

Standing at a Crossroads in the Recovery

Fellowship from Minoru Chen on October 11, 2020

Introduction

The plan for this series of meetings beginning this Lord's Day afternoon and continuing every week, as our schedule allows, will likely carry us through January of next year. We will let you know more details about this schedule at the end. I think in many ways, a fellowship of this kind is unprecedented. Here, we plan to have a gathering on a regular basis of these ten churches from diverse regions of the country, to have much and thorough fellowship concerning our common interest— which is the Lord's interest—and, to consider this common move of the Lord in His Body with a focus on the United States. Even in the past moves and migrations for GTCA, we have never done something like this.

This is, number one, a blessed sign of the Lord's leading. I would even say that the Lord's presence with us is what allows us and causes us even to have the heart to meet in this planned way. The second thing is, I believe this is also a sign, or evidence of, the level of one accord and oneness that the Lord has built up among us. The oneness is not just in these ten cities, but in the Lord's recovery, and specifically today, I'm talking about in America. We are not yet perfected into one according to the Lord's aspirational prayer in John 17 but we cannot ignore the fact that the Lord has blessed his recovery through His speaking, the Spirit's work, and the blending over many years to bring us to this point.

Today, I see about seventy brothers participating. Included in this fellowship today are various coworkers in this country who have been

participating in the GTCA burden, the leading brothers in these ten cities, and also brothers who are not elders or leading brothers but those who have been serving or helping in coordination for these ten churches and are those who would typically attend ITERO. In this sense, it's a bit of an open meeting here which I think is the right thing to do. Now, these ten churches represented today, at the most, would represent four or five percent of the churches in the United States, if we assume there are 250 churches in this country, not including the churches in Canada. I wish that this kind of fellowship could be for the whole country, to include all the churches. Maybe that day will come but, we are not doing that now. Instead, we are here taking advantage of this present round of GTCA with these ten cities to begin this sort of fellowship.

The original plan for these meetings is first, to familiarize the brothers with these 36 lessons, which I have prepared with help on the proper church life. Our hope and plan is that, by the beginning of next year, these lessons may also be used to train and perfect many saints, including those in these ten churches and any new migrants to these churches. These lessons don't dive deep into the subject matter but offer a more comprehensive view. These lessons are foundational and basic on what a proper church life looks like. The emphasis here is not depth but breadth. However, we will not get into the start of these 36 lessons today. I had a clear feeling before starting this message that I should not start on these 36 lessons, so you don't need to worry about that right now. Instead, I'd like to fellowship with you all on something much more important.

Burden for a New Beginning

My observation today is that this kind of fellowship is needed, not only with the so-called new believers or new ones, but even with some of the older saints that have been among us. We all need fellowship on just what is the proper church life. We all need to see what the essence of the church is and what are the different aspects of a proper church life. As you can imagine, this is a very broad subject and there

is no way we can cover everything in depth in just 36 lessons, but these lessons can lay the groundwork. At this point in time, we can use these ten churches for a new beginning. It's almost treating it like some in Ezra. If you recall with the history of Israel, a remnant returned to Jerusalem to this desolate situation with both the house and the city broken down, burned, and rampaged. They had to lay again a foundation to rebuild the house of God. Now, I'm not inferring that the churches here today are burned down and desolate. I'm just using that as an illustration to show that the burden now is for these ten churches to take advantage of this present migration to really have some kind of a new beginning, a renewal, a reset, or of a new start.

Brothers, this kind of renewal is something very natural (in a good sense), organic, and positive. As a principle of this universe, especially with organisms of organic matter, all things suffer an aging process. The second law of thermodynamics is something called entropy stating that things in this physical universe have this tendency to go from a steady, stable state towards chaos unless there is some kind of interference. We see this principle in our physical bodies—our bodies age and get sick, we become frail and die. So, unless there's some intervention to renew or strengthen it, it will naturally go that direction.

The church is not an organization, and we don't do things like restructuring the company to change things up. The church is an organism. Organisms need a constant renewal at the cellular level, and we see this process, brothers, every day as we live because our body is constantly being renewed. We have this metabolic process of renewal, of new intake and discharge of the old. This is a daily matter, for even after a child is born, that metabolism has to keep going for growth and renewal. And if we don't look at the church this way, eventually the church will suffer. The church will get old, the church will become weak and ill, and the church would even die. So, there ought to be a renewal day by day, by the work of the cross, and by the

work of the life-giving Spirit. “Our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day.” (2 Cor. 4:16) We may know that verse, but unfortunately, we don't have that kind of view. We don't project that verse into the church life as a whole.

