

**THE PERFECTING TRAINING FOR THE SHEPHERDS**  
**General subject: THE CHURCH LIFE IN THE VITAL GROUPS**

Message Three

**Truth, Life and Gospel , The three fold cord of The Church life**

Scripture: 1 Tim2:7; John. 14:6; Ecc. 4:12

**I. There are three things which are emphasized in the New Testament- Truth, Life and Gospel; Truth is for Life, and Life is for Gospel:**

- A. The record in the Gospel shows us that truth, life and gospel are emphasized simultaneously—1 Tim2:7; Jn. 14:6.
- B. If there is no truth, there is no life; no life, there is no gospel; because gospel is a matter of bearing fruit.
- C. For the past two thousand years in the track of the saints and the history of the church, we cannot find any group of people who bind the threefold cord together.
- D. The Bible tells us, if we bind the threefold cord together, it will be solid and not quickly broken— Ecc 4:12
- E. Neglecting the gospel, we will lose spiritual offspring, it won't last long if in our preaching the gospel without truth and life.

**II. Consecrating ourselves for the preaching of the gospel:**

- A. Christ is the true vine, and we are His branches, if the branches do not bear fruit, He takes it away— Jn 15:2 b, 6.
- B. We have to consecrate ourselves to the Lord in His love, compel them to receive the Lord to be their salvation.

**III. Teaching the truth from house to house—Acts 5:42:**

- A. We not only need to beget, to nourish, we also need to teach.
- B. Our former practice of the big meeting was like a big family, we ate the same food and did not care for the new born babe who just could drink milk.
- C. Now we are practicing one on one, we go to the new one's home and feed him with milk.
- D. Nourish them mouth to mouth and teach them face to face— 2 Thess. 2:7, 12.

**IV. Preparing the proper materials:**

- A. In Hebrews 5:12-14 Paul mentioned two kinds of food: milk and solid food. We should not attempt to nourish a child with solid food.
- B. Hence, we need someone to labor in order to write some suitable materials for the group meetings that will nourish the new ones with milk.

**V. Distributing food at the proper time:**

- A. The meaning of distributing food to God's children at the proper time is profound. It does not mean merely to distribute food according to the seasons but to distribute different kinds of food according to the varying needs.
- B. The co-workers and the elders need to spend an adequate amount of time to pray thoroughly, to observe the condition of the brothers and sisters, and to understand the need of all the homes and the groups. We need to know their conditions, and then we should search out the suitable material from our publications.
- C. But I want us to see the absolute necessity of preparing the right kind of reading material for different meetings. This is in the principle of distributing food according to the proper time. The advancement of

the various kinds of meetings hinges on this very matter.

**VI. Being assured that the Lord will work out His recovery:**

- A. I am convinced that among us the Lord will:
  - 1. Recover the New Testament priesthood of the gospel.
  - 2. Recover the organic essence of the Body of Christ so that every member is living, full of the Spirit, and full of life.
  - 3. Recover Ephesians 4 so that all the gifted ones may perfect the saints to do the work of the ministry.
  - 4. Recover 1 Corinthians 14 so that all the saints may arrive at a state in which they all speak for the Lord as prophets.
- B. We all should have much faith and maintain a heart of endurance, being hopeful in the Lord and hopeful concerning His new way.
- C. We should not be too hasty to have a success but should rather proceed slowly with a right heart and endurance.
- D. We also should consider one another and pray for one another, without criticizing, despising, or opposing, but only loving, exhorting, and supporting one another.

**Excerpts from the ministry:**

**BEING ASSURED THAT THE LORD WILL WORK OUT HIS RECOVERY**

For this reason I am convinced that among us the Lord will first recover the New Testament priesthood of the gospel. Second, He will recover the organic essence of the Body of Christ so that every member is living, full of the Spirit, and full of life. Third, He will recover Ephesians 4 so that all the gifted ones may perfect the saints to do the work of the ministry, and fourth, He will recover 1 Corinthians 14 so that all the saints may arrive at a state in which they all speak for the Lord as prophets. I believe that the Lord will work this out for the accomplishment of His purpose. On the human side, we may have looseness and shortcomings which merely delay the Lord's time. Furthermore, to the Lord a thousand years are like one day. However, He will eventually accomplish what He is after; He will work it out sooner or later.

