

The Perfecting Training on Organic Shepherding

Jan 21st 2007

Message Two

Being Cared For by Caring for Others

Scripture Reading: S. S. 1:8; Luke 15: 5-6; 1 Cor. 9:14; Matt. 25:16, 29; 2 Cor. 9:6-7; Acts 20:35b

I. The need in the Lord's Recovery today is to build up the habit of contacting people; if you care for others, you will be taken care of — John 21:15-17; S. S. 1:8:

- A. If you contact people regularly, this will make you happy because the Lord is happy.
- B. According to the divine economy of the Bible, if we desire to receive, we need to give — Prov. 11:25.

II. The new believers are our glory and our joy — John 15:11; Luke 15:5-6; Phil. 2:17:

- A. “These things I have spoken to you that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be made full”—John 15:11.
- B. “And when he finds it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing; and when he comes into his house, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost”—Luke 15:5-6.
- C. “Those who sow in tears Will reap with a ringing shout; He who goes forth and weeps, Bearing seed for scattering, Will no doubt come in with a ringing shout, Bearing his sheaves with him” —Psa. 126:5-6.
- D. “But even if I am being poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I rejoice, and I rejoice together with you all” —Phil. 2:17.

III. “So also the Lord directed those who announce the gospel to live from the gospel” —1 Cor. 9:14:

- A. “For in the Law of Moses it is written: ‘You shall not muzzle the ox while it is treading out the grain.’...” — V. 9:9a.
- B. “Jesus said to them, My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to finish His work” — John 4:34.
- C. When you go out in the gospel, you enjoy Christ not in a doctrinal way but in a very experiential way.
- D. “And Abraham prayed to God; and God healed Abimelech and his wife and his female servants, so that they bore children” (Gen. 20:17), “And Sarah conceived and bore Abraham a son in his old age, at the appointed time of which God had spoken to him” (v. 21:2).

IV. “For to every one who has, more shall be given, and he shall abound...” — Matt. 25:29a:

- A. “... And every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it that it may bear more fruit”— John 15:2b.
- B. “Immediately he who had *received* the five talents *went* and *traded* with them and *gained* another five”— Matt. 25:16.
- C. “And Jehovah turned the captivity of Job when he prayed for his friends, and Jehovah gave Job twice as much as he had before”— Job 42:10.
- D. “There is one who scatters and increases yet more, and there is one who withholds what is appropriate but ends up only in want. The blessing soul will prosper, and he who waters will also be watered himself. As for him who withholds grain, the people will curse him; But blessing will be upon the head of him who sells it”— Prov. 11:24-26.
- E. “For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, for your sakes He became poor in order that you, because of His poverty, might become rich”— 2 Cor. 8:9.

- F. “But take note of this: He who sows sparingly shall also sparingly reap; and he who sows with blessings shall also with blessings reap” (v. 9:6), “Now He who bountifully supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed and cause the fruits of your righteousness to increase. You in everything are being enriched unto all liberality, which works out through us thanksgiving to God” (v.v. 10-11).
 - G. “And Elijah said to her, do not fear. Go, do as you have said. But make me a little cake out of it first, and bring out to me; then make for yourself and for your son afterward. For thus says Jehovah the God of Israel, The barrel of meal will not give out, nor will the jar of oil fail, until the day that Jehovah sends rain upon the face of the earth”—1 King. 17:13-14.
- V. “... For God loves a cheerful giver”— 2 Cor. 9:7:**
- A. “And Melchizedek the king of Salem brought out bread and wine. Now he was priest of God the Most High. And he blessed him and said, Blessed be Abram of God the Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth”—Gen.14: 18-19.
 - B. “And Joseph brought in Jacob his father and set him before Pharaoh, and Jacob blessed Pharaoh”—v. 47: 7-8a.
 - C. “... And to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He Himself said, it is more blessed to give than to receive”— Acts 20:35b.
 - D. “Give, and it will be given to you; a good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over, they will give into your bosom. For with what measure you measure, it shall be measured to you in return”— Luke 6:38.

