

2017 NJ Perfecting Training

General Subject:

**Gaining Christ in His Excellency to
Build Up His Body in All Aspects**

July 28-30, NJ Churches

Name _____

Church _____

**GENERAL SUBJECT:
GAINING CHRIST IN HIS EXCELLENCY TO BUILD UP HIS BODY IN ALL
ASPECTS**

Message One

Gaining Christ in His Excellency to Build Up His Body in All Aspects

Scripture Reading: Phil. 3:7-8, 12-14; Heb. 11:24-26; Dan. 7:9-10; 1 John 2:15; 5:4-5; Psa. 73:25

- I. The entire world situation is under the rule of the heavens by the God of the heavens to match His economy for Christ; the state of things in the world situation is for one thing—the Lord's recovery—Dan. 7:9-10; 4:34-35:**
- A. What is being recovered today is God's economy, which is focused on the central work of God—to work Himself in Christ into His chosen and redeemed people, making Himself one with them for His expression—Eph. 3:16-17a; 4:4-6.
 - B. According to His economy, God will rule over the world, produce a situation for Israel to be His elect, gain the church as His mysterious people, and have the nations to be the peoples in the eternal kingdom of God; if we see this, we will know where we are, and we will know the meaning of our human life—2 Tim. 1:9; Rom. 8:28-30.
 - C. Those who live Christ, who live in the spirit, are the actual Body of Christ corporately; eventually the Body life will reach the reality of Romans 12, and this will be the preparation of the bride for the Lord's coming back—Eph. 4:16, 24; Rev. 19:7.
- II. In order to live and magnify Christ for the church life in God's economy, we also need to pursue and gain Christ; we live and magnify Christ in order to build up the Body of Christ—Phil. 3:12:**
- A. To pursue in Greek means to persecute; to pursue Christ is to persecute Christ in a positive sense; before Paul was saved, he persecuted Christ; after he was saved, he pursued Christ to such an extent that he persecuted Christ, but in a positive way.
 - B. Living and magnifying Christ is the first condition, first term, first requirement, for us to live the church life in God's economy; we need to be those who desire to gain Christ to such an extent that we would lay hold of Him, not letting Him get away from us—v. 12.
- III. In the Bible there are two examples; one is Moses in the Old Testament; the other is Paul in the New Testament; both were willing to give up the enticing, tempting, and entangling world to gain Christ—Heb. 11:24-26; Phil. 3:7-8:**
- A. “By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, Choosing rather to be ill-treated with the people of God than to have the temporary enjoyment of sin, Considering the reproach of the Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he looked away to the reward”—Heb. 11:24-26:
 - 1. During Moses' time, to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter was an enjoyment to the life of the soul; but Moses refused this, choosing rather to be ill-treated with the people of God than to have the fleeting enjoyment of sin; the enjoyment in Egypt, that is, the enjoyment in the world, is sinful in the eyes of God—v. 25.
 - 2. Moses esteemed the reproach of the Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; he made an estimation and reckoned that no matter how noble and precious the treasures of this world are, they cannot be compared with Christ—v. 26.
 - B. On account of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ, Paul counted all things to be loss,