The Condition of Malaise

So if the church has been around for decades, like the number of the churches here today that have 20 or 30 years of history, but there has not been a definite renewal taking place, it is no wonder when the church life would by default fall into a kind of condition of oldness over time. Without a revival there is a lack of vigor, there is weakness, there is barrenness, am I right? And, in the condition where the church suffers a lack of vitality, we can keep the church going, because we have faithful brothers, we love the Lord, and we love the church. We're faithful and thank God for that. However, we actually are in a church life that has become listless, without direction, without a goal, and without the kind of industry or freshness that perhaps it once had. I was thinking of a word for this, and I thought of one I learned from former President Jimmy Carter, who once upon a time described the United States as under a condition of malaise. That was a pretty apt description of the US at that time of the late 70s with the oil embargo. The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines malaise as “an indefinite feeling of debility (like debilitation) or lack of health often indicative of or accompanying the onset of an illness.” These are very meaningful terms; brothers just think about this. Malaise is a description of something you can't quite put your finger on, but you're about to get sick. For example, if you were infected with the COVID-19 virus and feel as if something is not right. You might not be running a high temperature, maybe just a low-grade fever, but you just feel like you have no energy, you are constantly fatigued, and you don't want to do anything. You see, that's malaise. A feeling of debility means you are unable to do things, you are frail, feeble, languid, and weary. You can't do things that a normal person would have the energy to do. You would rather just lay there in bed even though you're not dead yet. But you are in body, in mind, and in spirit, you're just kind of in that

kind of a condition and so inertia takes over and you exist and carry on in that way.

A Look at the Church's History

Now, I know this is a horrible word but brothers, to be very honest with you, compared to certain early days and certain times in the moments of revival the condition among us was not like this. You may ask then, when did this malaise begin? Well, there are many ways to read history. But as a student of history and especially of the Lord's recovery, I've done my research and also can share with you my own experience, of having come into the recovery since the late 60s. In my personal study, the onset of such a malaise began as early as the late 70s when we were besieged on two fronts, outwardly and inwardly. Outwardly, we experienced a terrible attack and opposition from Christianity. Some of you are old enough to remember how bad it was when we were called a cult and maligned with slander. The young people today have no idea how bad it was. The attack at that time was ferocious. It was a total assault, that not only damaged the church but absolutely canceled out the Lord's recovery in these United States. The enemy did a pretty good job in his attack and damaged our original boldness. Basically, any momentum and impact that we had, it came to a screeching halt. And as if that outward attack was not enough, we also experienced the first major internal turmoil in the United States. Throughout church history, we had experienced some small turmoil, but never had we experienced something like this one in the late 70s which just knocked the wind out of us. So we had a double whammy brothers, from without and within that caused us to basically go underground. The "cult" accusations" blockaded our gospel work, blockaded our spreading of the truth, and stopped the momentum of the Lord's recovery. In the late 60s and early 70s, we were having a true, classic revival, and the Lord's recovery was on a steep incline but that waned by the mid-70s. And these two attacks, external or internal, caused us to lose that kind of a spirit, faith, and boldness in our work and in church life.

Fighting for a New Way

From the mid-70s into the 80s was the beginning of that kind of onset of a certain indolent condition. Brother Lee recognized that. At that time, what comforted Brother Lee, was not the USA or Taiwan, but it was Germany. That was his boast and joy, the work happening then in Stuttgart, Germany. But he realized that Germany is Germany, and that condition of malaise was not unique to the United States, but it was a global issue including the Far East. Thus, when Brother Lee finished his work on the life study of the New Testament, he just dropped his pen, and flew back to Taiwan for five years.

Brother Lee's trip to Taiwan was to find, research, and study a way to break out of this doldrum. Brother Lee began his work to break out of this dormant and stuck condition that the churches of the recovery were in. He committed to restudy everything. You may ask why Taiwan? Taiwan, of course, is where Brother Lee came from, there he had certain assets available to him and because it's a small island, he could do a lot of work there. Of course, he went back there to finish the Recovery Version and he started the Full Time Training, and so on. But in those five years, he studied and succeeded with this matter called the New Way, or the God-Ordained way, which he believed would get those of us in the recovery out of this dormant situation. His burden was always to experiment and gain a measure of success in Taiwan, recognizing that Taiwan was just a small island, and its influence was limited, so the view was always to come back to the United States to work it out.

