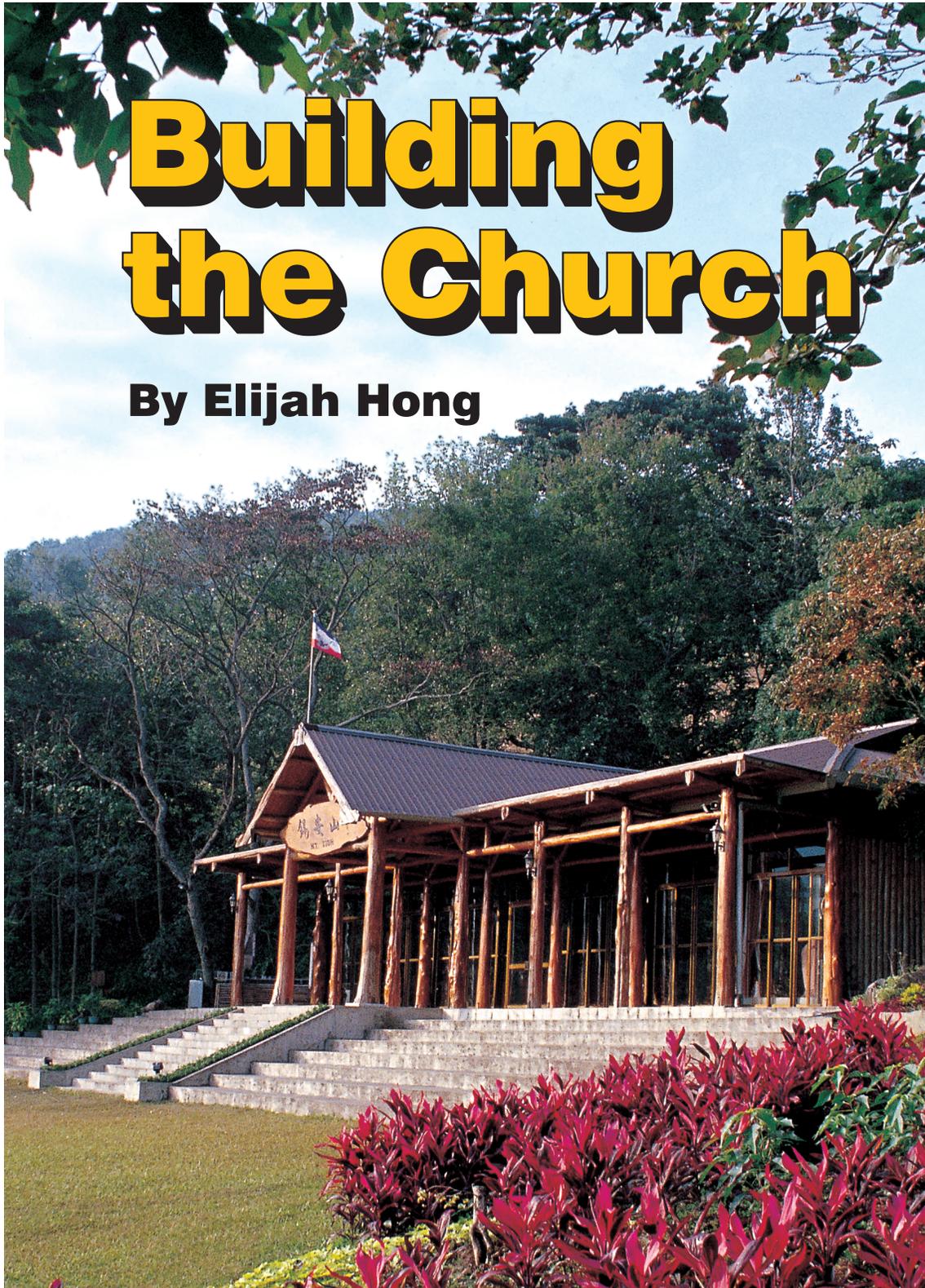


Building the Church

By Elijah Hong



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Foreword

The 1960s was an extraordinary and memorable decade. It was a decade when God raised up the chief apostle to build the church. She was God's maidservant Sis. Kong Duen Yee, the vessel of the era who brought about the end-time revival. By choosing this vessel, God showed how much He cares for His children. This is good news for this generation. The heavens have been opened to mankind and the dawn of salvation has shone from on high, giving light to those who sit in the shadow of death, guiding their feet onto the way of peace. God's children may now become holy and await the Lord's return. Therefore, let the heavens rejoice; let the earth be glad! Let all mankind sing and praise the LORD, for the spiritual minister has been sent! Hallelujah!

On April 18, 1963, God sent an old pastor from the West to find Sis. Kong in Hong Kong. His mission was *to reveal her ministry as the prophet of all nations* (God had let the pastor see Sis. Kong in a vision). God's Spirit moved the old pastor to prophesy to Sis. Kong in public, saying, "The Spirit of the Lord has anointed you. Through you, He shall do many great things. He shall use you to set free those who are oppressed by Satan. God has specially chosen you to preach the full truth of Jesus Christ to all places, even to the ends of the earth. Through you, He shall bring great blessings to many people, and do mighty works. And through you, He will shake not only China and the East, but also the whole world..." *The ministry of God's maidservant Sis. Kong concerned all mankind—from the East to the rest of the world.*

In 1963 God sent Sis. Kong to preach in Hong Kong, Kauloon, Singapore, Malaysia and Taiwan. Despite great spiritual battles, she preached the full truth of Blood, Water and Holy Spirit. She also announced to the entire world an epochal message: "The Holy Spirit Rebuilds the New Testament Church and Demolishes the Denominations." Although she only assumed her ministry for a few years (she rested in the Lord in 1966), her ministry was powerful. And as God promised, the truth she preached shook the whole earth, from the East to the West. The majesty and glory of her ministry prove that it was a ministry

from heaven. In only two to three years, she expounded several mysteries of the truth, including the law of building the church. Her revelation was abundant, surpassing and deep. It was a revelation given to her by God the Father. It was not the result of human analysis. Other than the early apostles, no one was greater than her. She was the great prophetess of all nations chosen by God in these last days.

In 1963, God raised up His maidservant Sis. Kong in Hong Kong. And in the same year He chose His servant Bro. Elijah Hong in Taiwan. God let Bro. Hong know that He had chosen Sis. Kong, so Bro. Hong began corresponding with Sis. Kong in 1965. From December 7–14 of that year, God sent Sis. Kong to Taiwan to build the church. But He also sent her there to do an even more important work: to gain Bro. Hong. She was like Samuel going to anoint David.

So on December 13, despite severe pain and bleeding in the tongue, Sis. Kong imparted the truth on “Raising the Signboard of the Church,” and the Holy Spirit enlightened Bro. Hong. Later, Sis. Kong washed Bro. Hong’s feet, laid hands on him and prayed for him. Claspings Bro. Hong’s hands tightly, Sis. Kong tried to pour into him everything she had received from God. It was an unusual moment; an epochal scene worthy of being called “Succeeding a Minister, Continuing a Revival and the Dawning of a new Era.” According to Sis. Kong’s prayers, God greatly moved Bro. Hong with the same Spirit that moved her. He revealed to Bro. Hong, as He did to her, the mystery of Christ which had been hidden from ages, and made him understand the principle of building the church. But most importantly, God chose Bro. Hong to continue Sis. Kong’s ministry as the prophet of all nations.

After Sis. Kong returned to the heavenly home in 1966, Bro. Hong fought numerous spiritual battles to build the church. In Hong Kong, Taiwan, Malaysia, Singapore, the Philippines and Thailand, Bro. Hong held conventions to preach about building the church. The mystery God revealed to Sis. Kong was very condensed. Bro. Hong, who was also enlightened, expounded the mystery even more clearly to God’s children. The messages he preached in the 1960s about building the church are still fresh today. Indeed, the truth and vision preached from revelation will forever be fresh and new.

Since the rebuilding of the New Testament Church in the 1960s, the work of the Holy Spirit has been getting more glorious. The stature of the church is more abundant, and the number of those returning has multiplied. That brothers and sisters may be firmly founded and built in the glorious New Testament Church, we feel the need to compile Sis. Kong's and Bro. Hong's messages on building the church. However, only one of Sis. Kong's recordings remains: the message on "Christ and the Church" which she delivered in Hong Kong in 1965. We have transcribed this message and included it in this book.

Bro. Hong delivered a series of messages during the conventions in Taiwan, Hong Kong and Southeast Asia, but few were preserved in their entirety. The Lord's servant preached about building the church during an eleven-day convention in Hong Kong, from April 18–28, 1968. That was about thirty years ago, and the truth in those messages is shining brighter and brighter. They quicken people's spirit; brighten their eyes; and give them a direction, a goal and a way to build the church. His messages will lead God's children to attain the full stature of the body of Christ. This is the mystery of Christ and the church—the glorious New Testament Church rebuilt by the Holy Spirit.

The Lord's servant Bro. Hong was moved to compile the eleven preserved messages from the convention along with Sis. Kong's "Christ and the Church" into one publication entitled, *Building the Church*. We dedicate this book to the head of the church, the Lord Jesus Christ. May He use it greatly. The full-scale revival is about to come. May the people of this last generation return to Christ, receive the full truth of Blood, Water and Holy Spirit, and be established in the New Testament Church rebuilt by the Holy Spirit. May all His children set aside their own works and join the main flow of the Spirit. May they follow the apostles' leading and abide by their teachings so that they may become holy in the New Testament Church and be received into glory. Amen!

Grace of Jesus Christ Crusade
April 18, 1995
Holy Mount Zion

***Succeeding a Minister!
Continuing a Revival!
Dawning of a New Era!***



From December 7-14 of 1965, God sent His maidservant Sis. Kong Duen Yee, the prophetess of all nations, to Taiwan in the Isle of the East where she found His servant Bro. Elijah Hong. Clasping Bro. Hong's hands tightly, Sis. Kong prayed that the Lord would give to him the double portion of her spirit.

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Christ and the Church

Christ and the Church

*(1965—Message of the Lord's Maidservant Sis. Kong
during the Convention at the Church of Hong Kong)*

And that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father. Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a habitation of God in the Spirit.

(Eph. 2:16–22)

If indeed you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which was given to me for you, how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I wrote before in a few words, by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ), which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets: that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel, of which I became a minister according to the gift of the grace of God given to me by the effective working of His power. To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to make all people see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ; to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God

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might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places.

(Eph. 3:2–10)

The entire Bible is about Christ and the church. Christ is the head of the church, and the church is His body. This is the mystery which was hidden for ages. By the power of the Holy Spirit, God has made known His will to us through various circumstances. His arrangement is best. He wants us to obtain His promises and be built up together.

The church is made up of Christians who have received the complete witness of Blood, Water and Holy Spirit—the Lord Jesus being the chief cornerstone. They are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets to become the glorious body of the Lord Jesus Christ. The church is not a physical building, nor is she a human organization or social gathering. The church is a spiritual body of Christians built together through the Holy Spirit in Christ.

After the Israelites came out of Egypt, God appeared to Moses on Mount Sinai where He showed him the pattern for building the tabernacle. God wanted to meet the Israelites through this tabernacle. The New Testament Church is the tabernacle of the New Testament. In the Old Testament all the prophecies were fulfilled in the flesh. In the New Testament they are fulfilled in the spirit. In the Old Testament all things were done in the flesh. In the New Testament all things are done in the spirit. The Old Testament is as it says—old. In the New Testament we no longer keep God's ordinances by the flesh. We no longer serve in the oldness of the letter, but in the newness of the spirit. All things in the Old Testament indicated what was to come in the New Testament. The Old Testament was the shadow and the New Testament the reality.

God chose Moses to lead the Israelites out of Egypt. He also prepared spiritual ministers to help him. In the New Testament, Moses and the spiritual ministers are God's workers. They are not ordained or elected by man, but revealed by God.

Many people want to be pastors, so they go to a seminary. They obtain a pastor certificate issued by man, not by God; they are ordained

by man, not the Holy Spirit. Those who are ordained by the Holy Spirit are like the high priests in the Old Testament who offered sacrifices with blood, water and Holy Spirit. We are the priests of the New Testament—God’s workers of today. So before we can serve God, we must first receive the complete witness of *Blood, Water and Holy Spirit*. For all spiritual gifts are in the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is the treasure inside earthen vessels. With the Holy Spirit, a vessel can demonstrate great power. This power comes from the Holy Spirit, not from the person. The Bible tells us: “‘Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,’ says the LORD of hosts.” If we do not rely on the spiritual gifts, or His might and power, how can we accomplish God’s sacred work?

1 Corinthians 12:4–10 says, “Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all: for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues.”

Several spiritual gifts are mentioned here. God assigns these gifts to His spiritual ministers—the vessels He chooses to lead brothers and sisters to serve in His church. They are God’s workers to whom God gives various gifts to reveal their ministries. Therefore, there are no self-appointed apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, or teachers in the church. The Holy Spirit will confirm those whom God has chosen, and this confirmation alone is the criterion.

In the past God ordained Moses so Moses could lead the Israelites to fight and to advance. Today, brothers and sisters in the New Testament Church have received the complete truth of Blood, Water and Holy Spirit. We speak in tongues and praise God, but that is not enough. We must also understand God’s will and build up our spiritual lives daily. God chooses His workers to declare His will as He did in the *Acts*

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of the Apostles. During that time God chose apostles to build His church everywhere. But was the work then completed? No, for there were still many spiritual battles ahead. Again, this can be compared to something that happened in the Old Testament era. After the Israelites entered Canaan, they still had to fight. But if they didn't have Joshua, how could they win? Likewise, in the New Testament era, God raises up workers, especially apostles, and works through them. Three of them were Paul, Peter and John, who wrote many epistles to edify the church and to help build up the saints' spiritual lives.

In the Old Testament, God revealed the pattern of the tabernacle to Moses, and Moses was to tell the Israelites about it. God wanted them to be built up together according to His will. In these last days, God has set up the Grace of Jesus Christ Crusade. He has revealed to us, His lowly servants, the full truth of Blood, Water and Holy Spirit—the foundation of the church. He leads us to preach the truth on “The Holy Spirit Rebuilds the New Testament Church.” God wants us to tell His people this pattern and law of building the church, which were shown to us on the mountain. Now God's people can rebuild the fallen tabernacle of David according to His will.

If there are no workers to tell the saints God's will, the saints will not be able to build the spiritual house, for God's children follow the example set by the workers. That is why we, have to pray earnestly always. We pray for the New Testament Church to be established, for the denominations to be demolished, and for the will of God to be done. Many Christians do not pray according to God's will. They ask the Lord to revive the denominations—denominations which God wants to tear down. In the past God wanted to destroy Jericho and said He would curse anyone who rebuilt it. But today, many people are building what God wants to demolish. They would rather bring men to a place filled with man's ideas instead of God's will. Today, God's will is to lead people out from human will and bring them to Israel—a place controlled by the Holy Spirit, where human will has no position. This is the New Testament Church. Her name, testimony, ministration and power all manifest Jesus Christ.

The Bible shows us that God's will is for the whole building (all local churches) to be joined together and to grow into His holy temple, in Christ. We have seen the Holy Spirit building the New Testament Church in various places, even in Taiwan. Although we have never been there, we have been telling the Taiwan brothers and sisters God's will through letters. Many of them have received the Holy Spirit baptism, and have left the denominations to be established by the Spirit. These brothers and sisters have formed "little New Testament Churches" in Taiwan. They help others receive the Spirit so that they, too, may worship and serve God in the Spirit. All these works are done by God through His workers.

The church is built upon the foundation of apostles and prophets. If no one reveals the way to build the church, then God's work will not be accomplished. Let us look at the plan for the Old Testament tabernacle. The tabernacle is in the center of the camp. This represents the Lord Jesus Christ reigning supreme over us. The tabernacle represents the temple, the New Testament Church, the millennial kingdom, the new heaven and new earth—New Jerusalem. The holy city New Jerusalem will be the King's city. The Lord Jesus will be its temple, and He will forever reign in our midst. Camped around the tabernacle were the Levites. Moses and Aaron were the apostle and prophet who proclaimed God's will. It was not enough to just have Moses and Aaron. The Levites were also needed to do the work of the tabernacle. Even the places they lived were arranged according to God's will. No one could violate the temple built by God.

In Exodus, we learn that *God showed only Moses the pattern to build the tabernacle because God has His purpose in election.* He did not ask Aaron to go up the mountain; He called only Moses. He gave Moses the ministry and the authority, and made him perform miracles and wonders before Pharaoh and in the desert. God did all these to confirm His choice on Moses so that no man would oppose or change it. Everyone had to honor Moses' divine power. They could not defy it, because this ministry was given to Moses to edify the Israelites.

Why did God have to choose the Levites in Numbers 3? He needed

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them to consecrate themselves to do the great work of tending the tabernacle. They were like today's full-time workers in the New Testament Church. In Numbers 1:47–50, God set up the Levites and had them camp around the tabernacle. They led God's people to submit to the Spirit and kept watch for the flock. Verses 51 to 54 say that anyone else who came near the tabernacle would be put to death. The Levites were to keep charge of the tabernacle of the testimony. This means that they were to execute divine authority, which was for building up the congregation, not for tearing it down.