- and he suffered the loss of all things, counting them as refuse that he might gain Christ; Paul's goal was the fullest enjoyment and gaining of Christ—Phil. 3:7-8, 13-14:
1. Paul's eyes were opened to see the excellency of the knowledge of the wonderful, all-inclusive Christ; on account of this excellency, he counted as loss all things, whether they related to religious gain or natural gain—vv. 4-8.
 2. Since our goal is to gain Christ, we should forsake all other things and pursue nothing but Christ.
- C. You are standing at the edge of a cliff; on the one side is Christ, and on the other side is the world; you can step over to the side of the world and fall, or you can step to the side of Christ and be lifted up; today I have a burden to save your life; this is an eleventh-hour decision; you must not make the wrong choice—1 John 2:15; James 4:4:
1. Egypt is a place that is easy to return to; this message is my warning; today, not only have I burned the bridge, but I have even lost my way of return.
 2. My burden this time is to infuse grace into you, that hopefully through the grace of the Lord your problems could be solved once for all and that you could say to the Lord, "Lord, burn my bridge! I cannot burn it, but please burn it for me." I hope that when you go home tonight, you would all have a bridge-burning prayer.
- D. We should give up the world to obtain the Lord Jesus, who is the all-inclusive Christ; these ones who have given up the world to gain Christ are working to complete the New Testament ministry; the work of the New Testament ministry is first the building up of the church of God—1 John 5:4-5.
- IV. To have the fullest enjoyment and gaining of Christ, we must keep our consecration fresh and up to date with the Lord for His present recovery—Psa. 43:4; 73:25; 110:3; 2 Cor. 5:14-15; Rom. 14:7-9:**
- A. Every morning we must consecrate ourselves sincerely to the Lord for the simple purpose of enjoying and experiencing Him—cf. Phil. 3:13-14.
 - B. Every day we need to spend time to be with the Lord privately and secretly to have intimate fellowship with Him; we need to enjoy the Lord in the Word every day early in the morning to have a new start of each day—Matt. 14:22-23; Psa. 119:147-148.
 - C. We need to deal with sins thoroughly so that there is nothing between us and the Lord—1 John 1:7, 9; cf. Ezek. 1:22, 26.
 - D. We need to maintain our fellowship with the Lord moment by moment, living a life of prayer—2 Cor. 13:14; Phil. 4:6-7.
 - E. We need to redeem our time and spend our energy to be saturated and soaked with God's holy Word; we should be filled in spirit by rejoicing always, praying unceasingly, and giving thanks in everything—2 Tim. 3:16-17; Col. 3:16; Eph. 5:18; 1 Thes. 5:16-19.
 - F. The goal of our Christian life is the fullest enjoyment and gaining of Christ; "the one thing" in Philippians is the pursuing of Christ to gain Him, lay hold of Him, possess Him, and enjoy Him—1:20-21; 2:2, 5; 3:7-14.
- V. "Through the bountiful supply of the Lord's sevenfold intensified Spirit, we need to be willing to pay the price and not to care for any opposition that we may build up the universal Body of Christ in all aspects to accomplish the eternal intention of God and attain His ultimate purpose, which is the New Jerusalem as His divine enlargement and expression for eternity." (Brother Lee's Fellowship for the Blending Conference of the Churches in Taiwan, June 1996, the Banner of "Our Present Urgent Duties in the Lord's Recovery Today")**

**GENERAL SUBJECT:
GAINING CHRIST IN HIS EXCELLENCY TO BUILD UP HIS BODY IN ALL
ASPECTS**

**Message Two
The Building Up of God's House (1)—the Praying Group**

Scripture Reading: Heb. 3:3-6; John 15:7, 16; Matt. 18:18-20; Acts 1:14; Eph. 4:3; 1 Cor. 9:16-27

