

#6 Keeping Ourselves in the One Flow of the Lord's Work for the Spreading of the Church, and Receiving the Lord's Mercy to Be Saved from Satan's Schemes (ITERO) 2018/12/17-12/23

I. The flowing of the divine life, which started on the day of Pentecost and has been flowing throughout all generations to this day, is just one stream for God's goal to build up the church for His corporate expression:

A. When we give the Lord the preeminence in our entire being, making Him our first love, He becomes the divine stream to us, flowing within us and out of us as the first works; the first works are works that are motivated by, issue from, and express the Lord as our first love.

B. Only works that are motivated by the first love are gold, silver, and precious stones.

II. 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:

A. The spreading of the church is brought about by the growth in the Lord's life and the flowing out of the Lord's life, the overflow of life.

B. When the church begins to spread, erroneous concepts are shattered, regardless of whether the concepts are regional, racial, or mutually discriminatory; it is through spreading that all our close-mindedness is eliminated.

C. Acts 8 shows that the first step in the church's spread was to Samaria, and the second step was to Ethiopia, to Africa; this shows that we must preach the gospel to every tribe and tongue and people and nation, because the church is universal and needs to spread. **[Tue]**

D. Acts 9 shows God's choosing of Saul (later Paul), which is against the human concept; our narrow, erroneous human concept needs to be broken and shattered through the spreading of the church; we must believe that a person can be persecuting the church one hour and preaching the gospel the next hour.

E. Acts 10 indicates that the Lord's evangelistic move on earth is under His administration on the throne in heaven and that the gospel needs to be spread to the four corners of the inhabited earth to collect all kinds of unclean (sinful) people, cleansing them with the redeeming blood of Christ and washing them with the renewing Holy Spirit.

F. Acts 13 reveals that in the church in Antioch, the five prophets and teachers who were ministering to the Lord were composed of Jews and Gentiles, each having a different background, education, and status; this indicates that the church is composed of all races and classes of people regardless of their background and that the spiritual gifts and functions given to the members of the Body are not based on their natural status:

① Through these five faithful and seeking members of the Body of Christ, the Lord took a great step to set apart Barnabas and Saul for His work and move to spread the gospel of the kingdom to the Gentile world.

② It was absolutely a move by the Spirit, in the Spirit, and with the Spirit through the coordination of the faithful and seeking members of the Body of Christ on earth with the Head in the heavens.

G. On the apostle Paul's first trip to spread the gospel, he went to Cyprus and then to Asia Minor to establish many local churches.

H. After Paul separated from Barnabas, he went out on his second ministry journey to Europe (Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, Athens, Corinth, and returning through Ephesus back to Antioch).

I. Paul's third journey was from Antioch to Galatia, Phrygia, Ephesus, Macedonia, and Greece to Jerusalem.

J. Paul's fourth journey was from Caesarea to Rome. **[Wed]**

III. We must receive the Lord's mercy to be saved from Satan's schemes to frustrate the spreading and building up of the church, keeping ourselves in the flow of the age for the building up of His Body:

A. We must be saved from outward and dead ordinances, human opinions, and the self with its old concepts; whoever receives mercy from the Lord will be saved in these matters; the degree to which we are saved is the degree to which the church can be built up.

B. We must learn from the lesson of Peter to be saved from the veils of our religious traditions and old background so that we may see and live under the vision of God's eternal economy to hold the truth of the gospel.

C. We must learn from the lesson of Barnabas to be saved from human opinions and natural relationships—disputes that arise among the coworkers because of personal relationships are terrible; remember this well.

D. We must learn from the lesson of Apollos to be saved from a ministry that lacks a complete revelation of God's New Testament economy and from not being fully one with the ministry of the age.

E. We must learn from the lesson of Paul in Acts 16:6-12; these verses indicate the problem of workers coming to a place and tending to become set and settled down, not wanting to move; old relationships, old affections, old inclinations, and old concepts keep us from following the inner leading of the indwelling Spirit:

① The Holy Spirit forbade Paul and his co-workers, and the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them; the Holy Spirit's forbidding separates us, sanctifies us, and the Spirit of Jesus either allows us or does not allow us.