Excerpts from the ministry:

**The Need in the Lord’s Recovery Today
to Build Up the Habit of Contacting People**

The Lord’s people everywhere have been scattered because there is no shepherding. We must realize that our shepherding should not be initiated by our care for people. John 21 reveals that our shepherding should be initiated from our love to Christ. We desire to contact people because we love the Lord, knowing that He loves people. Nothing can please the Lord as much as our going out to shepherd His flock. I assure you that if you contact people regularly, this will make you happy because the Lord is happy.

Today the church’s need is shepherding. My burden is to stir you up that you may realize that today the Lord’s recovery needs you to rise up to contact people. You have to build up a habit. If you do not contact people, you cannot be satisfied. You should even become addicted to the Lord’s love to take care of His people.

I want to remind you to make a list of all your acquaintances. You may think that you do not know that many people, but when you make a list, you may find out that you have over a hundred people whom you know. You should pray over these names, seeking the Lord’s leading as to whom you should contact. Sometimes when you contact someone, you may feel that he is the wrong person. But according to my experience, no contacts are wrong. Do not say that you caught a fish, which is the wrong fish. No fish is wrong, as long as it was hooked by you. The only thing that is wrong is for you not to contact people. (*The Training and the Practice of the Vital Groups*, pp. 78-79)

Being Cared For by Caring For Others

According to the divine economy of the Bible, if we desire to receive, we need to give. If we water others, we ourselves will be watered, and if we desire to grow in life, we need to help others to grow (Prov. 11:25). When we help others to grow in life, we ourselves will have the growth. The way to receive is to give, and the more we give, the more we receive (Luke 6:38; Acts 20:35). Therefore, we should not believe our situation. Our situation with respect to whether we are good or bad, useful or not useful, are a lie. We should not say that we can do nothing and are not useful. Rather, We need to say, "Satan, get away from me. I can do something, I have something, and I am useful in the Lord's hand." We should declare this to the whole universe, not by feeling or according to our situation but by faith. If we will all declare this, our whole situation will change...Although the Lord promised a child to Abraham, the child did not come for many years. The Lord even put Abraham into a situation in which he was forced to pray for the household of Abimelech so that they could have children (Gen. 20:17). If we were Abraham, we might have found it difficult to pray. We might have said, "I am too pitiful. I have been praying for myself for myself for many years, yet I have not received a child. How can I pray for them?" However, when Abraham prayed, God answered the prayer not only for Abimelech but also for Abraham (21:1-2). If we turn our prayer from ourselves to others, we will receive what we desire (Job 42:10). It is because we are too self-centered in our prayer that the Lord needs to teach us a lesson. If we water others, we will be watered, and if we care for others, we will be cared for. (*The Normal Way of Fruit-bearing and Shepherding for the Building Up of the Church*, pp. 38-39)

The New Believers Being Our Glory And Our Joy

In John 15:11 the Lord said, "These things I have spoken to you that My joy may be in you and that your joy may be made full" (v. 11). To be branches of the divine vine and to bear fruit to express the divine life is a matter of joy – a joyful life. Many saints have had the experience of being in ecstasy when they have baptized one into the Triune God. They have testified that after bringing one to the Lord, they were unable to sleep well throughout the whole night because the Lord's joy had become their joy.

First Thessalonians 2:19-20 says, "For what is our hope or joy or crown of boasting? Are not even you, before our Lord Jesus at his coming? For you are our glory and joy." In John 15:11 the Lord refers to our joy being made full. In 1 Thessalonians 2 Paul refers to our joy again. What is our joy? Our joy is the fruit that we bear. These two portions of the Word are related. John 15:11 should be referenced to 1 Thessalonians 2:19-20.

What is our joy? What is our glory? What is our crown of boasting? Christ's joy is our joy. The Father's glorification is our glorification. In John 15 and in 1 Thessalonians 2, we have these two words – glory and joy. To Paul the fruit borne by him was his glory and his joy.