Let us look at 2 Corinthians 10:8. God gave Paul authority so that the church would not be in confusion. And by what authority did Paul write to the church at Corinth? He wrote by the apostleship given to him by God. The Old Testament and the New Testament echo each other. The Levites in both the Old and New Testaments had to execute God's authority. Who executes human laws in the kingdoms on earth? The rulers and authorities of the nations do. Similarly, divine law is made known through God's workers. If God has no workers, how can He tell His children to obey His divine law? And what is divine law? The Scriptures. God wants us to obey the Scriptures. He wants all Christians in the New Testament Church to be holy, live in the Lord, and walk in His will. But if there are no workers, how can brothers and sisters hear His words?

There is also a spiritual order for God's workers, with each person holding his own position. Some serve in the outer court, some in the sanctuary, and others inside the Holiest of All. In the church God has appointed apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. After that, He also appoints those with gifts of administration, helping others, working miracles and healing. Each minister has his own position. One minister cannot interfere with another, nor can he be interfered with.

Moses and Aaron had a high ministry, so they had to pay a high price. Paul suffered more than the other apostles, so God let him accomplish more works than them. No other apostle paid as great a price as Paul did before the Lord. Therefore, the grace God revealed on Paul exceeded that of the other apostles. When a vessel willingly offers all

to God, God will be able to use him. The amount he offers is how much God will use him. The New Testament Church is different from the denominations, in that the denominations serve by the authority of their theology school diplomas. They do not need a holy life. But in the New Testament Church, God has high demands on His workers and uses the cross to break and deal with every one of them. How much they are broken determines how much God will confirm them. The workers must be clear when they offer themselves. If we are not clear about our own offering, God will not use us. Therefore spiritual ministers meet God personally. They do not receive God's message from others. We never need to be jealous of others and say, "Why is he an apostle or prophet, while I am only an administrator?" For God will only use you to the extent you offer yourself to Him.

The workers of the New Testament Church must be holy and evil-hating. They must hate what God hates and love what He loves. This is because God wants His workers to do His will and bring His divine law to His children. If the workers' lives do not meet His demands, then He cannot fulfill His will in them. If the roots are holy, the branches will be holy, and the fruits too. Therefore, God's workers must lead holy lives before they can execute heavenly authority and preach divine law. This authority is what the Lord Jesus told the disciples about in Matthew 18. The church has power on earth. What she binds on earth will be bound in heaven; what she looses on earth will be loosed in heaven.

The workers of the New Testament Church exist to manifest the life of the Lord Jesus Christ. By the Holy Spirit, they present every brother and sister perfect before the Father. To do this, they must be filled with the Spirit of God's righteousness. God has chosen me as His maidservant. If I do not strive to be holy, evil-hating and righteous, I cannot serve Him as He wills. His Spirit will not be with me, and I will be the most pitiful person of all. Since He called me to do His work, I must live before Him in fear. I cannot do as I wish, nor can I be indifferent.

The ideas of men fill theological colleges. Men's teachings hinder

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people from obtaining the abundant grace of God. Human knowledge makes them arrogant and disobedient to the Holy Spirit. These people do God's work by their flesh. They may be zealous for Him, but zeal won't satisfy His heart. Instead, they provoke Him to anger. To do God's will, one must mind God's heart in the spirit. *A prophet must mind God's heart before he can preach God's words. He does not learn these words from men, but receives them from God through revelation.*

Therefore, it is useless to study theology if you are not filled with the Holy Spirit, or if your life is not holy or if you do not pursue righteousness. If you accept the full truth, submit to the Holy Spirit, willingly deny your old self and put away all that belong to your old self, God will surely fill you with His rich and glorious wisdom.

Moses had God's righteous and holy Spirit in him. He despised the luxuries in the palace. He did not want to be a prince in the world, but God's worker, so God made him a man of God. God does not look at peoples' status or gender. He examines the heart. God will reveal His power on those who offer themselves completely to Him and leave nothing for themselves. His life will flow from such people, and He will use them.

The twelve tribes of Israel included the Levites. However, God later chose Joseph's two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim, to replace the Levites and the tribe of Joseph. In Numbers 8:14–17, we see God chose the Levites as the firstborn of all of Israel. He wanted them to consecrate themselves to do the work of the tabernacle and not care about worldly matters. God told Aaron to offer them as a wave offering. Romans 12:1 says: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice..." Therefore, the saints of the New Testament shall also consecrate themselves and offer themselves to the Lord.

If you have found grace and are willing to suffer for Christ in preaching the gospel, then consecrate yourself, and set not your mind on earthly things, but be a Levite in the New Testament. Even the soldiers on earth do not entangle themselves with the affairs of the world. What more to say of us, the Christian soldiers. A businessperson must be

serious to be successful. How much more must we be, who do the business of heaven?

In these last days God has rebuilt the New Testament Church. He wants New Testament Church saints to offer their firstborn to Him. That means offering the best years of your life to the Lord and consecrating yourself to Him. Today, all Christians should fulfill their duty to preach. However, if God's grace comes upon you more and moves you to put away all things to pray and serve Him full time, you should consecrate yourself for His use. This world has many lawyers, doctors, teachers and other professionals. However, not many people can serve in the tabernacle of meeting. These people are specially chosen by God Himself, for doing the work of God is the most important job. *If a person has not received the complete truth, or does not listen to today's Moses, he cannot do the work of the tabernacle.* For to do God's work, the saints need to unite in one heart and spirit to overcome the devil Satan.

After the church is built, problems will follow. It is inevitable. The apostles Paul, Peter, John, Jude and James did not write epistles to outsiders, but to the New Testament churches who had received the full truth (Blood, Water and Holy Spirit) and were established by God. False prophets and teachers had brought poisonous teachings to the Lord's body, so the apostles had to assume their ministry and write epistles to help the brothers and sisters. Had Paul pretended to be humble, saying that he was unworthy, he would not have written to the churches. Had he seen the brothers and sisters as his equals, he would not have completed God's work. Such "humility" is of the flesh and not of the Spirit.

What is spiritual humility? It is when workers completely surrender themselves to the Lord and make none of their own decisions. "Whatever God wants me to do, I will do. I prostrate completely before Him." This is genuine humility.

What is false humility? It is when you say before man, "Please correct me. I can't do it well without your help." True, we can't do anything before the Lord. But as a worker, we must tell people God's will. How can we ask help from outsiders, from those who have not re-

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ceived the truth? We preach the words of God, so if we seek advice from others, how can God work through us? Therefore, all of God's workers have to stand firm in the position God gives them.

Judges 5 mentions the prophetess Deborah who stood firm for God. God used her to deliver His children from the hands of Jabin, king of Canaan. When Deborah stood firm in the position that God gave her, the Israelites willingly sacrificed themselves for the Lord. Since God had raised up a leader for His children, the enemies fled away from them in fear. Had Deborah said that there were many mighty men around and that, being a woman, she was not worthy to lead, she would have opposed God's will. For God did not choose Barak or any of the other men. God does not choose according to gender. If the brothers refuse to submit to God, they are useless, regardless of how many there are. And if the sisters are willing to submit to God and offer themselves completely to Him, they will be used by God.

The Christian Assembly believes in covering the sisters' heads with a veil. Without a veil, women are not allowed to preach or to pray. But God had done something great and new—a woman encompasses a man! Great was the company of women who proclaim the glad tidings (see Ps. 68:11). When the Lord was on earth, Mary Magdalene was the one who reported the good news of Christ's resurrection. *Today, God also has entrusted me to preach this good news—the full truth of Blood, Water and Holy Spirit, and the law of building the church.*

Many people ask if there are still prophetesses and female apostles. We don't have to answer this question. God has confirmed His choice on us with signs, wonders and miracles and all perseverance.

The disciples of John once came and said to the Lord, "Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?" The Lord answered, "Go and tell John the things which you hear and see: The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk; the poor have the gospel preached to them. Then he will know God's kingdom has come."

There are many people who disbelieve the wonderful works God has accomplished through us. They do not believe that *the Grace of Jesus Christ Crusade and I are workers God has sent to rebuild the fallen tabernacle of*

David. They do not believe that *the Grace of Jesus Christ Crusade has been commissioned to revive the truth.* However, *with many signs and wonders, God has already revealed that He has given us this ministry.* So we don't have to argue for ourselves.

When a spiritual minister is faithful in his position, he is not exalting himself; he is being faithful to God. If, in false humility, we say, "We don't deserve to be the ministers of God, you have overpraised us," God will not be pleased. He will choose someone else. But if we bravely carry out His entrustment, then His power will be revealed through us.

Recently, God told me to write many letters to defend the truth. The devil has been attacking many churches from all sides. False teachers bring in old leaven—an incomplete and perverted gospel from the denominations. Paul would have immediately rebuked such false teachings. All God's workers must have this evil-hating spirit. If one does not rebuke false doctrines, these teachings will spread and do great harm. Therefore, Paul wrote to remind the brothers and sisters not to accept another spirit or listen to another gospel.

Recently, some brothers and sisters in Taiwan have not been able to understand the name "New Testament Church" or the testimony of the church, so we wrote letters to explain. Some erroneous concepts are not easy to correct. However, we thank the Lord. When we submitted to God and prayed for them, He solved our problems. Some sisters have been established by God in the church, but still refused to remove their veils. So I wrote the book entitled, *Wearing Veils and Prophesying*, as the Holy Spirit moved me. If the Holy Spirit did not move me, I would not have dared to write it. So why do I dare oppose the denominations? Because God is with me. I am not opposing people, but the human organizations to which they belong. We are not against individuals, but the organizations behind the individuals. Their regulations and organizations have become Goliath and Jericho inside men. These have become the devil Satan's strong fortress. God has to bring these organizations down!

During the time of the pristine churches, some people suggested

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reinstating circumcision and observing the law. And today, since the Spirit has rebuilt the New Testament Church, we can find similar old leaven and leaven of malice in the church. Some people oppose the truth on Holy Spirit baptism, and others oppose the messages on raising a church signboard. They have many carnal viewpoints which hinder God's Spirit from working. So God needs to cleanse His church. *No one can overthrow the revelation of "The Holy Spirit Rebuilds the New Testament Church," a revelation given to us by God.* God established churches in Singapore, in Malaysia, Hong Kong and Taiwan to testify for this revelation. Through us, His message is preached not only in these places, but also in all the world. God shall reign in all the earth. In this last generation, especially in this year—1965, God will reveal our ministry. How does He reveal our ministry? He set His seal on our work.

We have nothing to boast of; our boasting is of the Lord. I have offered my entire life to Him. May He use me, this small vessel, to accomplish His great work. God has let me experience various hardships and spiritual battles. After I returned to Hong Kong, some people did not understand God's work and obeyed Satan to try to shake my faith. But no one can shake our God-given faith. The Lord has confirmed us in many ways.

Earlier, some Taiwan sisters who had received the full truth could not remove their veils. But after reading *A Living Testimony to the Truth* and *The Golden Lampstand*, they understood the head covering is long hair and not a piece of cloth. The Bible made no mention of a cloth. According to the books of Deuteronomy and Joshua, as well as the Revelation, one must not add to or take away from the words of the Bible. However, many sisters were accustomed to wearing a cloth veil. Their conscience deceived them, and they were reluctant to put away their concepts. The devil Satan covered their heart with a cloth so that they could not see the Lord.

Wonderfully, God had us write a letter to reveal the truth to them. Then these sisters willingly put away their old concepts. Most of them submitted to the truth and acknowledged our ministry. But some still refused to accept. They asked if God only confirmed us and not them.

There is still a group in Hong Kong who deny that God has confirmed us. They are like Korah and his company. They asked, "Are you the only holy ones? Can't we also do what you do?" God cannot establish such people in His New Testament Church.

Concerning the issue of *raising the church signboard*, at first I feared that other preachers might steal our name and raise it before us. But God told me that *He would protect His own work*. Since we were willing to put up a signboard for the Church of Hong Kong, God recognized this as His church. Those who refused to believe what we preached would not erect a sign with the name "Church of Hong Kong." *God did not give this name of the local church to others. He reserved it for the New Testament Church which the Spirit has rebuilt. Hallelujah!*

We are the workers whom God has set up in these last days. We walk in His will. Some people come to the New Testament Church, saying, "We do not want to be caged birds. We were bound by our former preacher, but we shall now leave the yoke of man. We will not acknowledge any human being. We only believe in the Lord." But this concept is wrong. Their former preacher was not ordained by the Holy Spirit, so what he preached were not God's messages, nor the truth for this era. He used human regulations to trap people. God's children will eventually recognize this and flee such a yoke. But since there is someone else God has appointed to preach His word and to build the New Testament Church, we have to believe in him. *We must believe in the one God sends, for this is doing God's work.*

The day before yesterday I received a letter from a pastor of the Assembly of God. His contract with the Assembly will soon expire, so he asked God to lead his way. He also hoped that God would add 500 new members to the Assembly of God before he left. So God told me to say to him: "Brother, you have heard and seen what God wants us to preach. Moreover, you have had a share in this holy work. How I hope that God will give you greater blessings by freeing you from the bondage of the Assembly. You need to work in God's field and not ask for 500 new members for the Assembly. You should ask God for all mankind to come into the unity of Christ. You have to tell the brothers and

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sisters not to mind human friendships, but God's will. Tell them to leave human ways, depart from human organizations, and let the Spirit establish them. When the time comes, the signboard of this Assembly of God will come down, and it will be built as the New Testament Church."

The Assembly of God, Lutherans, Baptists, Chinese Christians, Methodists, or any other Christian group are all human organizations which hinder God's work. How I hope that brothers and sisters will recognize the evil of the denominations and lead people back to the New Testament Church to enjoy the great blessings! If they do, their offerings will not be in vain. Therefore, if anyone wants to offer money to the Grace of Jesus Christ Crusade, I will first tell him the reason for leaving the denominations. After he hears what I have to say, I do not mind whether or not he makes an offering. I do not look at those things. I simply want to remain faithful before God. I believe God will be responsible for my needs because *I do not follow my own desires. I do as the Spirit leads me, His lowly vessel, to do. It is impossible for anyone to overthrow this ministry.*

Numbers 3:10 says, "So you shall appoint Aaron and his sons, and they shall attend to their priesthood; but the outsider who comes near shall be put to death." If you attend to your priesthood, God's Spirit will be with you. He will reveal His power through you. Therefore, you must attend to your priesthood. Do not try to escape responsibilities, and do not be dismayed.

Numbers 16 speaks of Korah and his company. They disobeyed God and could not believe in Moses and Aaron. Korah led 250 leaders in Israel to attack Moses and Aaron, saying, "You took too much upon yourselves, for all the congregation is holy, every one of them. Why then do you exalt yourselves above the assembly of the Lord?" Many people are like that today. They ask, "Is the New Testament Church really the only right one? Are you the only workers called by God? Doesn't 1 Corinthians 14 say that everyone can prophesy? Can't everyone serve God?" To this group of people Paul said, "You have reigned as kings without us." The church at Corinth had no worker watching

over them, so they were in confusion. God gives His workers faith in their ministry, and this faith has authority. What happens when the workers are absent? In 1 Corinthians 14, Paul tells the brothers and sisters how to serve God and satisfy God's heart in his absence.

There are many companies of Korah today. They disobey God and refuse to submit to God's words which we preach. Then they go wild. So the Lord Jesus said, "Blessed are those who are not offended because of Me." Who could possibly be offended? Those who do not believe. Once they refuse to believe, they lose the spirit of submission, and God leaves them alone. If they do not repent, they will not be able to stand before God. What consequence did Korah and his company suffer? Numbers 16:4 says, "Moses heard it and fell on his face." God's workers have to be the first to prostrate before the Lord when being attacked. They must first examine themselves and then deal with whatever does not conform to God's will. Then Moses said to Korah and all his company, "Tomorrow morning the LORD will show who is His and who is holy and will cause him to come near to Him." Consequently, the earth opened its mouth and swallowed up Korah and his company. Chapter 16, verse 28 says, "And Moses said, 'By this you shall know that the LORD has sent me to do all these works, for I have not done them of my own will.'"

Brothers and sisters, *there will be signs showing that God has sent the Grace of Jesus Christ Crusade to preach His words, and not our own words. Those who oppose us oppose God, just as those who opposed Moses opposed the LORD. When God's workers stand in God's presence, God will stand by them and fight for them.* In the end, God will show that His chosen people belong to Him. He will reveal their ministry and make their work fruitful. But the work done by those He did not choose will be swallowed up by the earth.

After returning to Hong Kong, I fought a great spiritual battle. (Perhaps many brothers and sisters do not know about this. God allowed this to happen because He wanted to reveal those He had chosen and those He had not.) This spiritual battle continued for months. And finally, God triumphed. Whenever we prostrate before God, He fights

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for us. He will reveal the true from the false. The false ones will have no results from their work, whereas the real ones will be confirmed by God through various matters. Regardless of persecutions and defamation, He will confirm us.