② The Holy Spirit says "no" to sanctify us, and the Spirit of Jesus says "go" to send us out in the humanity of Jesus to accomplish the will of God under the cross. **[Thu]**

F. We must learn from the lesson of Paul to practice the Body life and to take the word of the Spirit through the members of the Body, obeying it as a word from the Head.

G. We must learn from the lesson of the mistake of James and the devastating mixture of the church in Jerusalem:

① Jeremiah spoke of the law of life that could be written upon our hearts, and Paul spoke of the law of the Spirit of life in our spirit, but James treasured and uplifted the law of letters.

② Paul spoke of being crucified with Christ and being conformed to the death of Christ by the power of Christ's resurrection; it is this life that produces the Body life that consummates in the New Jerusalem.

③ In the light of the divine revelation, the greatest lack of James is the cross of Christ; self-cultivation does not carry out God's economy, but self-denial does.

④ James boasted that there were thousands of believing Jews in the church in Jerusalem who were zealous for the law, but Paul was zealous to gain Christ, be found in Christ, know Christ, lay hold of Christ, pursue Christ, and uplift only Christ for the fullest enjoyment of Christ.

H. We must learn from the lesson of Paul to be saved from the mixing of Judaic practices with God's New Testament economy, which is not only erroneous but also abominable in the eyes of God.

I. We must learn from the lesson of Paul's appealing to Caesar, utilizing his Roman citizenship to save himself from his persecutors so that he might fulfill the course of his ministry:

① Paul was willing to sacrifice his life for the Lord, but he still endeavored to live longer that he might carry out the Lord's ministry as much as possible.

② God in His sovereignty rescued Paul so that He might separate him from all the dangerous situations and entrapments and sent him to a quiet prison; this was to afford him a quiet environment and give him time, whether in Caesarea or in Rome, so that through his last Epistles he might release exhaustively to the church throughout the generations the revelation of the mystery of God's New Testament economy that he received from the Lord.

③ The benefit and profit that the church throughout the generations has received from these Epistles will take eternity to measure.

IV. All of us should follow the pattern of the apostle Paul to do the same one work universally for the unique Body:

A. The work in the Lord's recovery is for the building up of the local churches unto the building up of the universal Body of Christ.

B. Today there are four kinds of workers:

① The first kind is the co-workers who match the need of the ministry of God in the present age; this is a small group of people who have been dealt with by the Lord and who are in one accord.

② The second kind is the younger co-workers; they are willing to receive the direction and to come under the coordination of the older co-workers, and they are willing to follow and to learn in humility.

③ The third kind is those who are unwilling to submit to the senior co-workers, who do not belong to the denominations, yet who are happy to remain in fellowship with us.

④ The fourth kind is the preachers and free evangelists among the denominations.

C. What we need today are the first and second kind of co-workers; concerning the third and fourth kind of co-workers, we can only let them choose their own pathway; with some people God has not assigned them to take the same way as we do, and we dare not say anything to them.

D. Whatever the situation may be, we are here to do the work that God has committed to us; we cannot interfere with others' work, and we are not here tearing down others' work.

[Fri][Sat]

Crucial Point①: One divine stream will produce gold, silver and precious stones on the positive side and shatter the racial and close-minded concepts on the negative side

OL1" Positive side" : When we give the Lord the preeminence in our entire being, making Him our first love, He becomes the divine stream to us, flowing within us and out of us as the first works; the first works are works that are motivated by, issue from, and express the Lord as our first love. Only works that are motivated by the first love are gold, silver, and precious stones.

John 4:14 But whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall by no means thirst forever; but the water that I will give him will become in him a fountain of water gushing up into eternal life.

OL2" Negative side" : When the church begins to spread, erroneous concepts are shattered, regardless of whether the concepts are regional, racial, or mutually discriminatory; it is through spreading that all our close-mindedness is eliminated.

Col. 3:11 Where there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all and in all.

The flowing of this stream of the Holy Spirit is the fellowship of the Body of Christ. It is similar to the circulation of the blood in our physical bodies. The blood is flowing all the time from one part to another and then back again. In just such a way the stream of the Holy Spirit as the fellowship of the Body is flowing among the saints upon this earth.

