

The background is a vibrant orange color, densely populated with small white dots of varying sizes. Several larger, semi-transparent white circles are scattered across the page, creating a layered, bokeh-like effect. The word 'manna' is printed in a bold, black, lowercase sans-serif font at the top left.

manna

1

MC(P) 942/76

CONTENTS

<i>The Basic Beliefs of True Jesus Church</i>	1
<i>Be the First in Doing Good</i>	9
<i>Can Christians Believe in Evolution?</i>	10
<i>The Future of the World</i>	13
<i>Who is Greater?</i>	14
<i>How True Jesus Church can Flourish in South-East Asia</i>	16
<i>The Church and Youths</i>	18
<i>Good Shepherd</i>	22
<i>The Proud will Definitely Fall</i>	25
<i>Present Him to the Frontline</i>	26
<i>Three Kinds of Blessings</i>	28
<i>Nothing is More Urgent than to Save Lives</i>	30
<i>The Four Things which Christians should Strive for</i>	32
<i>The Two Great Warnings</i>	33
<i>Woman's Role in the Divine Work</i>	34
<i>The Correct Path to Salvation</i>	40
<i>The Tongue is the Most Difficult Thing to Tame</i>	43
<i>The Significance of Spiritual Meetings</i>	44
<i>The Anti-Christ has Reappeared</i>	46
<i>A Man Forsaken by God</i>	47
<i>Unto the End of the World</i>	49
<i>The Grace which God has Manifested in my Family</i>	50
<i>Saved from a Great Fire</i>	52
<i>Spiritual Nurture</i>	53
<i>End of Year Words</i>	63

THE BASIC BELIEFS OF TRUE JESUS CHURCH

Foreword: The Basic Beliefs of True Jesus Church are the Common Faith of our church which have been passed in the Second World Conference of the True Jesus Church. Now basing on the Bible we will briefly explain the meanings of each belief.

- I. Believing that Jesus, who became flesh to die on the cross for the redemption of sinners, resurrected on the third day and ascended to heaven. He is the only Saviour of mankind, the Ruler of the heavens and earth and the Only True God.**
1. The Word became flesh.
 - a. The Word was God. Jesus is God who manifested in flesh (Jn 1: 1, 14; 1 Tim 3: 16).
 - b. Jesus was born through virgin Mary who had conceived Him through the Holy Spirit. He was man and is true God (Mt 1: 18-23; Is 7: 14).
 - c. God must become flesh then only could He shed His blood to redeem the sinners (Heb 2: 14; 9: 22; 10: 4-10).
2. To die on the cross for the redemption of sinners.
 - a. All men have sinned (Rom 3: 23).
 - i) The sin of not fearing God (Mt 22: 36-40; Ex 20: 3-11).
 - ii) The sin of not loving mankind (Mt 22: 39-40; Ex 20: 12-17).
 - b. After the death of sinners they will be judged and will be sent to hell for eternal punishment (Heb 9: 27; Rev 21: 8).
 - c. Jesus died for us.
 - i) A sinner cannot save himself (Jer 13: 23; Gen 3: 7).
 - ii) The blood of bulls and goats cannot take away sins (Heb 10: 1-4).
 - iii) The Lord who is sinless

- died for us (2 Cor 5: 21; Mt 20: 28; 1 Cor 15: 1-3).
3. He resurrected on the third day and ascended to heaven.
 - a. The Lord had prophesied that He would resurrect on the 3rd day after His death (Mt 16: 21; 17: 23).
 - b. The Lord indeed resurrected on the 3rd day after His death. After 40 days He ascended to heaven (Jn 20: 1-8; Acts 1: 1-11).
 - c. He is now in heaven holding great authorities to deliver all those who rely on Him (1 Pet 3: 22; Heb 4: 14-16).
 4. Jesus is the only Saviour of mankind.
 - a. He was born to deliver mankind (Lk 2: 8-11).
 - b. Now He saves us from all evils (Mt 1: 21; 1 Tim 1: 15).
 - c. On the Last Day He will lead us to the heavenly kingdom (2 Tim 4: 18; Mt 25: 31-34).
 5. Jesus is the Ruler of the heaven and earth, and the only True God.
 - a. All things were created by Him (Jn 1: 1-3; Col 1: 16).
 - b. All life is in His hand (Jn 11: 25; 1: 4; 11: 39-45).
 - c. He and the Father are one (Jn 10: 30; 14: 9-11).
 - d. He is the only True God (Rom 9: 5; Is 9: 6; 1 Tim 3: 16).
- II. **Believing that the new and old testaments of the Holy Bible are inspired by God, and are therefore the only authentic scriptures to testify the truth, as well as the standard guide of a Christian way of life.**
1. All scriptures are inspired by God (2 Tim 3: 16).
 - a. Only when the spirit of God moves a person then can that person prophesy (2 Pet 1: 21).
 - b. The ten commandments were personally written by God (Ex 31: 18).
 - c. Though there were about 40 people who wrote the new and old testaments of the Bible, they are only like 40 pens and the person who really holds these pens is God (cf: 2 Sam 23: 2; Mt 22: 43).
 2. It is the only authentic scripture to testify the truth.
 - a. The Lord said that the scripture cannot be broken (Jn 10: 35; Mt 5: 18).
 - b. The Lord used the scripture to testify that He is the Christ (Jn 5: 39, 46; Lk 24: 44-47).
 - c. The word preached by the church must be in accordance with the Bible (Gal 1: 6-9; Acts 17: 2, 3).
 3. The standard guide to the Christian way of life.
 - a. The Bible is the lamp to the feet and the light to the path of believers (Ps 119: 105).
 - b. The Bible is the standard morale for human beings (2 Tim 3: 16-17; Is 8: 20).
 - c. The Bible never changes though time changes (Prov 30: 5, 6).
- III. **Believing that our church is established by our Lord Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit of the Latter Rain, and that she is the True Church to revive the church of Apostolic Days.**
1. Our church is established by the Lord through the Holy Spirit of the Latter Rain.

- a. The Holy Spirit descended in two periods.
 - i) God will give the autumn rain (Early Rain) and spring rain (Latter Rain) in its seasons (Deut 11: 14; Jer 5: 24).
 - ii) The Holy Spirit of the early rain first descended in the apostolic days (Acts 1: 8; 2:1-13).
 - iii) The Holy Spirit of the latter rain descended in the last days of the world (Joel 2: 23; 28-31).
 - b. To establish the church one has to rely on the Holy Spirit
 - i) Only those who have the Holy Spirit are sent by the Lord (Rom 10: 15; Lk 4: 18, 19; Jn 20: 21, 22).
 - ii) Only those who have the Holy Spirit have the power to forgive or retain sins (Mt 18: 17, 18; Jn 20: 21-23).
 - iii) The true church of the Lord can be established only through the Holy Spirit (Eph 1: 23; Zech 4: 6).
2. She is the True Church revived from the church of the apostolic days.
- a. A true church must possess the following three conditions:
 - i) the presence of the Holy Spirit (Eph 1: 23, 1 Cor 12: 13; Rom 8: 9).
 - ii) the presence of wonders and miracles (Mk 16: 17-20; Heb 2: 1-4; Acts 14: 3).
 - iii) the words that she preaches must be in accordance with the Bible (Gal 1: 6-9; Eph 2: 19, 20).
 - b. To revive the church to be the same as the days of the apostles (Amos 9: 11)
 - i) Same in the Holy Spirit (Eph 4: 4; 1 Jn 4:1-3).
 - ii) Same in the words (Eph 2: 19, 20; 4: 4, 5).
 - iii) Same in the ability (Acts 1: 8; 5: 12-16).
 - iv) Same in holiness (Acts 5: 25-27; Acts 5: 1-11).
 - v) Same in love (Acts 2: 41-47; 4: 32-37).
- IV. **Believing that being baptised by full immersion (the whole body) with the head lowered in living water is a sacrament for the forgiveness of sin and regeneration. This baptism must be performed in the Holy Name of Lord Jesus by a baptist who has gone through both the Baptism of Water and Spirit.**
- 1. Believing that the water baptism is a sacrament for the forgiveness of sins and regeneration.
 - a. Our Church has three types of sacraments:
 - i) The sacrament of baptism.
 - ii) The sacrament of foot washing.
 - iii) The sacrament of Holy Communion.
 - A sacrament must have the following conditions:
 - i) It was personally established by the Lord.
 - ii) The Lord had commanded the disciples to follow His ways to do so.
 - iii) It concerns salvation.
 - b. The water baptism has the effect to forgive sins and regeneration.

- i) Forgiveness of sins (Acts 2: 38; 22: 16; Rom 6: 6, 7).
 - ii) Regeneration (Tit 3: 5; Rom 6: 3-4; Jn 3: 5).
 - iii) Baptised into Christ (Gal 3: 27-29; Rom 6: 3; 1 Cor 12: 13).
2. To be baptised by those who had received both the Water and Holy Spirit baptism
 - a. Only those who are purified through the water baptism are qualified to perform the sacraments (cf: Neh 19: 18; Ex 29: 4; Acts 22: 16).
 - b. Only those who have received the Holy Spirit and sent by the Lord have the power to perform sacraments (cf: Rom 10: 15; Jn 20: 21-23; Lk 4: 18, 19).
 3. The correct mode of water baptism.
 - a. Baptised in the Holy name of Lord Jesus (Acts 2: 38; 19: 5; 8: 16).
 - b. With whole body fully immersed in the living water (Mt 3: 16; Jn 3: 23; Acts 8: 38).
 - c. With the head lowered (Rom 6: 5, 8; Jn 19: 30; Ps 40: 12).
- V. Believing in the receiving of the Holy Spirit as the testimony for entering heaven; and that the speaking in tongue is the only proof of having received the Holy Spirit.**
1. Receiving of the Holy Spirit is the testimony for entering heaven.
 - a. To enter the kingdom of God one must be reborn through the Holy Spirit (Jn 3: 5; Tit 3: 5).
 - b. The Holy Spirit will give us eternal life (Rev 22: 17; Jn 4: 14).
 - c. The Holy Spirit testifies that we are the sons of God (Rom 8: 16; Gal 4: 6, 7).
 - d. The Holy Spirit is the guarantee of our inheritance of heavenly kingdom (Eph 1: 13, 14; 2 Cor 1: 20-22).
 2. Speaking in spiritual tongues is the proof of receiving the Holy Spirit.
 - a. It is not true that once a person believes in the Lord he has the Holy Spirit already (Acts 19: 1-7).
 - b. It is also not true that once a person receives the baptism he automatically receives the Holy Spirit (Acts 8: 15, 16).
 - c. It is not true either that a person who had good deeds has already received the Holy Spirit (Acts 10: 2, 22 & 44).
 - d. It is not correct to say that once a person serves the Lord fervently he has received the Holy Spirit already (Mt 19: 27; Acts 1: 4 & 5).
 - e. The apostles reckoned speaking in spiritual tongues as the evidence of receiving the Holy Spirit.
 - i) The personal experience of the apostles on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2: 1-4).
 - ii) The experience of Cornelius and others (Acts 10: 44-46; 11: 15-18).
 - iii) The experience of the believers in Ephesus (Acts 19: 1-7).
 - Speaking in tongues are words spoken to God, hence normally it is not understood by men (1 Cor 14: 2, 14 & 15).
 - The tongues have their meanings. Whenever it is necessary

God will move a person to interpret them (1 Cor 12: 10; 14: 26–28; Acts 2: 5–11).

VI. Believing that the Foot Washing Sacrament is a sacrament which enables one to have a part with the Lord and that it is a teaching of mutual love, holiness, humbleness, service and forgiveness. The Foot Washing Sacrament must be performed in the Holy Name of Lord Jesus only once to one who has been baptised. Mutual foot washing can be conducted in time of necessity.

1. To have part with the Lord.
The Lord said to Peter, "If I do not wash you, you have no part in me" (Jn 13: 8). Hence it can be seen that the washing of feet by the Lord was more than just a customary practice, it has the effect and mystery of enabling a person to 'have part in the Lord'.
2. The sacrament of feet washing gives rise to many teachings:
 - a. Must emulate the love of Jesus, who loves His disciples to the end, to love our brothers (Jn 13: 1 & 34).
 - b. Must keep ourselves holy and not to walk onto the path of unrighteousness again (Jn 13: 10, 11; Prov 4: 26).
 - c. Must emulate the humility of Jesus, who served His disciples, to serve others (Jn 13: 12–14; Mt 20: 25–28).
 - d. Must emulate the forgiveness of Jesus who though had already known that Judah would betray Him and yet willing to wash his feet (Jn 13: 10, 11; Col 3: 13).

3. The mode of Foot Washing:

- a. To those who have received the water baptism, the divine workers should wash their feet once in the Name of Lord Jesus so that they may have part in the Lord (Jn 13: 8, 20).
- b. Concerning the question of 'mutual feet washing', for places which are customary then they must do it with humility in order to serve others. As for places which do not have such customary practice then they should manifest the teaching in their daily life by forgiving one another when necessary.

VII. Believing that the partaking of the Holy Communion is a sacrament to commemorate the death of our Lord Jesus, to receive His body and His blood, to be in communion with Him, thus enabling one to receive eternal life and be raised on the Last Day. Only one unleavened bread and grape juice should be used.

1. To commemorate the death of our Lord Jesus (1 Cor 11: 26; Lk 22: 19).
 - a. Remember that for our sake the Lord became poor (2 Cor 8: 9; Lk 9: 58).
 - b. Remember that for our sake the Lord was scourged (Rom 4: 25; Mt 27: 18–31).
 - c. Remember that for our sake the Lord was nailed on the cross (Mt 27: 32–50; Ps 22: 12–16).
 - d. Remember that for our sake the Lord tasted the death of Hades (Heb 2: 9; Mt 27: 45–52; Acts 2: 30–32).

2. To receive His body and His blood.
 - a. Believe that after the consecration the bread is the body of the Lord and the grape juice is the blood of the Lord (1 Cor 10: 16; 11: 24, 25, 29 & 30; Lk 22: 19–20).
 - b. Partaking of the Holy Communion enables one to be in communion with Christ (1 Cor 10: 16–21; Jn 6: 56).
 - c. Partaking of the Holy Communion enables one to receive eternal life and be raised on the Last Day (Jn 6: 53, 54; 1 Cor 11: 26).
 3. The method of performing the Holy Communion.
 - a. Use one unleaven bread (1 Cor 10: 17; 5: 6–8).
 - b. Use one pot of grape juice (Mk 14: 25; Lk 22: 18).
 - c. The frequency of performing Holy Communion is not fixed. It can be performed as often as needed (1 Cor 11: 26).
- VIII. Believing that the Sabbath Day (Saturday) is the Holy Blessed Day of God to be observed under grace — remembering His creation and the promised redemption with the hope of eternal rest in the age to come.**
1. Sabbath Day is the Holy Blessed Day of God.
 - a. God created all things in six days and rested on the seventh day (Saturday) (Gen 2: 1–3).
 - b. God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it (Gen 2: 3; Ex 20: 8, 11).
 - c. God commanded the people to rest on this day and specially provided food for them (Ex 16: 23–26).
 - d. Those who observe the Sabbath will be blessed by God (Is 58: 13–14; 56: 2).
 - e. Those who do not observe the Sabbath will meet with calamities (Jer 17: 27; Neh 13: 17–18).
2. To remember His creation and redemption under grace.
- a. The Jews observe the Sabbath under the laws.
 - i) Cannot kindle fire on this day (Ex 35: 3).
 - ii) Cannot do any form of work (Ex 31: 15).
 - iii) Those who profane it will be put to death (Ex 31: 12–14; Num 15: 32–36).
 - b. The Christian should observe the Sabbath under grace.
 - i) On the Sabbath Day one can do divine work (Jn 7: 23; Mt 12: 5).
 - ii) On the Sabbath Day one can do good deeds (Mt 12: 11).
 - iii) On the Sabbath Day one can save life (Mk 3: 4).
 - iv) If the circumstances do not allow a person to observe the Sabbath, God will forgive that person (Mt 12: 1–4, 7–8).
 - v) One should observe the Sabbath with delightful heart (Is 58: 13).
 - c. To remember God's creation and redemption.
 - i) Should gather on this day to remember the grace of God in creating all things for us to enjoy (Ex 20: 8–11; Mt 5: 45; Lev 23: 3).
 - ii) Should gather on this day to remember the grace of

Christ for delivering us from the eternal punishment (Deut 5: 15; Jn 3: 16; 2 Cor 5: 14, 15, 21).

- iii) To hope for the eternal rest in the age to come.
 - This life is full of toil and trouble (Ps 90: 10).
 - What Christians hope for is the blessing for the age to come (2 Cor 4: 16–18; 1 Cor 15: 19).
 - One should strive to enter the eternal rest of heavenly kingdom (Heb 4: 9–11).

IX. Believing that salvation is given by grace through faith. However, it is necessary to rely on the Holy Spirit to strive for holiness, to fulfill the teachings of the Bible, to fear God and to love man.

1. Salvation is given by Grace through faith.

a. By grace.

- i) The Lord brought along grace (Jn 1: 17).
- ii) The Lord sacrificed His life to fulfill the salvation (Heb 10: 19–20; Rom 3: 25; 1 Jn 2: 2).
- iii) Besides Him there is no other salvation (Acts 4: 12; Jn 14: 6).

b. Through Faith.

- i) Man cannot be saved through deeds alone (Eph 2: 9; Tit 3: 5).
- ii) Man cannot be saved by keeping the Laws (Rom 3: 20, 28).
- iii) Salvation is by grace through faith (Eph 2: 8).
- iv) Salvation of the Lord is given to everyone who has faith (Rom 1: 16–17).

- v) Those who believe and are baptised will be saved (Mk 16: 16; Tit 3: 5).