We thank and praise the Lord! In the last days God shall do great and amazing works. God has done works of revival in China and Taiwan. In Sarawak, New Guinea, Vietnam, Cambodia, Thailand and many other places, He has opened the door for preaching the gospel. He has also let the full gospel be preached in France, England, Germany... We know these things were not done by man—God did them. We render all glory to Him. May God raise up more faithful and dedicated workers. May they be willing to suffer for God's word and name and not live for themselves. God shall gain glory on those who have this insight, entrustment, and willingness to offer themselves for His use. God shall gain glory on them as He did on Moses and Paul. We render all glory to God.

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The Church After God's Heart

*(April 18, 1968—Message of the Lord's Servant Bro. Hong
during the Convention at the Church of Hong Kong)*

Thank the Lord for giving us this eleven-day convention. During this convention, the end-time will of God will be made known, and the vision of "The Holy Spirit Rebuilds the New Testament Church" will be preached. This end-time will of God concerns the spiritual condition of God's children and the future of the church. That's why this convention is so important and why we feel so heavily burdened. May the Lord help us understand His will.

The Highest Will of God for the End Times: To Rebuild the New Testament Church Through the Holy Spirit

Ephesians 5:17 says, "Therefore do not be unwise but understand what the will of the Lord is." Paul said this to the saints who were at Ephesus. Who are the unwise? They are those who do not understand the will of God. The unwise cannot please the Lord. Paul said this because he was certain that if God's children were ignorant of God's will, their end would be tragic.

When Paul, in his ignorance, did not serve God according to God's will, he persecuted the Christians. To him, he was serving the God of his ancestors with zeal. But to God, he was a fool doing foolish things. The Lord Jesus told him, "You are persecuting Me!" So it is important for God's children to understand His will. In these evil last days we must all the more seek the will of the Lord and be wise.

Many Christians are satisfied with only believing in Jesus. They think that God will be pleased with them if they only go to church on Sundays. And to them, the Presbyterians, the Baptists, the Lutherans, the Christian Assembly...are all the same since they all worship the same Lord.

But because they do not seek to understand His will, they are the unwise.

Dear brothers and sisters, I hope we all have the desire to understand the will of God. During this convention, we must pray for the Lord to help us enter into His will. We must also pray for a humble spirit, that we may understand His words. The Bible says, “God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.” The will of God is revealed to the humble, but is hidden from those who think they are smart. I used to be very conceited because I had known the Lord for over a decade. Moreover, for most of those ten years I served God in the Christian Assembly. Therefore, I didn’t even want to look at *A Living Testimony to the Truth*. I despised Sis. Kong. She was a sister. What truth could she possibly preach? Brothers and sisters, don’t you think I was conceited? Yes, I was too conceited, yet I tried to appear humble. So if we have such pride and prejudice before the Lord, we will not be able to find His grace.

We must not only ask the Lord to give us a desire to learn humbly, but also a desire to abide by the truth. If we have no intention of doing God’s will, God will not show us His will. John 7:17 says: “If anyone wants to do His will, he shall know concerning the doctrine, whether it is from God or whether I speak on my own authority.” The will of God is revealed to those who want to do His will. Many people come to the New Testament Church just to see if they can get some new theories for their teaching ministries. Such people will not understand God’s will. May the Lord transform us by the renewing of our mind, that we may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God (see Rom. 12:2). If our mind is not renewed, we will not be able to understand what God considers good and perfect. Instead, we will end up doing only what we think is good.

Paul wrote those words to the brothers and sisters of Rome because he used to be like them. Before his mind was renewed, he obstinately held fast his faith in Judaism. He thought that he was the most zealous, most devoted and most enlightened person toward the will of God. Many people cannot accept New Testament Church’s doctrines. To them, what we preach is illogical. They simply, can’t get over their

numerous old concepts. If their mind is not renewed according to God's will for today, they cannot please God.

Before Paul was shone by the light on his way to Damascus, he was a typical Jew. He obeyed the law, was devoted to Judaism, and was godly. Concerning zeal, he persecuted the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, he was blameless. Today we must ask the Lord to renew our mind that we may be able to prove what is the good and perfect will of God, as the wise men from the East did. They were truly those who sought the Lord with a pure heart. They did not just love the Lord with their mouths, but they took action and searched for the Lord Jesus.

There were many scribes and Pharisees in Jerusalem who were familiar with the Scriptures and knew about the prophecy concerning the coming of the Messiah very well. When people came to Jerusalem looking for the Messiah, these scribes and Pharisees told them where He could be found, but they did not go look for Him themselves. So they never met Him. They seemed to be waiting for the Messiah, but they actually didn't want Him. May the Lord renew our mind that we will not be like them—stubborn in our own ways—lest we lose the opportunity to walk on the way of the New Testament Church.

Some people say, "The leaders of the New Testament Church are so young and have no theological training. When they were filled by the Holy Spirit, they became zealous and enthusiastic. This is only the impulse of the soul. They don't understand much about the truth." Dear brothers and sisters, you should never entertain such thoughts. Don't ever think that the revelation of God cannot come upon youths. In fact, the words of God can come upon anyone. To become a messenger of God does not depend on age or on whether a person has studied theology or not. If age were a prerequisite, then old Eli was most qualified. But he aged so much that his eyes dimmed and the word of the Lord rarely came upon him. He was so old that he didn't know what was going on. The word of the Lord came upon the boy Samuel instead, for God has the right to speak to whomever He wants. He doesn't have to speak to you just because you are old, knowledgeable about the

Bible or educated in theology.

Brothers and sisters, there is nothing to boast of when the grace of God comes upon us, or when a vessel is being used by God to speak on His behalf. What matters is not how hard the vessel strives, but God's mercy. It was by His mercy that God raised up Sis. Kong Duen Yee in these last days and entrusted her with His end-time will and the law for building the church. So, if the words of God are brought out by some youths, we must bow in worship of God. We must get rid of our old concepts and prostrate before God humbly so that we may understand His will. If a person's biblical knowledge and experience in serving God makes him think that the New Testament Church is just an insignificant new sect, then he is a fool who will suffer loss. May the Lord give us a humble heart, that we may get rid of our old concepts and self-righteousness.

Some people cannot agree with the New Testament Church, not because of the truth, but because of their old, pious concepts. To understand the will of God you must ask the Lord to renew your mind. Otherwise, you will not be able to catch up with God's leading for today.

When the Lord Jesus wanted Peter to go to Cornelius' house to preach to the Gentiles, Peter refused to go. This was not because he had no love and reverence for the Lord, but because he was restricted by his old, pious concepts from Judaism. Preaching to the Gentiles at that time was a new leading of the Holy Spirit in the New Testament era. Brothers and sisters, you all love the Lord dearly and want to live a godly life. But you must understand God's leading for today. Once you put aside your traditional thoughts, the Holy Spirit will have a chance to work in you.

Tonight, we will talk about what the end-time will of God is. Since we live in these last days, we must understand God's end-time will. For our livelihood, work and ministration to be remembered by God, we have to live according to His will. Let me make it simple: *The end-time, highest will of God is to rebuild the glorious New Testament Church through the Holy Spirit.* Since the New Testament Church is rebuilt by the Holy

Spirit, we must be guided by the Holy Spirit into all truth about the church. We must pray for the Holy Spirit to work and speak to us personally.

Brothers and sisters, “The Holy Spirit Rebuilds the New Testament Church” is the only will of God for this era. This is the only work God wants to do today. Other than this, God has no other work. Why must the New Testament Church be rebuilt? Why is the New Testament Church needed in these last days? Are there not enough Christian organizations that we need a new sect? Many people think Christianity is flourishing sufficiently, such that there is no need for the New Testament Church to be rebuilt by the Holy Spirit. Brothers and sisters, if you don’t understand the will of God, you will think this way. But if you do understand God’s will, you will know that the epochal work of God has begun.

The Church Manifests God’s Glory

There are denominations and chapels everywhere. Every Sunday you can see Christians going to church with their Bibles. But God still cannot find rest and be satisfied. Why? Because these people are Christians in name only. They have lost the heavenly nature of the church. The church is supposed to be glorious. 1 Timothy 3:16 says, “And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen by angels, preached among the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up in glory.” Our God is glorious, wise, righteous, good and brilliant. He wants to manifest Himself in the church. *The church is the place where God manifests Himself to the world. The church is also the place to display His abundance, His wisdom, His glory...His all.*

Unfortunately, what we see in most Christians today is not God. Though the denominations have big chapels and grand religious activities, speak high-sounding words, give great sermons and even do charity work, they cannot display God’s presence, nor His glory and wisdom. Going to such places is like going to a theater or to some social gathering.

Such a condition cannot satisfy God. The mission of the church is to manifest God. If God cannot be manifested in a church, that church has lost her testimony and has failed to perform her function.

Brothers and sisters, God wants to display His riches and manifold wisdom through the church. If there is no church on earth, then God's glory and wisdom cannot be displayed. For this reason, God has an earnest desire in this last generation: to rebuild the New Testament Church to display His glory and manifold wisdom. Since the church is where God's glory is manifested, why can't the denominations display God's glory? It is because the church must first meet a few conditions to display God's glory—conditions which the denominations have not met.

Let us read Exodus 39:32: "Thus all the work of the tabernacle of the tent of meeting was finished. And the children of Israel did according to all that the LORD had commanded Moses; so they did." The tabernacle is the tent of meeting, and the tent of meeting represents the church of the New Testament era. So how was all the work of the tent of meeting completed? "The children of Israel did according to all that the LORD had commanded Moses." Verse 42 says: "According to all that the LORD had commanded Moses, so the children of Israel did all the work."

Exodus 40:34–35 says: "Then the cloud covered the tabernacle of meeting, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. And Moses was not able to enter the tabernacle of meeting, because the cloud rested above it, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle." Moses first received the pattern to build the tabernacle from the LORD. Then he told the Israelites the pattern, and they built accordingly. After Moses erected the tent of meeting according to the pattern which God showed him, the glory of God filled the tabernacle.

Brothers and sisters, why did the glory of God fill the tabernacle? Because God's children built it according to all that the LORD had commanded Moses. It was built according to what God wanted—according to the pattern God showed Moses on the mountain. If the tabernacle was not built in this way, God's glory would not have been there. If

Moses said that a certain part should be made of gold, and someone said, “Gold is too expensive. Don’t use it. Use bronze,” or if Moses said the width should be thirty cubits, but someone said, “Thirty cubits is too narrow. It must be a bit wider. Make it thirty-five,” or if Moses said the height should be ten cubits, but someone said, “Ten cubits is too high; eight will do,” do you think the glory of God would fill that tabernacle? Definitely not. A tabernacle built in that way would not be the tabernacle of God, but a tabernacle of men. The glory of the LORD will not fill a tabernacle of men.

Likewise, today’s denominations are not built according to God’s revelation and principle. They replace God’s will with men’s will. They take away what they dislike from the Bible and add what they like. The Bible clearly says baptism is done by full immersion. But they say, “Why bother? Just sprinkle a few drops of water.” God’s glory will not fill such a place. So if the ministration of a church is not in the will of God, God’s glory will not be manifested there.

Why did God’s glory leave Israel during the days of Eli? Because Eli was not faithful to God. He did not hold fast God’s truth. His serving was influenced by human thoughts. The words of God could not come upon him, and the truth could not be revealed to him. Since the worker neglected his duty and failed to bring out the will of God, God could not work, nor could His glory remain in Israel.

Before God can be glorified in the church, He must first find a church built according to His will. God raised up Moses to bring out the law for building the tabernacle and told the Israelites to construct the tabernacle according to the pattern He revealed on the mountain. Then the glory of God could fill it.

Likewise, in the last days, God raised up the apostles to make known His mystery and to restore the law of building the church. Through the apostles, the glorious New Testament Church has been built. The glory of God shall fill this church, and God will find glory in it. Today, the glorious work of God is right before you! God raised up His maidservant, our beloved Sis. Kong Duen Yee, to restore the foundation of the church—the complete truth of Blood, Water and Holy Spirit—so that we

might receive the complete faith. And through His maidservant, God also restored the truth on apostleship—the key to building the church. For the church is to be united and built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets.

To gain a church after His will, God restored the ministry of the apostles through His maidservant Sis. Kong. God let His children understand His will, offer themselves to the Lord, submit to the leading of the apostles and abide by their teachings. Now the church can be built, and God's will can be done. He can now manifest His glory in the midst of His people. This is the greatest and most glorious work of God in these last days, and also the beginning of the end-time, great revival.

Whether the glory of God can be manifested through a congregation does not depend on the number of its members or on how fervent they are. It all depends on whether they are in God's will. If they are, even if man despises that congregation, God will still recognize it and dwell in it.

The Lord Jesus was born in an uncomely manger in Bethlehem. This Jesus who came to the world as a human was so lowly. Not many people knew Him, but God's eyes were on Him. God's presence, glory, authority, holiness, righteousness, pride and will were with Him, too. So all those who went to Him found joy, freedom, peace and satisfaction, and they offered Him gifts. On the contrary, the great city of Jerusalem, its stately temple, all its pious and ritualistic ministrations, and the knowledge of the scribes and Pharisees could not bring people joy, freedom or satisfaction in the spirit.

The denominations have grand cathedrals, unlike our small place here on the sixth floor (we made it by knocking down all the partition walls). Our premises is not like a chapel at all. Nevertheless, those grand chapels are not built according to the will of God, nor are they built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets. The glory of God cannot fill them. People cannot find God there. The weak remain weak, even after going there many years. They go in ready to read their Bibles, but come out headed for the theaters. They go in and sing hymns, but go

home and sing pop songs. They know the coming of the Lord is near, yet they cannot advance courageously and love the Lord. They love the world instead and think about earthly things all day long. They find it torturous to be Christians, and are so heavily laden that they want to give up. They ask, "Is there a retirement for Christians?"

The Bible says, "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." As they preach the gospel, they tell others that believing in Jesus will give you peace and joy. But they themselves are heavy laden and have no peace and joy. This is because they preach theories and not the truth; they do things as they will and not as the Holy Spirit leads. The problem is not not with the gospel of Christ and the truth, but with the people who disobey God's will and discount God's words. They add to or take away from the word of God as they see fit. Therefore, God's glory cannot be manifested among them. When people come to the New Testament Church, the dry bones live, the cold become hot, and the weak become strong. For the New Testament Church has the truth and the Holy Spirit and only the truth and the Holy Spirit can set people free.

The Church Displays Christ's Riches

The church not only displays God's glory, but also Christ's riches, for the church is the body of Christ and the manifestation of Christ in the flesh. The Lord Jesus, the Word who became flesh, was crucified. His blood was shed to accomplish eternal salvation. He was buried, rose three days later, and ascended into heaven after forty days. He poured out the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost and established on earth the New Testament Church, which is His body. Through this body, He displays His riches and executes the will of God. Ephesians 1:22–23 says: "And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all." Since Christ is so great and abundant, the church must be the same.

The Church Executes the Authority of God

God has given all authority in heaven and on earth to the Lord Jesus, and put all things in subjection under His feet. Let us read Hebrews 1:13: “But to which of the angels has He ever said: ‘Sit at My right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool?’” Hebrews 2:7–8 says: “You made Him a little lower than the angels; You crowned Him with glory and honor, and set Him over the works of Your hands. You have put all things in subjection under His feet.” God not only crowned Jesus with glory and honor, but also appointed Him to rule over all creation and put everything in subjection under His feet. Since the Bible says that all things are subject to Him, there is nothing that will not be subject to Him.

However, we have yet to see all things being subject to Him. When we preach the gospel and tell people to believe in Jesus, some stare at us and say, “Who is Jesus? Why do I have to believe in Him?” They are not subject to Lord Jesus. Others say more arrogantly, “Where is Jesus? Show Him to me and I’ll punch Him in the face!” People use many ways to persecute Christians and try to stop them from serving and believing in God. So all things have yet to be subject to Jesus.

Even we ourselves often rebel against the Lord Jesus. Our heart falters between the Lord and the world. We want to love the Lord and live a holy life, but we also want to enjoy the pleasure of sin. Within us, all things are not subject to Him. There are many rebellious, unrighteous, crooked and evil things in us. But God is determined to put all things in subjection under His feet.

But how? Where are Christ’s feet? Christ’s feet are with His body, and the church is the body of Christ. So the church is the key to putting everything in subjection under Christ’s feet. Whether all things will obey Christ and be put in subjection under His feet depends on whether the church has appeared and has grown up. If a person can only present his big head, but his legs are so weak that he can’t even walk, how can he trample the enemies under his feet?

Brothers and sisters, why don't we see all things in subjection to the Lord Jesus? Because the body of Christ has not yet appeared. When the body of Christ appears, you will see all things subject themselves under Christ's feet.

Christians in the denominations are so pathetic. Not only do they fail to execute God's authority to trample on the enemies, the enemies trample on them! The enemies command those Christians' eyes: "Watch TV! See a movie! Read that obscene book! Look at that filthy thing!" So instead of looking at the good things, they look at the bad things and store them in their brain.