Out of the flowing of the stream come the gold, the pearls, and the precious stones. Look at the picture in Genesis 2. These precious substances are for the building of God's dwelling place. Wherever the flowing is, material will be produced for the building of the church. Look at the tabernacle, the dwelling place of God in the Old Testament. On the shoulder pieces and on the breastplate of the high priest were precious stones set in gold. The apostle Paul tells us that the church is built with gold, silver, and precious stones. These are the materials that come out of the flowing of the current of the Holy Spirit. In Revelation we are told that the entire city, the New Jerusalem, is built with gold, with pearls, and with precious stones. How did all these materials come into being? They came simply from the flowing of the current of the divine life. Where the stream of the divine life is, there some material, some precious material, for the building of the church will come into being. You and I can never produce material for the building of the church. Only the flowing of the divine life, the current of the Holy Spirit, can do this. It has been flowing through the generations and is flowing today, and wherever it goes, gold, pearls, and precious stones are produced for God's building.

The spreading of the church can break through many barriers and eliminate many undesirable practices. In many places where the church is raised up, however, the saints may be narrow-minded. This was the case in Jerusalem. They had many Old Testament traditions and teachings that caused them to close themselves off from others...They sealed themselves up and despised other people; moreover, they did not communicate with others.

When the church begins to spread, erroneous concepts are shattered, regardless of whether the concepts are regional, racial, or mutually discriminatory.

It is through spreading that all our close-mindedness is eliminated. The New Testament shows that not long after the church in Jerusalem was raised up, God seemed to throw a huge stone into her midst; it seemed like a big "bomb," scattering the saints by its impact and forcing them to leave Jerusalem. God intervened because the church is neither of the Jews nor of

Jerusalem; the church is universal.

Application: For Young working saints/graduate students

Your drinking of the water of life which quench our thirst is for this water to become a fountain within you to gush up and flow out. We need to pray for the six kinds of new ones (gospel friends, ones just baptized, backslidden ones, seeking ones in Christianity, ones just moved in, our family members) and flow out this water of life for them. You should not stop this flow. You need to keep preaching the gospel and keep this life flowing.

In this flow, we have gold, silver and precious stones for the building on the positive side and all the close-mindedness is eliminated on the negative side. Japanese people have this close-minded island-nation mentality and have the strong tendency of becoming exclusive unconsciously. This may due to the geographical factor of being an island-nation and also due to the history of isolation policy for 200 years during Edo period. Japanese can not change this close-mindedness by their own effort. But the divine stream will shatter this exclusive nature and erroneous discriminatory concepts

You will surely fail if you remain in the regional or racial realm in your business or study. Things not reaching the global standard are not evaluated. For the success of your business or study, you should get out of the regional and close-minded nature. For example, the magazines such as "Science" and "Nature" are the most excellent academic journals in the science field. And the articles which are published in these journals are highly evaluated around the world. And in business field, if a company is not spreading globally, it can not grow continually.

In such a consideration, we can say that your remaining in the flow in the church life and preaching the gospel with brothers and sisters by flowing out the water of life to others is the strategic focus you need to gain for you to be perfected and become the successful business person or researcher.

A brother's testimony: I worked for a big global U.S. company as a vice president. Often I was asked the questions like following, "Why you don't have the Japanese close-mindedness among employees in Japanese branch offices (over 500 employees)". I replied like this, "I was raised up in the church and since there are a lot of kinds of races in the church, I could develop the diversity (acceptance for a range of different kinds of people) in a spontaneous way." Or "My wife is an Taiwanese and I am eating Chinese food every day." Thank the Lord. The Lord is shattering the Japanese close-minded nature in me little by little in the divine stream and keeps transforming me with gold, silver and precious stone. Because of this, I could communicate with the executives in the headquarter and succeed to draw large investment from them.

Prayer: " Oh Lord Jesus, I enjoy the Lord every day and go out for the gospel and to shepherd every week and flow out the life. Let me keep practicing the church life which flows out life! Only in such stream, my close-mindedness will be shattered so that I can be perfected to be useful to God and men. Thank and praise the Lord. Amen!"

Hymn846 CHURCH — ITS BUILDING

- Oh, may my spirit flow, Oh, may it flow!
Now I beseech Thee, Lord, Oh, may it flow!
My past I would forsake, The iron walls would break,
My spirit free would make; Oh, may it flow!
- Oh, may my spirit flow, Oh, may it flow!
For this I plead with Thee, Oh, may it flow!
High-minded not to be, Pride shall not prison me,
I'd flow unceasingly, In spirit flow.
- Oh, may my spirit flow, Oh, may it flow!
Answer my prayer, dear Lord, Oh, may it flow!
Not just commune with Thee, I long to builded be,
Mingle with others free In spirit, Lord.