2. To rely on the Holy Spirit to strive for holiness.

a. To strive for holiness.

- i) Everyone who belongs to the Lord should depart from iniquity (2 Tim 2: 19).
- ii) The unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God (1 Cor 6: 9, 10; Gal 5: 19–21).
- iii) Without holiness no one will see the Lord (Heb 12: 14; Mt 7: 21–23).

b. To rely on the power of the Holy Spirit.

- i) Man alone is unable to do good (Jer 13: 23; Rom 7: 18–24).
- ii) The Holy Spirit will help to sanctify us (2 Thess 2: 13; Rom 8: 13).
- iii) Only by relying on the Holy Spirit can one bear good fruits (Gal 5: 22–23; Rev 22: 1–2).

3. To fear God and Love man.

- The Lord has summarised the commandments of God into two:
- To love God with all our might
- To love others as we love ourselves (Mt 22: 34–40).

If one can abide in these two teachings of love, one has fulfilled the law (Rom 13: 8–10).

a. Fearing and Loving God.

- i) We should worship the only True God (Ex 20: 3–6; Dan 3: 16–18).
- ii) We should keep His commandments (1 Jn 5: 3; Jn 14: 21–24).
- iii) We should obey His will (Mt 26: 39, 42; Heb 10: 7).

- iv) We should offer everything to God (Rom 12: 1; Gen 22: 16–18).
 - b. To love others as we love ourselves.
 - i) We should care for the physical needs of others (1 Jn 3: 16–18; Jas 1: 27).
 - ii) We should love others' souls (Rom 9: 1–3; 2 Cor 12: 15).
 - iii) We should love others as we love ourselves (Mt 22: 39–40; Rom 13: 9).
 - iv) If we love man we love God (1 Jn 4: 16–17).
 - v) If we love God and man we shall enter the kingdom of heaven (Mt 25: 34–40).
- X. Believing that the Lord Jesus will descend from heaven on the Last Day to judge all people, the righteous will receive eternal life while the wicked will be condemned to eternal punishment.**
1. The Last Day of the world.
 - a. There will be the Last Day for the world.
 - i) The world has its day of creation (Gen 1: 1; 2 Pet 3: 4–5).
 - ii) The world has its day of destruction — Last Day (2 Pet 3: 6–14).
 - iii) The Last Day is the day of Lord Jesus' second advent (Jn 12: 48; Mt 25: 31–33).
 - b. The signs of the Last Day.
 - i) Sins are heaped high as heaven (2 Tim 3: 1–5; Rev 18: 4–5).
 - ii) The knowledge of men increases (Dan 12: 4).
 - iii) Nations will be divided (Dan 2: 33–35, 42–45; Mt 24: 7–8).
 - iv) Great tribulation shall occur (Mt 24: 21–29; Rev 6: 3–8).
 - v) The True Church will revive (Amos 9: 11; Hag 2: 9).
 - vi) The anti-christ will appear (Rev 13: 1–7; 20: 7–10).
 - vii) The True Church will make herself ready (Rev 19: 7–8; 21: 2).
 2. The Lord will come again to judge all people.
 - a. The Lord will definitely carry out judgement.
 - i) The judgement is in the hands of the Lord (Jn 5: 22).
 - ii) The Lord will judge all people by His Words (Jn 12: 47–48).
 - iii) The Lord will repay every one for what he has done (Rev 22: 12).
 - b. The righteous will receive the eternal life.
 - i) Inheriting the heavenly kingdom (Mt 25: 32–34).
 - ii) Enjoying the everlasting life (Mt 25: 46).
 - iii) Receiving the crown (1 Pet 5: 4).
 - c. The wicked will be condemned to eternal punishment.
 - i) Exclusion from the presence of the Lord (2 Thess 1: 7–9).
 - ii) Entering into eternal fire (Mt 25: 41–46).
 - iii) Suffering the eternal punishment (Rev 21: 7–8).
- You should prepare to meet your Lord (Amos 4: 12).

BE THE FIRST IN DOING GOOD

Very often we can hear some older members comment that most of the educated youths of our Church today are not concerned with the commission of evangelism entrusted to them by the Lord. They say that these youths do not accept the commission voluntarily even at the time when the Church is badly in need of their services.

To dedicate oneself to become a full-time preacher is certainly not an easy matter because it does present many difficulties. However, the main reason for one being reluctant to accept this commission is the lack of faith. If one has a strong faith, then there should not be any problem.

Evangelism is the most urgent mission for the present Church and preaching itself is a noble task. The Church now is in need of people who are spiritually gifted and capable (not necessary to be highly educated) to carry this burden. In truth, the worldly professions are not comparable to this holy task, because they are temporarily good for oneself, whilst the holy work is meant for the eternal blessings of millions of people. We strive to preach, not for the future reward, but to fulfill the commission entrusted to us by the Lord. While offering oneself, one should have the attitude of 'saving others as if it is saving oneself'. It is written in Proverbs — "Rescue those who are being taken away to death, hold back those who are stumbling to the slaughter" (Prov 24: 11). People of this world are heading towards

the path of destruction, so they need us to hold them back.

During the Old Testament period the Israelites were suffering in Egypt, and when Moses saw this he was very sad. He gave up his luxurious life in the palace and forsook worldly pleasure so as to live and die with God's chosen people. Paul of the New Testament, chose to remain single for the Lord, which is worthy of our admiration. There is an old Chinese saying which means 'to be behind none in the desire to benefit mankind'. Thus those upon whom is bestowed the gift of preaching should take up the commission willingly so as to repay the grace of redemption (Ps 116: 12-13; 2 Cor 5: 14-15). Therefore one should not ponder over the consequences but should accept the commission willingly because God has arranged to provide for one's needs.

Paul exhorted us, "Brethren by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship" (Rom 12: 1). The Lord's second coming is near, so "we must work the works of Him who sent me, while it is day; night comes, when no one can work" (Jn 9: 4). Hence the educated youths of the True Jesus Church should not bury the gifts from the Lord, but should wake up now and be fervent. Come forward to offer your talent and gifts by propagating the gospel of salvation to all corners of the world, in order to receive the second coming of the Lord. Amen.

CAN CHRISTIANS BELIEVE IN EVOLUTION?

One day a small child came home from school. The moment he reached home he asked his mother, "Mama, where did I come from?" Mother answered, "I gave birth to you." The child asked again, "Where did you come from then?" The mother answered, "My mother gave birth to me." The child asked again, "Where did your mother come from then?" The mother answered again, "Her mother gave birth to her." Then the child said, "Today, my teacher told me differently. He said that man evolved from monkeys."

Basically, there are only two theories to the origin of all things, i.e., the Theory of Creation and The Theory of Evolution. The basic principle of Creation is based on the first verse of Genesis Chapter 1 which states, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." This is a miracle which cannot be explained

by scientific methods. Christians have to accept this theory through their faith. There are four basic concepts in Evolution:

- (1) All species evolved naturally.
- (2) All species descended from simple organisms to complex forms through millions of years by gradual modifications.
- (3) In addition to evolution, all species undergo variations.
- (4) Variations of nature at present can be used as a standard to gauge the changes in the past.

Questions which the Evolutionists Find Difficult to Answer

There are some facts which evolutionists find hard to explain. Take the example of Geology. Basing on the theory of Evolution this world has gone through many periods, such as 'glacial epoch' (ice age) etc., which amount to billions of years.

They estimated the history of the earth by studying the structures of the earth: the lowest stratum is the oldest and the upper strata are of latter period. Based on this, there should be vestiges of simple organisms in the lowest stratum. However, facts proved that this theory is not valid, examples:

(1) There is neither consistency in the structures of the earth's strata throughout nor is there any uniformity in its positioning. This is because not all the strata are laid horizontally but some vertically and some slanting with mixtures of clay and rocks.

(2) In every stratum is found vestiges of simple and complex organisms mixed together.

(3) It was once found in Mount Alpine the fossils of fishes. Fishes are supposed to thrive in water but why were they found on a mountain?

(4) In the North Pole, extinct elephants were found buried in the ice by some explorers. Some of these elephants still have grasses in their mouths. Their flesh had not decayed. Why should a tropical animal go to the North Pole?

The above mentioned discoveries not only stultify the theory of Evolution, they also prove that there was a great change on this earth. When Christians see all these things, they are not astonished, because these things testify to the truth of the great flood as recorded in the Bible. In Genesis Chapter 7 it is recorded: "... all the fountains of the great deep burst forth, and the windows of the heavens were opened. And rain fell upon the earth forty days and forty nights. ... And the waters prevailed so mightily upon the earth that all the high mountains under the whole heaven were covered ...

And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, birds, cattle, beasts, all swarming creatures that swarm upon the earth, and every man; everything on the dry land in whose nostrils was the breath of life died. ... And the waters prevailed upon the earth a hundred and fifty days."

Next let us talk about Biology. It is stated that on this earth there are over 200,000 species of plants and over 70,000 species of animals. Based on the theory of Evolution, all living things originated from a single cell. After a few million years of evolution, various new species were formed and these finally changed into the many species found at present. However this theory is not convincing. Take the world of bacteria for example: within a few hours, they can give rise to a few generations. Results of research by biologists showed that in the few generations of bacteria there might be some changes in their shapes but no new species is being formed. In 300 B.C., there was a father of medicine in Greek by the name of Hippocrates. In his book there were already records of bacteria that caused Malaria and Tetanus. Biologists in ancient Egypt also found that there were germs of tuberculosis. As for insects, recently there were people who used flies as objects for their research. They used certain methods to stimulate the propagation of these flies. As a result they found that within the few thousand generations of these flies there were some variations, e.g., the colour, the wings and the shapes etc. But they never found a completely new insect being produced.

There were also people who tried various ways of crossbreeding, hoping to produce a new species.

For example, to crossbreed the horse and the donkey we will get mule. In plants they used the method of grafting. But the result achieved was only an improvement in quality but never produced a new species. So even until today a horse is still a horse and a dog is still a dog.

Further we can ask: "What is the whole business about the 'Missing Link' that the theory of Evolution has made that assumption?" For example, if man was changed from the monkey, then definitely there should be the existence of half-man half-monkey. Many evolutionists think that the Peking Man which was found is the Missing Link. But we cannot simply assume that this Peking Man is half-man half-monkey just because his skull was very large. This is because man may be tall or short and may have a large or small head. Furthermore there are abnormal people. Another 'Missing Link' is the things between 'lifeless' and 'life'.

Another question which evolutionists find it hard to answer is that where all life originated. They may say the simplest organism is the cell. But where did the cell come from?

Must Believe That There is an Almighty Creator

If we believe there is an Almighty God, then for Him to create heavens and earth in six days is not an unbelievable event. Let us study the order of His creation. According to the records in Genesis Chapter 1, God created:

Light on the first day; air on the second day; land, water and plants on the third day; the sun, moon and stars on the fourth day; birds in the sky and fishes in the seas on the fifth day; beasts, insects and man

on the sixth.

God is indeed an orderly Creator. If God had not first created light, air, land and water, then the plants that were created on the third day could not have multiplied. The creations in the first three days also sustained the lives of man and all animals.

When God created the world, He did not create them from existing material (Heb 11: 3). Psalms Chapter 33 states, "By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, and all their host by the breath of his mouth ... For he spoke and it came to be; he commanded, and it stood forth" (6, 9). This is the mystery of God's creation and it cannot be fully understood by human reasoning because man's wisdom is limited.

Irrespective of whether they are animals or plants from the day of creation their kinds have been fixed. This is because after the creation, each living creature must be according to its kind (Gen 1: 11, 12, 21, 24, 25). If any animal or plant does not follow this simple rule of God, it would face the danger of extinction. For example, a mule cannot give birth to another mule. Hence since the creation, although there may be slight variations in their kinds but the rule that 'each according to its kind' as fixed by God shall exist for ever and can never be changed.

The Bible has clearly told us that man did not change from another animal but was created in God's image. Genesis Chapter 1 verse 27 states, "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them."

From the above reasons we know that the theory of Evolution is erroneous, so Christians should not be deceived by it.

THE FUTURE OF THE WORLD

A. No Peace (Ezek 7: 25)

1. This can be understood from the vision of the Great Image (Dan 2: 31–45).
2. This can be understood from the existence of the 'Red Horse' (Rev 6: 3–4).
3. This can be understood from the prophecy by the Lord (Mt 24: 6–8, 21, 29).

B. The Great Disasters Will Surely Come

- God punishes the sinners with various types of plagues (Lev 26: 21; Ezek 14: 21).
1. With sword (Ezek 14: 17; Is 10: 5–14).
 2. With famine (Ezek 14: 12–13; 1 Kings 18: 18).
 3. With pestilences (Ezek 14: 19; Num 25: 1–9).
 4. Using beasts (Ezek 14: 15; Dan 7: 3, 17).
 5. With earthquake (Rev 16: 18–19; Num 16: 31, 33).
- Before the Last Day there will be great tribulations (Mt 24: 21, 22; Joel 2: 1–3).
 - The great war will start from the Middle East (Rev 9: 13–16; 16: 12–16; cf: 2 Kings 23: 28–30).

C. The Consequences Of The Great Disasters

1. Blood flows and forms into rivers (Rev 14: 17–20; Zeph 1: 17).
2. Bodies are not buried (Jer 25: 32–33; Zeph 1: 17).
3. Men are more rare than fine gold

(Is 13: 11–12; Mt 24: 22).

4. The world shall become a waste ground (Rev 18: 19; Joel 2: 2–3).
5. People will be as if burned to lime (Is 33: 12).

D. Why Is The World Punished ?

- They are punished because their sins multiply (Is 13: 11; Rev 18: 4–5).
1. They do not worship the True God (Dan 5: 23; 2 Tim 3: 4–5).
 2. They worship idols (Dan 5: 22–24; Rev 9: 20).
 3. They have greed for money (Rev 9: 21; 2 Tim 3: 1–2).
 4. They turn towards fornication (Rev 9: 21; Jude 7).
 5. They glorify themselves (Rev 18: 7; Gen 11: 4).
 6. They persecute the saints (Rev 13: 6, 15–17; 17: 6; 18: 24).

E. What Should Man Do ?

- The merciful Heavenly Father is calling you (Rev 18: 4–5).
1. He must believe in the Lord Jesus (Acts 16: 30–31; 4: 12).
 2. He must repent and receive the baptism (Mk 16: 16; Acts 2: 37–38).
 3. He must receive the Holy Spirit and be renewed in the Spirit (Tit 3: 5; Jn 3: 5).
 4. He must proclaim the true gospel (1 Cor 9: 16–17; Eph 1: 13–14).
 5. He must honour God and love men (Mt 22: 37–40; 25: 34–40).
 6. He must prepare to meet God (Amos 4: 12; Rev 19: 7–8).

WHO IS GREATER?

Before the Lord Jesus was taken to be crucified, a dispute arose among His disciples. The dispute was over which of them was the greatest (Lk 22: 24). Such a dispute still exists among the believers today. Some have asked, "Who is the greater, the elder or the deacon? Is the position of an evangelist higher than that of the elder or the deacon? Is there any difference in position between officials of the Church and ordinary members?"

The Worldly Concept: In school, a departmental head is higher in position than an ordinary teacher; however, the principal is higher in position than any of the departmental heads. In military ranks, a lieutenant is higher than a private; a colonel is higher than a lieutenant; a general is higher than a colonel. In a worldly organization, the vice-chairman is higher in position than the other committee members; however, the chairman's position is the highest in that committee. Although each committee member has his own duties, what is most important is that his designation indicates his position and his power thereof. Therefore, when a teacher becomes the head of a department, he is regarded as being promoted. Promotion is something glorious and calls for a celebration.

The Observation Of The Church: Jesus had said to His disciples, "You are all brethren" (Mt 23: 8). In the family of God, although there is the elder brother

and the younger brother, there is no rank distinction between them. For the edification of believers, each Church has her elders and deacons (Phil 1: 2; Acts 14: 23); for evangelizing the gospel and establishing the body of Christ (the Church as a whole), God has given the gifts that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and some teachers (Eph 4: 11, 12); these designations only indicate that their duties and responsibilities are different from one another and not that they have ranks among them. The deacon has his duties and responsibilities, the elder has his, the evangelist has his work, and all the other believers also have work which they should do. For example, the eyes have their functions, the hands have their work, the feet have their uses; they are all indispensable in a body; they are each a valuable member of the body (cf. 1 Cor 12: 14-30). Therefore, Paul, the apostle (2 Pet 3:15), Apollos, the preacher (1 Cor 16:12), and Timothy (Heb 13: 23) were addressed as "brethren". The apostles and the elders in Jerusalem (Acts 15: 23), and John, the pillar of the Church (Rev 1: 8), had all addressed themselves as "brethren". In order to achieve efficacy in the holy work, the Church has to be organized. Churches in some regions have to abide by the local authority regulations; as such they have to make use of designations like other worldly organizations, viz. chairman,

secretary-general, etc. However, in the Church, unlike in worldly organizations, such designations only indicate their duties and responsibilities; they are not the positions or ranks which would make them higher than the other ordinary members.

The Spirit of the Lord's workers: The Lord said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. It shall not be so among you; but whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be your slave; even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Mt 20: 25-28). A nation works by authority; the household of God, the Church, has to act in love. The elders, deacons, evangelists, and the other officials in the Church Committee, are not exerting their authority to control the other members of the Church; on the contrary, they are there to serve and to tend the sheep of the Lord. For example, Peter said, "... not as domineering over those in your charge but being examples to the flock" (1 Pet 5: 1-3). The spirit of the Lord's workers should be: serve the believers as servants serve their masters, love them as parents love their children, willingly and gladly spend and be spent, forbearing and tolerant, even as Christ died for our sake (1 Cor 4: 14, 15; 2 Cor 12: 14, 15).