The enemies control not only their eyes, but also their ears. Like trash cans, their ears collect the enemies' garbage. So the Christians don't listen to God's words—the word of life. Instead, they listen to corrupt words. Ask them what the message was last Sunday and they'll reply, "Oh, I forgot! My memory is so bad!" Then ask them about the latest gossip, and they will remember every word. Some brothers and sisters even say they will never forget some of the things people have told them. They will not forget for the rest of their lives, even until they come before the Lord. They will remember them until they come before the judgment seat of Christ, and even until eternity. Suddenly their memory has become excellent! But they still cannot remember the words of God.

The enemies also control their mouths and make them slander, gossip and speak controversial, foul and cruel words. If you ask them to preach the gospel, they will say, "No way! I can't speak well. Please ask sister so-and-so to go." They have no eloquence when preaching the gospel, but when they gossip, words pour from them so fluently. Gentiles specialize in speaking cruel words. Their throats are open tombs, and poison is under their lips. However, many Christians are just as bad. This is because they have failed to subject their mouths to the Lord Jesus.

The enemies even invade their hands. Instead of doing God's work, they do things that are not edifying. If you tell them to work for God, they are clumsy. But when they sin, they become skillful. The enemies

control not only their hands, but also their legs. They cause them to walk the rebellious way. This is the pathetic condition of today's Christians. Therefore, until the body of Christ grows to a perfect man, the enemies cannot be trampled underfoot.

Brothers and sisters, it would be easy for God to deal with the enemies Himself, for He is God. However, *God wants to trample on the enemies, subjugate them and rule over the whole earth through the church.* This is the glory of the church. But if we continue to be so weak and tender, we will not be able to satisfy God and trample on His enemies. For the enemies to be trampled, and for all things to be subject under Christ's feet, the body of Christ has to appear, and must grow to a perfect man. Therefore, in these last days, God is very earnest to build the body of Christ.

How can the body of Christ be built? Ephesians 4:11–12 says, “And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.” The church is built by God's chosen apostles and the various spiritual ministers who assist them—the prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. Without the apostles, the body of Christ cannot be built. Only God's chosen apostles can bring out the full truth, that we may come to the unity of the faith and the knowledge of God's Son, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. Then the enemies will be trampled under the feet of Lord Jesus, and all things will be in subjection to Him.

God will continue to work until this is fulfilled: That at the name of Jesus, every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth. And every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. Therefore, it is an exceedingly great thing for God to raise up the apostles in these end times. During the next few days, we will discuss this topic in more detail.

The Church Is a Habitation of God in the Spirit

The church is the spiritual house built by the Holy Spirit, and a habitation of God in the Spirit. Without the church, God has no resting place on earth. When the Lord Jesus was on earth, He said, “Foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head.” The people at that time had departed from God and rebelled against Him. So, the Lord could not find rest. It is very pitiful for a person to have no home on earth and to wander around. Brothers and sisters, all of you have a home, whether you are rich or poor. You may not own them, and they may not be that big, but at least you have a place where you can be sheltered from the rain and the sun. Have you ever thought of God having no home? God’s children only care about themselves and never think of God having no home on earth.

Brothers and sisters, let us mind God’s heart and find Him a resting place as David did. The Israelites only cared for their paneled houses, and never thought of building a dwelling place for God. Only David was after God’s heart. He could understand how God felt and was determined to build a temple for Him. His determination to find a dwelling place for God was pleasing to God. There are many Christians today, but how many of them mind God’s heart? How many of them know that He is wandering on earth? How many of them are willing to find a dwelling place for God?

In these last days, God found His maidservant Sis. Kong. She understood the mind of God and was earnest for God’s temple. She rebuilt the fallen tabernacle of David and repaired its gaps. She brought out the law for building the church. After Sis. Kong rested in the Lord, God raised up another vessel to succeed her ministry as the chief apostle. This vessel is to lead the church forward and build the spiritual temple—His resting place on earth. This is the most earnest will of God in these end times.

Brothers and sisters, I repeat: The church is to display the glory of God and to execute His authority. It is also God’s dwelling place. God

wants not only to display His glory and trample on the enemies through the church, but also to find rest here. God's highest will in these last days is to build His church through the Holy Spirit. And in order to rebuild the church, He has specially chosen some apostles.

If you cannot agree with or don't understand the truth on apostleship, it doesn't matter for now. We hope you will continue to attend this convention for the next few days, and we believe God will enlighten you. If you are determined to do His will, He will surely let you understand it. May we find grace through the meetings over the next few days and recognize God's end-time will. Then we can build the spiritual house together.

God has raised up the apostles and has rebuilt the glorious New Testament Church. The testimony of the early church has now been displayed. Therefore, we must surrender ourselves completely to the Lord and to the apostles, and abide by their teachings according to the Bible. In this way, we will come to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, and the testimony of unity will be displayed. God will once again find glory in the church, and the enemies will retreat in shame and be trampled. At the same time, we will be able to live a victorious life by the Holy Spirit, bear the fruits of righteousness and enter God's kingdom abundantly.

Now, let us sing this new hymn, "Spiritual Flame of Revival Gets Brighter." Here it says, "I'm so happy and here's the reason why, God has raised up a spiritual leader. God has revived the apostleship, and the testimony of the early church is manifested." Let us sing it with joy.

The Foundation of the Church

*(April 10, 1968—Message of the Lord's Servant Bro. Hong
during the Convention at the Church of Hong Kong)*

Last night I said God's highest will in these last days is to rebuild His glorious New Testament Church through the Holy Spirit. This is the place where He will manifest His glory, riches and power. The church is the great mystery of godliness, where God is manifested in the flesh. Through the church, God makes Himself known to man. The church is also the body of Christ. God deals with His enemies through the church—a body of saints who have come to the unity of the faith. This is the testimony of unity, the testimony of home. The church is also called the house of God. Without the church, there is no place on earth where God can find rest.

The denominations do not serve God according to His will. Each one of them has its own point of view. They cannot display the testimony of home and unity, and God cannot find rest among them. That is why they are called denominations and not the church. Denominations are organizations built by men. But the church is built by the Holy Spirit. After God's children receive the full truth of Blood, Water and Holy Spirit, they become living stones, and are built together by the Holy Spirit to become God's dwelling place, which is His spiritual house. If Christians are not built into the church they cannot be united. They are not a spiritual house, but unused building material. There are many Christians and countless denominations. But none of them are united because they are not built by the Holy Spirit. God cannot find rest in their midst. Therefore, God is earnest to do something in these last days—to rebuild the glorious New Testament Church.

The Foundation of the Church Is Jesus Christ

We have to understand the significance of the New Testament Church. The denominations call themselves churches. But what actu-

ally is the church? How is the church built?

The church must be built according to God's law. As with building a house, you have to build the church according to the blueprint and at the proper location for it to be legal. Otherwise, no matter how well it is built, it will have to be demolished. Therefore, the church must be built according to the law of God.

The first stage of any construction is to lay the foundation. To lay the foundation of the church we must first find out what the foundation of the church is. The strength of a house depends on its foundation. If the foundation is solid, the house will be firm; if it is weak, the house will be shaky. The Bible says, "If the foundations are destroyed, what can the righteous do?" (Ps. 11:3). So the foundation is the most important part of the building.

What is the foundation of the church? The Bible gives the answer when the Lord Jesus said to His disciples, "But who do you say that I am?" Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16:15–18). The Lord Jesus told His disciples that the church is built on this rock. This rock is the foundation of the church. So what is this rock? 1 Corinthians 10:4 says, "That Rock was Christ." 1 Corinthians 3:11 says, "For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ." The Bible shows us *the foundation of the church is Jesus Christ*.

God does not want us to merely know this; He wants us to be built on this foundation. It is not enough for you to just understand this truth, or to just preach it. Satan always tries to hinder man from understanding God's will. If someone manages to understand it, Satan will try to prevent him from making it a life reality. This is the condition of all Christian organizations. They have theories, but no reality.

This was also my condition when I was in the Christian Assembly. In their spiritual training classes, we studied the truth of the church.

So I knew long ago that the foundation of the church is Christ. But when I tried to tell others about it, I could only speak empty theories. I could not lead them to experience it with their lives—to experience the reality of the truth. Knowledge can never replace the reality of being built on this foundation.

Brothers and sisters, why is the New Testament Church hated by men? Why do people say that the New Testament Church is terrible? In Taiwan, the denominations tremble at the name New Testament Church. Why does the New Testament Church have such a great impact on this generation? Because the New Testament Church is built on the foundation of Jesus Christ. There are so many Christian organizations. Many of them have grand cathedrals and large congregations. Most of their evangelists have doctorates and are famous for their preaching. But they still cannot influence this generation, for they do not build on Jesus Christ, the foundation.

These denominations are like Jerusalem of the past. Jerusalem had a magnificent temple. It had priests, scribes and Pharisees who served and interpreted the Bible. They looked so holy and godly as they carried out their ceremonies. But Jerusalem was in the hands of King Herod, who symbolized the devil. Jerusalem at that time was under the power of Satan! This happened because it had departed from the foundation of Jesus Christ.

A Child was born in a manger in Bethlehem. He was Jesus Christ, who came to this world in the form of man. All Jerusalem was troubled upon His birth. He had such a great impact! Today, although Christianity is flourishing, it does not influence the world as much as Jesus did. Therefore, the denominations have no power to cast out the devil Satan, wipe out sins, or overcome the world. Instead, the world has overcome them! The devil Satan rules over the denominations. Even their evangelists are filled with the world. Why? Because they do not have Christ—the foundation. Yet, they still think they are built on Christ, refusing to believe otherwise.

There was a brother Sparks who could really talk about Christ. He said that Christ is abundant, great, surpassing, universal and heavenly.

He not only called Him great, but long, wide, high and deep. He said that Christ is full of unsearchable riches. How mysterious! The more he talked, the more surpassing Christ became. But his “Christ” had become an abstraction. His “Christ” was unsearchable and untouchable, like a castle in the air you could never enjoy. How miserable!

How to Be Built on the Foundation of the Church

Receive the Witness of Blood

How can you be built on the foundation of Christ? How can you enjoy the abundance of Christ? Let us read 1 John 5:8–9. “And there are three that bear witness on earth: the Spirit, the water and the blood; and these three agree as one. If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater, for this is the witness of God which He has testified of His Son.”

God has personally testified of His Son. This testimony contains three witnesses: the Spirit, the water and the blood; and these three agree as one. The testimony God gave for His son, Jesus Christ, is definite. It has three witnesses—no more, no less. So to be built on this foundation you must have all three—blood, water and Holy Spirit. Otherwise, it is useless for you to say, “Our foundation is Christ.” If you have received only one-third, or two-thirds of the testimony, you are missing something. And, in the eyes of God, you are not built on the foundation—Christ.

There are several types of Christians today. One type disbelieves. They may say that they believe in Christ, but they only preach the social gospel. They deny the divinity of the Lord Jesus, and all the miracles and wonders He performed. They don’t believe that the Lord Jesus was born of the virgin Mary, or that He fed 5,000 people with two fish and five loaves. Nor do they believe that He rose from the dead, ascended into heaven, sat at the right hand of the Most High, and sent the Holy Spirit. They don’t believe that He will come again one day. And finally, they reject the Blood, Water and Holy Spirit.

Another type are called the fundamentalists. They believe in the divinity of the Lord Jesus and in His miracles, and that *the blood of the Lord Jesus can forgive sins. They repent and receive forgiveness through the blood of Jesus Christ. This means that they have received the witness of the blood* (one of the three witnesses). However, they do not continue to pursue the truth to receive the other two witnesses—water and the Spirit.

Receive the Witness of Water

What is the witness of water? The water is the word of God. God uses the blood of the Lord Jesus to wash away our sins, but He uses His holy word to further cleanse and sanctify us. So not only must we accept the Lord's blood for the forgiveness of sins, we must also obey the word of God. The Bible is the word of God. *Every man saved by the blood must believe and obey the Bible. This is receiving the witness of water.*

To receive the witness of water, one must first “*believe and be baptized*” according to the words of the Lord Jesus. *Receiving the water baptism is the beginning of obeying God's words.*

Some Christian organizations do not receive the water baptism according to the words of God. The Bible shows us that the whole body must go into the water and then come up from the water during baptism. Our Lord Himself set an example for us. He went into the Jordan to be buried in the water, and then He came up from the water. In Acts 8, the eunuch accepted the Lord while riding in a chariot. He asked Philip what would hinder him from being baptized. When they came to some water, Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and Philip baptized him. Then they came up out of the water. Philip did not sprinkle a few drops of water on the eunuch's head to baptize him. If baptism could be done with just a few drops of water, they would have just used some drinking water that might have been in the chariot. They would not have needed to go to a place with much water. And they would not have needed to go down into the water, and come up out of the water.

Many people insist water baptism is just a ceremony, and that it doesn't have to be taken so seriously. They say that it is too inconve-

nient to go down into the water. Others explain it is too hard to be baptized in cold regions because the freezing water may make people sick. But the Bible shows us water baptism is done by immersion. Please read John 3:22–23. “After these things Jesus and His disciples came into the land of Judea, and there He remained with them and baptized. Now John also was baptizing in Aenon near Salim, because there was much water there. And they came and were baptized.” Because there was much water there, they went there to be baptized. If baptism could be done with a few drops of water, they would not have needed to go to a place with much water.

Matthew 3:13–16 says, “Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him. And John tried to prevent Him, saying, ‘I have need to be baptized by You, and are You coming to me?’ But Jesus answered and said to him, ‘Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.’ Then he allowed Him. Then Jesus, when He had been baptized, came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him.” This is the example the Lord Jesus set for us. These are the words of God, by which we must abide. When we are baptized, it means that we have died, been buried, and risen with the Lord. You cannot bury someone with just a few handfuls of dirt. You need to bury the entire body. Wouldn’t it be horrible to bury the dead by sprinkling some dirt on the head? Do not add to or take away from the words of God to make things more convenient.

Some people argue, “It all depends on our heart. That’s the most important thing. If you have faith, you don’t need to go into the water. Because if you do not really believe in Jesus, it doesn’t matter if you go into the water a hundred times.” But this is only their personal view. God never said this. For God wants us to have not only sincere faith inside, but also real action outside. Only then can the testimony be complete, for “faith without works is dead.”

Others may say, “The Bible does claim they went down into the water. But maybe they were not immersed in the water. Maybe they

went down into the water to put a few drops of water on the head.” Man is good at making excuses, but God’s word is the standard, and we should abide by it. The Bible clearly says “much water” and that “both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water.” If they only needed a few drops of water, the one giving the baptism would be the only person who would have to go in. Why, then, did both of them have to go into the water?

Man has fallen from grace, and this world is under the bondage of affliction. This is because people are not absolute toward the words of God. They change God’s words at random. What God did not say, they say. And what God did say, they don’t. Brothers and sisters, we are the children of God. We must abide by His words, and we must not change them. After Christians receive the witness of blood, they must also receive the witness of water of the Lord Jesus. They must be edified by the truth, and obey every word of God. Only then can they be strengthened in the truth, be sanctified and cleansed by the truth, and not have any spot or wrinkle or any such thing. Then they can become a glorious church that can be offered to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Receive the Witness of Spirit

After receiving the witnesses of blood and water, Christians should receive the witness of Spirit—that is, *receive the Holy Spirit baptism and speak in tongues*. This is very important.

Before ascending to heaven, the Lord Jesus commanded the disciples not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father. He said that John truly baptized with water, but they would soon be baptized with the Holy Spirit and receive power when the Holy Spirit came. Then they would become the Lord’s witnesses. The Lord Jesus made this commandment just before He ascended to heaven. These were His last words. This shows how important it is to be baptized with the Holy Spirit. Every believer of Jesus Christ should receive this testimony because it is the promise of the Father, and the commandment of the Lord Jesus. If you do not receive it, you are despising the promise of God and disobeying the commandment of

the Lord.

In Acts 2 it says the Holy Spirit descended on the Day of Pentecost. The disciples were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. That was how they received the Holy Spirit baptism—they spoke in tongues. This was a new work of the Holy Spirit in the New Testament era, so the people who saw it did not understand. They were amazed and wondered why the believers acted like that. What was going on? Were they drunk? Some were confused, and others mocked them.

It is the same today. God had His maidservant Sis. Kong preach the complete truth, which included the truth on the Holy Spirit baptism and speaking in tongues. When a person receives the Holy Spirit baptism, he speaks in tongues. Many people are surprised when they see the New Testament Church speaking in tongues, and say, “We have believed in Jesus for so long, and we have been to many cathedrals, but we have never seen anything like this.” They are like the Jews in Acts 2. They are completely confused. Some wonder if we are crazy. Others even say, “This could be an evil spirit. It’s so terrible! Be careful!” And some despise us, saying, “They dress nicely. But once they receive the Holy Spirit, they become so excited that they clap their hands and cry bitterly. They get tears and mucous all over themselves. It looks awful.”

Being filled with the Holy Spirit and speaking in tongues is an extremely great thing. Let us read Acts 2:14. “Peter, standing up with the eleven, raised his voice and said to them, ‘Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and heed my words.’” The “this” mentioned here is what we just talked about: being filled with the Holy Spirit and speaking in tongues. This is the work of God. It is a new sign of the Holy Spirit that marks the beginning of the New Testament era. Everyone must know this, yet it is neglected, despised and rejected by men. The devil Satan wants to hinder men from understanding this great work. May we all see through his scheme.