Crucial Point②: The need to renew your values to build up the marriage life and build up the church life

OL1: We must receive the Lord's mercy to be saved from Satan's schemes to frustrate the spreading and building up of the church, keeping ourselves in the flow of the age for the building up of His Body:

We must be saved from outward and dead ordinances, human opinions, and the self with its old concepts; whoever receives mercy from the Lord will be saved in these matters; the degree to which we are saved is the degree to which the church can be built up.

Gal. 2:20 I am crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

21 I do not nullify the grace of God;

The first problem encountered in the spread of the church was the limitation and bondage of Judaism (Acts 15:1-34). The believers in Judea were Jews who still kept the traditions of Judaism; they looked at the church from a Jewish viewpoint....The Jews believed that their law, ordinances, and rituals were from God and pertained to piety; therefore, they considered themselves as those best able to keep God's word. Satan used this thought to severely limit the church.

Throughout church history, each time the church has spread, it has been through a group of people whom God empowered to break through religious rituals, ordinances, and dead letters.

On the one hand, we should obey the Bible, walk in its light, and comply with the teachings of the truth....On the other hand, however, we must ask ourselves whether our Bible knowledge and our light of the truth are dead or living. If we have only dead doctrines, this will limit and frustrate the church.

Application: For Marriage life

Husband and wife typifies Christ and the church. If you practice your marriage life with your Japanese cultural concept, you will lose God's blessing.

For example, according to the modern Japanese concept, unchastity and divorce due to the incompatibility of their temperaments are somewhat accepted. However, according to the divine revelation, any other reason including the incompatibility can not be justified to accept unchastity. Concerning this point, there is no reasoning and excuse can be justified. Because husband and wife typifies Christ and the church, any unchastity can not be accepted. You should realize as a Christian that God does not accept unchastity in any reason. Under this realization you need to build up your marriage life.

Moreover, you should go on to be saved from your old concept. To build up your marriage life as pleasant one, you need to understand the merit of your spouse and evaluate it highly. And for the shortcomings of your spouse, you should not blame them, realizing you yourself have the shortcomings. The building up of the marriage life is basically by additional method and not by deduction of the scores. So whether you are a husband or wife, you have the responsibility of building up your own marriage life in a positive way.

With such a view point, can you, as a husband, answer immediately if you are asked what kind of benefit you are getting from your wife? If you can not answer immediately, it means that you are not getting God's blessing enough by your own old concept toward your wife. The husbands need to be saved from their own ordinances like "predominance of men over women". By your mind being renewed, you need to be released from your old concept and have the marriage life which coincides with the values of Christ and the church.

Genesis 2:18 And Jehovah God said, It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper as his counterpart.

Eph. 5:28 In the same way the husbands also ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his own wife loves himself.

And can you answer, as a wife, if asked in what aspect you are helping your husband? According to the Bible, the wife is the helper to the husband. With such a view, please build up your marriage life.

Proverbs 12:4 A worthy woman is the crown of her husband, But she who brings shame is like rottenness in his bones.

14:1 The wise woman builds her house, But the foolish one tears it down with her own hands.

31:10 Who can find a worthy woman? For her price is far above jewels. **11** The heart of her husband trusts in her, And he will have no lack of gain. **12** She does him good and not evil All the days of her life.

31:26 She opens her mouth with wisdom, And the law of kindness is on her tongue. **27** She watches closely over the ways of her household And does not eat the bread of idleness.

28 Her children rise up and call her blessed; Her husband also, and he praises her, saying: **29** Many daughters have done worthily, But you surpass them all. **30** Grace is deceitful, and beauty is vain; But a woman who fears Jehovah, she will be praised.

Ephesians 5:22-6:9 tell us the living needed in ethical relationships. The first mentioning is the husband and wife, then children and parents and then slaves and masters. This shows that the building up your marriage life is the basis of the family life and business life. By your marriage life being blessed, all the livings like your family life, business life, study life are blessed. This is ultimately for you to become the person who build up the church which is the subject of the book of Ephesians.