The attitude towards the workers of the Lord: The Bible instructs: "Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honour, especially those who labour in preaching and teaching" (1 Tim 5: 17). The Bible also says: "Obey your leaders and submit to them;

for they are keeping watch over your souls, as men who will have to give account. Let them do this joyfully, and not sadly, for that would be of no advantage to you" (Heb 13: 17). Elders, preachers, etc., have been anointed to be the guardians of the flock, and the stewards of God; they have special duties to perform. Therefore, the congregation should not forget the duties and responsibilities of these workers of God. The congregation should respect and obey them on account of their labour and sacrifices (cf: Acts 20: 28; 1 Cor 4: 1; 1 Pet 5: 5). Such obedience should not only be present in the local Churches, it must also be shown in all Churches. For example, the apostolic churches obeyed and kept the regulations and decisions made by the Conference of the Apostles and Elders at Jerusalem (Acts 16: 4, 5). The decisions made by the apostles and elders and their instructions to the various Churches were not for the purpose of controlling them; they were for the sake of edifying the believers and protecting the truth; moreover all the Churches obeyed because of their respect for and confidence in them (cf: Acts 15: 1, 2; 1 Thess 5: 12, 13); it was not at all due to any difference in ranks. Such attitude should be followed by us today.

We are all the children of God and are brethren. Although we have been given different duties in accordance with our different gifts, there is no presence of ranks among us; and no one is greater than the other. However, in the household of God, those "that are younger be subject to the elders," and clothe ourselves with humility towards one another. In this way, God would, in due time, exalt us (1 Pet 5: 5, 6).

HOW TRUE JESUS CHURCH CAN FLOURISH IN SOUTH-EAST ASIA

Thanks to the grace of our Lord for giving me the opportunity to work in South-East Asia recently. From what I observed there are good mission fields throughout South-East Asia. If these fields are well cultivated, the harvest will be plentiful. Using "How True Jesus Church can flourish in South-East Asia" as the title, I would like to write briefly on the impression of my work and to give suggestions for future expansions as follows:

(1) **More attention should be given to Religious Education**

Childhood life is a stage of flexibility. In whatever way we want a child to be, he will be. During this period, if we are able to train him up with a firm foundation in faith, then even when he is old he will not depart from it (Prov 22: 6). The reason why Timothy had such good faith was the result of the faith of his mother and grandmother who taught him the sacred writings when he was young (2 Tim 1: 5; 3: 15).

If the churches in South-East Asia were to prosper, the youths in the region should be conscious of their responsibilities, and such responsi-

bilities are to teach and guide the younger generation (Ps 78: 2-7), and to set up a proper Religious Education System. Otherwise, the churches will surely decline.

(2) **More youths should be encouraged to join the missionary service**

When Jesus Christ was preaching on earth, He saw that many people were troubled and helpless like sheep without a shepherd. Then He said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the labourers are few" (Mt 9: 36, 37). The lack of workers has been the case in the past and the condition is particularly so now, especially for the present churches in South-East Asia. It is indeed a regrettable state of affairs.

There are many mission fields in South-East Asia urgently waiting to be tilled. The existing churches themselves need to be nurtured carefully. Encouragements should be given to the youths so as to build up their determination in offering themselves to serve the Lord. One way of doing this is to send them to the Theological Seminary in Taiwan for training to become missionary workers.

(3) The organisation of the Church should be strengthened

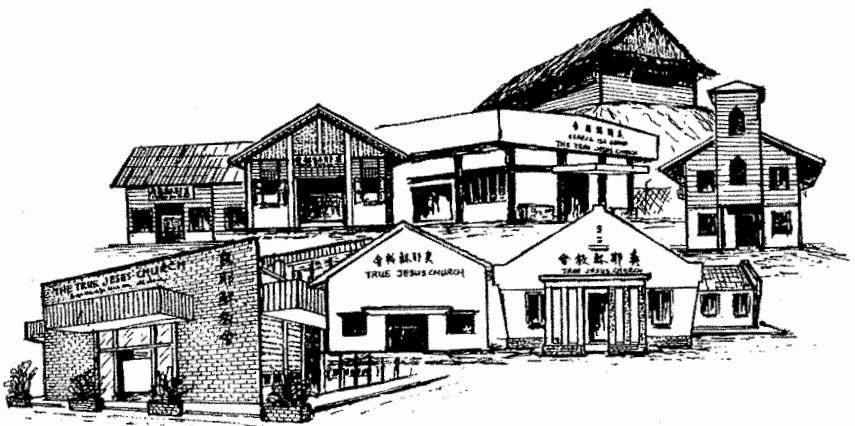
The church is the body of Christ and we are individually members of it (Col 1: 24; 1 Cor 12: 27). Though the members are many, there is only one body. As such, the whole body should unite properly in the Holy Spirit with all the joints working according to their respective functions so as to upbuild the body of Christ (Eph 4: 12, 16). Though the churches in South-East Asia have their organisation, nevertheless it is not without flaws. Some regions do not have a leading body, so each church administers its own affairs without any co-ordination with the other churches, thus hampering the progress of the church immensely. The South-East Asian churches should therefore strengthen their

church organization.

(4) The workers should work in one accord for the Gospel

Unity is strength. The Bible says, "A threefold cord is not quickly broken" (Eccles 4: 12). One's sacrifice will add to the strength to work in one accord for the Lord. Even Satan knows the importance of unity. That is why he and his devils are never divided among themselves (Mt 12: 25, 26).

If the churches in South-East Asia were to prosper, every one must work with the same mind, in humility and with the same mind as Christ Jesus (Phil 2: 2-5) and to strive side by side for the faith of the gospel (Phil 1: 27). Otherwise the church will anchor in a paralytic position in which prosperity can never be achieved.



THE CHURCH AND YOUTHS

The Bible records that Lord Jesus restored life to three persons. None of them was a fragile old man or a newly born baby, but they were all young and vigorous people with great capabilities (cf: Jn 11: 32-44; Lk 7: 11-16; Mk 5: 35-42). This seems to indicate that the Lord treasures the lives of youths considerably and their existence is of great importance. In fact we can see that every family and every nation places its hopes upon the youths. In the same way the church i.e. the household of God, or the nation of God, should also love the youths, train them and make good use of them.

A. THE YOUTHS ARE ABLE TO PERFORM GREAT TASKS.

1. Examples in the Bible:

Through the witness borne by a young Israelite maid, God had brought the army commanders of Syria to worship Him, the Lord of heaven and earth (2 Kings 5: 1-19).

With God's help, David, a youth, killed Goliath, which King Saul and his army were incapable of doing, thereby delivering the nation from the attack of the Philistines (1 Sam 17: 1-11). With the wisdom God gave him, young Solomon was able to establish the strongest nation of that time (1 Kings 3: 6-14). The youth, Jeremiah, was appointed by God to be a prophet as well as a messenger to the nations. (Jer 1: 4-8).

2. Facts in History.

Alexandra the Great established the strongest kingdom when he was only a youth.

Mozart was already a very famous composer when he was merely a youth.

While Martin Luther and Wesley were still studying in the University, they already had their ideas of reforming the churches.

B. THE CHURCH NEEDS THE YOUTHS.

1. Youths are like Bridges.

Youths are like a bridge standing in between the old and the young. The Bible says, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it" (Prov 22: 6). Childhood is the period where one develops one's habitude, hence it is essential for one to receive proper religious education during this time (2 Tim 1: 5). The best person to train up these children are the youths, hence the church needs youths. Good youths can give guidance to children in the church. If there is no god-loving youth, it will be just like a broken bridge and the children will be scattered and lost because there is no bridge to cross.

2. Youths are the Successors

The works of the church are not complete, and have to be continued until the Lord comes. Moses, before his death, asked the Lord, "Let the Lord, the God of the spirits of all flesh, appoint a man over the congregation, who shall go out before them and come in before them, who shall lead them out and bring them in, that the congregation of the Lord may not be as sheep which have no shepherd" (Num 27: 17-20). Hence the leaders of the churches should be like Moses who, besides being faithful towards his duties, was also concerned over the training of his successor. So the leaders should delegate these works in steps to the youths and also invest some authority to them (Num 27: 18-20). Hence works are not only given to the youths when they are schooling, but more so when they have graduated, they should be given the chance to serve the church (cf: Rom 12: 1-8; Prov 31: 15). It is hoped that after they have taken over the baton they can run faster and farther so that the gospel of salvation can be proclaimed to the whole world earlier.

C. THE YOUTHS NEED TO BE TRAINED.

1. Strengthen their Religious Education.

Youths bear the great responsibilities of the church, and if they are not trained with the correct faith, proper conduct and ability to work, not only will they be unable to perform the divine work, they may bring trouble instead. Therefore, we should strengthen our work on religious education. In the children classes there should be an Infant class, a Lower Primary and Upper Primary

classes. Similarly, the youths' service should have the various classes.

More emphasis should be given to the Lower Secondary classes. This is because youths around the age of sixteen will experience great changes in them both physically and psychologically. If at this stage they are not properly guided, then all the efforts that have been spent on them would be in vain. On the contrary if their faith can be properly secured when they are around sixteen years of age, then there will not be much changes in the rest of their lives. Take the example of Joseph, he left the family at the age of seventeen and was alone in the sinful Gentile land, yet he was able to stand firm and uphold the truth (Gen 37: 2; 39: 7-10).

2. Establish Youth Counselling Centre.

Although the youths may have the love for the Lord and the fervency to serve Him, they may lack experience. They may not be thorough in their thinking and very often they tend to be too idealistic and become impractical. Furthermore, they are not well equipped with the truth and their thoughts are not spiritual enough, so they can easily make errors (cf: 2 Chron 10: 6-16). They may believe in the authenticity of the Words, however, inevitably they will have doubts in the Bible. How should one treat the opposite sex? How should one deal with one's own marriage problem? How should one solve the many problems encountered in school or society?... All these problems cause distress, irresolution, and may even cause them to lose heart and determination and be lost. In order to help them to solve their problems in life and

establish their faith a 'Youth Counselling Centre' should be established to guide the youths.

D. EXPECTATIONS FROM THE YOUTHS

1. Must be determined to live for the Lord.

The Bible says, "By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to share ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin" (Heb 11: 23-26). The reason that he did all these things was because he understood the will and grace of the Lord for sparing his life (cf: Acts 7: 18-22; Ex 1: 22; 2: 10).

Paul always remembered the grace of the Lord by saying, "He loved me and gave Himself for me" (Gal 2: 20). He also said, "Since the Lord has died for us, we should live for the Lord" (2 Cor 5: 14-15). Hence it is hoped that the youths in the Lord can understand the grace of the Lord and be determined to live their whole life for the Lord (Rom 14: 7-8), to study for the Lord, to further study for the Lord, to earn money for the Lord, to marry for the Lord, to bear children for the Lord, in other words to do everything for the Lord. For those who receive special gifts from the Lord, they should follow the examples of Moses and Paul. They gave up fame, pleasures and wealth and offer their whole life for the divine works (Rom 12: 1).

2. To be a vessel for noble use.

Holiness: The Bible says, "If any one purifies himself from what is ignoble, then he will be a vessel for noble use" (2 Tim 2: 21). In society, a man is judged by his ability, but God places emphasis on the holiness

of man. Prophets Elijah, Elisha, and others were able to manifest the great power of God because they were all holy men of God. They were pure in the way they treated the opposite sex and money (2 Kings 4: 8-9; 5: 15-16; cf: 1 Kings 17: 18-20). Hence it is hoped that the youths of the true church will pay special attention to the correct attitude towards the opposite sex and money. It is necessary for the youths to keep the body and heart pure and holy so as to be acceptable for the Lord's use.

Meekness: The Bible says, "Now the man Moses was very meek, more than all the men on the face of the earth" (Num 12: 3). He was able to undertake the toughest task at that time and endured till the end. This was because his meekness was greater than that of any other man on earth. For those who are humble, the Lord will surely be with them and will give grace to them (1 Pet 5: 5). Only a gentle person can solve all the problems encountered by him with satisfactory solution (cf: Judges 8: 1-3). However, 'meekness' can be attained only after a person has paid a 'great price' for example, it took Moses 40 years of training to remove his pride and hot temper, and finally to change him into a humble and meek person (Ex 2: 11-12). It is hoped that the youths of the true church will practise the teachings of 'being obedient to the elders' and 'being gentle to others' so as to be acceptable for the Lord's use (cf: 1 Pet 5: 5; 2 Tim 2: 24-26).

Faithfulness: The Bible says, "It is required of the stewards that they be found trustworthy" (1 Cor 4: 2). To be faithful is to serve the Lord from within the heart; to strive with might and to work till the end; to seek only the will of the Lord and

to follow the Lord till the end, even unto death. These are also the requisites which the Lord requires of His servants. Joshua was chosen to succeed Moses because he was Moses' faithful helper (cf: Ex 33: 11). Hence it is hoped that youths of the true church can be faithful over small

things so as to be entrusted with greater task by the Lord in the future. Also they must pray constantly to rely on the power of the Holy Spirit to complete the commission of the true church, i.e. the world evangelism (cf: Lk. 16: 10-12).

Does God Exist?

• In 1961, when a Russian cosmonaut returned to earth from his trip in space, he made a statement saying that he had already been to 'heaven' but he did not see God. Hence, he concluded that God does not exist. A certain evangelist made a comment on his statement and said, "There was an earthworm who one day emerged from the soil. When he looked to his left and right and yet could not see Khrushchev (a former Premier of Russia), he said to himself, 'Surely Khrushchev does not exist on this earth!'

• There was a famous doctor who was an atheist and he often gave talks on the non-existence of God. One day, after one of such speeches, he invited the public to challenge him on the topic. However, no one dared to accept his challenge because of his eloquence and knowledge. Seeing that no one came forward, he felt rather proud and happy.

Just when he was about to declare the close of his talk, an old village lady carrying a basketful of oranges went up the platform. Everyone, including the doctor, was startled, thinking that this lady was crazy. The old lady began to speak, saying, "I just came back from the market after buying these oranges. When I heard your talk I came in. Your depth in knowledge is highly commendable. So I would like to put forward this question: Are my oranges here sweet or sour? If they are sour, how sour are they, and if they are sweet, how sweet?"

The doctor replied, "How could I say with certainty when I have not even tasted it?"

She started to peel one of the oranges and eat it in front of the doctor. Then she said, "I've now tasted this orange and I know that it is sweet but I cannot describe to you in words just how sweet it is. Similarly I have experienced God in my life because we often have spiritual communication and He often showers blessings upon me. I do not know how to debate but I know that there is God. You haven't tasted God as you haven't tasted the orange. So how can you say that there is no God?"

"O taste and see that the Lord is good!" (Ps 34: 8).

The Lord Jesus said, "I am the good shepherd" (Jn 10: 11). This Good Shepherd has now delegated His flock whom He had redeemed with His life to His chosen shepherds i.e. the preachers, elders, deacons, officials-in-charge, religious educationists, etc. He earnestly hopes that these people would become good shepherds who will look after the flock so that they can be saved, be fed, have peace and be blessed, hoping that none of His flock will be scattered but be brought in front of Him. Below are some of the points which a good shepherd should do:

GOOD SHEPHERD

1. Recognise the flock

"I am the good shepherd, I know my own and my own know me" (Jn 10: 14).

"Know well the condition of your flocks" (Prov 27: 23).

The basic thing which a good shepherd must do is to recognise and understand those who are under his guidance. The good shepherd should know the name, age, background, nature, health, interest, ability, environment and faith of his flock. In order to achieve this he must spend time on talking, visiting or corresponding with them. This will enable the good shepherd to build up a good relationship and also a close spiritual fellowship with his flock.

2. To walk in front

The Lord said, "When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him" (Jn 10: 4).

"Tend the flock of God that is your charge, ... not as domineering over those in your charge but being examples to the flock" (1 Pet 5: 2-3).

'To walk in front' has the meaning of 'setting examples'. It is good to lead believers through verbal teachings but it will be more effective if one could set good examples through one's action. It is often heard, "I am greatly influenced by such and such a person." The best way to lead a believer is to set a good example for them. Therefore a good shepherd should strive hard in his faith, conduct and love, while walking in front of the flock.

3. To lead them to the green pasture

"The Lord is my shepherd, ... he makes me lie in green pastures" (Ps 23: 1-2).

Our Lord said, "I am the door, if any one enters by me, he will be

saved, and will go in and out and find pasture" (Jn 10: 9).

The sheep need grass, so the good shepherd should lead them to the "green pasture", i.e. the church with the truth. The shepherd must also supply the lambs with the spiritual food, that is, the truth. He himself should be rich in biblical knowledge, eloquent, able to provide the necessities of God's word to the congregation at an appropriate time. A shepherd who does not know much of the words of God is unable to gather his flock and also to keep them. Therefore a good shepherd should diligently study the bible in order to become a warehouse for the spiritual food.

4. To lead to Still Water

"The Lord is my shepherd — He leads me beside still water" (Ps 23: 2).

Our Lord said "Whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst; the water that I shall give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life" (Jn 4: 14).

'Water' prefigures Holy Spirit, those who drink of it will have eternal life and will also receive the guarantee of the inheritance to the heavenly kingdom. A child who is lost will not receive satisfaction from anything nor will he be at peace, unless he is back to his mother. Similarly, those who have received the Holy Spirit are those who are acknowledged by God and they are those who have received everything and should be contented. A good shepherd while leading his flock must help them to receive the Holy Spirit so that they will live a life filled with the Holy Spirit.

5. To look after them daily

"Thus I was; by day the heat consumed me, and the cold by night, and my sleep fled from my eyes" (Gen 31: 40).

"And apart from other things, there is the daily pressure upon me of my anxiety for all the churches" (2 Cor 11: 28-29).

