

Message Three

**Migration Being the Practical Way to Spread the Church  
and to Carry Out God's Divine Dispensing**

Scripture Reading: 1 Tim. 2:4; John 6:57; John 15:4-5, 16;  
1 Cor. 15:45, 47; Gen. 1:28; Acts 1:8; 8:1, 4; Dan. 11:32

**I. Every believer should be fully engaged in four main realities for carrying out God's divine economy—gaining a full knowledge of the truth, growing in life, increasing the church in numbers locally by bearing remaining fruit, and spreading the churches as the testimony of Jesus universally from city to city, from state to state, from country to country, and from continent to continent until there are local churches everywhere globally; this should be a part of our culture, our way of life—1 Tim. 2:4; John 6:57; Phil. 1:21; John 15:16:**

- A. The believers' knowledge of the truth and growth in life are for the increase and spread of the church, the Body of Christ.
- B. The increase and spread of the church are the goal of our knowing the truth and growing in life, yet the first two have been neglected; thus, the Lord has been restricted, and we have not carried out the recovery in a balanced way.
- C. We should pick up the burden to ensure not only that the churches in the Lord's recovery would increase in number but also that the recovery as a whole would spread; migration is God's heart's desire; it is God's call and our response.
- D. All the churches should follow the pattern in Acts 8:1 and 4 concerning migration; the saints should not stay in a certain place too long; on the contrary, we all should be migrants; we should not be permanently settled:
- E. It is wrong for a church to exist in an area for ten years without spreading to other cities.

**H. Propagation through scattering or migration is the Lord's move today in His Body in this age on the earth; migration is a divine principle in the Bible—Gen. 1:28; Heb. 11:8; Matt. 28:19; Acts 1:8; 8:1, 4:**

- A. Just as the propagation of the first man, Adam, was to be fruitful and multiply (increase) and fill (spread over, Heb. "occupy to the full") the earth, so the propagation of the second man, Christ, should be—Gen. 1:28; Acts 17:26; John 15:4-5; Matt. 28:19; Mark 16:15; Acts 1:8.
- B. In the Bible migration is to "go from your land / And from your relatives / And from your father's house / To the land that I will show you"—Gen. 12:1; Acts 7:3.
- C. Migration is not a movement; it is the move of the one new man, that is, the move of the all-inclusive Christ in His Body.
- D. When the migrants went out from Jerusalem in Acts 8, they did not establish churches of their own; on the contrary, they spread the Body—vv. 14-17.
- E. For many years in the Lord's recovery we have been practicing the matter of migration, first in China, then in Taiwan, and then in the United States:
  - 1. Migration is one of the revelations and practices recovered in the Lord's recovery since 1922 (see *The History of the Church and the Local Churches*, pp. 52-53).
  - 2. Spreading by migration is considered an item of practicality in the church life (see *The Speciality, Generality, and Practicality of the Church Life*, pp. 69-70).

**III. Migration as a means to increase and spread the church life in the Lord's recovery uniquely matches the God-ordained way to practice the church life for the building up of the Body of Christ; thus, the two practices strengthen one another—Matt. 28:19-20; 24:14; Eph. 4:16:**

- A. Migration is for the spreading of the church life:

"Because the church is universal, it is also spreading. The most blessed church is the church that spreads the most. If there is a local church that never spreads, it will have more and more

problems until **it** becomes very weak. On the one hand, we must be careful and serious about the spreading of the church, not being loose or careless and using human methods to promote it. We must allow the Lord to work. On the other hand, we must be clear that the church needs to spread, and we must do our best to raise *up* churches in every place. Although this does not depend on human effort, we should not limit the spreading" (*The Three Aspects of the Church, Book 2: The Course of the Church*, pp. 32-33).