But alas, even while he was trying to do that work, in the third year of his five years in Taiwan, another turmoil began to ferment. In fact, just the year before he came back. which was around 1987 or 1988, is when that turmoil actually exploded in Anaheim. That second turmoil was worse than the first one. We were already in less than robust and healthy situation, yet we got hit with a second round. Brothers, as I'm talking about history with you, you have to realize what transpired. The enemy is at every turn trying to stop the Lord's recovery in this

country from going on. That is more than clear. In this second attack, he threw the kitchen sink at the Lord's recovery. It was so bad and took away whatever remaining strength that we had. So when Brother Lee came back, even though he had the God-Ordained Way and he was full of burden, this country was simply not ready to cooperate with him to fully work this out. He still gave the messages, he still did the vital group training, but he couldn't get through. But thank the Lord, Brother Lee found another place and another way to have a breakthrough which was in Russia.

Blessing in Europe

In 1991, with the historical backdrop of the recent collapse of communism and Desert Storm, the 100-Hour War, Brother Lee had the feeling of going to Russia now to gain the Caucasians there by the God-Ordained Way. This was a success, using full-timers and migrants from both this country, Taiwan, and others elsewhere in the Lord's recovery. So that success was at least a comfort to him. Some of you may remember how in almost every message Brother Lee boasted about Russia and the brothers there. That was his joy, where what he could not work out in the US, at least, there was a breakthrough in Russia.

Today, the Lord's move in Central and Western Europe actually has its genesis in Russia. After Russia, there was Poland, Romania, Czechoslovakia, and eventually, of course, London, and so on. And so, we have seen the Lord's blessing in these regions. So brothers, when I say malaise, and discuss these things, let me be more specific, I'm applying that to the United States. The Lord has in these many years broken through in Africa. The Lord has broken through in South America, specifically in Brazil. But brothers, here I'm talking to you about the United States. As far as the United States are concerned, Brother Lee did not see what he wanted to see. After he finished the vital group training, he said, "If you don't do it," meaning we were not doing it, "I will stop speaking." That word was six months before he passed away. And true to form, he did not speak about this matter

anymore. But he continued to finish what the Lord commissioned him to speak on, that was the high peak of the divine revelation, thank the Lord for that. But you have to realize that United States was and is important to Brother Lee. He called it the center of the Lord's recovery, geographically, and it is where he was, and this is where his ministry is.

Base of the Lord's Recovery

And he even used the words, "It is the base of the Lord's recovery." The USA just occupied that strategic position, not only in the physical earth, but even spiritually in the Lord's work in the Lord's move. So, he did not see that, but he did pray for a new revival to come. He anticipated that, but he did not see it. In these twenty plus years since he passed away, it's not like nothing has happened. It's too much to say that. When I use the word "malaise," of course, I must qualify myself. In these years, the Lord has done much globally, and even in these United States. Elsewhere I have spoken about this to the saints.

Seven Feasts

Isn't that wonderful, brothers, that the Lord's speaking continues, and the churches are well supplied by these feasts? That is a wonderful thing that the Brother Lee willed, if you will, to us, which we're still carrying on today. Those feasts held us together. And those feasts supplied us not only in this country, but throughout the earth. Also, partly due to these feasts and partly due to our practice, there's a blending starting with the co-workers and with the leading brothers in the ITEROs, and then even with the saints. That kind of blending has caused us to become closer and to break down more barriers. Then with technology now, which is borderless, there is more blending among us, and the result of this kind of blending is a level of one accord or oneness that even in this country during Brother Lee's time, we had not quite experienced. Now this is all from my personal study. That is a wonderful thing. Even this tonight, that we can talk like this – fellowshiping, working, and laboring together – is indicative of that. The co-workers are just one. Brother Lee, before he passed away,

talked about the blending brothers. He said, "I have never seen such blending even in my whole history in the Lord's recovery." He said that before he died. I would say today that blending is *more* than even when he was here. Thank the Lord for that. So that is a great thing. What else?

Work on the Campuses

Since 1998 until today we've gained so many young people, both from within our own families and then, of course, outside. That is a big thing.