There is an old saying which means 'for where the child is, there will the mother's heart be also'. Though parents cannot be with their children always but they will be worried over their children's education or career, life, health and especially their religion. Which parents are not worried for their children? The natural flow of love of a shepherd towards his flock is to look after them daily, help them, save them in every angle. As a shepherd, when your lambs are met with difficulties and you are not moved, can you still consider yourself as a good shepherd?

6. To heal the sick

"I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the crippled, and I will strengthen the weak, and the fat and the strong I will watch over" (Ezek 34: 16).

"They have healed the wound of my people lightly, saying 'Peace, peace' when there is no peace" (Jer 8: 11).

To look after the lambs and to feed them with grass and water is important. But when the lambs are afflicted with sickness and their lives are in danger, yet as a shepherd one does not give them proper treat-

ment, fearing that it will be too difficult for them to take the medicines or too painful for them to endure the operations, then such a shepherd can be considered as not really loving his lambs.

It is a common fault that the present shepherds are afraid to admonish those believers who are afflicted with spiritual illness such as pride, greed for money, licentiousness etc. for fear of offending them, thus causing an increase in the dead among believers (spiritual death). A good shepherd should be able to detect any spiritual illness immediately and must be able to restore the health of the lamb completely.

7. All for the flock

Paul said "I will most gladly spend and be spent for your souls" (2 Cor 12: 15).

"So being affectionately desirous of you, we were ready to share with

you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves, because you had become very dear to us" (1 Thess 2: 8).

A hire-ling will only aim for earning money, so instead of tending the sheep he seeks to shorten the time of work and hope to increase his salaries. A good shepherd will definitely not do this; his aim is the growth of the lambs and their security. For the sake of their happiness, he is willing to sacrifice his wealth, strength and even his life. He shares the joy and sorrow of the lambs, and places all his hope on them. He sincerely hopes that when the leader of the shepherds comes again on the Last Day, he will be able to present all His sheep without blemish back to Him. This may enable him to be praised by Him and to receive the everlasting glory.

We hope that this will be a mutual encouragement to the workers in Christ.



THE PROUD WILL DEFINITELY FALL

God opposes the proud, hence the proud will definitely fall (Prov 16: 18). The following are three examples which can serve as mutual warning.

A. King Asa

1. His pride

- He would rather rely on kings of other nations than relying on God (2 Chron 16: 1–6).
- Despite the warning of a prophet he did not repent (2 Chron 16: 7–9).
- He was angry with the prophet and put him in prison (2 Chron 16: 10).
- He treated some of the people at that time cruelly (2 Chron 16: 10).

2. His end

- His feet were afflicted with a severe disease for two years (2 Chron 16: 12–13).
- When he was sick he only sought the help from physicians and did not seek God (2 Chron 16: 12).
- He did not receive mercy from God and he died of his disease (2 Chron 16: 12–13).

B. King Amaziah

1. His pride

- After he had won the battle over the Edomites, he brought back the gods of these Edomites and worshipped them (2 Chron 25: 14).
- He refused to listen to the counsel of a prophet and scolded him instead (2 Chron 25: 15–17).

2. His end

- Feeling proud after he had defeated the Edomites he wanted to challenge the King of Israel (2 Chron 25: 17–19).
- God caused him to be defeated by the King of Israel (2 Chron 25: 20–24).
- He was killed by his conspirators (2 Chron 25: 25–28).

C. King Uzziah

1. His pride

- God had made him prosper, but instead of humbling himself, he became proud (2 Chron 26: 4–5, 16).
- He entered the temple of God to burn incense without God's authorization (2 Chron 26: 16).
- He refused to be dissuaded by the priests and became angry with them instead (2 Chron 26: 17–19).

2. His end

- He was punished by God and leprosy broke out on his forehead while he was still in the temple of God (2 Chron 26: 19–20).
- Until the day of his death his leprosy was not cured (2 Chron 26: 21).
- God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble (1 Pet 5: 5). If we have faults we must humbly accept the advice of others so that we may escape the punishment (Prov 28: 13).

PRESENT HIM TO THE FRONTLINE

On a beautiful day in June, I was married to him in church with the blessings of our Lord Jesus.

After our marriage we both worked in a neighbouring organisation leading a happy life. We lived a simple and god-fearing life. We were contented with whatever we had and did not care much for vainglory.

However, two years after our marriage we still did not have any child. As such, I felt very sad, especially when I had a second premature delivery; my second baby was in the incubator for seven days and later he too died. I was overcome with sorrow and grief. Life is so mysterious and uncertain. No man can hold back his life for a moment longer. The life and death of man depends upon the Lord (1 Sam 2: 6). No medical expert could solve my problems. I grieved over the loss of our little baby and felt that the future was all but darkness and despair. Thanks to the wonderful grace of our Lord, we later met Elder Lin Wu-chen who related to us why he chose to serve the Lord and also about the shortage of full-time workers in the present church. Every word he said carried strength. Perhaps it was the will of the Lord that after the conversation with Elder Lin that my husband was determined to give up his occupation and to offer himself to the Lord. Women are of the weaker sex (1 Pet 3: 7). I often took this reason as an excuse for my weaknesses and thus became even weaker. I was then having two emotional conflicts — whether to

let him go to serve the Lord or not to let him go. 'If he goes, it would mean less chance of seeing each other. No, I cannot allow this to happen to me! Why should our present peaceful life be disturbed by this matter?' "But if he doesn't go it would be just like what he had said, that supposing it is the will of God, and if man still sets his mind on the flesh and does not submit himself to God, he would displease Him. If that be the case, it would be meaningless to live on'. Not only that, we fear that the spiritual grace may be withdrawn from us. Finally, I took up courage and sent him off in tears.

Women by nature are very dependent and it seems to be related to the fact that God had created Eve out of the rib of Adam. But rather unexpectedly, ever since he went into the Theological College, I was encouraged to have more daily bible reading and constant prayers. I even tried to follow the ways of Hannah in praying for a son. In my loneliness, I learned to draw nearer to God, because only He can fill up the emptiness in my heart and also in times of trials and tribulations, to build up my endurance and trust in Him.

After what seemed to be ages of waiting, he eventually completed his three-year Theological course. On the third day after his graduation, we were rewarded with a plump little baby girl. During those few moments my heart was filled with joy and happiness, just like receiving

rain again after a long drought. The birth of the baby girl has brought much joy and laughter into our family and has made our life even more meaningful and complete. Now my little baby is learning to talk and by watching this cute and lovable baby, I could do no more than to thank God for this blessing.

Today, he is like a new soldier fighting in the battlefield. As a preacher, he has a great task to perform and besides acquiring spiritual gifts, he must set an example to the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity (1 Tim 4: 12). Moreover, he must be a good teacher, physician and friend to the believers. This is indeed a great responsibility and I could only but pray that the Holy Spirit may strengthen him so that he too, can fight the good fight of the faith (1 Tim 6: 12).

Now, if preachers are compared to brave soldiers fighting in the battlefield, their wives should be the strong supporters behind them. But I am ashamed to say that as the wife of a preacher I am spiritually young and weak. Because of this, I am often afraid and the only way out is to ask God to help me to be on my own so as to enable my husband to be free from other worries and to devote himself towards the divine service. It is said that wives of the more elderly preachers are good examples of diligent and economical house-keepers, serving their husbands and educating their children. This is a model example for us who are younger, to learn from. Whenever I give a thought to this matter, I often feel that it is not easy to be the wife of a preacher, and because of this I had to be more persistent in my prayers.

There are some who, at the

thought of becoming the wives of preachers, would always try to brush aside the idea because preachers, are seldom at home. In actual fact, life is such that when there is an unwilling parting, there is always the hope of a happy reunion. For the past few years, we have been living under the grace of our Lord; we trusted each other and helped each other. And though, in the flesh we are seldom together, we are always of one body in the Lord. This will give rise to greater affection and deeper love for each other. Those who labour for the Lord will not labour in vain, for the Lord's grace is ever so rich. A preacher may receive only a small sum of money for the maintenance of his family, yet he will never suffer from want of food or daily needs, for God will provide him and give him the peace of mind which no one can buy with money.

Today, the people of the world are heavily laden in the course of pursuing wealth and status, but those who devote themselves solely to the Lord do not involve themselves in the pursuit of worldly things. They only carry the Lord's yoke and bear the Lord's burden which are easy and light (Mt 11: 30).

I hope that the brothers who have the gifts of an evangelist, will immediately leave their work, their parents, wife and children and take up their own cross to follow the Lord Jesus. I also hope that our sisters-in-Christ who are already married will unselfishly encourage their husbands, when the Lord calls, to help in the evangelical work so that the gospel could be preached throughout the world, and to meet the Lord on His Second Advent! (Mt 24: 14) Amen.

THREE KINDS OF BLESSINGS

It is every man's desire to receive 'blessings'. Many different kinds of blessings are recorded in the Bible, and they are ours to receive only if we observe the biblical instructions. Three kinds of blessings recorded in Psalms chapter 84 are quoted below for mutual exhortation:

1. Blessed are those who dwell in the house of God.

"Blessed are those who dwell in thy house" (vs 4). Dwelling in the house of God means dwelling in the grace of God. Blessed are these people. The Bible often teaches, "to continue in the grace of God" (Acts 13: 43); "keep yourselves in the love of God" (Jude 21); "continue in His kindness" (Rom 11: 22), etc.

The psalmist also described, in verses 1 & 2, the beauty of God's temple, and the state of envy and longing; especially in verse 3, a parable was used to explain the sense of stability, serenity, satisfaction and hope, to those who dwell

inside the temple — "Even the sparrow finds a home, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young" (vs 3). The sparrow is a bird of no value; for Jesus had said, "Are not two sparrows sold for a penny?" (Mt 10: 29-31). Yet they find their resting place at the altars. This indicates that man whose life is of no value must seek for a dwelling place which is at the altars — the salvation grace of the cross of Jesus Christ. The swallow is a very busy bird, flying in and out from morning to evening, but she also finds a resting place at the altars; it indicates that man is busy all the day, from morning to evening, yet he must finally rely on the salvation grace of the Lord in order that he may have hope (Ps 39: 6, 7).

The 'home of sparrow' and the 'resting places for the young swallow' are built at the altars. This teaches us to build our dwelling house in the grace and love of God; as such, we shall be satisfied with the good-

ness of the temple (Ps 65: 4). In chapter 15 of Luke, the Lord Jesus told a parable of a prodigal son, which also teaches us that the prodigal son, while enjoying himself in travelling to various places, must also at the end go back to his father's house for his physical, spiritual, and mental comforts and contentment. So we must follow what David said, "I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life" (Ps 27: 4).

2. Blessed are the men who walk the highways to Zion.

"Blessed are the men . . . , in whose heart are the highways to Zion" (vs 5). God is with Zion (Jer 31: 6) where the truth is and where man worships God (cf: Deut 12: 5). He who often goes to Zion will often be blessed by God. In the church where there is the presence of God, if we often attend the services, keep the Sabbath Day and 'festivals', that is, the various spiritual meetings and evangelical meetings, etc. (cf: Lam 1: 4; 2: 6), we shall receive the truth and blessedness, for we have worshipped the true God (Ps 128: 5; 134: 3) and shall have eternal life (Ps 133: 3).

"As they go through the valley of Baca (tears) they make it a place of springs; the early rain also covers it with pools. They go from strength to strength; the God of gods will be seen in Zion" (vs 6 & 7). Those who go to the highways of Zion must go through the valley of tears (it means that the world is full of afflictions and tears). But the Latter Rain (Holy Spirit) shall assist and console us as a land of spring with hope; the power and consolation of the Holy Spirit

will assist us to overcome the afflictions of the world. Therefore, those who walk the highways to Zion shall grow from strength to strength and the more they attend the church services, the more they love to come.

3. Blessed is the man who trusts in God.

"O Lord of hosts, blessed is the man who trusts in thee!" (vs 12) More often than not, life is not what we would have wished. Afflictions and frustrations are unavoidable to human beings in this world. Many people do not know how to have trust in God, and they shall be disappointed for they depend on men, money and power. For instance, King Asa, who was diseased in his feet and which became severe, did not seek the Lord but sought help from physicians; at last, his disease was still not cured and he died in shame (2 Chron 16: 12, 13). The Bible tells us, "Put not your trust in princes, in sons of man, in whom there is no help. When his breath departs, he returns to his earth; on that very day his plans perish. Happy is he whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the Lord his God" (Ps 146: 3-5). David said, "In thee our fathers trusted; they trusted, and thou didst deliver them. To thee they cried, and were saved; in thee they trusted, and were not disappointed" (Ps 22: 4, 5). David trusted in God, and not in swords; at last he defeated Goliath. We will not be afraid of evil tidings if we fully trust in the Lord (Ps 112: 7).

May we always dwell in the house of the Lord, and walk the highways to Zion, trusting in God all the days for ever. Amen.

NOTHING IS MORE URGENT THAN TO SAVE LIVES

While living in this world, man feels that he has endless tasks to accomplish. But among these, the most valued task ought to be the works of the church. However the scope of divine work is very broad, and the most urgent task yet to be done is of course to rescue fellow-mankind who is unconsciously heading towards eternal destruction.

A. Mankind is in desperate need of Salvation

1. Life is but toil and trouble (Ps 90: 10). Man's life is full of toil and trouble. The moment we step into primary education we begin to be actively involved in school lessons and have worries over our examinations. Later when we step into society, we would toil for and worry over our career, family and unending aspiration till we draw our last breath.
2. After death, whatever we possessed is vanity (1 Tim 6: 7). We brought nothing into the world and we cannot take anything out of the world. No matter how much we have achieved in reputation and wealth, we still feel the emptiness in spirit. When our last breath is drawn, everything will come to an end for us, everything is vanity and a striving after wind.
3. There will be judgement after death (Heb 9: 27). There are some people who deny the existence of the soul and believe that death brings an end to all things but the Bible indicates that it is appointed for men to die once, and after that comes judgement, that is to say, on the Last Day, everyone will have to stand before the judgement seat of God.
4. The sinners will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction (2 Thess 1: 6–9). The Lord of heaven and earth, the heavenly Father of men, bore us and raised us. He keeps us alive and He also wants to redeem us. However, many people who have not heard of the truth do not know the True God, on the Day of Judgement, they will be condemned to eternal punishment.

B. The Salvation Grace has already been manifested

1. The Lord has died for us (Rom. 5: 5–8). A sinner is unable to save himself, neither is he able to save others. Under the law of God, without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness of sins. However, it is impossible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins (Heb 9: 22; 10: 4). Therefore God became

flesh and was nailed to the cross for our sins so that a way to Salvation is opened for us (Heb 10: 19-20).

2. He who believes and is baptised will be saved (Mk 16: 16). A man is saved not through his righteous deeds but through his belief that the Lord died for him and through accepting the baptism of His precious blood. For Baptism of water has the power to wash away man's sins (Acts 22: 16), so that in Christ, he is the son of God (Gal 3: 26-28).
3. The Holy Spirit is the proof of one's salvation (Eph 1: 13-14). The Salvation Grace of the Lord is not without any evidence. In order to prove that a man is saved and is a son of God, the Lord bestows upon him the promised Holy Spirit as a seal so that he has the guarantee to the possession of the Heavenly inheritance (cf: Rom 8: 16).
4. The Holy Spirit of the Latter Rain has come (Joel 2: 23). Although the development of the early church towards the end of the Apostolic days was rapid, heresies infiltrated them and they were filled with heresies and evilness. But the church will not be in exile forever, for at the appointed time God will again send down the Holy Spirit, to reproclaim the truth and to accomplish the great works of the salvation of mankind (Mt chapter 13). Now is the acceptable time, the days of the proclamation of the Salvation Grace.

C. The End of the World is at Hand

1. The world is filled with wickedness (2 Tim 3: 1-5). The whole

generation of Noah was destroyed because it was burdened with sin and evilness and none would repent and turn to God. Similarly, in the world today, ethics and morality have degraded; men become lovers of self, proud and arrogant, lovers of money, adulterous, lovers of pleasure, unrighteous, unbelieving and haters of good. These ever increasing wickedness will bring the world even nearer to the day of destruction.

2. The antichrist has appeared (Mt 24: 15, 21-22, 29-30). The desolating sacrilege spoken of by Daniel has already appeared. It will deny the existence of God, oppose the Most High and persecute the church (Dan 11: 31, 36-37; Rev 13: 1-2, 6). It will also take away peace from the earth, to stir up great wars and to cause great tribulations such as have not been to come upon the earth. These are the signs of the Lord's second coming (Rev 6: 3-4).
3. God wants everyone to repent (2 Pet 3: 9). This world of ours is so filled with wickedness and filthiness that it should have been destroyed. But God, not wishing that any should perish but that all should reach repentance, has delayed in coming, being forbearing even until today so as to spare the lives of men to allow them to repent and believe in Christ and to receive salvation.
4. We must promptly proclaim the salvation grace (Rev 14: 6-7). The population of the world today is about 3.5 billion. An average of two people die every second and everyday more than a hundred thousand people die, thus

losing the chance of salvation. We who are specially loved by our Lord, who have been saved in the True Church with the Holy Spirit and the Truth, must look upon the propagation of the gospel and the salvation of sinners as the most important matter. Therefore we should contribute what the Lord has given us viz. time, wealth and capabilities to this divine work to repay God's mercy to save the pitiful mankind and to accomplish our duty of saving men so that on the Last

Day the Lord will not require from us the blood of the wicked man who died in his iniquities (Ezek 33: 7-9). Therefore while we are still alive, while we are still living in an environment of freedom given by God and before the Lord comes again, let us fight for time and take hold of every opportunity and with the reliance on the Holy Spirit, preach persistently the gospel and save others.