Please pray-read these verses concerning marriage life above and ponder upon them and pray. And please deal with your old concept by confessing your values. If you do so, your values concerning marriage life in your mind will be renewed.

Hymn 743 Various Aspects of the Inner Life – The New Heart and the New Spirit

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| 1. God created us His vessels | His expression to achieve; |
| Thus He made a heart to love Him | And a spirit to receive. |
| 2. With our heart we have to love Him, | With our spirit Him possess |
| As our life, of Him partaking, | That Himself we may express. |
| 3. Satan has our heart corrupted, | To our spirit death did give, |
| That the Lord we should not contact | But by self attempt to live. |
| 4. Thus the Lord in His salvation | Heart and spirit has renewed |
| To recover our receiving | And our loving aptitude. |
| 5. It is by our heart's renewal | We may God in love pursue, |
| And in newness of the spirit | We may contact God anew. |
| 6. Every true and pure and single | To the Lord our heart must be, |
| Poor in spirit, ever seeking | God to contact constantly. |
| 7. Keep our heart, Lord, in love's freshness, | And our spirit strengthen more, |
| That in newness of the spirit | We may touch Thee o'er and o'er. |

Series 1 The High Gospel (For new ones / Junior & Senior High School Students)

Topic 1: Mystery of Human Life

Rom.9:23 In order that He might make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy, which He had before prepared unto glory,

Rom.10:9 That if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved;

GOD'S PLAN

God has a plan. This plan has everything to do with man. In the Bible, this plan is called God's economy.

God's economy is just God's entire plan for man. It explains the origin and destiny of man as well as the meaning of human existence.

MAN WAS CREATED TO CONTAIN GOD

You are not merely created to contain food in your stomach, or to contain knowledge in your mind, but you are created to contain God in your spirit.

SIN ENTERED INTO MAN TO CAUSE MAN TO FALL

Sin caused man's spirit to be deadened, caused man's mind to rebel, and caused man's body to sin. Throughout history, man has tried every possible way to escape sin, but he has found that he cannot save himself.

CHRIST WAS NAILED TO THE CROSS TO ACCOMPLISH THE WORK OF REDEMPTION

As the Lamb of God, He died to take away man's sin; as the brass serpent that had been lifted up, He died to crush the old serpent—Satan; as a grain of wheat, He died to release the divine life

GOD'S DISPENSING FOR REGENERATING MAN

God became flesh, born as a man called Jesus. "The Word became flesh and tabernacle among us." The Lord became the Spirit called the life-giving Spirit by His resurrection from the dead. "The last Adam became a life-giving Spirit." Since this Spirit is the life-giving Spirit, He dispenses God with His life into His believers.

WHAT MUST YOU DO NOW ?

1. Turn Your Heart to God—Repent

Repentance is to have a change in mind. "Repent, for the kingdom of the heavens has drawn near." (Matt. 4:17)

2. Believe—Receive

Believing is just receiving. "But as many as received Him, to them He gave authority to become children of God, to those who believe in His name." (John 1:12)

3. Confess—Call

"...if you confess with your mouth, Lord Jesus, and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from among the dead, you shall be saved." (Rom. 10:9)

4. Be Baptized—Testify

Baptism is a testimony before men. All believers should be baptized in order to be saved not only before God, but also before men. Through baptism, God transfers us from the kingdom of Satan into the kingdom of God. The Lord Jesus said: "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a man is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:5).

NOW PLEASE PRAY

"Lord Jesus! I am a sinner. I need You. Come into my spirit. Take away my sin. Fill me that I may have the life of God. I receive You right now as my Savior and life. I give myself to You. I ask this in Your name, Amen!"

Hymn 1404 Gospel — The Meaning of Human Life

1. God made man a vessel he. With a spirit, soul, body. God to man his content be. That through man His glory see.
2. Man does have God's image true, Noble in his status, too. But God's life man also needs Divine nature to receive.
3. Christ in death as God expressed Man redeemed, His blood was shedd' st. In His resurrection He Enters us our life to be.
4. Man without Christ will perceive That all things are vanity. Human life is meaningless Without hope or purpose.
5. But when man takes Christ as life, He's in spirit born anew. When he daily lives by Christ, Vanity is turned to song.