When the Lord comes and you stand before Him, who will stand with you and for you? What will you say? Suppose you have never brought anyone to the Lord. This means that you have never borne any fruit. You may say: "Lord, look at Your talent, Your talent is in my pocket. I didn't lose it. I've been keeping it." For us to say this to the Lord when He comes will be a shame to us, not a glory or a joy (Matt. 25:24-30). My burden is to pass on this God-ordained way to you. If you will take the God-ordained way, you will be a new person, a person bearing fruit. (*The Exercise & Practice of the God-Ordained Way*, pp. 53-54)

THE FURTHERANCE OF THE GOSPEL BEING THE FACTOR FOR LIVING CHRIST

The experience of Christ unveiled in the book of Philippians includes several items. In chapter one Christ is our life and living. To take Christ as our life within and our living without is to live Christ (v. 21a). This chapter also reveals that the reason we live Christ, taking Christ as our life and our living, is for the furtherance of the gospel (vv. 5, 12). The experience of Christ as our life and living comes out of the furtherance of the gospel. The more we have fellowship in the gospel, in coordination with the apostle, the more we live Christ. The factor for living Christ is the furtherance of the gospel which is carried out in a corporate way.

Some have separated the preaching of the gospel from the experience of Christ. This is a mistaken concept. Our experience of Christ, our living of Christ, must have the factor of the furtherance of the gospel. Without such a factor, our words about living Christ are vain. Paul and the Philippians lived Christ, taking Christ as their life within and their living without, because they all were in the corporate fellowship of the gospel. The apostle was burdened for the furtherance of the gospel, and the Philippians were in coordination with him. Paul and the Philippians were happy in the furtherance of the gospel, and they all enjoyed Christ as their life within and their living without. Philippians 1 reveals not only the factor but also the result. The factor is the furtherance of the gospel with the apostle, and the result is the enjoyment of Christ, the experience of Christ, as both our life within and our living without. When you go out in the gospel, you enjoy Christ not in a doctrinal way but in a very experiential way.... Furthermore, the more we enjoy Christ, the more we participate in the furtherance of the gospel. Thus, the furtherance of the gospel is also the issue of our enjoyment of Christ. (*Experience and Growth in Life*, pp. 69-70)

FEEDING OTHERS CAUSING OUR OWN PROBLEMS TO BE SOLVED

This is a matter of feeding, not merely a matter of teaching. If we expect the church and the saints to grow unto maturity, we all must learn the lesson to take care of some spiritual children and feed them all the time. Otherwise, there will be no real growth among us. We should not simply meet here year after year, not increasing by caring for spiritual children. The increase of the church must be in the way of taking care of the "young goats." If we do this, we will be right and balanced, and this will solve many problems.

In these few days I have exercised in my spirit to seek the Lord concerning what to speak in these messages. The Lord gave me the answer: "Tell them to have spiritual children. Then all their problems will be solved. The best way to solve their problems is to help them to have spiritual children. Then they will learn the lessons, and they will be able to avoid many negative things."

In some parts of this country, people do not like to have children, because children are naughty and noisy. However, if you are going to choose a neighborhood to live in, do not choose one that has no children. People who insist on not having children are the hardest people to deal with. They often come to complain that you play the piano too loud or that your radio is on too high. I would rather live with people who have many children. Then they can play their piano, and I can sing my hymn. They can march, and I can jump, and no one will complain. The way to solve the brothers' and sisters' problems is to help them to have spiritual children. All those who seek the Lord without feeding others are the ones who create problems. If someone is indifferent, the church can easily deal with him, but the more someone is seeking without feeding others, the more problems he creates. The right way for people to solve their problems is to have spiritual children. Then they will know where they are, and they will know what responsibility is. Moreover, they will know what the real growth in life and the experience of life are. (*Preaching the Gospel in the Way of Life*, pp. 162-163)