THE FOUR THINGS WHICH CHRISTIANS SHOULD STRIVE FOR

A. Pray Frequently

1. Pray throughout the night (Lk 6: 12).
2. Praise God throughout the day (Ps 71: 8).
3. Pray constantly (1 Thess 5: 17; Rev 4: 8).

B. Read The Bible Frequently

1. Read in the morning (cf: Ps 119: 147, 148).
2. Read daily (cf: Acts 17: 11; 8: 28).
3. Read throughout our whole life (cf: Deut 17: 18-20; Col 3: 16). Those who are illiterate must attend services frequently to listen to the truth (Heb 10: 25).

C. Enhance Spiritual Nurture

1. Restrain our lips (Prov 10: 19).
2. Check our conduct (1 Cor 9: 27).
3. Keep our heart (Prov 4: 23).

D. Work

1. Work everyday (2 Cor 12: 28).
2. Work with all our might (1 Cor 15: 58).
3. Work throughout our life (2 Pet 1: 12-15).

If any can practise these four points one can definitely save oneself as well as others, and in future will receive a great reward (1 Tim 4: 16; 2 Tim 4: 7, 8).

THE TWO GREAT WARNINGS

The Bible records the failure of the people in the olden days so as to warn us who are in the last days (1 Cor 10: 11, 12).

A. The Greed For Money

1. Because of his greed for money, Balaam had caused the death of more than twenty thousand chosen people of God (2 Pet 2: 15; Rev 2: 14; Num 31: 16; 25: 9).
 - Consequence: Balaam himself was also killed (Num 31: 3, 8).
2. King Ahab and his wife coveted Naboth's vineyard so they plotted and killed him (1 Kings 21: 17–26).
 - Consequence: Both husband and wife were punished and killed (1 Kings 22: 34, 35; 2 Kings 9: 30–37). Even their 70 sons were killed because of them (2 Kings 10: 1–10).
3. Because of his greed for 30 pieces of silver, Judas betrayed the Lord (Mt 26: 14–16).
 - Consequence: He hanged himself and burst open in the middle (Mt 27: 3–5; Acts 1: 18). His soul will be punished (cf. Mt 26: 24; Heb 10: 26).
4. Teachings:
Covetousness takes away the life of the possessor of others' properties (Prov 1: 19).
Those who greed for money will

wander away from the truth (1 Tim 6: 10).

- Keep our life free from love of money (Heb 13: 5).
- Be content with the food and clothing we have (1 Tim 6: 6–8).

B. Fornication

1. Sodom and Gomorrah underwent a punishment of eternal fire because of their indulgence in fornication (Jude 7; 2 Pet 2: 6–8).
2. While the Israelites dwelt in Shittim they committed adultery with the daughters of Moab. Hence more than 20,000 people died of plague. (Num 25: 1–9).
3. King David was cursed for his adulterous act and as such great trouble came upon his family (2 Sam 12: 7–12).
4. Teachings:
 - No adulterers will inherit the Kingdom of God (1 Cor 6: 9, 10).
 - Shut our eyes from looking upon evil (Is 33: 15).
 - Man and woman must treat each other with purity (1 Tim 5: 2; Mt 5: 28).
 - Do not drink wine because wine and immorality go hand in hand (Prov 23: 31–33; Gen 19: 30–38).
 - We must pray constantly and rely on the Holy Spirit to subdue the lust of the flesh (Rom 8: 13; 2 Thess 2: 13).

WOMAN'S ROLE IN THE DIVINE WORK

In the beginning God created Adam, and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it (Gen 2: 8, 15). But God did not consider it good for Adam to be alone, so He created for him a partner (Eve) to assist him (Gen 2: 18). The garden of Eden is a place for those who are holy to live in, and is the place where God communicates with man (cf: Gen 3: 8-10, 22-24). The garden of Eden prefigures the True Church which God has established on earth (cf: Rev 2: 7). As at the time of Adam, the woman was needed to help in the garden of Eden, so too does the Church of our Lord need the service of woman to help accomplish her important mission in the present age.

1. The Responsibilities of the Church

When the Lord Jesus established His church on earth, He entrusted His disciples with two important missions.

Firstly, He commanded the disciples to preach the gospel to the whole creation (Mk 16: 15). This is the Gospel of Salvation which testifies that Christ died for our sins on the cross, was buried, and was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. Today, through the redemption of our Lord Jesus Christ, all who believe and are baptised will be made justified before God at no cost of their own whatsoever, and the Holy Spirit will be given to them as proof of their salvation (1 Cor. 15: 1-4; Rom 3: 24; Mk 16: 16; Eph 1: 13, 14). This gospel is also referred to as "the gospel of the heavenly kingdom" (Mt 24: 14), "the Word which saves souls" (Jas 1: 21), and it is also known as "the Words of Life" (Acts 5: 20), connoting that this gospel gives salvation to man and shows him the way to the heavenly kingdom and eternal life. This gospel is indeed a good tidings to man, who toils and suffers in this world only to find life meaningless and without hope (cf: Ps 90: 10; Lk 2: 10, 11). The man of this world is in great need of Christ. The Lord's chosen ones must therefore realise how great and important a mission they have been entrusted with and should willingly shoulder the responsibility to proclaim the Truth to the world, especially when it is fast approaching the Last Day (cf: 1 Pet 2: 9; Joel 2: 1-3).

Secondly, He instructed His disciples to tend His sheep (Jn 21: 15-17). People who have heard of the gospel and have received the wash-

ing of regeneration, are like newborn lambs who need the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and upbringing in the truth (1 Pet 2: 1, 2; Tit 3: 5; Phil 2: 12). If we do not care to feed the little lambs and to seek the lost and dying or to bring back the outcasts and to tend to the wounded or heal the sick, then all efforts will be wasted even though we may have gone through a lot of difficulties in bringing them to Christ. They would surely fall prey to 'wild animals' again (cf: Ezek 34: 15, 16). Therefore those disciples who love the Lord must each do his part by ministering to the Lord's sheep (cf: Jn 21: 15-17). The female disciples are of no exception. In what way then can the women in the Lord assist in the above-mentioned divine work and what work is suitable for them?

2. The Role of Women in Divine Work

A. In the family

It is the duty of each individual Christian who has received the Salvation grace to bring and guide his whole family to believe in the Lord Jesus (cf: Acts 16: 30, 31). The women (i.e. the sisters) are more suitable for such work. If salvation has not yet reached your entire family, then you should be prepared to take up this divine mission.

(1) To convince the husband to accept the Lord

The Bible says, "Likewise you wives, be submissive to your husbands so that some, though they do not obey the word, may be won without a word by the behaviour of their wives, when they see your reverent and chaste behaviour" (1 Pet 3: 1, 2). Wife is the other half of

the husband. She is "the bone of the husband's bones and flesh of his flesh" (Gen 2: 21-24). And as the wife's relationship with her husband is most intimate, she has the greatest influence over him. She only needs to have a God-fearing heart and chaste behaviour, to be gentle, submissive, considerate and understanding, and above all, if she offers unceasing prayers to the Lord, her husband will eventually be moved to accept Christ. There may be husbands who are merely nominal Christians. In this case, the wife should realize that this is the opportunity given by God, and that with much patience, she should assist her husband to abound in faith and fervency.

(2) To teach her children to love the Lord

An old saying says, "Children are reared that they might be a support in old age", but she must also bring up children with the purpose to serve the Lord too. Children are a heritage from God (Ps 127: 3). If a child is brought up into a virtuous and God-fearing youth, not only will he be a dear possession to his parents but also a precious jewel of the church. However, whether the children can become good vessels to glorify the Lord or not, would very much depend on the mother, because she has the greatest influence over her children. For example, the virtues found in Timothy, which Paul regarded noble for the Lord's use, had been inculcated into him by his grandmother and mother since he was young (2 Tim 1: 5). There is a saying from the West, "The hands that rock the cradle is able to rock the whole world." This means that a mother is capable of making her child a great man. As such, it is hoped that our

sisters-in-Christ who are mothers, will look upon educating their children as even more important than gaining wealth and status, and with the Lord's help, accomplish this most important and glorious duty of bringing up good, holy Christians who shall put into practice Christian principles: Love the Lord God with all your heart and your neighbour as yourself (Deut 6: 4-9; Mt 22: 35-40).

(3) **To bring the whole household to serve the Lord**

Not only does a virtuous woman have stronger influence over her husband and children, in fact she also has great influence over her entire household. My own conversion is a testimony to this. I was converted through my sister-in-law's Christian love for me. So if there is any non-believer in the family, the woman member must, as one of the family, guide and exhort him to accept Christ (cf: Acts 16: 14, 15, 31). However, we must not be contented when our whole household is saved, instead we must pray to God to bless them so that they shall all serve the Lord. As a gesture of gratitude to the Lord for His salvation grace, besides encouraging members of our family to offer tithes (cf: Gen 28: 20-22; Mal 3: 8-10), we should encourage them to abound in the work of the Lord with gifts they have received from Him (Rom 12: 3-8; 1 Cor 15: 58). Especially now that "The harvest is plentiful but the labourers are few" (Mt 9: 37, 38), many more workers are needed to go out to reap the harvest. This is the time we urgently require women who love the Lord to willingly offer their husbands and children to the service of the Lord and to serve Him

throughout their life as Christian soldiers. How very important then is the role of women in the divine mission of the church! What glorious vocation! (cf: 1 Sam 1: 21-28; Gen 22: 1, 2, 15-18).

B. In the Church

Of the divine work in a family, the woman is, no doubt more suitable and is able to produce better results than the man. However, although it seems that most of the work in church are done by the men, in actual fact, the women are quietly working just as effectively as the men. For example:

(1) **in showing hospitality to the believers**

Elders, deacons, evangelists and brethren often travel to churches in various places to evangelise the Gospel and to tend to the Lord's sheep (cf: 3 Jn 5-8; Acts 15: 1-4). For the sake of attending students' spiritual meetings or other spiritual meetings and seminars, or when making a survey on the organization and progress of the church, it is also often essential for members concerned to travel from place to place. Members on such trips need accommodation and, although the length of stay may be very short, the hospitality given to them by the church can affect their faith to a great extent. There are some who have fallen away just because they have been given the cold shoulder (though due to unintentional negligence). While some, who, having received much hospitality, have been greatly encouraged and motivated to greater fervency to serve the Lord, and stronger determination to follow the Christian principles: Love the Lord God with all your heart and your neighbour as yourself. So, the

Bible teaches us "never neglect to show hospitality to strangers" (Heb 13: 2) and "do not neglect to care for even the least of our brethren" (Mt 25: 34-40). To show hospitality to our brothers and sisters is to show hospitality to the Lord; this also is divine work (3 Jn 5-8). Thus, we hope that the sisters of our church will devote themselves diligently to this aspect of Christian service whenever opportunities arise, because this is another part of the divine work in which women members can do better than the men (cf: 2 Kings 4: 8-11; 1 Tim 5: 10).

(2) in assisting to propagate the Truth

Sisters are normally not as good as the brothers when called upon to speak on the pulpit, unless they are endowed with the gift to do so. But other than speaking on the pulpit, they excel over the brothers in other aspects of the divine service such as, in receptions and visitings which call for much amiability and they can perform more effectively eloquence of speech. For example, evangelical tracts distributed by the brothers are more often rejected than those distributed by the sisters who, with their gentle, sincere and amicable attitude, can more effectively convince the Gentiles to come to church. In visitings too, sisters have the aptitude to be more effective than the brothers in giving admonishments to the drunkard members, the quarrelsome ones and those who seldom attend church services. Such members may be more responsive to the sisters' exhortations and be more ready to repent of their 'un-christian' conduct. Therefore, in the divine service, whether in or outside the church, men need the assistance

of the women exceedingly, just as the Apostle Paul who had requested for the assistance of Phoebe and Prisca (Rom 16: 1-4). So our sisters should put into practice the gifts of amiability and eloquence of speech especially in family visitings and individual evangelism, so as to help make the divine service more enhanceive (cf: Acts 18: 24-26; Jn 4: 39).

(3) in educating the lambs

Organizing Religious Education classes is yet another vocation for the sisters. Not only the sisters who are still in secondary schools or universities help with the affairs of the Religious Education in church, those who are married should also do the same to help bring up the young members (cf: Jn 21: 15).

In recent years, many youths have moved into the cities either for further studies or to seek after occupational opportunities. Owing to the exodus of youths to the cities, some churches in the villages are faced with a shortage of Religious Education teachers. Under such crisis, married women who are experienced in the affairs of Religious Education are urgently needed to shoulder the duties of this divine service and to give the necessary guidance and assistance so that the Religious Education of the church in various places can continue to function normally. And because the result of the nurture of the faith of children and youth will affect the future prospect of the church, we urge married teachers, for the love for the Lord and for the church, to have concern over the Lord's lambs and at all times guide them and care for them, whether in church or at home (cf: Prov 22: 6; Ps 78: 4-6).

(4) in getting along with life

A consummate home brings happiness to every member of the family and is also a glorification to the Lord (Mt 5: 14–16). But inevitably, there are church members who do not find much happiness in their families. Most of the reasons behind it are due to the ignorance of the women, for example, not knowing how to live in harmony with others, like her husband, her in-laws, relatives, neighbours, etc. At times, it is probably because she has no knowledge on how to educate her children, how to be a housewife and to budget the family expenses, all of which as a result create conflict and an unpleasant atmosphere in her family, mounting up to antagonism and hatred. These domestic problems will eventually affect their faith in the Lord. In this case, a good knowledge on how to get along with life in order to establish a Christian family is absolutely necessary. May all the wise women in the Lord strive to live with life as befits Christians so as to assist other sisters in the church to build up a harmonious Christian family which will be a glory to the Lord (Ps 133: 1–3; Mt 5: 9).

(5) in relieving those in poverty

During the time of the apostles, women who had devoted themselves to doing good in every way were well attested and honored. They were engaged in activities like bringing up children, showing hospitality to the saints and relieving the afflicted (1 Tim 5: 10). During those days, such charitable acts were common among the women, such as Dorcas, who were “full of good works and acts of charity” (Acts 9: 36–39). Caring for orphans and widows, helping and comforting the afflicted,

are like giving a cup of cold water to a thirsty man (cf: Mt 10: 42). On the part of the giver, such a service is not difficult to render, but the one who accepts receives with deep gratitude. Such good deeds are very suitable for women who are of a compassionate nature and are more acquainted with the believers’ plight. And not only should this brotherly affection be manifested towards fellow believers in the Lord but also be extended to all men (2 Pet 1: 7). Charitable acts done out of love can stimulate the faith of believers and can also easily motivate non-believers to accept the Lord as their Saviour. For God loves a cheerful giver and He will provide her with every blessing in abundance for every good work (cf: 2 Cor 9: 6–15; Prov 19: 17).

(6) in Praying with supplication for evangelising the Gospel

Divine service and prayers are like the two wheels of a cart in which one cannot do without the other (Acts 6: 5). Women in the Lord should not only pray for abundant blessings to be showered on their own families, or for the divine service but should also pray day and night for the Church in every part of the world, that more souls may be brought to Christ so that the kingdom of our Lord may grow; and also pray for the work of salvation to be accomplished soon and for Christ to come again to take us back to the heavenly kingdom (cf: Col 4: 2, 3; Is 26: 15; Rev 22: 20, 21). When Joshua led the Israelites against the Amalekites during the Exodus, his victory or defeat on the battleground was determined by Moses’ prayers which he uttered with hands raised

(Ex 17: 11). Today, in order that the servants of God can prevail in the battle for the truth, they need prayers and supplications to be made by all the believers for them. Here then is another aspect of the divine service in which the sisters can help. They are urged to pray for the soldiers of God who are in battle and to share in their victorious achievements.

3. A Few Suggestions for those in the Divine Service

(1) To have proper training

If women are required to propel the divine work, they must be given proper training so as to produce good results (cf: Eccles 10: 10).

(2) To be organized

Having a group of people but without any organization is like a dismantled car which cannot function at all. The Church should look into this matter and organize the women into a few groups, each with a person-in-charge to arrange and co-ordinate the different duties (cf: Ex 18: 13–26).

(3) To work in submission

The Bible says, "The head of every man is Christ, the head of a woman is her husband, and the head of Christ is God" (1 Cor 11: 3). In every way the woman must be humble and submissive to Christ and to have respect for the men (cf: 1 Tim 2: 11, 12).

(4) To be gentle

The Bible says, "With patience a ruler may be persuaded, and a soft tongue will break a bone" (Prov 25: 15). Gentleness and tolerance are women's salient characteristics which when put to use can be of tremendous help to them in their Christian service.

(5) To be careful in speech

Women are more loquacious, but when words are many, transgression is not lacking (Prov 10: 19). Therefore let your words be few (Prov 17: 27, 28). Do not tell tales or criticize the shortcomings of others but as peace-makers, say words of thanksgiving and what is good for edifying (Eph 5: 4; 4: 29).

(6) To have love for others

One should work out of love for God and man, and not out of the desire to gain publicity. Love is not jealous or boastful; does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful. Love bears all things, endures all things (1 Cor 13: 4–7). Where there is love, her service will be successful and pleasing to God (1 Cor 8: 1).

May the Lord Jesus move our sisters-in-Christ that they may understand His will and be diligent in the divine service so that the prophecy "Great is the host of those who bore the tidings" (Ps 68: 11) can materialize in the True Church, so as to accomplish the commission which God had entrusted to the women.



THE CORRECT PATH TO SALVATION

A. The Facts of Life (Ps. 90: 10)

1. Toil

- (a) To toil for education (Eccles 8: 16).
- (b) To toil for livelihood (Gen 3: 17–19).
- (c) To toil for desires (Lk 12: 15–21).