- I. **As the Apostle sent by God and from God to us, Christ builds the house of God; He is the Builder of the house, and we are the house; this means that He is building us together as the house of God; He is the universal Builder, the unique Builder in the entire universe—Heb. 3:3, 6.**
- II. **For the universal spreading of Christ as the true vine, we need to have effective prayers for fruit-bearing; prayer is man cooperating and co-working with God, allowing God to express Himself through man and thus accomplish His purpose—John 15:7, 16; Rom. 8:26-27; James 5:17:**
 - A. We need to pray in the Lord's name as the issue of our abiding in the Lord and of His words abiding in us:
 1. When we abide in the Lord and let His words abide in us, we actually are one with Him, and He works within us, and there will be a desire in us that comes out of His words, and His desire will become our desire—John 15:7.
 2. To ask in the Lord's name requires us to abide in the Lord and allow Him and His words to abide in us so that we may actually be one with Him; this kind of asking is related to fruit-bearing and will surely be answered by the Father—vv. 7, 16.
 - B. To abide in the Lord as the true vine is to be one spirit with Him and to live in the mingled spirit; the Christian life is a life of abiding in the Lord as the true vine—v. 1, 4-5; 1 Cor. 6:17.
- III. **In Matthew 18:19 the Lord charged us to be in harmony when two of us would pray together for anything:**
 - A. In this verse the Lord used the word harmony, which is *sumphoneo* in Greek, meaning "to be in harmony, or accord" and referring to the harmonious sound of musical instruments or voices; when we have the one accord, we become a melody to God.
 - B. Here the Lord said that if His disciples pray in one accord, their prayer will surely be heard and answered; if we are not in one accord, God has no way to answer our prayer—Matt. 18:19:
 1. The sickness among us is that we do not have the one accord adequately; because of this, it is hard for the Lord to answer our prayer, especially in the matter of fruit-bearing for the increase of the Lord's recovery—John 15:16.
 2. The grouping of the saints together in the vital groups is to recover us, and to recover us means to heal us, to cure us; the healing that we need is to be grouped together in the adequate accord; the way to touch the sickness that is among us is to have the vital groups—Acts 1:14; 2:46; Phil. 1:27.
 - C. Verse 18 says that we should touch heaven by our binding and releasing prayer; this is the prayer of the vital group:
 1. We have to bind with the authority of the heavens by two or three coming together in the principle of the Body, not by ourselves; two or three represent the cooperation of the

Body; these two or three come together to pray in harmony—v. 18.

2. Verse 19 is the practice of a vital group of two or three in harmony touching the very God in heaven; these are the members of a vital group.

IV. A vital group could come into being only by a saint who is desperate and absolute for the increase of the Lord's recovery; such a desperate saint would spontaneously contact others by the Lord's leading and gain some companion or companions for him to have a vital group—Matt. 18:19; Eph. 6:18; Col. 4:2; Acts 13:13; 20:34:

- A. A vital group can be formed only by a saint who is vital; it is only possible to be vitalized if you yourself are pressed by the Lord to pursue Him desperately and absolutely in this matter—Eph. 6:18; 1 Cor. 9:16-27.
- B. Such a desperate saint would spontaneously contact others by the Lord's leading and gain some companion or companions for him to have a vital group—Matt. 18:19.
- C. These will then come together to have intimate and thorough fellowship and begin to vitalize one another; they should definitely and absolutely fulfill the first four basic requirements:
 1. Intimate and thorough fellowship that they may be blended together—1 John 1:3.
 2. Thorough confession of sins, transgressions, defects, wrongdoings, etc.—Heb. 9:14.
 3. Thorough consecration of themselves and of all that they have and do to the Lord—Rom. 12:1-2, 11.
 4. Praying unceasingly that they may be brought into the infilling and the outpouring of the essential and economical Spirit—Acts 2:17-18.

V. We must be in harmony with the fellow-believers and be in one accord with the Body in prayer, which issues in the establishment of the church—Matt. 18:19; Acts 1:14:

- A. To have a prayer partner (or partners) not only can help us to pray better but also can help to sustain our prayer life—Matt. 18:19-20; Dan. 2:17-23.
- B. In order to fight on God's side against Satan, we need to persevere in prayer; this perseverance is needed because the course of the whole world is away from God: to pray is to go against the current, the trend, in the fallen universe.
- C. The vital groups need to gain the proper increase through much prayer and labor:
 1. To build up the vital groups, we need to keep the oneness of the Spirit, that is, the oneness of the Body, in the one accord according to the Lord's desire with much and thorough prayer (Eph. 4:3; Acts 1:14; 4:24); without the one accord we cannot keep the oneness.
 2. In the vital groups we need to be blended by much and thorough prayer, as fine flour of the wheat, with all the members of our group, with the Spirit as the oil, through the death of Christ as the salt, and in the resurrection of Christ as the frankincense, into a dough for the Lord—1 Cor. 5:6-7a; Lev. 2:11-13.