What is the devil Satan’s scheme? It is to make people adhere to their old traditions and practices. You should not reject something just

because you are not used to it. Otherwise, you will suffer loss. In the denominations, Christians have all kinds of observances. They have their own ways of praying and singing hymns. But most of what they do is against the Holy Spirit.

When I first came to the New Testament Church, I was not used to praying in tongues. I was accustomed to quiet prayers in the Christian Assembly. Everyone would say softly, “O Lord. O Lord.” We had to retreat to our spirit and be calm. The quieter, the better. We thought the Spirit would fly away if we got too loud. To us, being loud was the work of the soul, not the Spirit. But these were only the concepts and practices of the Christian Assembly, not the truth of the Bible.

In the New Testament Church, we not only pray loudly in tongues, but also clap our hands. And sometimes we clap hard. Many people can't get used to this. I also had a problem with it at first. I said, “Let's go anywhere except the New Testament Church. They like to clap and shout. They pray so loud. How can they meet God? When you pray, you must be calm. The calmer you are, the easier it is to meet God.”

Brothers and sisters, we must have a reverent heart. Loud prayers may be strange to us, but we will get used to it. Actually, the real question should be: What is the will of God? You should ask, “Is this from the Holy Spirit?” If it is from the Holy Spirit, you have to get used to it. You cannot reject it just because it is new to you. Your old practices should not replace the living God. God must be your standard. If there are any conflicts between you and God, you must put down your own views. You cannot ask God to comply to your standards. God cannot lower His standard, and no one can hinder what God wants to do. If somebody wants to oppose God's will, he will suffer loss. No matter how hard-hearted and rebellious you may be, God can make you submit to Him one day. Therefore, to avoid loss, you must listen to the words of God in reverence. Never use your past experiences to judge His words.

Every saint should receive the Holy Spirit baptism. Do not think that some people need it and some do not. The Christian Assembly says that there are two sides to the Holy Spirit. One is the Spirit that

helps you from within. The other is the Spirit that fills you from without. One is found inside you, and the other is outside. They say that the Spirit inside gives us life, and that He is a Spirit with form and eternal value. But they say that the Spirit outside is the Spirit of power. And when it comes upon you, you shall receive power to work for the Lord. However, they claim this Spirit is temporary and will pass away. To them, it does not matter whether you have received it. This is the teaching of the Christian Assembly, not biblical truth.

I used to listen to their erroneous teachings. They also told me stories about the “Holy Spirit movement” and warned me against the Spirit baptism. They said, “Oh, it’s so dangerous! It causes people to act impulsively. They become deceived by the devil, and start doing things that do not glorify God. If their condition worsens, they will be possessed by evil spirits and become insane!” I was terrified. I knew nothing about the truth on Holy Spirit baptism, so I guarded against it and despised it. It was hard for me to accept the Spirit baptism.

Maybe some of you are the same. I used to think that “other tongues” were foreign languages, because in the Christian Assembly I had never heard the truth on speaking in tongues. In fact, I seldom heard the term “Holy Spirit baptism.” I was an evangelist who had been teaching Christians for 18 years, and I still did not know that receiving the Holy Spirit baptism and speaking in tongues was the basic requirement for doing God’s work. Wasn’t I a deceiver?

The Lord Jesus asked the disciples not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for the Holy Spirit baptism. Only after receiving the Holy Spirit would they have power to testify for Him. Without it, they could not do any spiritual work. Therefore, every Christian must receive the Holy Spirit and speak in tongues. It is the testimony everyone who serves God must have. If one is not filled with the Holy Spirit, whatever he does will be from his own flesh. Without the Holy Spirit, how can you do the work of the Holy Spirit?

Some preachers only speak pleasant words. They have learned that they cannot oppose the truth, so they say, “I do not oppose the Holy Spirit. If somebody receives it, I thank God for him. But if someone

does not want it, I will not force him. I allow people to choose freely. ” They sound spiritual, unlike the New Testament Church who, they say, is subjective, stubborn and extreme. They say New Testament Church members demand that Christians receive the Holy Spirit baptism.

Brothers and sisters, those preachers’ words do not come from God, but from the flesh and Satan. In fact, the New Testament Church is opinionated, but absolute about the truth. She follows the Bible 100 percent. The witness of God which He has testified of His son are three: the Spirit, the water and the blood. And since there are three, we cannot belittle nor leave out any one of them.

The Bible puts it this way: “Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name...by which we must be saved.” Besides the Lord Jesus, God has not prepared any other way for mankind to be saved. All must believe in Jesus Christ and be saved by the cleansing of His blood. Otherwise, they will perish. This is something definite. We must believe in the Lord Jesus. And it is wrong to disbelieve in Him. Some people say, “You Christians are so terrible. Why do you have to bother with others’ faith? Go preach your Jesus but leave us alone. You believe in your Jesus, and I’ll believe in my idols. You follow your Christ, and I’ll follow my gods. This is a democratic world we live in. Don’t criticize others. Don’t say you are right and everyone else is wrong. You are too narrow-minded and have no love. You should give others their freedom.” We are not trying to rob anyone of their freedom. We are simply being faithful in telling them the truth, for the truth is the word of God. And God wants all people to be saved by believing in His word. God wants every Christian to receive the Holy Spirit baptism. This is God’s command. The truth is definite; it is not multiple choice. It is something everyone must accept.

May God give us a humble heart to receive the three witnesses. Otherwise, your “Christ” will be an empty theory. I know of a group of evangelists who are very good in preaching “Christ.” Everything to them is “Christ.” When they pray, they pray to “Christ.” When they read the Bible, they read about “Christ.” When they serve, they serve “Christ.” When they give, they give to “Christ.” It is “Christ” in the

morning, “Christ” in the afternoon, and “Christ” in the evening. Yet, they do not obey the command of Christ and receive the Holy Spirit baptism. These evangelists think highly of themselves, but they are actually blind. They are laymen and deceivers, religious deceivers indeed!

A faithful servant of God must preach the truth completely. In Acts 19, when Paul saw the disciples at Ephesus, he asked them, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?” “No,” they answered. Those people were honest. They were not like some people today, who pretend they have received the Holy Spirit when they have not. Some claim to have received it when they first believed in Jesus. Others say they received it when they were baptized in the water. These are all groundless claims. The disciples at Ephesus honestly admitted that they had not received the Holy Spirit. So Paul immediately baptized them with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke with tongues.

We make many people unhappy today when we follow Paul’s example. When we meet a Christian, no matter how long he has believed, we ask, “Have you received the Holy Spirit baptism?” It is not enough to say that you believe in Christ; you must believe in Him the right way. Some people believe the complete truth, and some do not. Perhaps you have not deliberately rejected it. Maybe the denominations you went to did not preach it completely. But God has now sent us His maidservant to preach the full truth of Blood, Water and Holy Spirit. According to the truth, she has shown us the way to receive the Holy Spirit baptism and speak in tongues (pray with the spirit).

All brothers and sisters who come to the New Testament Church receive the Holy Spirit baptism. When they do, they feel so liberated and happy! Receive the Holy Spirit baptism quickly and speak in tongues, then you shall also enjoy the riches of Christ.

Canaan was a land flowing with milk and honey. However, when the Israelites were east of the Jordan, they could only see Canaan. They could not enter it to enjoy it. There was a river that separated them from that land. But when the Israelites followed Joshua to cross the Jordan (symbolizing the Holy Spirit baptism), they entered the beautiful land of Canaan, and could finally enjoy all of its abundance. Similarly,

after you have received the Spirit baptism, you will enjoy all the riches of Christ and experience “the land flowing with milk and honey.” You will pray, “O Lord, there is no good thing apart from You!” If you do not receive the Holy Spirit, you will be separated from the Lord, and you will not receive any good thing from Him.

Brothers and sisters, may God help us to know that Christ is the foundation of the church, and to also receive the complete witness of Blood, Water and Holy Spirit of Jesus Christ. May we all be built on this foundation. When our foundation is built on Christ the rock, the Spirit says, “The gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.” Therefore, to receive the complete witness of Jesus Christ is to be built on the foundation—Jesus Christ. If we are, then we will have the power to overcome Hades, and we shall sing praises to God. This is living in Canaan and enjoying milk and honey. When we are filled with the Holy Spirit, we can truly enjoy milk and honey. It is so sweet! So joyous! So liberating! No more sorrow! May God be gracious to us so that we may understand the foundation of the New Testament Church: the complete truth of Blood, Water, and Holy Spirit.

If some of you still have not received the Holy Spirit, I hope you will receive it tonight. We are willing to help you be built on this complete foundation. Let us sing the hymn, “Dwelling in Promised Land.”

Built on the Foundation of the Apostles and Prophets

*(April 20, 1968—Message of the Lord's Servant Bro. Hong
during the Convention at the Church of Hong Kong)*

The Foundation of the Church: The Complete Witness of Blood, Water and Holy Spirit of Jesus Christ

Last night, we said the foundation of the church is Jesus Christ. We all understand this truth, but that's not enough. We must be built upon this foundation realistically. For the words of God are not only for us to understand, but also for us to experience and enjoy. If we only know the words of God, but do not obey them, they will not do us any good. So we must not only know that the foundation of the church is Christ, but also be sure we are built upon this foundation. If we only listen to the truth but never walk in the truth, we will not please God. He will not be glorified in us, and the devil Satan will not be shamed. Brothers and sisters, Christ is not abstract. He is real. He is surpassing, but not so surpassing that He cannot be met. He is abundant but not so abundant that no one can enjoy Him.

Last night we mentioned *the three witnesses of God which He has testified of His Son are Blood, Water and Holy Spirit*. These three are the complete witness of Jesus Christ. As God's children, we must receive this complete witness before we can be built on the foundation of Christ. The denominations also say their foundation is Christ. But since they do not preach *Blood, Water and Holy Spirit*, their foundation is incomplete. Therefore, the witness of Jesus Christ they have received is incomplete.

The unbelievers and social gospel sects do not believe in the precious blood of Christ. Some of the fundamental denominations believe in the precious blood, but fail to go on to receive the testimony

of water and Holy Spirit. The Baptists, the Christian Assembly and others have advanced a little further by receiving the water baptism by full immersion, according to the Bible. However, they fail to go one step further to receive the testimony of the Holy Spirit. Some Pentecostal sects receive the Spirit baptism, but do not continue to seek a holy life and walk in God's words by the Holy Spirit. Therefore, God is still not satisfied with them. The Christian Assembly really knows how to explore the truth on the church, but fails to begin with the Holy Spirit. They reject the Spirit of Jesus Christ and lock Him outside. So no matter how much they talk about Christ and the church, they cannot lead the brothers and sisters into the reality of the church. This is what we will be discussing tonight.

What Is Receiving the Testimony of Blood?

To receive the complete truth of Blood, Water and Holy Spirit you must first *recognize that you are a sinner* who has committed many sins. Then, you must *recognize that the Lord Jesus is the Savior who shed His blood and gave His life for you*. Finally, you must *repent and confess your sins before the Lord Jesus and ask Him to cleanse you with His precious blood*. Then you have received the testimony of blood.

You do not receive the testimony of blood just once. You must continuously live before the Lord by His blood as long as you live. Many people still try to be justified by their own works even after they have been born again by the Lord's blood. When they feel their spiritual condition is good, they come to God. But when they are a little weak they say, "No, I cannot come to God today. I have been bad. I haven't done anything good. I have fallen short of God. I don't dare come close to the Lord." Of course, it is good for Christians to respect God, but you should also remember that the Lord Jesus shed His precious blood for us. Were it not for the precious blood of the Lord, we could not live before God at all. Therefore, we shouldn't come before God by our own good works, but by His blood.

We are corrupt and weak, so how do we become clean? When can we be holy? Humans are never holy. You may think you are holy, but to

God, you are corrupt. You may think you have been good, but to God your goodness is like filthy rags. You may think you have been charitable, but you have offended God. If a Christian does not know how to enjoy the redemption of the blood of the Lord Jesus, his life will be miserable. At one moment, he will be in heaven. The next moment he will be back on earth. In one day, he will go back and forth between heaven and earth several times. That's why Christians must receive the precious blood of the Lord and continue to live in the blood.

What Is Receiving the Testimony of Water?

Christians receive the testimony of Water when they believe and are baptized into the name of the Lord according to God's word. This is the beginning of receiving the testimony of water. After this, believers must abide by the truth in the Bible and live in the word of God for the rest of their lives.

If any one of you here today has believed in Jesus, but still has not received water baptism, you must quickly be baptized into the name of the Lord. Otherwise, you have not received the complete testimony. We have a baptism pool upstairs. We can baptize whomever wants to believe in Jesus at anytime. Some denominations test new believers before giving them the water baptism. They want to observe them to see whether they behave like Christians. If they do, they will baptize them with confidence that the new Christians will not later disgrace God. But the Bible never tells us to do that, so this is unnecessary. As a matter of fact, the Bible says, "Believe and be baptized." So as soon as a person believes, he can be baptized. It doesn't depend on how long he has believed, but on whether he truly believes in Jesus.

There was a eunuch who heard the gospel while riding in a chariot and believed in Jesus. When he came to some water, he said, "See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?" Then Philip told him, "If you believe with all your heart, you may." There was also a prison keeper who was baptized by Paul on the same night he believed in Jesus. So as soon as someone believes, he must be baptized. It must not be delayed or deemed a ceremony. Rather, it is a testimony to your faith in Jesus. Through baptism, you testify that you have begun to

walk in God's truth. You have died, been buried and have risen with the Lord. From now on, you are separated from the sinful world and belong to the Lord Jesus. So water baptism is the beginning of the testimony of water.

What Is Receiving the Testimony of the Holy Spirit?

Receiving the testimony of the Holy Spirit is to *receive Holy Spirit baptism and speak in new tongues*. The Bible shows us that receiving Spirit baptism is always evidenced by speaking in tongues. The first time someone speaks in tongues while being filled by the Holy Spirit is Spirit baptism.

I used to disagree that Spirit baptism is always evidenced by speaking in tongues. I presumed that I had received the Holy Spirit baptism when I was in the Christian Assembly. When asked, "Did you speak in tongues when you received the Holy Spirit baptism?" I would say, "No, tongues is the least of all the gifts; it is nothing! Tongues is a language God gives to whomever He wishes. But not everybody speaks in tongues." When I heard if you do not speak in tongues you have not received Holy Spirit baptism, and you have not been filled by the Holy Spirit, I strongly disagreed. I said, "How could that be? When I pray, sometimes I feel so sweet. Sometimes I feel so happy that I want to jump, and sometimes I feel so zealous that I almost explode. Doesn't this prove that I have received the Spirit baptism and am filled by the Holy Spirit? The only difference is that I don't speak in tongues."

However, these signs did not mean that I had received the Spirit baptism and was filled with the Holy Spirit—it was only the urging of the Holy Spirit. If a person truly receives the Spirit baptism and is filled by the Holy Spirit, he will surely speak in new tongues. The Bible says, "If someone can tame his tongue, then, he is a perfect person. For even though the tongue is a small member, it is the hardest to control." But if a person receives the Spirit baptism and is filled by the Holy Spirit, his tongue will obey the Holy Spirit, and it will leap and speak in tongues. This is something practical. It is a spiritual reality.

Brothers and sisters, to pray in spirit you must speak in tongues.

For Paul said, “If I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays ...” (1 Cor. 14:14). It doesn’t matter if you don’t understand what you are saying when you pray in spirit, for it is to be received by faith and not by your feelings or by your human understanding. Many people try to analyze it. The more they do, the more they cannot accept it. If you keep trying to use your brain to understand it, you will never accept this truth. Since this is a spiritual principle, you must simply obey, and it will work. It is like a match: When you strike it, it will light up. Adults can light it, children can light it, chemists can light it, and so can the uneducated and old grannies in the country. For this is a natural phenomenon and not an abstract theory. You need to use your brain to understand a theory, but need only to act by faith to see a natural phenomenon.

Many people cannot understand praying in tongues. They doubt our praying in tongues is real. I hope you will come before the Lord humbly today and receive it by faith. Then you will see it accomplished on you instantly.

My mother cannot read, and she is in her seventies. No matter how I explained the Spirit baptism to her, she could not understand it. When I told her that speaking in tongues is to make sounds with the tongue, she was even more confused. I became frustrated and gave up.

One day, while I was kneeling and praying in the Spirit with some others, she pulled up a chair and sat beside us. She was desirous to be filled with the Holy Spirit. She was very simple and couldn’t say anything except, “Oh Lord Jesus, I thank you! I praise you!” As she went on praising the Lord earnestly, her tongue went out of control and began to speak: “Da Da Da.” And not only did her tongue move, her entire body did too. We knew that God personally baptized her with the Holy Spirit and let her speak in tongues! She was greatly filled with the Holy Spirit! Later, we all stopped, but she went on saying, “Da Da Da.” After she stopped, she said, “It was like being charged with electricity. My whole body was numb, and still is.” After that, all the sicknesses in her were healed, and she was liberated in the spirit.