2. Anxiety

- (a) Anxiety over education (Eccles 1: 18).
- (b) Anxiety over livelihood (Mt 13: 22).
- (c) Anxiety over desires (Eccles 6: 7).

3. Short

- (a) As short as a breath (Ps 144: 4).
- (b) Men are but like strangers exile on the earth (Heb 11: 13–15).
- (c) No one knows when one's life will come to an end (Jas 4: 13–15).

4. Vanity

- (a) Status is vanity (Ps 49: 12; Is 40: 6–8).
- (b) Wealth is vanity (Ps 49: 16–17; 1 Tim 6: 6–8).
- (c) Man can never be satisfied (Eccles 5: 10–11; 2: 10–11).

B. What will come after death ?

1. There will be Judgment (Heb 9: 27).

- (a) Sinners will be punished (Rom 2: 8–9; Ezek 18: 4).
- (b) The righteous will be rewarded (Rom 2: 10–11; Gal 6: 9).
- (c) Cases of reward and punishment in this life (Judg 9: 53–57; Acts 10: 4, 34; 44–47).

2. Two Destinations (Mt 7: 13–14).

- (a) On the Last Day God will exercise judgment (Ps 98: 9; Rev 22: 12).
- (b) Those who are saved will enter into the heavenly kingdom (Mt 25: 34; 2 Tim 4: 7–8).
- (c) Those who are condemned will enter into hell (Mt 25: 41; Rev 21: 8).

3. The Importance of Salvation (Acts 16: 30).

- (a) If one is not saved there is no purpose in one's life (Mt 16: 26; Eph 2: 12).
- (b) No one can obtain salvation by relying on himself (Ps 49: 6–9; Eph 2: 8–9).

- (c) Only Jesus is our Saviour (Acts 4: 12; Jn 14: 6).
- C. Believe in Lord Jesus (Acts 16: 31)**
1. **He is the Creator.**
 - (a) All things are created by Him (Jn 1: 1–3; Mt 8: 23–27).
 - (b) All lives are in His hands (Jn 11: 25; Lk 7: 11–15).
 - (c) He and the Father are one (Jn 10: 30; Ps 9: 6).
 2. **He is the Redeemer.**
 - (a) He is God manifested in the flesh (1 Tim 3: 16; Jn 1: 1–2, 14).
 - (b) He died for all mankind (Heb 10: 1–4; Rom 5: 6–8).
 - (c) He resurrected and returned to Heaven (1 Pet 3: 21–22; 1 Cor 15: 1–3).
 3. **He is the Lord of Judgment.**
 - (a) Both reward and punishment come from Him (Rev 22: 12; 2 Cor 5: 10).
 - (b) His word will judge the whole world (Jn 12: 48; Mt 24: 35).
 - (c) Believe in Jesus to avoid the punishment (Jn 3: 16–18; Rom 5: 9).
- D. Accept the Baptism of Regeneration (Tit 3: 5)**
1. **The Effects of Baptism.**
 - (a) Forgiveness of sins (Acts 2: 38; 22: 16).
 - (b) Regeneration (Tit 3: 5; Jn 3: 5).
 - (c) Baptised into Christ (Gal 3: 27; Rev 5: 9–10).
 2. **The Mode of Baptism.**
 - (a) In the name of Lord Jesus (Acts 2: 38; 19: 5; 10: 43, 48).
 - (b) With face downwards (Rom 6: 4–5; Jn 19: 30; Ps 40: 12).
 - (c) With whole body immersed (Jn 3: 23; Acts 8: 38; Col 2: 12).
 3. **The three requisitions of one who is receiving baptism.**
 - (a) He must believe (Mk 16: 16; Acts 4: 12).
 - (b) He must repent (Acts 2: 38; Lk 3: 7–14).
 - (c) He must be determined to lead a new life (Lk 14: 25–33; Acts 14: 22).
- E. Strive for the Renewal in Holy Spirit (Tit 3: 5)**
1. **Receiving of the Holy Spirit in relation to Salvation.**
 - (a) It is the condition for one to enter the heavenly kingdom (Jn 3: 5; Tit 3: 5).
 - (b) It is the guarantee of the inheritance of the heavenly kingdom (Eph 1: 13–14; Rom 8: 14–17).
 - (c) Without the Holy Spirit one does not belong to Christ (Rom 8: 9; Mt 25: 1–13).
 2. **The signs of receiving the Holy Spirit.**
 - (a) One does not automatically receive the Holy Spirit when he believes in the Lord or receives baptism (Acts 19: 1–2; 8: 15–16).
 - (b) When the Holy Spirit comes upon a person, the person will speak in tongue (Acts 10: 44–46; 19: 6–7).
 - (c) The body will also be moved (Acts 2: 33; 13; 1 Cor. 14: 23).
 3. **Rely on the Holy Spirit to renew oneself**
 - (a) Man cannot change himself (Rom 7: 14–24; Jer 13: 23).

- (b) The Holy Spirit helps to sanctify a person (Ezek 36: 26–27; 2 Thess 2: 13).
- (c) Relying on the Holy Spirit to change oneself into the likeness of Christ (2 Cor 3: 17–18; Eph 4: 20–24).

F. Practise the great teaching of loving God and loving man (Mt 22: 36–40).

1. We must love God with all our might.

- (a) Worship Him in truth and sincerity (Rev 4: 8–11; Jn 4: 23).
- (b) Obey Him completely (Jn 14: 15; Phil 2: 5–8).
- (c) Offer everything (Gen 22: 1–2; 16–18; Rom 12: 1).

2. We must love others as we love ourselves.

- (a) Help those who are in difficulties (Jas 2: 15–16; Lk 10: 30–37).
- (b) Save the souls of mankind (2 Cor 12: 15; 1 Cor 9: 19, 23).
- (c) Forgive the faults of others (Prov 19: 11; Gen 50: 15–21).

3. We must practise these

teachings when there is still time to do so.

- (a) We must worship God when we are still young (Eccles 12: 1; 2 Tim 3: 15).
- (b) We must love God and man whenever we have the opportunity (Lk 23: 50; 24: 3; Gal 6: 10).
- (c) We must do our best to work when we are still alive (Eccles 9: 10; Lk 16: 19–31).

Conclusion:

Man must:

- (a) realise the vanity of life
- (b) understand that there is judgment after death
- (c) determine to believe in the Lord Jesus
- (d) accept the baptism for forgiveness of sins
- (e) manifest the likeness of Christ
- (f) practise the teachings of loving God and loving man so as to complete the work of salvation.

In this way when one has completed his journey in this world he will definitely return to the heavenly kingdom in full glory.

THE TONGUE IS THE MOST DIFFICULT THING TO TAME

“For we all make many mistakes, and if any one makes no mistakes in what he says he is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body also” (Jas 3: 2).

Language is the human means of communicating ideas. Jesus said, “... for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks” (Mt 12: 34). It is difficult for anyone not to speak a single word in a day; and seldom there is anyone who makes no mistakes in his speech throughout a day. James told us that if anyone makes no mistakes in what he says, he is a perfect man. So, if we wish to be a perfect man, we must first tame our tongue.

When we consult a doctor, he very often likes to examine our tongue so that he could diagnose our sickness. Likewise, we could judge a man’s perfectness through his tongue (cf: Mt 12: 34, 35).

A Chinese proverb says, ‘how great a matter a little fire kindleth!’ Though the tongue is a little member, it can affect the whole body. James chapter three discusses the tongue in detail and it is there that James sets a few plain, but meaningful, comparisons to illustrate that the tongue controls:

1. like bits being put into the mouths of horses that they may obey us; we guide their whole bodies;
2. like a small rudder, able to guide the ship and its direction;

3. like a small fire which can set ablaze a great forest;
4. like a sinful world — it defiles the whole body; and
5. like a restless evil, full of deadly poison.

James also told us that if we let God manage and use our tongues, we would utter blessings; if it was controlled by the Devil, it would let out cursings, and become the tool for committing sin (Jas 3: 9–12).

The Bible says when words are many, transgression is not lacking (Prov 10: 19). So the tongue is really very difficult to tame. Can we tame it? The Bible says, “he who restrains his lips is prudent”, showing that the tongue could be tamed. David also told us, “I will guard my ways that I may not sin with my tongue; I will bridle my mouth, so long as the wicked are in my presence” (Ps 39: 1).

Only if we allow the Spirit of God to work in our heart, be obedient to His directions, and put our inward mind and thought to God, let Him be our helmsman, and let our speech be restrained by God, our tongue will not be difficult to tame; and we shall always utter the words of thanks, thus edifying others and praising the Heavenly Father. Let us, with one accord, imitate the psalmist who prayed to God saying, “Set a guard over my mouth, O Lord, keep watch over the door of my lips!” (Ps 141: 3).

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF SPIRITUAL MEETINGS

Before our Lord Jesus ascended to heaven, He entrusted His disciples with two great commissions, which are 'to tend my sheep' and 'to preach the gospel to the whole creation' (Jn 21: 15-17; Mk 16: 15). In a man's life, none of his messages is more important than the last few words spoken by him just before his death, and normally when a person receives such a message, he would keep it and try to fulfil the request. Similarly, Christianity has been existing till this day and is being preached to all corners of the world because, throughout history, the believers kept Jesus' commandments given before His ascension. In our Church, spiritual meetings are held once or twice a year. The purpose of holding these spiritual meetings is to carry out the two great commissions entrusted by Lord Jesus, i.e., to tend the flock and to preach to the unbelievers.

The Spiritual Meeting is indeed a great occasion every year in each church. During this occasion believers are benefited by:

- (1) receiving more spiritual food;
- (2) being able to pray for grace, i.e., those who have not yet received the Holy Spirit can pray for the Holy Spirit; those who have already received can pray for the abundance of the Holy Spirit and the various

- spiritual gifts; those who are sick can pray for the healing of their sickness and those who are burdened can pray for relief;
- (3) partaking the Holy Communion to enrich one's spiritual life;
- (4) enjoying love feast to improve the communion among brethren;
- (5) offering thanksgiving to repay part of the grace of the Lord.

These are the aims for which Spiritual Meetings are held for the purpose of tending the flock.

Another important purpose of Spiritual Meetings is that one can bring more friends and relatives on these great occasions so that they may be able to share the grace of the Lord. Those who are heavy-laden should be invited to draw near to the merciful Lord Jesus; as for those who are possessed by demons, they should be led to pray to the almighty Lord to cast out their demons. If a gentile is brought to the Spiritual Meeting and is bestowed with the Holy Spirit, he would be able to realise the existence of the True God and he may turn to God, Jesus Christ. In this way, another soul is saved.

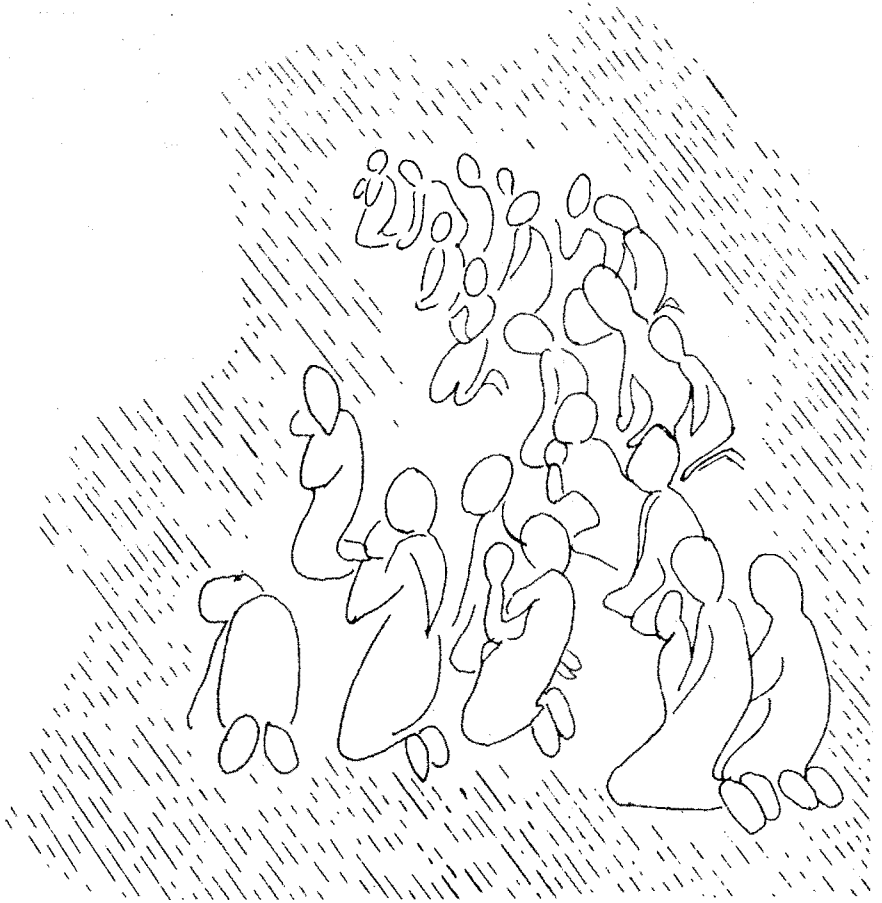
According to the report made by the General Assembly of Taiwan in 1974, 1,265 believers were baptised in 1973 and 1,365 members received the Holy Spirit. The rate of souls being saved from the grasp of Satan as compared to the amount of money

being spent on the evangelical work is still not very encouraging.

After knowing the fact, should not one feel shameful for not fulfilling the commission? Taiwan is a striving metropolis and everybody has to devote most of his time in striving for a living, and being further enhanced with the progress of science, man indulges in materialistic measures and neglects the value of spiritual life, thus causing the atten-

dance during services and the zealousness of members to decrease. We are in fact facing the danger of our faith being weakened.

Now that Spiritual Meetings are held in every town, we should seize this opportunity to rise up from our slumbering; to revive ourselves in the spiritual fervency to propagate the Truth and to accomplish the mission entrusted upon us.



THE ANTI-CHRIST HAS REAPPEARED

When the Lord Jesus was born, Satan, through King Herod, gave orders to kill all male children in Bethlehem and the surrounding regions who were two years old or under so as to destroy the work of God (Mt 2: 16). But the angel of the Lord had foretold Joseph to take Jesus and flee to Egypt (Mt 2: 13–15). When the Lord began to preach the gospel of God at the age of about thirty, Satan again made use of Judaism to attack, hinder and at last crucify Jesus on the cross. However, through the cross, God accomplished the great work of salvation (Heb 2: 14, 15; Jn 19: 30).

According to the Scriptures, Christ resurrected three days after His death, and ten days after His ascension, that is, on the Day of Pentecost, the promised Holy Spirit was poured down. Thereafter, the disciples received the power from Him to preach the gospel, and established churches to save all mankind. Because of this, Satan became frightened and panicky, so he made use of Judaism and the Jewish rulers to persecute the disciples with intent to annihilate the church (cf: Acts 1: 8, 37–41; 4: 1–4, 17–20). But as Paul said, "the gospel for which I am suffering and wearing fetters like a criminal. But the word of God is not fettered" (2 Tim 2: 9). The early Church, under the cruel and vindictive persecution of the Roman Empire, appeared outwardly to have vanished, but in fact she went into underground work, and the gospel of God was widely spread (cf: Rev 2: 10; 12: 11).

In the last days, according to biblical prophecy, God would send His Holy Spirit of the Latter Rain to re-build the True Church similar to the apostolic church. Satan raised a beast with ten horns and seven heads to which he gave his power and great authority in order to destroy the salvation plan of God. The beast with seven heads represents an organised group and ten horns represent its great strength or authority. Its appearance represents its development which is as swift as a leopard. Its temperament is as cruel as a bear and it will devour anything it catches. And it cannot exist in peace with man. It loves to be swollen with conceit and boastfulness (Rev 13: 1, 2). Its main work is to profane the name of God (Jesus), the tabernacle of God (Church), and also those who are dwelling in heaven (the spiritual believers). It would conquer all tribes and peoples and tongues and nations, so that its anti-Christ government will be established and thus proceeds to carry out widespread persecution of the church (Rev 13: 6–10). But the people of God shall stand firm in their actions (Dan 11: 31–32).

Now that our Church is in the time of tribulations, we must pray continually for those saints who are trapped in the beast-like organisation, and we should preach the grace of salvation while it is daytime, consolidating the foundation of the disciples, putting on the armour of God against the Devil so as to rescue all mankind (Eph 6: 10–20).

A MAN FORSAKEN BY GOD

Saul, a Benjaminite, was the son of Kish. He was tall and handsome; not only was he a hardworking and responsible man, he was also filial (1 Sam 9: 2-5). He was a humble man among the Israelites, a man of great courage and love for his nation (1 Sam 9: 21-23, 27; 11: 11). Therefore, he was loved by the people and the eyes of the Lord were upon him, and he was made the first King to reign over Israel. Unfortunately, not long after, he was forsaken by God. Saul was forsaken for the following reasons:

A. Saul offered the sacrifices at Gilgal by himself
(1 Sam 13: 8-15).

To offer the sacrifices was the duty of the priests; this was commanded by God to the chosen race when they were in the wilderness. And Saul, being a King, certainly knew this. However, fear seized

Saul when the Philistines were mustered in front of him. More fear came as his people began to scatter away from him, and the prophet delayed his coming. Finally, Saul disobeyed God's commandment and intruded into the duty of the priest.

At present days, quite a number of believers are following Saul's foolishness; they lose faith when facing difficulty; they have no patience to wait for God; and worse, they rely on themselves. When the Israelites came to the Red Sea, they saw that the Egyptians were pursuing them. In that precarious moment, the Lord provided them a way of salvation, as a result of which they were saved from destruction. In the same manner, God's grace is also given at the proper time, and believers should wait for the downpour of God's grace with patience. Only by enduring to the end can believers be blessed (Lam 3: 25).