VI. We all need to make a vow to Him concerning our prayer life; "Lord, I mean business with You about this matter of prayer. I call heaven and earth to witness that from this time forth I will have a life of prayer. I will not be a prayerless person. Rather, I will be a praying person." "Lord, I am desperate about this. I offer myself to You so that I may have a prayer life. Lord, keep me in the spirit of prayer. If I forget this or neglect this, I know that You will not forget it. Remind me again and again about prayer."

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Message Three

The Building Up of God's House (2)—the Gospel Living

Scripture Reading: John 15:2-5, 7-12, 16; Phil. 1:19-21; 2:15-16; Acts 5:20; 1 Cor. 9:23; Mark 10: 29-30

- I. We need to see that the cultivating of Christ as the universal vine is God's economy and that in this economy we are the branches of this vine; God's economy is that we bear fruit for the building up, the raising up, of Christ as the universal vine tree—John 15:5, 8, 16:**
- A. God's economy is that we would be fruitful branches; God destined us to be branches that bear fruit so that Christ might be expressed and God might be manifested through us; this is our destiny in God's economy—v. 5.
 - B. Fruit-bearing requires us to abide in the Lord and be built up with others—vv. 4-5; Eph. 2:21-22:
 - 1. Fruit-bearing depends on two kinds of fellowship; the branches of the Lord as the vine, must maintain a proper fellowship with the Lord and simultaneously keep a proper fellowship with all our fellow believers—John 15:4-5, 12; 13:35.
 - 2. Our being built up with others helps our fruit-bearing, and our fruit-bearing is a help to our being built up with others; without the growth in life it is impossible to have the building, similarly, without fruit bearing it is impossible to have the building.
 - 3. We desire to bear solid, weighty fruit of life, fruit that will remain, that will accomplish the Lord's purpose, and that will spread His recovery over all the earth—15:16.
- II. Fruit-bearing is the main thought of John 15; the purpose of the vine with its branches is fruit-bearing; therefore, we need to bear fruit; the more we enjoy the Lord, the more we should bear fruit—vv. 4-5, 16:**
- A. The branches of Christ as the true vine are destined to bear fruit (v. 16); the reason God planned to have so many branches of Christ was for the purpose of bearing fruit; to bear fruit is our destiny.
 - B. If any branch does not bear fruit, it will be taken away (v. 2a, cf. v. 6); to be taken away is to lose the enjoyment of Christ; it is not to perish eternally (cf. 3:16).
 - C. In order to bear fruit, we need to be pruned (v. 2b); pruning implies that there is something excessive that needs to be cut off; in order for us to bear fruit, something deep within us must be cut and pruned; for a branch to bear fruit, it must be new, fresh, and tender; the way to be new, fresh, and tender is to be pruned.
 - D. The way the Lord prunes us is through His word; the more we pray-read the Word, the more we will be pruned and cleansed—John 15:2:
 - 1. Every day we need to be cleansed by eating the Lord's word; when we pray-read a verse in the morning, the word does a work of cleansing in order to carry away all the filthy things in our being, such as unrighteousness, darkness, and any idolatrous or negative things; this kind of cleansing helps us bear fruit—Jer. 15:16; John 15:3.
 - 2. We need to realize that we all have our own disposition, temperament, habits, and ways of doing things, which hinder us from bearing fruit; we need to allow the Lord to prune and deal with our disposition, temperament, habits, and ways—v. 2.