Brothers and sisters, see how great the power of the Holy Spirit is! This is a real experience every Christian can have. Of course, not ev-

everyone who receives the Holy Spirit will shake all over like my mother, or feel as though they've been charged with electricity. But everyone will have the sign of receiving the Spirit baptism—speaking in tongues. Whether you feel hot, and whether your body moves is not important. What is important is that you speak in tongues. This is the mystery. It is an extraordinary and invaluable grace God wants to give to every believer in the era of the Holy Spirit. Everyone in the New Testament era must receive the Spirit baptism and speak in new tongues. And after that, they must often pray in tongues and sing in tongues to worship God in spirit.

Many people lack faith when praying in tongues. They say, “No one can understand that ‘Da Da Da’ sound you make. It’s monotonous. How can that be speaking in tongues?” At first, I was also a bit doubtful. I thought, “Anyone can make a childish ‘Da Da Da’ sound. The tongues mentioned in Acts 2 were understandable. But the tongues you speak are not. I don’t think your speaking in tongues is real.”

Brothers and sisters, tongues mean “sounds made by the tongue.” The tongues mentioned in Acts 2 were tongues spoken for the first time in history. Peter and about one hundred and twenty others were indeed speaking in tongues. But each person who listened to them heard them speak in his own language. The Holy Spirit was doing the interpretation. We also had such an experience before.

Tongues is an incomprehensible speech. If the Holy Spirit does not interpret, you will not be able to understand it. Therefore, 1 Corinthians 14:14 says, “For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my understanding is unfruitful.” And verse 2 says, “For he who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God, for no one understands him” (1 Cor. 14:2). So tongues (praying in tongues) is incomprehensible to the speaker as well as to others.

But do tongues have any meaning? Yes, they are full of meaning. The second half of 1 Corinthians 14:2 says that no one understands him; “however, in the spirit he speaks mysteries.” Verse 4 says, “He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself.” And praying in tongues is praying in the spirit. This is God’s mystery. God wants us to use our

tongues to have close fellowship with Him in the spirit. The sound we make with our tongues by faith is praying in spirit, and these tongues are real. So true tongues are not determined by how they sound or by their being understood, but by whether they are spoken by faith, according to biblical truth. Without faith, everything is false.

We pray to God in understanding: “O Lord Jesus, we thank You. You love us; You were crucified for us and shed Your blood for us, and have forgiven us our sins. You also fill us with the Holy Spirit so that we may gain strength. We thank You.” Is this prayer real or false? It depends on whether you say it by faith. If you have faith, your prayer is real. If not, it will be false. It is the same with the prayer in tongues. So whether your tongues are real or false depends on your faith.

If you say that anyone can say “Da Da Da,” you are right. But the “Da Da Da” spoken by faith and the “Da Da Da” not spoken by faith are completely different. You can say, “O Lord, we thank You!” Children by the roadside can also say that. But if you say by faith, “O Lord Jesus, we thank You!” It will be different from the “O Lord, we thank You!” echoed by little kids. Tongues are no different. If you believe the words in the Bible: “For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays,” and you pray in tongues, “Da Da Da,” then these are real tongues and real prayer in spirit. But if you don’t believe the words in the Bible and you only imitate others to speak pleasant and fluent “tongues,” then your tongues will be false.

Dear brothers and sisters, all spiritual things must be received by faith. Tongues must be spoken by faith and praying in the spirit must also be done by faith voluntarily. For this is the blessing which God has given us. The first time you pray in tongues is when you receive the Spirit baptism. If you continue to submit by faith and pray in spirit every day the Holy Spirit will fill you greatly. Your spirit will become free and strong.

Brothers and sisters, God wants us to unite our tongues with our spirit, not our brain with our spirit. Acts 2:26 says, “Therefore my heart rejoiced, and my tongue was glad.” The Chinese Bible translates “tongue” as “spirit.” Tongues and spirit come together. When your

tongue prays in faith, “Da Da Da,” your spirit will live and rejoice. This is a mystery.

Christians should follow Paul’s example by praying more in tongues. They must never think that prayer in the spirit is time-consuming and noisy. Many people find that praying and singing in spirit are the hardest things to accept in the New Testament Church. Some of them think it is too noisy. They cannot get used to it, so they stop coming to service. Some people say it makes them tense. Others say they have a weak heart, and if they pray so loudly in spirit they will faint. Nevertheless, this is biblical truth. God wants us to pray to Him in tongues. Therefore, we must accept God’s grace happily and joyously, and we must not ignore the grace of God just because we are not used to tongues.

Some people say, “As if the prayer of the New Testament Church wasn’t noisy enough, they even clap hands when they pray. Does the Bible say clap hands and pray?” Yes! Psalm 47:1 says, “Oh, clap your hands, all you peoples! Shout to God with the voice of triumph!” The Bible tells all people to not only clap their hands, but also shout to God with the voice of triumph. Don’t you think that will be loud? According to the standard set by this verse of the Bible, we were not loud enough tonight, and we have yet to shout triumphantly! People from the Christian Assembly say, “The New Testament Church is too noisy and chaotic! They are not spiritual at all. They act completely out of the impulse of their soul.” However, this is man’s feeling, not God’s. When God’s people shout and rejoice, how glorious it is, and how satisfied God is! For this is a sign of victory. The stronger you are, the louder you can shout.

Denominations are so quiet. Actually, it is not so much that they are quiet but desolate and lifeless. What is the most quiet place on earth? A tomb! If you go to a tomb, you will not hear a thing. Of course, I’m not saying that all loud noise is spiritual, but denominations are quiet because they are sick and lifeless. How can sick people shout? How can the dead sing? Only the living can shout and sing. So loud praising in spirit is not an impulse of the soul, nor is it unspiritual.

Once, when some children saw the Lord Jesus in the temple, they cried out. The chief priests and scribes were indignant with the children and even with the Lord Jesus. But what did the Lord Jesus say? He said, “Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants You have perfected praise.” When we sing and pray in spirit, we are perfecting praise and are becoming like children. Only those who are converted and become as little children will enter God’s kingdom. But your brain is so big. You have studied the Bible for years, memorized it so well, and have so much biblical knowledge. Yet God cannot be praised through you. Who rejected and crucified the Lord Jesus? Were they not those who studied the Bible most? Yes. But although they studied the Bible, they were the least enlightened. So go ahead and speak in tongues, for this is prayer in spirit and words for praising God. Just speak without fear. You should speak it not only in the church, but also at home. Then you will receive power and be released. After you experience praying in tongues, you will treasure it. We will stop talking about Spirit baptism and speaking in tongues here. Let us now move on to the foundation of the church.

The Foundation Is Jesus Christ, and the Foundation of the Apostles and Prophets

Last night we said that the foundation of the New Testament Church is Jesus Christ. Tonight, we will learn how to lay this foundation and how the church is built. A brother once asked me, “Bro. Hong, I have listened to two of your sermons. Last night you said that the foundation is *of* the apostles and prophets. But tonight, you said that the foundation *is* Jesus Christ. Are there two foundations or one?” Dear brothers and sisters, have you also noticed this? Let’s talk about this truth now.

The Bible says, “According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how he builds on it. For no other foundation can any lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus

Christ” (1 Cor. 3:10–11). The foundation of the church is Jesus Christ, and no one can lay another foundation. Let us continue: “having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone” (Eph. 2:20). The first verse says the foundation of the church *is* Jesus Christ, but goes on to say the church is built on the foundation *of* the apostles and prophets. The first verse says no other foundation can anyone lay, but the second verse talks about the foundation of the apostles and prophets. So is there really only one foundation?

Brothers and sisters, we must pay attention to what the Bible says. 1 Corinthians 3 explains that the foundation of the church *is* Jesus Christ. And Ephesians 2 says the church is built on the foundation *of* the apostles and prophets. Do you see the difference? There is only one foundation. 1 Corinthians says the foundation itself *is* Jesus Christ. But how is this foundation laid? Who laid this foundation? Paul said, “As a wise master builder I have laid the foundation.” So the foundation is one thing, and laying the foundation is another. 1 Corinthians 3 says that *the foundation is Jesus Christ*. But Ephesians 2 says that *those who lay the foundation are the apostles and prophets*. Therefore, *this foundation is Jesus Christ, laid by the apostles and prophets*. And other than the apostles and prophets, *no one can lay the foundation of the church*. For *the foundation of the church is entrusted to be laid by the apostles and prophets*. Therefore, the Bible calls it the foundation *of* the apostles and prophets. This is an important and great truth.

Dear brothers and sisters, how is the church built? It is built through the apostles and prophets, for *the foundation of the church is laid by the apostles and prophets*. *Without the apostles and prophets, the foundation cannot be laid and the church cannot be built*.

The Building of the Church Is Entrusted to the Apostles and Prophets

Why is Christianity so chaotic today? The number of chapels and denominations is increasing. A layman would say that Christianity is expanding, and the gospel is being spread. But to God, this is an in-

crease in opposition to His will and in apostasy! This is not revival, but confusion. They are not building the church, but denominations. Even their pastors cannot overcome the world and preach without the power of the Holy Spirit. It is very desolate. Chapels and Christian organizations are everywhere. You can see a church sign here, a mission there and another sect down the street. There are so many denominations, yet they all claim to be the same, saying, “There is only one Jesus. Denominations are all the same.” But they are not.

So many of God’s children who love God with a pure heart do not know where to go to seek the Lord. If you are somewhat wealthy and renowned, many chapels will try to attract you. It’s so hard to please them all that you end up just praying at home. But if you are poor and unknown, you will be ignored. Those who want to believe in Jesus do not know where to go to believe in the right way. The more they try, the more confused they become, until they finally give up completely. Therefore, chapels are desolate and without God. They are dominated by man, not God. This is the condition of Christianity today.

God’s children do not know the way of the Lord. They don’t know why Christianity is so chaotic. This is because they don’t know the truth in Ephesians 2—that the church is built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets. When they are zealous, they want to establish churches. Some people have nothing better to do with their money, so they build chapels. These people want to serve the Lord and offer money to Him, but they don’t know how to build the church. When they are zealous they don’t care they are neither apostles nor prophets; they just go ahead and build their “churches.” The result is chaos.

There was once a rich man who loved the Lord. One day, filled with carnal zeal, he decided to build seven to eight chapels. He hired preachers to preach in them, thinking he was helping God build the church. But since he was not an apostle, he did not build churches—he built denominations.

Today we must find the right way. We must know the testimony of the church God wants.

The church is to be united, so the testimony of the church must also be united.

The church is the body of Christ, so the testimony of the church must also be one body. However, Christianity is divided. Each has its own doctrines, members and inventions. This is not in conformity with the will of God. Brothers and sisters, God will not hide His thoughts from us. *He has laws for building the church. He will not allow just anyone who is zealous to build the church. God only entrusts this work to the apostles and prophets, and to no one else.*

Let's read another portion of the Bible: "*Which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets*" (Eph. 3:5). This is the mystery of the church, and the Holy Spirit reveals it only to the apostles and prophets. Therefore, *only the apostles and prophets can build the church, and they build it on Christ, the foundation.* Since building the church is entrusted to the apostles, *you cannot build a church if you are not an apostle.*

In Acts 10, there was a certain man named Cornelius, a centurion of the Italian Regiment, a devout man and one who feared God with all his household. He gave alms generously to the people, and prayed to God always. Don't you think he was zealous? Wasn't he good? Indeed, he was zealous. And very good. He was also renowned and had many relatives. It would have been easy for him to gather a group of people to establish a church. But one day God appeared to him through an angel and said, "Your prayers and your alms have come up for a memorial before God..." Since God had heard Cornelius, then He should have let him establish a church. Right? Wrong! God continued, "...Now send men to Joppa, and send for Simon whose surname is Peter." He wanted Cornelius to send for Peter so Cornelius could hear Peter's words (see Acts 10:22).

People often say, "We want to hear from God directly. We don't want to listen to men. Men cannot help us, only God can help us." But God has His principle: *He would not speak directly to Cornelius; He wanted Peter to speak to him.* Don't you feel it was too troublesome for God to work in that way? Why didn't He just speak to Cornelius directly instead of going through Peter? Was Peter really necessary?

Brothers and sisters, God never does unnecessary things. There is

an important truth concerning building the church to be learned here. God wanted Cornelius to send for Peter because God entrusted the responsibility of building the church to Peter. When Peter came, Cornelius said to him, “You have done well to come. Now therefore, we are all present before God, to hear all the things commanded you by God” (Acts 10:33). Where did Peter’s words come from? From God. *The Lord commanded Peter to speak His words, therefore the words of Peter were the words of God.* This is how Cornelius heard the words of the Lord: He listened to everything the Lord commanded Peter to say.

The Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven Are Given to the Apostles

Matthew 16:19 says, “And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.” We all know that keys are for opening doors. The kingdom of heaven has a gate and you must enter by the gate. If you don’t come in through the gate, you will not be able to enter. And who are the keys of the gate of heaven given to? The Lord Jesus gave them to Peter. Only Peter could open the gate to the kingdom of heaven. If Peter didn’t come, the gate couldn’t be opened.

Do you want to enter the kingdom of heaven? Do you want the gate of heaven to be opened to you? It cannot be opened without Peter. No matter how strong you are, you will not be able to open it. But once Peter comes, he only has to turn the key slightly, and the gate of the kingdom of heaven will swing open. This is something great! This authority is too awesome!

Nevertheless, Peter had nothing to boast of. He wouldn’t say, “Look, I have the keys!” Yes, it was something great, but Peter knew that the keys did not belong to him. They were entrusted to him by the Lord, so he had to respect the ministry the Lord gave him.

Brothers and sisters, if you say, “I don’t need Peter to open the gate; I want the Lord Jesus to open it,” the Lord Jesus will tell you, “I

cannot open it because I do not have the keys. I have given them to Peter. If you want the gate opened, you must go to Peter.” Why did Peter receive the keys? It was not because Peter was better or stronger than others, but because of God’s mercy and choice. God gave him the ministry of an apostle. *This is God’s law for building the church. He delivers the revelation and authority of building the church to the apostles and prophets.*

Cornelius was not an apostle or a prophet. Therefore, he could not build the church. He was zealous for God. He gave alms to the people, he feared God, and prayed to God always. His prayers even came up for a memorial before God. But all these did not make him qualified to build the church. To build the church you must be an apostle and prophet. Some people have a little zeal and eloquence to preach, so they start building “churches.” They have services together, but when they have disagreements, they will argue, saying, “So you have money? Me too. You deliver sermons. I do too. You read the Bible, and so do I. You have your followers; I have mine.” As a result, they become divided and even more denominations are formed.

If people were not so zealous, there wouldn’t be so many denominations. The more zealous people become, the more denominations are built. Some people, because they know a little about delivering sermons, won’t listen to others. They want to be the big brother or sister. They want to boss others around and not be bossed. They always want to be above everyone and be the leader. If they cannot be the leader here, they go somewhere else. You are on this street; I will go to another. You can try here, and I’ll try there. Some people have no skill in delivering sermons, and they also don’t like others’ sermons. So they gather several people who get along well. They pray together at home and form a new sect. These people don’t recognize the truth of building the church, so they end up building denominations. How greatly they have sinned against God!

The church is built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets. Without them, the church cannot be built. This is a great truth which had been buried for more than a thousand years. The restoration of this truth is a great

revival. Ever since the apostles of the early days passed away, the church fell. The darkest period was when Roman Catholicism dominated. Later, God raised up Martin Luther to restore the truth on Justification by Faith—the testimony of blood. But since he was not an apostle, he couldn't preach the truth on building the church.

Since then, many people studied the Bible, but because none of them was an apostle, none of them could expound the biblical mystery concerning building the church. All of them just held on to what they understood and started new denominations. Christianity seems big, but that makes no difference since the Lord is not in it. Everyone does as he wishes and God is not pleased. *For the sake of gaining a church with the testimony of unity, God raised up His maidservant Sis. Kong Duen Yee in this last generation. He chose her to restore apostleship and to give her the ministry of an apostle and prophet.*

Brothers and sisters, have you wondered how such a female movie-star who had not studied theology and who had only believed in the Lord for a few years could possibly bring out such a great truth? How could she be so courageous? How could she be so capable? Was she greater than Bible scholars like us? We are theology professors and have worked for the Lord for decades. We studied Greek, Hebrew and Latin. Why couldn't we bring out the truth on apostleship? Brothers and sisters, this has nothing to do with human talent, but it has everything to do with God's choice. We just said that Lord Jesus had the keys to the kingdom of heaven. He had the right to give them to whoever He wanted. And since God chose Sis. Kong as an apostle, He gave her the keys, and she was able to open the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven.

May we all seek the truth with a humble and reverent spirit. May the Lord be gracious to us and let us understand and enter into this truth. Now, let us sing the hymn, "God Has Raised Up a Spiritual Leader."
”

The Way God Works

(April 21, 1968—Message of the Lord's servant Bro. Hong during the Convention at the Church of Hong Kong)

The Importance of Apostleship

Last night we said that the foundation of the church is Christ and that it is laid by the apostles. Without apostles, the foundation of the church cannot be laid. And without apostles, the church cannot be built. But the church is not completed when the foundation is laid. We still need to build on it. Paul said, "According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how he builds on it." Building the church is a huge project, so God uses various spiritual ministers to coordinate with the apostle—the master builder.