- B. When questioned by Samuel, Saul not only did not repent, he also defended himself, and even tried to cover his sins by putting the blame on the prophet and the people (1 Sam 13: 11).**

The flesh is weak and therefore to err is unavoidable. If we are humble enough to confess our sins, and beg God for forgiveness, God would certainly have mercy upon us (Prov 28: 13). On the other hand, God will dislike us if we are not repentant of our sins or if we put the blame on others. David committed a great sin, but he humbled himself and confessed his sins immediately when rebuked by the prophet; as such he obtained the Lord's forgiveness (2 Sam 12: 13). Although Saul's sins were lighter than David's, he defended himself by giving false excuses and was forsaken. This serves as a warning to us.

- C. After the defeat of the Amalekites, he sinned again (1 Sam 15: 1-9).**

Although Saul was told beforehand by God that he should totally destroy the enemies and their possessions, out of greed, he spared all those which were good; also he had pity on King Agag and spared his life. Nowadays, there are quite a number of believers who have forsaken the truth for the sake of wealth (1 Tim 6: 10), and there are even more people who would gratify their flesh and would not destroy the desires of the flesh, and thereby have sinned (Jas 1: 15). Saul was bound to be rejected for his continual disobedience, yet he insisted to stick to his former ways, putting the blame on the people. This shows that Saul

did not have the intention to repent; and so the Spirit of the Lord departed from him (1 Sam 15: 26; 16: 14). If the ways of a believer are always in opposition to the Word and there is no repentance from him even to the end, he will surely be forsaken by God eventually.

Evil spirit entered Saul after he was rejected by God, and he spent his days in hatred, jealousy, thirsting for blood. He was a completely different man. If a man is forsaken by God after receiving His grace, his final condition will be worse than the first state when he had not received this grace at all (Mt 12: 43-45). In the beginning when God ordained Saul to be King over Israel, it was intended that he would deliver the Israelites from the hands of the Philistines; but Saul disobeyed God by not destroying the Amalekites. In the end he was badly wounded during the battle against the Philistines, and he was killed by an Amalekite (1 Sam 31: 1-4; 2 Sam 1: 6-10).

Today, we are called by God to reign together with Christ, and are contending against the spiritual host of wickedness (2 Tim 2: 12; Eph 6: 12); if we do not obey the Lord's commandments to purge out the evil desires of the flesh, we will surely fall in the spiritual warfare and be conquered by our own desires which would lead to our spiritual destruction (Jas 1: 15). Therefore, we should always remember the rejection of Saul in our hearts, pray to the Lord to keep and help us, and should always obey the commandments of the Lord. Only in this way can we fight the good fight, and be able to reign with Christ forever.

Amen!

UNTO THE END OF THE WORLD

Before the Ascension, the Lord Jesus commanded His disciples to "feed his flock" (Jn 21: 15), and to "preach to all creatures" (Mk 16: 15). Up to the present time, our church has stressed the work of "feeding" rather than evangelical work. The Holy Spirit wants us to preach the word from Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria to the end of the earth (Acts 1: 8). One has to undertake the holy work giving equal attention to the following factors: "feeding" and "evangelical work".

During the Apostolic period, the disciples prepared for evangelism (Acts 2: 5-12, 37-41), on receiving the grace of God on the day of Pentecost. When they were persecuted in Jerusalem, they were sent by the Holy Spirit to Samaria and Judea, where they preached the word (Acts 8: 1). The Lord directed Philip, who was then busy with the holy work in Samaria, to meet the eunuch of Ethiopia in the wilderness. As a result, the eunuch received the grace of the Lord and brought the gospel to Africa (Acts 8: 26-39).

Peter, while constrained by racism, was told by the Lord to preach the word to Cornelius, a Gentile. The Lord gave the Holy Spirit to the Gentiles as an evidence of His acceptance (Acts 10). Afterwards, the Holy Spirit sent Barnabas and Paul from Antioch to evangelise in the foreign nations (Acts 13: 1-3). While Paul was preaching in Asia Minor, on his second missionary journey, the Holy Spirit forbade the disciples to preach

there. In a vision Paul was instructed by the Holy Spirit to open the gate of utterance in Macedonia. In so doing, the seed of the true word was brought to Europe (cf: Acts 16: 6-15).

From these foregoing examples, one learns that the Lord Jesus always took the lead in the evangelical work. The disciples only carried out the work under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Nowadays Christian churches are established everywhere in the world. And this seems to indicate that the preaching of the word to every creature is fulfilled. However, in the sight of the Lord, many churches have preached heresies, or impure truth. Neither do they have the Holy Spirit. They need to be regenerated and be saved by the gospel of salvation. The true church receives the Holy Spirit — the "Latter Rain" in the last days, and She is established on the foundation of the Apostolic Church. The true church will likewise preach the full gospel to every corner of the world (cf: Rev 7: 2-3; Mal 4: 5; Mt 24: 14).

Accordingly, we believers in the true church ought to recognize the mission entrusted by the Lord Jesus. We should not limit ourselves to any locale; instead, we should follow the guidance of the Holy Spirit in the work of world evangelism. We should request the Lord to send His workers and to work for the glory of Him in the preaching of His Word unto the end of the world.

THE GRACE WHICH GOD HAS MANIFESTED IN MY FAMILY

My family lacked a father, for he had passed away while I was still a child, without leaving any substantial properties or patronage. He left only seven growing children to our lonely mother. However, thanks to God, although we did not have an abundance of nourishment, we had enough; although we did not have beautiful dresses, we were warm. Relying on God, we have all grown up, capable also to stand on our own feet.

In this present dark and materialistic world, if one should want to secure a job one often needs the influence of patronage or "red packet". The Lord knew that we did not have any of these two means and thus made providence for us not only to

be able to dispense with them but also to go through a smoother passage than other people. To-date, each of us has a stable job, which has resulted in surprise and comments from many people. All these are due to the Lord's mercy.

Before my father departed, he was very worried that his children would have no place to settle themselves in the future because he did not have a house of his own. Suddenly, in a dream, he saw a beautiful place, as scenic as a drawing; there were a lot of houses and upon the door of each was hung the name of the master of the house, among which was my father's name. In this way he slept peacefully (died).

Just after my father passed away,

my mother became very weak and had doubted in her heart, "Is there really a Heavenly Kingdom?" One night, she also had a dream: She saw a ladder which led from the ground to the sky and at the top was a door. She became curious and climbed up the steps. When she reached the door, she saw a lot of angels singing and many people sleeping on beds. They all wore white clothes. My father slept among them. Thanks to the Lord for strengthening my mother's faith so that due to this, she firmly believes that the Heavenly Kingdom exists.

When my father died, all of us seven children were still very young, requiring both nourishment and upbringing. But sincere friends are few and relatives were far away so that my mother was very worried. God again made use of a dream to strengthen her courage. In the dream she saw seven lambs, five fully grown up which could find their own food. They have filled themselves already and were frolicking around but the remaining two small lambs were starved and crouching forlonly on one side. When my mother became very worried about these two lambs, a person clothed in white came and poured food into the manger. When the two small lambs have eaten, they became lively. Thanks to God who has so many times made use of dreams to comfort, encourage, and strengthen our faith so that we firmly believe that the Heavenly Kingdom is our inheritance and know that God shall uphold all the weak ones.

One night last year, I woke up in the middle of the night because of the hot weather. Without switching

on the light I just plugged on the electric fan. On waking up next morning, I was startled out of my wits. For I saw that the bed board was covered with sparks. I had mistaken the electric iron plug as the fan plug. It had burnt for one whole night, fortunately without resulting in disaster. More dangerously, sometime during the night I had thrust my head out of the mosquito net to the side of the iron. If I had only moved slightly more, my hair would have come into contact with the extremely hot iron or sparks. The outcome would be terrible to imagine. From then on, I knew that the Lord's watch over us surpasses time and space; He not only guards me during the day, He also watches over me while I sleep.

In our daily lives, the Lord strengthens us when we are weak; He directs us when we are in doubt; when we are in need, He provides for us; when we do wrong, He chastises us; in sickness He heals us; in danger He guards us. In this way we experience the Lord's mighty power and trust in Him. The Lord's grace is bountiful, and everytime I think of it, I give thanks and feel happy; but I feel downcast because I have not done anything for the Lord. I earnestly pray that God, in the ensuing days, will continue to guide and direct us; give us strength and opportunity so that we may humbly and wholly work for the Lord to repay His bountiful grace.

Amen!

SAVED FROM A GREAT FIRE

In the name of Jesus I bear witness.

My family and I are members of the True Jesus Church in Singapore. I am the owner of a restaurant. We lived in No. 167 Syed Alwi Road, Singapore. Under the showers of blessings from God, we have been living a contented life. Thank the Lord!

On the 3rd Sept., 1971, the idol worshippers celebrated the Seventh Moon festival. All along the road, the residents were burning joss-sticks in front of their shop-houses. At about 3.20 p.m., a gust of wind sent the burning papers up into the air and some of them landed on the wooden sheds which were not far from our house. Soon the sheds were set ablaze and the fire spread towards our row of shop-houses.

During the conflagration, I was very frightened and could only pray and beg God to save my house and properties. Then, a miracle happened. Just as the raging fire began to consume the house next to mine there was a sudden change in the direction of the wind which drove the fire back to where it came from. After some time the fire was brought under control, but about 200 people were made homeless. The fire started at No. 156 and was put off at No. 166. My house was just next to No. 166 but my home was spared. Indeed, had it not been for the wonderful grace of God, our future would have

been ruined. Many of the neighbouring residents who knew that I believe in Jesus were all surprised. They commented, "Idol worshippers pray for blessings and receive disasters instead; but these people who believe in Jesus are not harmed."

During the days of my youth, I came to believe in Jesus when I was in my hometown in Fukien, in mainland China. Later I came to West Malaysia alone to seek a fortune but led a poverty-stricken life instead. I was married in Ipoh and brought my wife and children to Singapore to set up a business. Under the abundant grace of the Lord Jesus, and also through our labour, we managed to own this restaurant. The Lord had granted me to possess this piece of property which is all that I have. Undoubtedly, everything would have been consumed by the fire, had it not been for the special protection of God.

The next day was the Sabbath day, so I brought my whole family to church to express our gratitude to the Lord God for His grace, and glorified Him by witnessing to the congregation. I hope that by publishing this witness, it will enable everyone to join me in glorifying our Heavenly Father who has shown me His wonderful grace.

Hallelujah! Amen.

(Singapore, Ong Bock Kim)
(10.9.1971)

SPIRITUAL NURTURE

I pommel my body and subdue it, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified (1 Cor 9: 27).

Importance of Spiritual Nurture

A. for our own salvation

1. The Lord said, "He who does the will of my Father who is in heaven shall enter the kingdom of heaven" (Mt 7: 21).
2. James said, "Faith apart from works is dead" (Jas 2: 26).
3. John said, "He who does not love remains in death" (1 Jn 3: 14).
4. The Bible says, "No one will see the Lord without holiness" (Heb 12: 14).
5. Paul said, "I pommel my body for the sake of salvation" (1 Cor 9: 27).

B. for the salvation of others

1. The Lord saves us in order that we may save others (1 Pet 2: 9).
2. What Paul did was to save some by all means (1 Cor 9: 22).
3. Some may be won by our good behaviour (1 Pet 3: 1-2).
4. We should rather suffer wrong and be defrauded in order that some one may be saved (1 Cor 6: 7-8).
5. We must never do anything that would cause another person's fall (1 Cor 8: 13; 10: 32, 33).

C. for the glory of God

1. We should glorify God in our body (1 Cor 6: 20).
2. We are created for God's glory (Is 43: 7).
3. For becoming "flesh made Word", we must be like Christ in order that God may be glorified (Phil 1: 21; Mt 6: 14-16).
4. The name of God should not be slandered by our evil doings (Rom 2: 23-24).
5. Whatever we do, we should do all to the glory of God (1 Cor 10: 31).

D. so that God may be with us

1. We must always do what is pleasing to God so that God will be with us (Jn 8: 29).
2. We must keep God's commandments in order to have our prayers answered (1 Jn 3: 22).
3. A sinner will never win in a battle (Josh 7: 1-12).
4. Elisha received great power because he was a holy man of God (2 Kings 4: 9).
5. To be a vessel for noble use we should strive for holiness (2 Tim 2: 21).

Aspects of Spiritual Nurture

A. Sincerity (Honesty)

1. Worship God in truth.

- (a) We must worship God in truth (Jn 4: 24).
- (b) We should go to the house of the Lord to hear His word with sincerity (Ps 122: 1; Ezek 33: 30–31).
- (c) We should worship God with reverence and awe (Heb 12: 28).
- (d) The Lord reveals His mighty power to help those who worship Him in truth and sincerity (2 Chron 16: 9).

2. Only those who are honest and sincere will be chosen as God's servants.

- (a) One who fears God and is absolutely sincere and honest, and rejects wealth procured through illegal means shall be chosen as leaders (Ex 18: 21).
- (b) Abraham was chosen because of his faith (Neh 9: 8).
- (c) Jesus praised Nathanael because of his guilelessness (Jn 1: 47).

3. Speak the truth.

- (a) Be not double-tongued (1 Tim 3: 8; Mt 5: 39).
- (b) Speak no fair and flattering words (Rom 16: 18).
- (c) Speak no lies (Prov 12: 22; 19: 9).
- (d) Do not spread rumours (Prov 11: 13; 16: 28).
- (e) Do not gossip (Rom 1: 30).
- (f) Speak the truth only (Eph 4: 15; Ps 15: 1–2).
- (g) Keep your words (Ps 15: 4).
- (h) To pay what you vow (Eccles 5: 4–7; Judg 11: 30–40).

(i) Mean what you say (Ps 28: 3).

- Joab did not mean what he said (2 Sam 20: 9–10).
- Absalom did not mean what he said (2 Sam 15: 1–6).
- Judas did not mean what he said (Mt 26: 49–50).

4. Faithfulness comes from sincerity.

(a) Servants of God must be faithful to their works (but faithfulness comes from sincerity).

- It is required of stewards that they be found trustworthy (1 Cor 4: 1–2).
- Words of God are entrusted to faithful men (2 Tim 2: 1–2).
- A faithful messenger refreshes the spirit of his masters (Prov 25: 13).

(b) A faithful man shows no favour.

- He does not please man but God (Gal 1: 10; Col 3: 22–23).
- Nathan, on receiving the word of God, scolded David (2 Sam 12: 7–19).

• Paul opposed Peter without reserve (Gal 2: 11–15).

(c) A faithful man is responsible for his work.

- He devotes himself to his duties day and night (1 Tim 4: 15; 2 Cor 11: 23–29).
- He does not slack in his work (Jer 8: 11; Ezek 13: 10–12).
- He carries out his duty to the end (Jn 10: 11; Acts 20: 22–24).

B. Love

1. The importance of love.

- (a) Love is more important than eloquence, knowledge and faith (1 Cor 13: 1–3).
- (b) Love can edify others most (1 Cor 8: 1; Gal 5: 6).
- (c) Love is most convincing (2 Cor 5: 14–15; Song 2: 4).
- (d) Love fulfills the law (Rom 13: 8–10).
- (e) He who loves his brother loves God (1 Jn 4: 20–21; Mt 25: 40).
- (f) The Kingdom of God is for those who have love (Mt 25: 34–40; 1 Jn 4: 16–17).

2. Love others' souls.

- (a) We should have great anxiety for the unsaved ones (Rom 9: 1–3; Acts 18: 5, 24–25).
- (b) We should willingly spend and be spent (our lives) for the souls of others (2 Cor 12: 15).
- (c) We should sacrifice our lives for the souls of others (1 Thess 2: 7–9; 1 Jn 3: 16).
- (d) We should do all these for the sake of saving more souls (1 Cor 9: 19–23).

3. Care for the physical needs of others.

- (a) Remember the poor (Gal 2: 10).
- (b) Help our brothers in need (1 Jn 3: 16–18; Acts 20: 34–35).
- (c) Have pity on our brothers who are sick (Jas 5: 14–16; Mk 1: 40–41).
- (d) Take care of orphans and widows (Jas 1: 27; Ex 22: 22–24).

4. The meaning of love.

- (a) Love does not insist on its own way (1 Cor 13: 5; Gen 13: 8–9).
- (b) Love is not resentful (1 Cor 13: 5; Gen 50: 15–21).
- (c) Love is not jealous (1 Cor 13: 4; 1 Sam 23: 16–17).
- (d) Love does no wrong to a neighbour (Rom 13: 8–10; 2 Kings 6: 20–23).
- (e) Love is to do good to one's enemies (Lk 6: 27–28; 23: 34).
- (f) Love our neighbours as ourselves (Mt 22: 39–40; Lk 10: 27–37).

C. Holiness

1. The importance of holiness.

- (a) God hates immorality (Heb 1: 9; Num 25: 9–11).
- (b) God does not listen to the prayers of sinners (Jn 9: 31; Is 59: 1–2).
- (c) God will not be with sinners (Josh 7: 11–12, 25).
- (d) No one will see the Lord without holiness (Heb 12: 14; Gal 5: 19–21).

2. Only a holy man is entrusted by God.

- (a) If we purify ourselves we will be vessels for noble use (2 Tim 2: 21).
- (b) The great prophet, Elijah, was pure in heart (1 Kings 17: 8–9, 18).
- (c) Elisha was entrusted by God because of his holiness (2 Kings 4: 9, 27).

3. Treat the opposite sex in all purity.

- (a) Treat the opposite sex in all purity (1 Tim 5: 2).