FTTA

What would we do without the full-time training? Thousands have gone through the training, and many of those today are useful brothers and sisters. The first crop from that training is today in their 40's and pushing 50, and many of them are now co-workers, full-timers, and leading brothers and responsible ones. That is not a small thing, brothers, the FTTA. That is a great matter that the Lord has left to us.

GTCA

Then in these years, there has been a kind of outgoing spread. We have what we call GTCA. Today, it's 20 years old. Now, for better or worse, we have been spreading some and then planting churches and going forward.

Bibles for America

BfA has been giving away so many millions of Bibles and books. So, it is not like nothing has happened. This has all been taking place. One more thing I would like to mention, and that is over these years we have made many Christian friends who have helped us, especially brother Hank Hanegraaff. You brothers in Charlotte, where CRI is based, know this, and we know he is still a friend standing for us. So today, that kind of attack and opposition against us still is present, but it has been blunted to a degree. For sure it is not like the late 70s and early 80s. There's a kind of openness there. Many Christian leaders

and theologians who vouch for us that we are bona fide true believers even though we may not agree with all their doctrinal views.

So, you add all this together, brothers, and it is not like the Lord has not blessed. However, let me come back to say this – we must look at the general situation of the country in many churches, compared to the days we experienced before - i.e., certain days of revival that we experienced before with its impact and its power, and its aggressiveness and its spread. We have not seen that for some time. And compared to what Brother Lee wanted to see and what Brother Lee dreamed about, for sure we have not seen that yet. Then when you look at the condition of many churches, thank the Lord for the faithful saints. Thank the Lord for so many brothers and sisters who are still standing and faithful and steadfastly going on in the Lord's recovery. We are full of thanks to the Lord for that. But too often we have not witnessed the kind of drive or the kind of morale or the kind of aggressiveness or the kind of power that cause the Lord's recovery to be able to carry out something of its commission on two counts.

Slow Spread of the Lord's Testimony

On the one side, the spread and propagation of the word of the truth and of the high gospel that the Lord has given to us and that the Lord has commissioned us to do. I'll come back to this in a minute to quote Brother Lee. This includes also not just the spread of the truth, but as a result of the spread of the gospel and the truth, the growth or the spread of the Lord's testimony in terms of local churches in city by city. I can tell you that today, the number of churches among us is not that much more than when Brother Lee was alive, and it's 20 some years later. I must go study the number, but I'm pretty sure it's approximately 200-250 churches not counting Canada. Today, we're not that much more. Some died and some are added. I can tell you this much. In Southern California, our number of churches is about the same as when Brother Lee died. Southern California, and we are a major center of the church's membership of the recovery's membership in this country. I don't say that with pride at all, and in

fact, I say that with a sense of shame. But I must be honest about that. And today, the truth among us is still very pocketed and still very covered and stored among us. This is not the way that Brother Lee wanted to see it spread.

Routine Church Life

The second side of things is to consider the church life in different localities, the level of exercise, the prevailing of the spirit, the power and attractiveness of the church life, the boldness and aggressiveness of the church life. You know, the church should be a city on a hill and a lamp on a lampstand and not hidden under the bushel. It's not what it was. Once upon a time, the church was like a hot knife in butter in this country, and I'm not exaggerating. But many churches are in somewhat of a maintenance mode. It has become old, aged, routine, standard, and common. Now I don't say this, brothers, in a judgmental attitude. I'm in one of the churches. So, I don't say it in that way. But brothers, I must be very honest with you, with myself, and before the Lord. As we consider together how should we go on?

Seeking a Breakthrough

Now I come back to Brother Lee. I've told some brothers that I've done a lot of studies of our history and of Brother Lee's speaking. I don't mean so much on the truth side of things. Of course, that's great. I'm talking about on the *move* side of things. In the 80's when he went back to Taiwan, Brother Lee in 1986 came back here and had a call for a special elders training. It's in book seven and it's called *One Accord for the Lord's Move*. It's a whole volume, and that was before many of us went back to Taiwan with him in the fall of 1986. This training somewhat precipitated that, and we were together in Anaheim. Today, you can go back and even view the video. Brother Lee was like a crazy man jumping all over. He was talking about by inference, he is the commander-in-chief, the master builder, and he's going back to Taiwan to discover the new way and he's calling the saints to join him to work this out. He said, in every country there are civilians and there is the military. Remember that? He was calling the military to join him