- E. In order to bear fruit, we need to love one another; loving one another requires us to be pruned and cleansed; everything natural must be terminated in order for us to be able to love one another—vv. 12, 17.
- III. The genuine preaching of the gospel is in the way of life; the gospel is not only the preaching of the word but also a life of enjoying the supply of the Body, the bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, to live and magnify Christ—Phil. 1:19-21a; Acts 5:20:**
- A. The preaching of the gospel is the expression of Christ, and bearing fruit is the outworking of the inner experience of life; wherever we are, in school or at the store, among neighbors or among relatives, there must be the magnifying of Christ in our life; we cannot preach the gospel only by our word; we have to preach the gospel by magnifying Christ—John 15:5; Acts 16:23-25, 30.
- B. The most normal Christian life is a life that bears fruit; it is absolutely not normal for a branch on a vine to bear no fruit for many years.
- C. The proper way to bear fruit is to realize that we need a daily living as the branches of the vine, absorbing all the riches of the fatness, the life-juice, of the vine, the rich life of Christ; then spontaneously we will have an overflow of the divine life, which will result in fruit-bearing—John 15:4, 7-11.
- D. From this time on, we must all go to the Lord and say, “Lord, this year I want to live a normal Christian life and a normal church life. I want to be fruitful”; we must go to the Lord to deal with Him thoroughly.
- E. We must be very definite in our going out to preach the gospel; do it regularly, constantly, and definitely; disregard your emotions and just go out; to be sure, door-knocking in this way every week for two hours, at least one person will be saved every two months.
- IV. We must live the gospel living and be desperate and live uniquely for the gospel; what a wonder and what a glory to live uniquely for such a gospel—1 Cor. 9:23; Mark 10: 29-30:**
- A. Today on this earth there is something called the gospel which we are reminded and commanded to live for; from the time we are saved until the time the Lord Jesus comes back, our Christian life should be a gospel-preaching life.
- B. The gospel requiring a practical, real testimony in our daily life; this requires us to be overcomers; it requires a real overcoming life—Rev. 2:7, 11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, 21.
- C. When the young people go to the campuses to preach the gospel, they need a proper daily living; for our gospel preaching we need not only the words spoken out of our mouth, but also a life that shines before men—Phil. 2:15-16.
- D. We should pray for the Lord to strengthen the spirit of the gospel within us so that the fire of the gospel would burn among us; the fire of the gospel needs to be kindled, and everyone needs to pick up this burden—1 Cor. 9:23; Mark 16:15.
- E. We have to burn the campuses and communities with the fire of the gospel, bringing people into the Lord, the value of which will last for eternity—Luke 9:25; 12:49.

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Message Four

The Building Up of God's House (3)—Shepherding One by One

Scripture Reading: John 21:15-17; 1 Thes. 2:7; 1 Pet. 2:2; Heb. 5:14; Acts 20:31, 27; 12:12; 5:42

- I. **The content of God's entire New Testament economy in His complete salvation is Christ as the Son of Man cherishing us and as the Son of God nourishing us; to shepherd people is to cherish and nourish them—Eph. 5:29:**
 - A. Christ as the Son of Man came to redeem us from sin, accomplishing His judicial redemption through His death (1 Tim. 1:15; Eph. 1:7)—cherishing.
 - B. Christ as the Son of God came to impart the divine life into us abundantly, carrying out His organic salvation in His resurrection (John 10:10; 1 Cor. 15:45b)—nourishing.
- II. **The enjoyment of Christ as grace to be our life issues in two things: fruit bearing and shepherding the flock; after we bear the fruit, this fruit becomes a flock of lambs for us to shepherd—John 15:16; 21:15:**
 - A. Our enjoyment of Christ issues not only in fruit bearing but also in lamb feeding; we have to bear fruit to produce life, and we have to take care of the lambs by feeding and nourishing them for the organic building up of the Body of Christ—15:16; 21:15.
 - B. The Lord Jesus tells us in John 15:16 to bear fruit and that our fruit should remain; in John 21 the Lord charges us to feed His lambs (v. 15); to feed the Lord's lambs is the way to insure that our fruit remains.
 - C. As Christ's members we should eat and enjoy Christ, bear fruit, and feed the Lord's lambs; as we enjoy the Lord in the Word, we should take care of unbelievers on one hand and young believers on the other.
- III. **In His heavenly ministry Christ is shepherding people, and we need to cooperate with Him by shepherding people; we have to shepherd the flock and feed the lambs one by one—Heb. 13:20-21; John 21:15-17:**
 - A. We need to exercise to nourish the new believers for our fruit to remain (John 21:15-17; 15:16b) by having home meetings with them; in these home meetings, we can cherish the newly baptized ones as a nursing mother (1 Thes. 2:7) for the organic building up of the Body of Christ.
 - B. The best way to feed the lambs is through the home meetings in the new believers' homes; when we take care of and nourish the new believers, we should be like a nursing mother cherishing her own babes (1 Thes. 2:7), not only feeding them but also caring intimately for them that they may be comforted and encouraged and may feel happy; this can be accomplished through the help of praying together, singing hymns, and reading the Word.
 - C. We also need this kind of personal contact for the feeding of the new believers; we have to feed the new believers one by one; this requires much endeavor and labor—Acts 20:31, 27.
 - D. Our urgent need today is to perfect the saints one by one; there should be not only face-to-face feeding, but also face-to-face teaching; not only should they teach in the meetings, but they have to go to the homes of the saints and teach them mouth to mouth and one by one—vv. 20, 27, 31.