- (b) Keep our hearts from lust (Mt 5: 28).
- (c) Samson was defeated by a woman (Judg 16: 4–21).
- (d) Joseph dared not do evil because he feared God (Gen 39: 7–12).
4. **Be pure in speech.**
- (a) Let no evil talk proceed from the mouth (Eph 4: 29; 5: 3).
- (b) Avoid levity (Eph 5: 4).
- (c) Foul talk will stain the whole body (Jas 3: 1–6).
- (d) Isaiah knew that he was not pure in words (Is 6: 1–5).
5. **Be pure in sight.**
- (a) The lust of the eyes comes from Satan (1 Jn 2: 15–16).
- (b) David sinned against God owing to the lust of the eyes (2 Sam 11: 2–8).
- (c) Turn our eyes from looking at evil (Job 31: 1; Ps 119: 37).
- (d) Adorn ourselves modestly to avoid tempting others to sin (1 Tim 2: 9–10; 1 Pet 3: 3).
6. **We must be honest in matters of money.**
- (a) Samuel was not greedy for gain during his life (1 Sam 12: 1–5).
- (b) Paul coveted no one's silver or gold or apparel (Acts 20: 33–35).
- (c) Do not use godliness as a means for gain (1 Tim 6: 5; 2 Cor 2: 7).
- (d) Balaam (2 Pet 2: 15), Gehazi (2 Kings 5: 20–27), and Judas (Jn 12: 4–6) failed in life because of their greed for money.
7. **Do not defile ourselves with wine (Dan 1: 8).**
- (a) Wine will make us forget God's decree (Prov 31: 4–5).
- (b) Wine will lead one into acts of fornication (Gen 19: 30–38).
- (c) Drunkards will not inherit the Kingdom of God (1 Cor 6: 10; Gal 5: 21).
- (d) Do not look at wine when it is red and sparkles in the cup (Prov 23: 31–32).
- We should strive to be holy in every way (1 Pet 1: 15–16; 1 Thess 5: 23).
- D. **Humbleness and Gentleness (Mt 11: 29)**
- Humbleness**
1. **The importance of humbleness.**
- If we are humble we will be able to:
- (a) walk with God (Mic 6: 8)
- (b) receive grace from God (1 Pet 5: 5)
- (c) receive honor from God (Prov 18: 12)
- (d) be saved by God (Ps 76: 9)
- (e) find peace for our souls (Mt 11: 29).
2. **The humble one will not be self-contented because he:**
- (a) counts others better than himself (Phil 2: 3)
- (b) is never conceited (Rom 12: 16)
- (c) never justifies himself as a righteous one (Lk 18: 14–19)
- (d) is willing to accept advice (Prov 15: 31–33; 25: 12).

3. The humble one does not seek his own glory.

- (a) Jesus did not seek His own glory (Jn 8: 50; 5: 41).
- (b) A humble man does not seek respect from others (Prov 25: 27; Mt 23: 5–7).
- (c) We must not boast about ourselves (Prov 27: 1–2; Dan 4: 28–31).
- (d) We must give all glory to the Lord (Ps 96: 7–8; 115: 1).

4. We should willingly humble ourselves to serve others.

- (a) The Lord came not to be served but to serve (Mt 20: 28).
- (b) Jesus humbled himself and washed the disciples' feet (Jn 13: 12–17; Phil 2: 6–8).
- (c) Paul imitated Jesus in order to be a slave for all (1 Cor 9: 19; Acts 20: 18–19).
- (d) Jesus said, "Let the leader be as one who serves" (Lk 22: 24–27).

Gentleness

1. Speak graciously (Col 4: 6).

- (a) A soft answer turns away wrath (Prov 15: 1).
- (b) A soft tongue will break a bone (Prov 25: 15).
- (c) Gideon spoke graciously to turn away the people's wrath (Judg 8: 1–3).
- (d) Rehoboam answered harshly and this caused his people to rebel against him (1 Kings 12: 12–16).

2. Be slow to anger (Jas 1: 19).

- (a) He who is slow to anger has great understanding (Prov 14: 29–30; 19: 11).
- (b) Be not quick to anger (Eccles 7: 9).

(c) Pressing anger produces strife (Prov 30: 32–33).

(d) He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty (Prov 16: 32).

(e) Deference will make amends for great offences (Eccles 10: 4).

3. Endure pain while suffering unjustly.

(a) When Jesus was reviled, He did not revile in return, and when He suffered, He did not threaten (1 Pet 2: 22–23; Is 53: 7–9).

(b) Jesus endured pain while suffering unjustly (1 Pet 2: 19–21; Is 50: 7).

(c) We should follow Jesus' example (1 Pet 2: 21).

(d) We should not be quarrelsome but be kindly to everyone (2 Tim 2: 24–26).

- Moses could perform the most difficult tasks because of his meekness (Num 12: 3).

E. Justice

1. Treat everyone justly.

(a) Do not judge others according to their appearance (1 Sam 16: 6–9).

(b) Do not place importance on the rich and despise the poor (Jas 2: 1–4).

(c) Do not be partial to the poor or defer to the rich (Lev 19: 15).

2. Judge impartially.

(a) Partiality in judging is not good (Prov 24: 23–24; 28: 21).

- Pilate freed the criminal, Barabbas, to satisfy the crowd (Mk 15: 14–15).

(b) Do not listen to only one side of the story in any judgment (Prov 18: 17; Jn 7: 50–51).

- David only listened to Ziba and wrongly judged Mephibosheth (2 Sam 16: 1–4; 19: 24–30).

(c) Do not believe witnesses blindly (Prov 18: 17; Jn 7: 50–51).

- Jezebel put Naboth to death by engaging false witnesses (1 Kings 21: 8–14).

(d) Do not convict a person basing only on material evidence.

- Joseph's master put Joseph into prison without investigating how the garment came to be in the hands of his wife (Gen 39:11–20).

3. Stand up for justice bravely.

(a) John the Baptist condemned Herod's unlawful act (Mt 14: 3–11).

(b) Joseph, a member of the council, did not consent to their purpose and deed (i.e. killing Jesus) (Lk 23: 50–53).

(c) We must aim at righteousness (2 Tim 2: 22).

(d) Righteousness delivers one from death (Prov 10: 2).

F. Obedience

1. The importance of obedience.

(a) By Adam's disobedience, many were made sinners (Rom 5: 19).

(b) By Jesus' obedience many are made righteous (Rom 5: 19).

(c) To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken

than the fat of rams (1 Sam 15: 22).

2. Be obedient to the truth.

(a) The Word of God (the bible) is the truth (Mt 5: 18).

(b) Those who disobey the Word will stumble (1 Pet 2: 8).

(c) Those who disobey the Word will be judged (Jn 12: 48).

(d) Those who obey the Word will be saved (Gen 6: 22, 7: 5; Mk 16: 10).

3. Obey God's Will.

(a) We should find out what the will of God is and then do it (Rom 12: 2).

(b) Do the will of God like Jesus did (Heb 10: 5–8).

(c) Jesus became obedient unto death, even death on a cross (Mt 26: 39–46; Phil 2: 8).

(d) Paul did not account his life of any value if only he might accomplish the will of God (Acts 20: 22–24; 21: 11–14).

4. Obey the church.

(a) The Church represents Jesus. To obey the church is to obey Jesus (Mt 18: 17–18; Lk 10: 16).

(b) Peter, John and the rest of the apostles took orders from the Church (Acts 8: 14–17; 11: 22–24).

(c) When faced with contentions over some doctrines, Paul went to Jerusalem to seek advice from the apostles and he adhered to their decisions (Acts 15: 1–6; 16: 4–5).

5. **Be submissive to one another.**

- (a) The young should be submissive to the elderly (1 Pet 5: 5).
- (b) The old should also listen to the young (Job 32: 6–10).
- (c) Everyone should respect the spiritual gifts of others and be submissive to one another (Rom 12: 3–6; 1 Cor 12: 8–26).
- (d) Korah and his people were put to death because of their disobedience to their leader (Num 16: 1–49).

G. Courage (Faith)

1. **A leader should have courage through his faith.**

- (a) God's workers are good soldiers of Christ Jesus (2 Tim 2: 3).
- (b) Divine work is war in which are many difficulties and dangers (Mt 10: 16; Acts 14: 22; 20: 22–24).
- (c) To seek courage through trusting the Lord is essential when working for the Lord (Josh 1: 6, 7, 9, 18; Rev 12: 11).
- (d) Whoever is too timid is not worthy to be a good soldier of the Lord (Judg 7: 2–3).

2. **All great workers are men of good faith who trust in the Lord.**

- (a) When Moses was confronted by difficulties from all sides, he did not fear for he had faith in God (Ex 14: 10–14).
- (b) Joshua exhorted the people of Israel to rely on God in their attack on Canaan (Num 13: 30; 14: 10).

(c) Deborah led the soldiers and encouraged Barak to fight bravely (Judg 4: 9, 14; 5: 12).

(d) With only three hundred men, Gideon fought a winning battle against their enemy through his faith in God (Judg 7: 2–7, 19–23).

(e) David, depending upon God, killed Goliath (1 Sam 17: 31–54).

(f) Elijah alone challenged the eight hundred and fifty false prophets to the truth at Mount Carmel (1 Kings 18: 14–40).

(g) Three youths risked their lives in disobeying the King's order (Dan 3: 16–18).

(h) Peter and John preached the gospel courageously without fear of being imprisoned (Acts 4: 13–21; 5: 26–31).

(i) To accomplish his course, Paul held no regard for his life (Acts 20: 24; 21: 13; 2 Cor 11: 22–27).

3. **The Holy Spirit strengthens us.**

(a) God may grant one to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man (Eph 3: 16; 6: 10).

(b) Peter, who denied knowing Jesus three times, became brave through the strength given by the Holy Spirit (Lk 22: 31–34, 54–62; Acts 4: 16–31).

(c) Be brave in God (1 Cor 16: 13; 2 Tim 1: 7).

H. Patience —

Patience is one of the factors of success.

1. Patience in work

- (a) An apt teacher should be patient and forbearing (Prov 25: 11; Is 40: 11; Gen 33: 13–14; 2 Tim 2: 24–25).
- (b) Great patience is needed to accomplish missionary work (2 Tim 4: 2, 5; Jas 5: 7).
- (c) Moses bore the weight and burden of the people upon himself with patience (Num 11: 11–14; Deut 1: 9–15).
- (d) Paul sacrificed himself in his work for others (2 Cor 12: 15–16; 1 Cor 4: 3–4).

2. Patience in persecution

- (a) We are destined to suffer for His name's sake (Jn 15: 18–21; Acts 9: 15–16).
- (b) We will suffer reviling, persecution, scourging, and imprisonment (2 Cor 11: 23–26).
- (c) The early believers had undergone all kinds of hardship and sufferings (Heb 11: 35–38; Mt 5: 10–12).
- (d) Being exposed to abuse and affliction, we can fulfill the will of God (Heb 10: 32–39).

3. Patience in life

- (a) Our Lord Jesus Christ lived in poverty for our sake (Lk 9: 57–58; 2 Cor 8: 9).
- (b) Moses sacrificed his luxurious life and, along with the people, willingly suffered for the Lord (Josh 11: 24–27).
- (c) Paul endured the lack of daily needs when he worked for God (1 Cor 4: 11; 2 Cor 11: 26–27).
- (d) Willingly suffer poverty with Christ, treat worldly pleasure as unvirtuous and sufferings as glorious (1 Pet 4: 1, 2, 12–13).

Only endurance will bring us spiritual progress, success in our work and ultimately the crown of glory (Mt 24: 13; 2 Tim 4: 6–8).

The above eight aspects do not cover everything. The ultimate object of spiritual nurture is to be like Christ. Christ is "Word made flesh" but Christians should become "flesh made Word" to reflect Christ's image (Phil 1: 21).

The Ways to Spiritual Nurture

A. Read the Bible daily.

1. The Word of God is a light to our paths (Ps 119: 105).

- (a) It directs our way (2 Tim 3: 16–17).
- (b) It reveals to us our true selves (Jas 1: 23).

2. The Word of God is a Christian's spiritual food (Jer 15: 16).

- (a) It helps us grow spiritually (1 Pet 2: 2).
- (b) It strengthens us spiritually (1 Kings 19: 7–8).

3. The Word of God sanctifies us (Jn 17: 17).

- (a) By keeping God's Word we can keep our ways pure (Ps 119: 9).
- (b) God sanctifies the church

through His Word (Eph 5: 26).

B. Be alert at all times.

1. Keep our minds free from evils.

- (a) Our hearts control our actions (Prov 4: 23).
- (b) To have an evil thought is sinful before God (Mt 5: 28).
- (c) Anyone who hates his brother is a murderer (1 Jn 3: 15).
- (d) Pray to God that the thoughts in our hearts will be acceptable in His presence (Ps 19: 14).

2. Watch our speech at all times.

- (a) Do not speak rashly (Ps 106: 33; Jas 1: 19).
- (b) Restrain your words (Prov 17: 27–28).
- (c) Determine not to talk bad about others (Rom 1: 30).
- (d) Pray to the Lord to let the words of our mouths be acceptable in His sight (Ps 19: 14).

3. Watch our conduct at all times (Prov 14: 15).

- (a) Check if what we do is according to the will of God (Rom 12: 2).
- (b) Check if we carry out our words (Rom 2: 21–22; Mt 23: 1–4).
- (c) Ask God to let us realise our faults (Ps 19: 12).
- (d) Ask God to keep us back from presumptuous sins (Ps 19: 13).

C. Exhort one another in Christ.

1. Point out one another's faults.

- (a) Jesus tells us to point out others' faults (Mt 18: 15).
- (b) Paul pointed out the fault of Peter (Gal 2: 11).
- (c) Friends should admonish one another sincerely (Prov 27: 9).

2. Take advice from others.

- (a) Better is open rebuke than hidden love (Prov 27: 5).
- (b) A wise reprovener is like a gold ring or an ornament of gold (Prov 25: 12).
- (c) He whose ear heeds wholesome admonition will gain life (Prov 15: 31–33).

3. Influence one another through good Christian conduct.

- (a) Iron sharpens iron, and one man sharpens another (Prov 27: 17).
- (b) Love the brotherhood (1 Pet 2: 17).
- (c) To aim at good conduct along with those who call upon the Lord from a pure heart (2 Tim 2: 22).

D. Rely on the Holy Spirit.

1. Put to death the deeds of the body by the Spirit.

- (a) Man no longer can do good through his efforts (Jer 13: 23).
- (b) Put to death the deeds of the body by the Spirit (Rom 8: 13).
- (c) Paul was delivered from the body of sin through Jesus Christ (Rom 7: 23–25).

2. We can only be renewed by the Holy Spirit.

- (a) Christians must be a new creation (2 Cor 5: 17).

- (b) We are renewed by the divine power of the Holy Spirit (Ezek 36: 26–27; 1 Sam 10: 6).
 - (c) This new nature is created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness (Eph 4: 20–24).
3. **The power of the Spirit comes from prayer.**
- (a) Pray unceasingly (1 Thess 5: 17; Ps 71: 8).
 - (b) Pray fervently (Rom 12: 12; Heb 5: 7).
 - (c) Pray to be filled with the Spirit and bear the fruits of the Spirit and work out one's own salvation for the glory of God (Eph 5: 18; Rev 22: 1–2; Phil 2: 12–13).



The year 1976 will be over soon! During this end of year, I give thanks to the Lord for His care and protection. I am rather heavily burdened at heart. To be able to live is a great blessing; it is also a burden. For a man who lives has a responsibility towards the Lord who keeps him alive — he must live for the Lord (Rom 14: 7, 8). I look back and wonder how much work and effort I had put in for the Lord. How much harvest had each church or all the churches contributed to the Lord? It would be most regrettable for us to receive the Lord's blessing without being grateful but to use up the ground (Lk 13: 7)!

END OF YEAR WORDS

May the living God sustain us so that we have the opportunity to make new resolutions next year, to help in the holy work and glorify the name of the Lord. The value of life is in being able to serve the Lord and glorify Him! Life will be insignificant and one would be ungrateful to the Lord's love if one does not serve the Lord and glorify Him (1 Cor 6: 20). In order to glorify the Lord, one has to be the light of the world to show one's good works (Mt 5: 14-16). There are more than one way for serving the Lord; in the field of God's work, the work of "sowing" is most lacking in workers. Therefore, it is hoped that true believers who are still living could resolve to contribute towards the preaching of the gospel next year (Jn 4: 34-38). Just think, to how many people out of a world population of about three and a half billion have we testified about the Lord's gospel? Let us not only just realise the commission and emphasize its importance, let us also acknowledge it with actions on our part. Listed below are works which help in the preaching of the gospel to the whole world (Mt 24: 14). Let us choose more than one of these works for our actions in the next year!

1. Pray daily for those who are yet to receive salvation. May the Lord save them;
2. Pray daily for the Lord's workers. May the Lord increase their strength;
3. Pray daily to the Lord to choose His workers to become full-time preachers;
4. Preach the Lord's gospel of salvation to more than one person daily;
5. Distribute evangelical leaflets or booklets to more than one

- person daily;
6. Bring more than one person to attend church services: Evangelical Meeting, Witnessing, children's services, youth services, etc;
 7. Offer monthly towards evangelism-local and overseas literary evangelism, evangelism over the radio/television, and overseas evangelism by full-time evangelists;
 8. Offer yourself to the Lord for the holy work;
 9. Offer your husband to the Lord for the holy work; and
 10. Offer your children to the Lord for the holy work.
- For effective evangelism each

national General Assembly should have an evangelical machinery under the chairmanship of a full-time worker who is responsible for planning and implementation. Every church should place importance on evangelism and hold evangelical meetings either on big or small scale. The International Assembly should send more workers to the various countries to help in evangelical work, and publish more evangelical literature for distribution to the various countries as a forerunner in evangelism.

May we regard the next year as an evangelical year and pray for the successful preparation and implementation of this work (Ps 126: 5, 6).