to work this out. And he said, "If you don't agree, at least please do not do anything to undermine or oppose until it is worked out." Brothers, I say these things very easily coming out of my lips just because I studied it a lot. I'm not making this up. His burden was to have a turn and a breakthrough in the whole of the Lord's recovery. But he could not do it in the U.S. He had to go back to study this first. So, he was making a call. Remember, in those days, brothers, we wrote a letter to him. Approximately 200 brothers signed that letter to him and pledged our oneness with him to work this out. Of that number, two persons eventually pulled their name off the signatory. One I can mention since he's already passed away. His name is John Ingalls. The other, a Chinese brother in Richmond, Canada, near Vancouver, is still alive, so I don't mention his name. In two years, they took the lead to dissent. In the US, that rebellion exploded in '88. The one in Canada exploded more like in '91 or so. But that's all history. The other brothers all stood with Brother Lee for this. Again, even though Brother Lee succeeded in Taiwan in finding this way, he was not able to work it out here even though we were one with him due to that rebellion.

Taking the Charge

It's been a long time, brothers, since I have looked back closely and more thoroughly at Brother Lee's speaking along this line in the '90s. Not that I don't know about it; I was there that whole time with him. During the '90s Brother Lee was mainly fulfilling his ministry and sharing regarding the high peak. He was not traveling that much due to his illness and because he was older. He mainly just stayed in Orange County, and because of that, he had a lot of time with the co-workers there, and I was one of those co-workers. We were even meeting with him every Monday for a period of time. In those meetings he would talk a little bit about the high peak and whatever his speaking was on at the particular time. Most of the time he was burdened that the co-workers would take the lead to work out the God-ordained way and to work out the vital groups in order for there to be a breakthrough in this country. Now here is where it gets

personal. Brothers, I'm not Brother Lee. Far from it. I'm just one of the co-workers among so many, so I don't have any illusions that I know what the Lord is doing. No, I don't. I'm just one of the brothers. But when I say it gets personal it's because in those years (in the 90's), to me much of Brother Lee's speaking was a charge before he died. A charge. And as one of his young coworkers, I must tell you that I took that charge personally and in a very serious way. I tell some brothers this story, which I usually don't talk about because it's personal, but I've mentioned in private moments to some that when Brother Lee was dying, he was in a coma. Just a few days before he passed away, some of us brothers were allowed by the family to have a private time in his room. I think he was, for practical purposes, not conscious. So, my wife and I went to see Brother Lee for the last time, and we didn't know whether he could hear or whether he was even conscious. But we did what we felt to do, and that is we spoke to him at the foot of his bed, and I told him "Brother Lee, I promise you that I will do what I can for the rest of my life to fulfill what you have seen," or something like that. I don't remember the words, but it was along that line. I remember Rick Scatterday was there with us. He was the physician, and you know he's a very discreet brother. He stood behind the curtain, watching. And I believe other brothers did the same thing, so I'm not saying I'm so special.

But I want to tell you personally, in this matter, that this was not just about releasing the truth and the teaching and all of that. Of course, that is very important and thank the Lord there's a group of brothers that have been carrying this out in these feasts through all these years. But I'm talking especially about a particular aspect of the Lord's recovery, and that is the work in the Lord's recovery. More specifically, brothers, for myself, the main burden is not the whole earth in general—although our heart is for the whole earth—but it is for the United States. I don't know why. I wasn't born in this country. I'm a naturalized citizen. I came here as a college student, but somehow, I adopted this country, or rather, this country adopted me. From the beginning, from Elden Hall days, I have witnessed Brother Lee's strong