Ephesians 4:11–12 states, "And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints, for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." Paul was an apostle, the chief apostle among the apostles. The foundation of the church was laid by him, and the other ministers coordinated with him. We must appreciate the importance of apostleship.

Apostles are the first ministers God appoints to build the church. 1 Corinthians 12:28 says, "And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers..." *God reveals the mystery of building the church to His holy apostles and prophets. And He makes known to us the laws for building the church through the apostles. If we want to do God's work, we must first know the way God works.* God says the church is built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, and we must remember this. We must recognize that the church is not built on the foundation of elders, pastors, teachers or preachers. The church is built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets. If you are not an apostle or prophet, God

will not give you His law for building the church. This is God's principle. A church cannot be built out of one's fervency. All ministers and saints must build according to the teachings of the apostles. Otherwise, the testimony of unity cannot appear, and there will be division and disunity.

Dear brothers and sisters, the apostles and their teachings are very important to the unity of the church. For the church to be united, we must respect the ministry of the apostles and abide by their teachings. If we do not follow the apostles' teachings, we will be against God's will. The messages of the apostles are not their own, but are revealed to them by God. They contain the mysteries of building the church. After receiving this revelation, the apostles explain it clearly to the saints. Therefore, the *apostles' teachings are not men's words, but the will of God. If you want to abide by God's will, and if you want to follow God's words, you must observe the apostles' teachings and obey their words. Otherwise, you will not be able to hear God's words, nor abide by His will.*

The Way God Works

People say, "We want to listen to God, not men." That's right; We do not want to listen to men, we want to listen to God. But how do we hear God? How does God speak?

God Spoke and Acted through the Prophets in Time Past

Let us read Hebrews 1:1–2: "God, who at various times and in different ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, but in these last days has spoken to us by His Son..." These verses show how God speaks. God does not stick out His head from heaven and speak to mankind directly. He speaks through His vessels. In time past, God spoke to the fathers by the prophets. *The Israelites had to listen to the prophets if they wanted to hear God's words.* If a person says, "I do not want to listen to the prophets, I want to hear from God directly," he surely will not hear God *because God speaks through the prophets.*

God Spoke and Acted through the Lord Jesus in These Last Days

How did God speak in these last days? Through His Son. When the Lord Jesus took a human form on earth, God spoke through Him. If the people of that time wanted to see God, hear His words and abide by His commandments, they had to go to the Lord Jesus, listen to Him and abide by His commandments. If they did not see the Lord Jesus or listen to Him, they could not see God or hear God.

The Jews said they believed in God, but they did not believe in the Lord Jesus. That is why the Lord Jesus said to them repeatedly, “The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works” (John 14:10). He also said, “You believe in God, believe also in Me” (John 14:1). But the obstinate Jews refused to believe that Jesus was the Messiah who was sent to them. They kept saying, “We believe in God, and the words God spoke through Moses; but who are you, Jesus of Nazareth?”

Brothers and sisters, this is a very frightening and serious matter. God’s heart was set on the Lord Jesus, and He spoke through the Lord Jesus, yet the Jews disbelieved Him. They kept saying, “We believe in God and Moses.” So they failed to believe in God. Not only did the typical Jew speak in this way, Philip, who had followed the Lord for many years, did too. Philip said, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us” (John 14:8). Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, ‘Show us the Father?’ Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me?” (John 14:9–10). The Father was in the Lord, and the Lord was the manifestation of the Father. All the riches of the Father were in the Lord. All the words God the Father wanted to speak to men were spoken through the Lord Jesus. Therefore, *the Jews had to listen to the words of the Lord Jesus to know God’s will. Without the Lord Jesus, they could not hear God’s words because at that time God spoke through the Lord Jesus, His Son.*

God Speaks and Acts through the Apostles during the New Testament Era

After the Lord Jesus was taken up into heaven, how did God speak? This is important to know because it concerns us. Let us read Acts 1: 1–2, “The former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, until the day in which He was taken up, after He through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen.” This is an important verse in the Bible. It shows there was a great change of eras. Following the ascension of the Lord Jesus, a new era began—the era of the New Testament, the era of the Holy Spirit!

How does God speak and act in this era of the Holy Spirit? *God gives commandments through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom He has chosen.* The Holy Spirit commands the apostles to speak and to act. Therefore, the New Testament era—the era of the Holy Spirit—is the era of the apostles. It is important to realize that in the New Testament era, God speaks and acts through the apostles. Otherwise, we will not know God’s will.

Dear brothers and sisters, let us realize that apostleship is extremely important in the New Testament era. If we do not know the apostles, or obey their teachings, we cannot live brilliantly before God. We will not be able to serve God according to His will. We will only behave foolishly before Him, and our fervency will be in vain.

Let us read Matthew 17:5–6: “While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, ‘This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!’ And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their faces and were greatly afraid.” What did the voice say that was solemn enough to cause the disciples to fall on their faces and be greatly afraid? *Hear Him!* (Listen to the Lord Jesus!) This was God’s solemn instruction when the Lord Jesus was on earth.

Acts 2:14 says, “But Peter, standing up with the eleven, raised his voice and said to them, Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and *heed my words.*” Doesn’t the Bible say that

we have to listen to the Lord Jesus? So how can a man stand up and cry: “Heed my words?” Who was this person? He was so arrogant! He told people to listen to him instead of God! Wasn’t he exalting himself above God? No. It was Peter who said this after he was greatly filled by the Holy Spirit. How could Peter say the wrong thing?

Peter’s statement marked the dawning of a new era. God no longer spoke through the Lord Jesus, the Word in the flesh, for Jesus had risen and ascended to heaven. Now God was speaking through the apostles whom the Lord had chosen. He moved them through the Spirit of the Lord Jesus. This is why we emphasize the importance of respecting the apostles’ ministry and abiding by their teachings.

But many people feel that we preach men, not God. They think we are telling people to listen to apostles instead of Christ, and to listen to men’s words instead of God’s. They do not understand we are not telling people to listen to men, but to *listen to the vessels whom God has appointed. God speaks through His vessels, and in the New Testament era, God speaks through the holy apostles.* Therefore, we hope all of God’s children will respect the ministry of the apostles and abide by their teachings. Only then are we truly obeying God’s words.

Follow the Apostles’ Teachings

1 Thessalonians 2:13 states, “For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe.” This verse makes it clear that *the apostles’ teachings are not the words of men, but of God.* When we follow what the apostles say, the word of God works effectively in us, to establish us. If we do not listen to the apostles, God’s word cannot work in us, and we will be those who reject and oppose God.

The believers in Thessalonica were very blessed. They understood spiritual matters very well. When the apostle Paul preached the word of God to them, they accepted it. They did not think of Paul as a mere

man and did not regard his word as man's word. They did not say, "We do not want to listen to Paul. We want to hear from God directly." Instead, they accepted Paul's teachings as God's word.

Many people like to sound spiritual. I used to be the same, saying, "I want to listen to God. I want to receive the word directly from God. I do not want or believe anything from men." But God clearly tells us in this verse that the word of the apostles is the word of God. Do you believe it? If you do, then God's word will work effectively in you. But many people do not believe it, so God's word cannot work in them.

Let us read Matthew 28:20: "Teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." These were the words of the Lord Jesus to the apostles. Here we see that the *apostles' teachings are not men's teachings but the instructions and commandments of the Lord Jesus. The apostles' words are not men's words, but God's.*

Now let us look at 2 Peter 3:1–2 (NIV): "Dear friends, this is now my second letter to you. I have written both of them as reminders to stimulate you to wholesome thinking. I want you to recall the words spoken in the past by the holy prophets and the command given by our Lord and Savior through your apostles." What the apostles tell us are the Lord's commands. Therefore, we have to observe the apostles' teachings. If we do not abide by the apostles' teachings, we are disobeying the Lord's commandments and have no part in building the body.

The phrase, "Continue steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine" was not coined by me. It is in the Bible. At the beginning of the New Testament, all the churches continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine. Acts 2:42 states that after receiving the complete truth from the apostles, the believers "*continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.*" Therefore, we need to accept, follow and abide by the apostles' teachings.

2 Thessalonians 2:14 (NIV) says, "He called you to this through our gospel, that you might share in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

” This tells us that God preaches the gospel through the apostles, and the gospel enables the saints to share in the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. Verse 15 (NIV) states, “So then, brothers, stand firm...” How do you stand firm? It continues: “...and hold to the teachings we passed on to you, whether by word of mouth or by letter.” This shows the importance of the apostles’ teachings. The apostles’ letters were documented and make up much of the New Testament. But the apostles not only wrote letters, but also taught by word of mouth, for which there is no record. So, one has to hold fast their teachings, written or spoken. These verses show how important is the apostles’ doctrine.

Some people ask, “Can’t the apostles be wrong? Are apostles right all the time? When the apostles are right, we will certainly listen to them. But when they are wrong, do we still have to follow them?” In the Bible, Paul put it very clearly, “...you may learn in us not to think beyond what is written...” (1 Cor. 4:6). Paul meant that we must not go beyond biblical principles in following the apostles. Nevertheless, the apostles’ teachings will certainly agree with biblical principles because the apostles are appointed by God. If you can judge whether the apostles are right, then you are greater than the apostles and even smarter than God. For if you disbelieve the words of the apostles, you are disbelieving in God who chooses the apostles. Men are weak, but the God who chooses men is not. Since God sends out apostles and speaks through them, we can be confident that He will be responsible for them. Of course, if the apostles depart from God’s will for that era, or go against God’s vision and refuse to turn back, God will abandon them. But leave that up to God. We should not worry about this.

Men’s ideas always hinder God. When God does something, men often do not say or dare not say Amen. They do not intentionally oppose God, but their traditional concepts of religion hinder them from following Him. When a person is unenlightened spiritually, the longer he keeps his old concepts, the more he will hinder the work of the Holy Spirit.

Once God showed Peter a vision of animals and creeping things and said, “Rise, Peter, kill and eat.” Peter, noting that all those animals

and creeping things were unclean, responded immediately, “Not so, Lord! For I have never eaten anything common or unclean.” Peter was very pious. He observed God’s laws so closely that he refused to eat unclean things when God told him to. Was it that Peter did not love God? Did Peter lack fervency? No! Peter loved God very much, and he was very fervent. But why did he refuse to obey God and eat? It was because of his old Jewish concepts. He thought all those creatures were unclean, so he dared not eat them. That is why God spoke to him from heaven and said, *“What God has cleansed, you must not call common.”*

God wanted to do a new thing. Through the salvation of Jesus Christ and through His cross, He wanted to tear down the wall that divided Jews and Gentiles, and He wanted to make all one in Christ. God did not want Peter to keep his old Jewish concepts. The Jews thought highly of themselves and treated the Gentiles as unclean. God wanted Peter to know that with the redemption through Christ’s blood, all were cleansed and were now a new creation. That was why God sent Peter to the house of Cornelius to preach the gospel to the Gentiles. When Peter obeyed and went, he accomplished great works. But had he disobeyed, he would have hindered God’s work.

Many people don’t understand why the New Testament Church preaches apostleship. They think the New Testament Church has gone from bad to worse. They consider themselves intelligent, spiritual and well versed in the Scriptures. They even study the original versions of the Bible. But so what? Were the scribes and Pharisees not well trained in the Scriptures? Yet when the Messiah came, they were the very people who rejected Him. When everyone was praising the Lord Jesus for the works He performed, the Pharisees disapproved. This happened because they stuck to their old concepts.

Without having fellowship with us, some brothers and sisters pass judgment quickly on the words we preach. According to their old concepts, they conclude that our teachings on “Respecting the Ministry of the Apostles,” “Following the Apostles’ Doctrine,” and “Giving Ourselves to the Lord and Then to the Apostles” are all wrong. When I was in Taipei, many people claimed Bro. Hong had gone astray. They

said, “He no longer preaches Christ. He is preaching a person.” How ridiculous! I forsook my career and all my possessions to become a faithful preacher. I know God called me to preach His word. I know the mission God has given me. How could I end up preaching a person instead of God? If I had really become foolish enough to preach about a man, I would rather preach about someone the world considers great.

Dear brothers and sisters, my words are not without basis. By the mercy of God, I realize the importance of apostleship. I know God appoints apostles in the church to make known His will and to build His church. If the church does not understand apostleship, she cannot build up the body of Christ nor display the testimony of unity.

Many people want the church to be united. They look for ways to achieve unity, but they never realize *the way to the unity of the church is by obeying the apostles’ doctrine with one accord*. Let us read 2 Thessalonians 3: 6, “But we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you withdraw from every brother who walks disorderly and not according to the tradition which he received from us.” Verse 14 continues, “And if anyone does not obey our word in this epistle, note that person and do not keep company with him, that he may be ashamed.”

Disobeying the apostles’ teachings is a very serious mistake. If anyone disobeys, brothers and sisters should not keep company with him, that he may be ashamed. You must not tolerate him out of carnal love, or you will offend God. Many people tolerate things that displease God out of their carnal love due to being ignorant and unenlightened. Brothers and sisters, we must not tolerate anything that does not agree with the apostles’ doctrine. This is God’s command in the Bible.

Be in the Main Flow of the Holy Spirit

When we preach apostleship, many people misunderstand us. They think we are exalting a person and preaching apostles instead of the Lord Jesus. But we are not exalting man. We are exalting the God who

has chosen that man. The truth on apostleship was buried for over a thousand years. The church was in desolation and was divided into denominations and sects. Many Christians did not know the church could not be built without apostles. In this period of over a thousand years, some people were chosen to work for God but, since they were not apostles, the mystery concerning the building of the church could not be revealed. They were unable to preach the truth fully and could not build the saints upon the foundation of Christ. This is why there is much division and confusion in Christianity today.

Brothers and sisters, *the church is the body of Christ. There is only one church, and it must be whole and united.* The Lord Jesus said, “For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them” (Matt. 18:20). Are two or three people considered a church? You cannot say no just because the number is small. If you do, you are opposing the Bible. But can many groups of two or three, all having different views, attain the testimony of unity? Or are only those places with large congregations the church? But with more people come more opinions. That would be more like a big group of denominations than the church. So what should the church be? No one is clear.

I was also confused, constantly saying to God: “O Lord, I wish to live in Your will, in the church, in the testimony of unity. I know the denominations are wrong. They are condemned by You. I sincerely do not wish to offend You, and I do not wish to be in the denominations that You’ve condemned. But I do not know which is the denomination and which is the church. Is the church a gathering of two or three, or two or three thousand? What actually, is the testimony of the body?” I felt very bitter!

Some people—especially those in the Christian Assembly and those who left the Christian Assembly to follow Sparks—are very good at talking about the body of Christ. They even wrote books on the “testimony of unity.” But if you ask them whether they have found the way, they will say, “I am still seeking.” They wrote the book, yet they are still seeking the way. Doesn’t this sound like deceit to you? They don’t know the way to unity, yet they want to lead others to unity. They

explain that since unity must include all God's children, you cannot close your mind. If you do, you will shut out some of God's children. But you cannot be so open either; if you are too open you will welcome those who sin. So they concluded that we must be "closed" to denominations, but "open" to God's children.

This sounds perfect. But how do you do it? How does one open himself to God's children and close himself to the denominations? They don't know. Apparently, this is only a dream, like building castles in the air. No matter how much they try to explain it, they still cannot guide others to a practical way. But I thank God. For after more than 10 years of searching, I finally found the way to building the body when I met Sis. Kong. It is not a theory, but a practical way.

People say, "We ought to achieve unity in Christ. We ought to be built into the body." But how can you be built in it? Where is the testimony? Some people say the church is formed in the Holy Spirit, so if all believers live in the flow of the Holy Spirit, we can attain unity. This is correct. But how do we do it? Where is the flow of the Holy Spirit today? It is not that I do not want to be in it, but you have to tell me where it is. Is it in the East, or in the West? It is true, as they say, that the Holy Spirit is limitless. But the Holy Spirit is not abstract. There should be a practical way to live in the body of Christ. I could not find the way, yet I preached it to people. I was really miserable.

When Sis. Kong came, the way to live in the body appeared, for she was the apostle raised up by God. She was not just an apostle, she was the chief among the apostles. God revealed to her the secrets and the blueprint for building the church. If we do as the Bible tells us and *give ourselves first to the Lord and then to the apostles (be like-minded with Sis. Kong and the Grace of Jesus Christ Crusade) the testimony of unity will appear.*

Sis. Kong said, "All of you have to be of the same mind, and co-work and coordinate with me." She also said, "The Bible states let them return to you, but return not to them." In other words, everyone had to go to Sis. Kong and her co-workers, but Sis. Kong and her co-workers would not go to them. Initially, I was very annoyed by her words. I said, "Sis. Kong is too arrogant. I have never seen anyone exalt himself

as highly as she does. So you are the only one who has the truth, and everyone has to listen to you? Are you not being very subjective? God is omnipresent. He is not only with you, Sis. Kong. To achieve unity and to attain peace, we must love each other. Give me one step and I'll give you one step. Only then can we talk!"