- B. In the past the spreading of the church to a new place required many saints for the big meeting church life, and it also required gifted speakers to maintain those big meetings as **well** as competent elders to shepherd the saints. In addition, the financial requirement to rent, build, or buy a big building as the center of the church life was often difficult.
- C. Today, in the age of the God-ordained way, each member has the organic function of begetting new believers, shepherding them in their homes, perfecting them in the small group meetings, and prophesying in the district meetings for the building up of the Body of Christ. Thus, the practice of the small meeting church life greatly reduces the difficulties of migration.
- D. Furthermore, the practice of migration opens many new places as opportunities for the saints to practice the church life. New places also mean new markets of people— seeking ones, sinners, and often students—for us to labor on as material for God's building. Everywhere in America people are waiting to be introduced to the unsearchably rich gospel and God's economy:
  - 1. The basic principle of the church is that it **is** eternal and universal, so the church must constantly spread on the earth; the growth of the church and the building up of the church are based on spreading—Acts 1:8; 8:1; 9:3 I.
  - 2. "We must stress very much that every church must be a gospel-spreading and truth-teaching church. This is our commission. Every church and every saint should be such a one...who preaches the gospel and teaches the truth in his neighborhood, among his relatives, classmates, schoolmates, friends, and colleagues. Our Jerusalem is in our town, in our city, in our village. Then we go out to the surrounding places; then we go out to places at a distance; then we would even go to other states and other countries, even to the remotest part of the earth. We must have such a spirit!" (*Elders' Training, Book 8: The Life pulse of the Lord's Present Move*, p. 135)
- E. The truth in the Lord's recovery has been brought to its consummation in the high peak of the divine revelation. The practice of the church life has been perfected in the God-ordained way. The oneness in the Lord's recovery has been established through the practice of blending in every way, by practicing one work for the one Body of Christ and by all the saints living under the vision of the New Jerusalem. Our portion today is to practice and to spread all that the Lord has given us for the establishing of His kingdom on earth.

#### **IV. The saints in all the churches should be encouraged to migrate; if the saints in a certain locality do not migrate, eventually that locality will become a "Dead Sea":**

- A. If the church in a particular locality is to avoid becoming such a "Dead Sea," a "canal" must be dug to allow the "water" to flow out.
- B. Furthermore, if "water" is allowed to flow out, more "water" will flow in, just as the experience of the church in Jerusalem was in the book of Acts:
  - 1. Every church should be like a hose that is open at both ends; when a hose is opened in this way, water is able to flow in and out.
  - 2. However, if the water is not able to flow out of the hose, nothing more will be available to flow **in**.
- C. The more a church gives up for migration, the more it gets; the more it keeps, the more it loses:
  - 1. Do not try to keep people; do your best to give them for the Lord's spread.
  - 2. Do not be narrow-sighted, thinking that you will lose something; you will never lose; even if you lose on the earth, surely you will gain in the heavens.

- D. However, since the churches in America have not regularly practiced migration for many years, both the number of saints and the number of churches have fallen far short of the pattern and goals set by Brother Lee (see attached chart).
- E. We must repent for our past failure and seriously endeavor to change the present situation among the churches in America.
- F. Brother Lee testified of his own dispositional reluctance to spread the Lord's testimony by going to new places:
  1. "In considering my history in the work, my problem is **that I** have a tendency to remain in one place. Whenever I begin to work in a certain place, I have no desire to move anywhere else. This weakness makes it impossible for the work to expand. Therefore, the Lord has always disciplined me. He has stirred up different circumstances to force me to move from one place to another" (*The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1968, Vol. 2, pp. 227-228, available in November 2009*).
  2. "This [a monetary gift given to Brother Lee so that he could go to America] occurred in 1938, but it was not until 1958, twenty years later, that **I** went to the United States. I recount these stories so that we can see how our natural disposition can limit the Lord's work. I am convinced that if **I** did not have such a disposition, the Lord would have been able to spread much more through me" (p. 231).
  3. "In my whole life, the greatest price I have paid is for the work in America. **I** cannot say how great this price was. It was entirely because of my dullness in following Him that the Lord had to chastise me in order to send me to America. If we have a feeling from the Lord to go abroad for His propagation, we should go and avoid suffering the Lord's discipline. After we have worked to a certain extent in a place, we should go out and propagate. I recount all these matters so that we can all go before the Lord to see that our work needs to spread out. We have not accomplished enough" (p. 233).