burden for this country. That's why he came here. When he came to the west, he didn't go to Europe, to England, but he came to this country, and he returned to this country, and he died in this country. Brother Lee talked about the importance of this country. This was brought out in the first message of the Labor Day Conference. The book, *The World Situation and God's Move*, is about the United States, even though Brother Lee had a strong burden for Europe. I'm for Europe, brothers; don't worry. I'm fully for Europe, but if the Lord cannot get through fully and completely in the United States, the move of the Lord in His recovery will still be discounted or held back across the earth, I can tell you that. Now, this is not to be U.S. centric. This is not to be patriotic; you know the Stars and Stripes. No, that's secular. I am following Brother Lee totally from a spiritual standpoint concerning his view of how the Lord's work should be carried out going forward. I believe this country was founded for the Lord's use. Brother Lee believed that, and I believe that. I believe this country is the last country—what Brother Lee called the ultimate country—that the Lord will use to facilitate His move. I believe that. So, because of this, most of my time in service and in the work has been in this country. I don't travel that much like many other brothers. I've been led by the Lord this way in these twenty years after Brother Lee passed away, and so I studied. I study the outward situation—the government, the politics, the culture, war, and all these things you need to know, and that Brother Lee was conscious of. Brother Lee did not work in a vacuum; I must tell you, brothers. He observed world events; he studied them. In fact, he sent brothers to Russia because of that. He looked at Communism and he looked at all these things, and then he said, "Let's go." And so I learned of him. I tried anyway. And, also because of my contact with the churches, with the brothers here and there, it gave me a kind of feel—you know, a hand to the pulse kind of feel—for the general situation in this country. All of that only adds to the burden that I have and that, may I say, I received from Brother Lee.

One Accord Among the Co-Workers

Now, I don't believe I'm the only one with this burden. I am not saying that either. For example, this current round of GTCA today is a result of much fellowship and prayer among the co-workers. Some of you know this. A lot of deliberation over two years, and that is with a background of the past GTCA work. The Bible Belt, the Heartland, the Midwest, whatever you call it, has been the object of much prayer and deliberation. All the brothers, all the senior co-workers, are absolutely one in this matter. Without that, how could we have the boldness to go forward? There is one accord in this matter. And somehow, by the Lord's sovereignty and the Lord's arrangement, some of these practical burdens kind of fell in my lap or on my shoulders. So, I'm also very thankful to the Lord, that today the Lord is raising up another generation of co-workers, of brothers who would identify with this burden. And I surely would like to tell them this is not just my burden, I can assure them, maybe not with 100% surety, because who can say that, but with 99% assurance that this is Brother Lee's burden. If Brother Lee were here on this Zoom call, he would not only agree, but he would say, "Why so late? I told you to work it out 20 years ago. Why so late?"

Well, my answer to Brother Lee is number one, "Sorry, Brother Lee. No excuses," and my second one is, "Brother Lee, we were not in a condition." That's an excuse. That's okay. But I will also say, "Brother Lee, you told us that this way, the God ordained way, the scripture-revealed way, if it is scripture-revealed, then it will be worked out by somebody. If not by us, then by another group God would raise up. Brother Lee said that, and he also said that if this way were not worked out when he was alive, then it would be worked out in twenty, thirty, or fifty years. Brother Lee, now it has been twenty some years, maybe it is time that we are working it out. That's all I can say to him.

A Crossroads in the Recovery

Brothers, I'm not here giving a message, but I feel it is important to talk to you like this, because I want us not to isolate the current GTCA

move. We need to look at the past and anticipate the future, then we will know from the Lord what we should do and know what the strategic importance is of what we are doing today. My feeling is, based on my prayer to the Lord, based on my observation of the situation, and based on my fellowship with the brothers, is that today, in the year 2020, we are standing at a crossroads in the recovery. I don't mean on the truth side; I am talking about the Lord's move and advance. We are at another pivotal moment, a milestone moment, a turning point in the Lord's recovery's move and advance. I sometimes fall into the temptation of exaggerating things, but my genuine feeling is that the present time, especially considering what is going on in the world, with all the things that the Lord is leading us to do, and with all the prayers that have been raised up, these years should be a time of a momentous turn in the recovery in this country. A time to break out of malaise, to break through any kind of dormancy, and to have a recovery that is strong, powerful, energetic, robust, vigorous, and vital.

A Two-Fold Burden

There is one point I forgot to mention earlier about Brother Lee's burden in the 90s. One side of his burden was for the prevailing spreading of the riches, the truth. The other side that accompanies this spreading of the truth was that we need to strengthen the churches. Because of this side, the releasing of the truth of the recovery is for all of God's children. Brother Lee said "I don't even care for the increase. I care first for all of God's children to be fed. What the Lord has given to us in the recovery is not merely for us to enjoy. It is for all of the Lord's children. We need to get it out." Do you remember Brother Lee's last message on earth? The message was given in February of 1997 in the International Chinese Speaking Conference. He was talking about reigning in life in Romans and the last message was on Romans 16 about the blending of the churches at Paul's time. He gave a word at the end about how he had some regret concerning our attitude towards the believers in denominations and Christianity. Unfortunately, that was taken and used by some in the Midwest to say Brother Lee repented and we