- E. We should nourish them as a nursing mother caring for her own children; we need to be steadfast in practicing the home meetings; we should not carry out the home meetings sporadically; rather, we should do it steadily and continually, fifty-two times a year—1 Thes. 2:7; 1 Pet. 2:2.

IV. The content of the home meetings is the truth in the Lord's recovery; the Lord has shown us that every saint should meet in the homes; we need to pay attention to the use of the Lord's word in a proper way in the home meetings to nourish and lead everyone—Matt. 18:20; Acts 12:5, 12; 5:42:

- A. We cannot be nonchalant in the kind of material we use for the home meetings; we need to spend an adequate amount of time to pray thoroughly, to observe the condition of the brothers and sisters, and to understand the need of all the homes and the groups; we need to know their conditions, and then we should search out the suitable material from our publications—Matt. 24:45.
- B. We need to learn to use the Bible and spiritual publications (for example, *Materials for Shepherding New Believers (96 Topics) in Chinese*) to nourish people—2 Tim. 3:15; Acts 8:35; Luke 24:25-27, 32.
- C. When you go to contact someone, you should open the Bible and read a few verses to him; when you read the important verses to someone and then read the footnotes with him, he will definitely be touched—Acts 8:26-35; Luke 24:16-19.
- D. We need to learn to speak by seizing the opportunity; we must learn to speak in an organic way; we should not preach in a dead way; regarding the truth we must be absolute, but in practice, we must learn to work as the opportunity arises (cf. Q&A in "Audio Cloud" App in Chinese).

V. Among us are a large number of spiritual publications, close to one thousand, on all kinds of topics; every message is appealing; we need to choose appropriate publications and carry two or three with us (for example, *The Mystery of Human Life, The Gospel of God's Economy, Calling on the Name of the Lord, Christ is Spirit and Life, The Economy of God, The All-Inclusive Christ*):

- A. The primary matter is not to promote the books but to stir up the saints' interest in pursuing the truth and to encourage them to enjoy reading the spiritual publications—Jer. 15:16; Psa. 119:103.
- B. The Lord's word will require that we bear the responsibility to labor willingly to zealously encourage and urge everyone in all the local churches to pursue the truth and read the spiritual publications—Col. 4:12; Neh. 8:1-8, 13; 2 Tim. 2:2, 15.

VI. "If we practice these things, there will be a real revival in the Lord's recovery. We must be shepherds with the loving and forgiving heart of our Father God in His divinity and the shepherding and finding spirit of our Savior Christ in His humanity. We also must have the heavenly vision of all the divine and mystical teachings of Christ. Shepherding and teaching are the obligation of the vital groups and the basic way ordained by God to build up the Body of Christ consummating the New Jerusalem"—*The Vital Groups*, pp. 55-56.