**V. Brother Witness Lee encouraged the churches to give up to ten percent of the saints each year for migration to carry out the spread of the Lord's recovery over the earth (see *The Holy Word for Morning Revival, Migration for God's Move to Carry Out His Economy, pp. 37-39, 46*):**

- A. May we open our mind and our heart to be broadened and to be full of faith concerning the future of the Lord's recovery in America and around the world. We should not be discouraged by any situation. Rather, **let** us exercise our spirit of faith to dream with Brother Lee!
- B. "We have the dream that one day there will be five hundred thousand Taiwanese young people knocking on doors all over the earth, and by their door-knocking the Lord Jesus will return" (*A Blessed Human Life, p. 35*).
- C. "I hope that some day many from Taiwan will go to Thailand. I do not have the time to pour out what is on my heart. I hope that Taiwan will be taken. Then all the saints from Taiwan can go to Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, and even to India, Ceylon, Pakistan, and the Arabian countries. This is all on my heart. Do not be narrow. We are taking a new way to carry out the Lord's recovery...Perhaps one day a good number will go out from the United States to the Philippines. **If** fifty would go to the Philippines under my instruction, they could conquer the entire country for Christ and the church" (*Elders' Training, Book 8: The Life pulse of the Lord's Present Move, p. 126*).
- D. "I feel that some brothers, especially from the Orange County area of California, should pick up the burden to move to where the Lord has a need. Many of you have been under this ministry and the practice of the church life for many years. According to your consideration, you do not know much or have much. I believe, however, that when you pick up a burden from the Lord to go to another place, you will discover that actually, comparatively speaking, you know a lot and can do a lot. Some places need someone who has had some experience in the church life for *a* number of years. The saints who have been with us in Orange County under the

ministry for over eight years have unconsciously and unknowingly had something deposited in them. If some of these saints who love the Lord enter into an environment where their experience is needed, they would be very useful" (*Elders' Training, Book 5: Fellowship Concerning the Lord's Up-to-Date Move*, p. 129).

- E. "However, today the whole world is opened to the Lord's recovery. This is not an exaggeration. If we have one thousand brothers and sisters, each one can immediately be sent out, because Western Europe is opened, New Zealand is opened, Australia is opened, and even Eastern Europe, Africa, South America, and Central America are all opened up. Every letter sent to us from the major continents all over the globe has fellowshipped with us regarding the need for people to go. But where are the people?" (pp. 52-53)
- F. "If Taiwan is to produce five hundred thousand brothers and sisters for the spread of the gospel overseas, then we need to have five million saints in Taiwan so that one out of every ten saints can go out. The people from Taiwan gospelizing the entire world, and the brothers and sisters from Taiwan trekking all over the earth—what a wonderful prospect that would be! Where will you go—to Africa, South America, Central America, North America, Eastern Europe, or Western Europe? We can pray to the Lord, 'O Lord, where should I go? O Lord, where do You want me to go?' May we all answer the Lord, 'O Lord, here am I; send me' " (p. 58).

**VI. We must be like those in Judges 5 who made "great resolutions in heart" and had "great searchings of heart" (vv. 15-16); we must achieve something for the Lord; Daniel 11:32 says, "The people who know their God will show strength and take action"; especially in these days in the Lord's recovery, we need to be those who show strength and take action.**

- A. In spite of the shortages felt by Brother Lee, the Lord used him to bring forth a great revival in Cheefoo at the end of 1942 and the beginning of 1943. That revival resulted in the migration of many hundreds of saints. "We met continuously for almost one hundred days, and every day we had new leadings from the Lord. The brothers and sisters consecrated themselves to the extent that every individual and every home was consecrated, and they offered all their possessions, including house deeds, property deeds, stocks, and bank deposits" (*A Blessed Human Life*, pp. 68-69).
- B. The Saturday before the revival broke out, Brother Lee wrote in his diary:  
"December 26: May all the oldness among the brothers and sisters be swept away by the Lord with the passing of 1942! May the revival come with 1943! May the first day of 1943 see the beginning of all things new!  
"The reason why we are so silent, the reason we do not have the ambition to spread the Lord's kingdom, the reason why we do not have the power and the boldness to spread the Lord's gospel, the reason why we do **not** have the living faith, and the reason why we are fearful, is that we do not have a thorough consecration; we have not denied living for ourselves, and we have not lived for the Lord absolutely!  
"The reason why we do not have the authority to cast out the demons or have the gift of healing is that we are not absolute in living for the Lord! If we are absolute for the Lord, as Peter was at Pentecost, we will be like Peter, who said, '**In** the name of the Lord Jesus, rise up and walk.' To say that, we must also be able to say, 'Silver and gold have I none.' Only then will our words be effective! If we live absolutely for the Lord, we will have all kinds of gifts and authority.'" (unpublished)