should join Christianity and be good with Christianity and so on. Of course, Brother Lee did not mean that we forfeit our standing and position of the Lord's recovery and join Christianity. However, he had a feeling within him that I detected not only in that message, but in some of his other messages. You can see his burden, for example, in this matter of the truth being for every single child of God. He was burdened that all God's children would be able to access these riches, whether they come to the Lord's recovery or not. This is why we give away Bibles through BFA and we don't proselytize. Whether they come or not, we just want them to have these riches. So this side of spreading the truth has to be augmented by the other side of strengthening the churches—to have fresh living churches that are gospel preaching, fruit bearing, and that are a testimony to the seekers. For those who touch the truth and want to find the church life, they can find the Lord's testimony in the churches. There should be a situation much like the early days of the 60s and 70s, when so many seeking ones came in. But they will only come to something that is vital, attractive, and rich. They won't come to a mundane and kind of a maintenance church life.

Raising up Models

These are the two things that Brother Lee talked about in the 90s. He talked about the truth side a lot more, which was central, but he also talked about the church side, and I know that because he said this to us in those Monday morning meetings. He said, brothers, I'm old. I cannot do much anymore, and I have to finish my ministry. You go. If I were your age, I would go to a locality and labor there to raise up a model church. That's exactly what he said. And if you look back at Brother Lee's ministry, he not only ministered the word wherever he went, he also raised up models in key places. And those models define the events of the Lord's recovery. The first one was Chefoo. The second one was Shanghai. The third one was Taiwan. The fourth one was Elden Hall in Los Angeles. Each one of those were revivals, and each one was raised up as a model that we are still benefiting from even today. I can tell you this because I studied these things. When he

prayed that there would be a new revival that will come, one definition of that is that there would be model church life according to God's way—a church built up with saints living out the high peak of the divine revelation, saints living the God-man life, a church that is fully practicing this new way, in which all the saints are functioning for the pursuit of the gospel, a church life that is filled with vitality and power. That's what he left us.

Spreading the Truth

Today, we have two jobs to do. Number one is to spread the truth, whether it is on the campuses, in communities, or in our states in the United States. Just blanket this country with truth. So far, in twenty years, we have given away 1.7 million Recovery Version New Testaments. Some may think that is a lot, but if you ask me, that is very little. We should have given out 17 million Recovery Versions, and even that is still a very small number compared to the 330 million people in the US today. Imagine the impact. Imagine how many more people, and how many Christians, would be exposed to these riches. Saints, should we say, well, we are not ready, we are still not in the best of shape? Brother Lee's way of working was always when he sensed the moment, when he had the clarity in his prayer, he just went. Brother Lee just moved. We know this is not a one-year or two-year thing, we know that it will be a multi-year thing. We just need to work hard and labor and toil. There is no way around that. Seven months ago, the pandemic hit and turned our whole world upside down. Considering the condition of the US today, and the Lord's move in the GTCA cities in this round, I just have this feeling, if not now, when? When will we be ready? It's been twenty-three years since Brother Lee passed away.

Strengthening the Churches

Number two, because any kind of a turn of the Lord will be over a period of time, not overnight, we are not expecting miracles. We are not Pentecostals. We have to start somewhere, so we come back now to the ten cities. My hope, my dream, and my burden with the ten

current cities is that each one will leverage this migration, this move, the new blood, and lots of fellowship and trainings, the prayers, and each one will have the goal to be a model church. Yes, a model church. You may think that is a tall order, that is a little ambitious. Well, maybe, but if we don't aim to be a model, what do we aim to be? We can't just aim to be a so-so church life or a kind of routine church life. Saints, in front of us, no matter what our condition is right now, is an opportunity, and we are to seize opportunities to labor and work, to make our church life a model church. Many churches have been around, and now is the opportunity to renew them, to revitalize them, to have a new beginning, I would even say, to consider the way we church. Why not do it in a new way? Why do we have to do the same thing? The principles will not change and that is why we have the 36 lessons on the proper church life. We will always need truth and life and to keep the oneness and to not abandon the ground of the church—all these things will not change. I am talking about the way we lead the saints, the way we practice the church life. I am talking about infusing the church life with a dose of vitality and strength. I am talking about the church life that is outward facing, spreading, growing, preaching the gospel, contacting people. I'm talking about a church life that is filled with prayer. I am talking about a church life where there is a revival of calling on the name of the Lord and pray-reading. I am talking about a church life where the saints are not in inertia and indolence, but a church life where all the saints are exercised.