**BEING POSITIVE, ENDURING, AND ENDEAVORING**

We all should have much faith and maintain a heart of endurance, being hopeful in the Lord and hopeful concerning His new way. In the last days of this age the Lord will fully recover these four things among us—the New Testament priesthood of the gospel, the organic function of the believers, the perfecting in Ephesians 4, and the prophesying in 1 Corinthians 14. We need to be positive but not anxious. We all have our old background and old upbringing which are not easy to discard and replace with something new. Therefore, we should not be too hasty to have a success but should rather proceed slowly with a right heart and endurance. At the same time, those who have already entered into the new way should not despise those who have not yet entered, and neither should those who have not yet entered oppose those who have entered. We all should love one another, bear one another, and wait for one another. Do not forget that whichever way we are in, we are all those who believe in the Lord, who love Him, and who are for Him. However, it makes a difference which way we take. If we take the right way, the results will be great; if we take the wrong way, the results will be small, and this will be a frustration to the

Lord. Therefore, as much as we can, we should turn to the proper way. (*The Church Life in the Lord's Recovery Today*, Ch. 4)

**Excerpts from the ministry:**

The new way is first to build the church in, through, and based upon the home meetings, having the church life in the home meetings. We do not care that much for having the church life in the big meetings. We do not believe that it is possible to do so. According to our experience and observation, the proper, adequate, one hundred percent church life could only be possible in the home meetings. (*Elders' Training, Book 08, Ch6*)

**Preparing the Proper Materials**

Once we gain some new ones, we need to study to find the way to take care of them. I have been considering what materials would be the best to use in the group meetings to teach people. We have both Life Lessons and Truth Lessons. Although these lessons are very well written, I feel that they are not so suitable, because they may be too much for the new ones to digest. Even The Holy Word for Morning Revival may not be suitable for the new ones in the group meetings. It is not good to feed people too much food; we need to give them the proper portions. In Hebrews 5:12-14 Paul mentioned two kinds of food: milk and solid food. We should not attempt to nourish a child with solid food. Hence, we need someone to labor in order to write some suitable materials for the group meetings that will nourish the new ones with milk. In order to have the profitable teaching and fellowship in the group meetings, some materials that can serve as a guideline are needed. I hope that some of the brothers will be raised up by the Lord to compose some proper writings for the group meetings. (*Fellowship Concerning the Urgent Need of the Vital Groups*, Ch4)

**Distributes food at the proper time**

We must carefully select the proper material for the home meetings. We need to spend an adequate amount of time to pray thoroughly, to observe the condition of the brothers and sisters, and to understand the need of all the homes and the groups. We need to know their conditions, and then we should search out the suitable material from our publications. A mother, in preparing a meal for the family, should consider the condition of all the members of the family. Sometimes one member of the family is sick, and she needs to prepare special food for that one. Sometimes the season changes, and she needs to shop for the proper kind of food. All this takes research as well as common knowledge.

Matthew 24:45 says that the faithful and prudent slave distributes food to God's children at the proper time. The meaning of distributing food to God's children at the proper time is profound. It does not mean merely to distribute food according to the seasons but to distribute different kinds of food according to the varying needs. This is something that requires time and research. Suppose we meet a new one, and without any regard for his condition

we begin to share with him about the seventy weeks in Daniel. It is true that we are speaking God's word, but that kind of "distributing of food" does not nourish him. Instead, it kills him. God's word is life, but if we do not use it in a proper way, it becomes a killing factor to others. It can spoil a person's appetite; the taste to come to the meeting will be spoiled because what he has heard has not benefited him.

I may have exaggerated a little, but I want us to see the absolute necessity of preparing the right kind of reading material for different meetings. This is in the principle of distributing food according to the proper time. The advancement of the various kinds of meetings hinges on this very matter. Whether or not a meeting brings profit to a person, attracts him, or stirs up the desire within him to join depends fully on this matter. (*The Vision and Definite Steps for the Practice of the New Way*, Ch.11)

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