Living and Attractive Church Life

One thing about malaise is the lack of exercise, a kind of tiredness, and so many in the church life suffer from this. The first lesson of the 36 lessons is on being vital—that is the first thing. When you don't have that, there is no church life to speak of. Paul says, “exercise yourself unto godliness” (1 Timothy 4:7b). It is altogether a matter of exercise. When you don't exercise, your body becomes tired all the time. You have no energy. Today, I would say we have no problem with food. The food is coming fast and furious. We don't even have enough time

in the year to cover all the seven feasts in *The Holy Word for Morning Revival*. We have no problem with food; our shortage is exercise. We need a turn to move, to act, to go forward, to do things, and to be active. Vital means living an active life. And Brother Lee said (when sharing concerning the vital groups) that the local, typical Americans in this country are attracted by livingness. You can even have the truth, but if your meetings are dead, that is just not attractive. When there is the Spirit, the liveliness, the activities that are divinely inspired and divinely energized, there is a kind of attraction.

Today, apart from all the mess that is going on, one condition of this country is there is another generation of seeking ones looking for reality. When I was talking to a brother living in South Carolina, I asked, “Brother, please give me an idea of what South Carolina looks like. We heard that in the Bible Belt there are many Christians, and a lot of seekers, is that really true today?” He said, absolutely. But you may have mega churches and a lot going on, but a lot of those things are just emotions, or self-help, very shallow, with hardly anything of the truth or not at all. It's just music—whoever can hire the best band will get the people. They talk about things that address certain human needs, not to mention prosperity gospel and such, but the truth, the word of God, is not even there. It's not even shallow, it's nonexistent. Even the very basic things, not to mention the high peak, but the all-inclusive Christ, God's New Testament economy, that's what is lost, and that's what seekers want.

I am in Bibles for America, and I can testify to you that people are hungry. People are looking and they still cannot find us because we have gone down into a bunker a long time ago.

I have a burden now regarding the Museum of the Bible in DC. We have made a very strong connection with the management to put forth an exhibit of Watchman Nee and eventually of the Chinese Bible, maybe the Recovery Version. I hope one day we can do an exhibit on Witness Lee. You may think I am crazy, but I am hoping that when we

do this exhibit, we have already gotten the okay and people just love it. For the exhibit we are working now, they said Watchmen Nee is known, and this will bring in a lot of visitors for the museum. Brothers, I feel it is time to pull out all the stops. We have been underground for too long, and there is no need to be. We should be on the rooftop, speaking and dispensing the truth, and those seekers that are marked out by the Lord will look for the church life. They will come and we will have a healthy, rich, and robust church life to bring them to and to receive them. I don't know where all this will lead, only the Lord knows, but I feel that for the GTCA cities, there is a tremendous opportunity in front of us, not just to fix up a little here and put on a band-aid over there, not just a kind of tightening the screws; no, there is a greater need in this country. The GTCA cities are a wonderful opportunity for us to build up some model churches. You don't have to be huge. You can have fifty people and be a model, or you can have two hundred and be a model.

Saints, I challenge you; I open my heart to you. I feel we all have been thinking small for too long. We keep thinking we are just the remnant, we should be small, and don't get too big, but saints, even if you have two or three hundred in your church, that's not too big at all. Today, the Lord's recovery is still about 25,000 in the US, and even if we double, it is still very small. We have been conditioned to think small and to be small. I am not talking about being the great Babylon. I am talking about a growing, spreading, rich and living Lord's recovery among us in these churches. Let's work on that.

Before we depart, I want to read a few sentences to you. I sent it to some brothers today because I was on *Beseeking.org*, but we should get all the saints into this. Brother Lee had this to say: "If we build up the habit of praying at regular times every day, a great blessing will be brought in. This blessing will affect not only our personal lives, but also the church, our neighborhood, and even our nation." Brothers, these days, let us pray every day and lead the saints to pray every day. I believe a revival will come to the US. The Lord will work this out.