Then someone said to me, "Sis. Kong is God's vessel of the era. The flow of the Holy Spirit starts from her." That annoyed me even more. I said, "What? The flow of the Holy Spirit comes from her? It is the flow of the Holy Spirit, not the flow of Kong Duen Yee. It should come from the Holy Spirit, not Sis. Kong. You are treating Sis. Kong like the Holy Spirit." That brother could not persuade me, so he said, "Ruth, who came from the country of Moab, could only glean ears of grain in the field of Boaz, and not in others'." So I tried to show off and challenged him, saying, "What is the field of Boaz? Where is it? In the Old Testament era, Boaz's field had its location; it was something physical. But today, in the New Testament era, Boaz's field is spiritual and not restricted by time or space. Everyone who lives in the Spirit is in Boaz's field. You seem so charmed by this actress. I pity you."

I thought I knew a lot and could reason well. I did not realize that I was blind. I could argue, but I did not know the way. I knew there must be a way for the Holy Spirit to flow. I understood that there must be a way to build the body of Christ. But I did not know how to be in this flow of the Spirit. Later I realized that the body of Christ is built through the apostles. So if you don't abide by the apostles' teachings, you are not built into the body. But if you respect the ministry of the apostles and obey their teachings, you will be in the flow of the Holy Spirit and on the path of unity. Therefore, *the practical way to be in the flow of the Holy Spirit is to submit to the apostles' leading.*

We say the main flow of the Holy Spirit is with the apostles. But what does this mean? Let us read 1 John 1:3: "That which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ." The apostle John meant this: "We declare to you that which was from the beginning—the Word of life (the full gospel)—so that you (the church)

may have fellowship with us, the apostles.” Many people have said that we must never lead men to have fellowship with man, but with the Holy Spirit. Now the New Testament Church wants men to submit to the apostles, and have fellowship with them. This, they say, is fellowship with man, and not with the Holy Spirit. If you read the Bible with this concept, you will certainly say, “John, you are wrong! You’ve gone too far! How can you ask people to have fellowship with you? Why don’t you tell men to have fellowship with the Holy Spirit?”

Brothers and sisters, did John preach correctly? If he was wrong, then the Bible is wrong. John had to be right. The verse that follows says, “Our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.” Actually, the apostles have fellowship with the Father and the Son. Therefore, when we have fellowship with the apostles, we are actually having fellowship with God. Bringing people to the apostles for fellowship is actually bringing them to God for fellowship.

This is how the Holy Spirit flows: The Father and Son are on the throne, and from there comes the flow of the Holy Spirit. First of all, it flows to the apostles. Then it flows to the saints. So we must have fellowship with the apostles, for the will of God is revealed to them. When the saints have fellowship with the apostles, they have fellowship with God. Do you want to have fellowship with the Holy Spirit? Do you want to be connected to God? First of all, you must keep in touch with the apostles. This is God’s law. If you are not connected to the apostles, you are not in the flow of the Holy Spirit, for God’s will is revealed to the apostles. *The apostles are the spokesmen of God’s will. Besides the apostles, God has no spokesmen on earth.* This is why we say that *the flow of the Holy Spirit is with the apostles.*

When people used to tell me that the flow of the Holy Spirit came from Sis. Kong, I could not accept it. I said, “The Holy Spirit is infinite. It fills all things. So how can there be a place where the Holy Spirit does not reach? Are you saying that only Sis. Kong is directly connected with the Holy Spirit, and we are not? The only reason Sis. Kong is so blessed by God is because she loves the Lord very much and has paid the price to bear her cross and obey the Holy Spirit. If I bear the

cross and obey the Holy Spirit as she did, I'm sure God will also bless me because He is fair." That was my understanding.

But after I understood the truth on apostleship, I realized that *one cannot receive God's will of the era simply by paying a price. Rather, it is by God's revelation. I also realized the church is built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets. The church must obey the apostles' doctrine in order to build according to God's will.* Therefore, every member of the church must submit to the apostles' leading, obey the apostles' doctrine, and be united with them. Otherwise, he is not built into the church.

We all know that the church is the body of Christ, formed by many members joining together. How are they joined together? In the flow of the Holy Spirit. But how does the Spirit join them? One person says he has a revelation from the Holy Spirit, another says he is moved by the Holy Spirit, and someone else says he is guided by the Spirit. But they never agree with each other, and no one knows who to follow. So how does the Holy Spirit join the saints together? *The Holy Spirit joins the saints together and builds them up through the apostles. Therefore, all saints must accept and obey the apostles' doctrine. This is the Lord's commandment. It is His will, and it is also the way God works. It is the law of God for building the church.*

If we do not observe the apostles' doctrine, all our construction will become individual construction—denominations that do not please God. He will abolish them, just as Ishmael was cast out. Though Ishmael was bigger and stronger than Isaac, God did not want him because he was not born of promise, but by men's flesh, fervency and ideas. God wants to destroy the traditions, rules, incomplete teachings, and false doctrines of the denominations. These are organizations that come from men's ideas.

When we talk about demolishing the denominations, we are not talking about destroying the brothers and sisters there, but the organizations to which they belong. The brothers and sisters are beloved of God. With earnest tears, we pray for them, hoping that they will finally understand God's will and be built into the church together with us. The Lord can bear witness to this.

So, brothers and sisters in the New Testament Church, we have returned to the New Testament Church and have submitted to the apostles' leading. Now we can enter God's kingdom. But don't fall into a deep sleep and love the world again. You should know this: Although you have returned to the New Testament Church and are walking on the path to God's kingdom, you still may not enter His kingdom if you do not walk carefully. Therefore, not every New Testament Church brother and sister will enter God's kingdom, just as in the past, not every Israelite who left Egypt entered Canaan. *If they wanted to enter Canaan, they had to follow Moses. The only secret to entering Canaan was to closely follow Moses and Joshua (who symbolize the apostles in the New Testament era).* Do not try to do it on your own. Just follow Moses. Wherever Moses goes, follow. When Moses walks, walk; when Moses stops, stop. If Moses stops for three days, stop for three days. If Moses stops for one month, do likewise. If Moses goes forward, follow him. If Moses goes around the wilderness, do the same thing. And if Moses crosses the sea, follow him across the sea. Just trust and obey Moses single-mindedly and you will enter the Promised Land (which symbolizes God's kingdom).

Dear brothers and sisters who are not in the New Testament Church, by the mercies of God, I advise you: Quickly come out of the denominations and return to the New Testament Church. God will demolish the denominations and organizations of men's ideas. Only the New Testament Church is built by the apostles chosen by God. If we return to the New Testament Church, we can enter God's kingdom together. New Testament Church brothers and sisters, hold fast the vision in fear. Obey the apostles' doctrine and strive on. Only then can you enter God's kingdom.

The Lord has found pleasure in us. He has shown us in the New Testament era, He builds the church through His holy apostles and prophets. He has also shown us the church must obey the apostles' doctrine to achieve the testimony of unity. Only then can she please God. Today, the testimony of the pristine church has been restored, and God has revealed the apostles and spiritual leaders in our midst. We

pray that the Lord will help us know the truth soon. Let's put aside our personal prejudices and individual work and submit to the apostles' leading. Then we will satisfy God's heart. God's glory will be manifested here, and His enemies will be trampled. He will find rest in our midst, and we will obtain His blessings.

Our convention will last a few more days and we will continue to talk on apostleship. Please come again.

Now, let us joyfully sing the hymn, "Flame of Revival Gets Brighter." Brothers and sisters, God has restored the ministry of the apostles and the testimony of the pristine church. Together, let us hoist the banner of truth. Let us support and care for one another in love. Let us leave the denominations, stop all individual construction and be built into the body. Let us become the holy body of Christ and enter God's kingdom together. Let us put down "self" and offer ourselves to the Lord unconditionally. And let us be resolute in submitting to the apostles' leading.

We will now sing the hymn.

Believe in Him Whom God Sent

*(April 22, 1968—Message of the Lord's Servant Bro. Hong
during the Convention at the Church of Hong Kong)*

Know the Spiritual Leader

Let us read Exodus 32:1–4: “Now when the people saw that Moses delayed coming down from the mountain, the people gathered together to Aaron, and said to him, ‘Come, make us gods that shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.’ And Aaron said to them, ‘Break off the golden earrings which are in the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters, and bring them to me.’ So all the people broke off the golden earrings which were in their ears, and brought them to Aaron. And he received the gold from their hand and he fashioned it with an engraving tool, and made a molded calf. Then they said, ‘This is your god, O Israel, that brought you out of the land of Egypt!’”

“Then they rose early on the next day, offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. And the Lord said to Moses, ‘Go, get down! For your people whom you brought out of the land of Egypt have corrupted themselves. They have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them. They have made themselves a molded calf, and worshiped it and sacrificed to it, and said, This is your god, O Israel, that brought you out of the land of Egypt!’ And the Lord said to Moses, ‘I have seen this people, and indeed it is a stiff-necked people!’” (verses 6–9).

“And Moses said to Aaron, ‘What did this people do to you that you have brought so great a sin upon them?’” (verse 21).

“Now when Moses saw that the people were unrestrained (for Aaron had not restrained them, to their shame among their enemies), then

Moses stood in the entrance of the camp, and said, ‘Whoever is on the LORD’s side, let him come to me.’ And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together to him. And he said to them, ‘Thus says the LORD God of Israel: Let every man put his sword on his side, and go in and out from entrance to entrance throughout the camp, and let every man kill his brother, every man his companion, and every man his neighbor’” (verses 25–27).

Exodus 32 explains that Aaron did not restrain the people from making the golden calf. God had brought the people out of Egypt. And He wanted to take them to the land of Canaan so they would build a temple and serve Him there. On their way to Canaan, the Israelites should have obeyed God’s instructions. But they did something awful: They had Aaron make them gods. Why? Their intention was good. They wanted to continue their journey; they wanted to worship and serve the God who brought them out of Egypt. Being very earnest, they simply wanted to move on. But their leader Moses had gone up the mountain, and had not returned for 40 days. They did not know what had happened to him. So they decided to go ahead without him. In haste, they looked for a new god and a new leader (Aaron). But they didn’t realize that God had chosen Moses, not Aaron.

Moses was the spiritual leader God raised up to bring His people out of Egypt and into the land of Canaan. The way the Israelites left Egypt, crossed the Red Sea, journeyed through the wilderness, built the tabernacle, served God in the wilderness and journeyed until they reached Canaan was entrusted to Moses. Along the way, Moses led them through dangers and battles. The people witnessed that God was always with Moses. Moses was their guide, their protector. With Moses they felt secure. So when Moses disappeared, they were put to a severe test. And they failed because once they were apart from Moses they had no way. Yes, without Moses, the spiritual leader, they had no direction.

This principle also applies to Christians in the New Testament era. We must be very clear about this principle. God’s children today also want to move forward to serve God, but they do not know the way.

They have no direction or goal. They do not know how to progress. So they remain where they are. This tells us that the most pitiful and dangerous thing that can happen to the children of God is for them to lose God's appointed leader.

Yesterday I stated the way God works: *God works through His vessels. In every era, God raises up vessels to carry out His will. Therefore, regardless of which era we are in, we must look for the vessel of that era if we want to serve God and move forward according to God's will.* Before you are clear who God's appointed vessel is, you should not do anything. Otherwise your efforts in following the Lord will be in vain. And possibly, the more earnestly you serve, the more you will offend God. That would be a serious mistake. You must find the vessel of the era and have absolute faith in him. You must submit to him completely. Once you understand who he is and depend on him completely, you should be convinced that the way he leads you is the way God leads you, and that his messages are the will of God. Then, if you maintain a close tie with him, you can serve God according to His will, and your service will have everlasting value.

Psalm 103:7 says: "He made known His ways to Moses, His acts to the children of Israel." Moses was the spiritual leader. God wanted Moses to know His ways. As for the Israelites, they needed only to follow Moses. After seeing all that had happened along the way, they knew God's acts. May God have mercy on us so that we may understand the way He works—He works through vessels, and from them we will know His acts.

During the exodus from Egypt, God worked through Moses. Did the Israelites want to be free from Pharaoh's bondage? Did they want to cross the Red Sea and enter the land of Canaan? They had to first go to Moses, be knitted together with him, submit to him, advance and wait as Moses did. If they didn't follow Moses, they could not leave Egypt, no matter how hard they tried.

I once met a young Malaysian brother in Taiwan who was on his way home from the United States. He loved the Lord very much. After he completed his university studies in Malaysia, he joined a Christian

organization and left for the U.S. He was in the States for about eight months and was sent to various places to preach the gospel. He said the Lord was with him, for many people accepted the gospel. He was satisfied with his work. He said that the people of this generation were really thirsty and hungry, and that he wanted to equip himself quickly to serve God well.

As I listened to him, on one hand I thanked God. But I also felt sad for him, because he did not know the way God works. I asked him, “Dear brother, you have preached the gospel and brought many people to the Lord. What should they do now? Where should you lead them?” “Oh, I tell them to love the Lord,” he replied. “How?” I responded. He said, “To encourage and equip them.” So I asked, “In edifying them, what do you want them to become?” He could not answer. Then I told him, “It is good that you are fervent and love the Lord. It is also good that you sacrifice for the Lord. But you must first know the way God works and what He wants to do in this generation. Otherwise all your work will be in vain.” I continued, “*What God wants to do urgently in these last days is to rebuild the New Testament Church, and display the testimony of unity.* God does not want people to just believe in Jesus. There are many today who believe in Jesus, but they are all divided and are unable to display the testimony of unity. This is not the church that God wants. What He wants is a church that is integrated and united. *God has His way of building the church.* In every era He chooses a vessel to do His work. During the time of Moses, He worked through Moses. After Moses, He used Joshua. After that, He raised up the judges during the era of the Judges. Then He raised up Samuel, followed by King David. Whatever era you are in, you must know the leader whom God has appointed in that era. If you do not know him, you do not know God’s will and you cannot serve Him. Then you will not be able to advance.”

I asked him, “Brother, do you agree with me?” He had never heard this before. After thinking about it for a while, he said, “Yes, that is right.” I asked him again, “Since you agree in this working principle of God, do you agree that in this era God will also raise up a leader for us?” After a long while, he replied, “It is possible.” But I told him that

“possible” is not the right word. “Possible” means that it may not happen; he should have said “certainly.” No matter how bad God’s people are, God will ultimately raise up a leader for them. The era of the Judges in the Old Testament was the darkest period for God’s people, but one after another He still set up judges to deliver them. In these last days, God has raised up a spiritual leader. But today’s leader is a little different from the leaders of the Old Testament. We will elaborate on this over the next few days.

The Consequence of Following the Wrong Spiritual Leader

In the Old Testament era, God raised up two types of spiritual leaders. One was like the judges; the other like Moses and David. We will explain the differences later. But as for the Israelites, the same principle applies: Whenever the people turn away from the spiritual leader appointed by God, they will lose their direction and will not know how to serve God, or how to move on.

The Israelites became anxious after waiting a long time for Moses to come back down the mountain. They should have been extremely cautious in identifying the leader sent by God. Instead, they lost faith in Moses and turned to Aaron, hoping that Aaron would show them the way. Their intention was good; they wanted to serve God and continue their journey. But the end was tragic!

Aaron was terrible. He did not stay in his own position. When the people came to him, he might have thought: “The people always went to my younger brother, Moses. I always hoped they would come to me some day, and here they are! This is great!” So the people said, “Aaron, come make us gods.” They asked Aaron to make them gods. Making idols is a grave sin. But Aaron was just glad that the people wanted him to be their leader. So he said happily, “Break off the golden earrings which are in the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters, and bring them to me.” The people were very obedient. Without a word, they acted immediately. Aaron received the gold from their hand, and

he fashioned it with an engraving tool and made a molded calf. The golden calf could not have been made with only two or three pieces of gold. This shows that the people were very earnest in offering their gold.

Then, to make matters worse, the Israelites said, “This is your god, O Israel, that brought you out of the land of Egypt!” The LORD of hosts was turned into a calf! But remember, this was Aaron’s teaching, not Moses’. This was the consequence of the people going to Aaron. Later, Aaron plunged them deeper into foolishness, and they built an altar before the golden calf. The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. Why did they sit down to eat and drink, and rise up to play? Because they were glad that they could finally move on with a visible god to serve. In the end, they did not go forward—they had backslid!

Brothers and sisters, *the people of Israel had committed a grave sin because they deserted the leader whom God had appointed for them and turned to another leader whom God had not chosen.* Since they had the wrong leader, they were led the wrong way and did the wrong things. Their spiritual eyes became blurred and they acted foolishly. They did unbelievable and unthinkable things. This is the terrible state of a person who strays away from the leader appointed by God. God’s presence is only with the leader chosen by Him. *God is the light and the way. So, the light and the way are with the leader set up by God.* Leaving the leader appointed by God is leaving God and turning away from the light. Without light you will be in darkness and you will lose your spiritual senses. This is a serious matter.

This is the present condition of God’s children in the denominations. They have the wrong leaders. Their so-called leaders are not appointed by God. They teach things that offend God, and they lead people astray. Their teachings are wrong. But the people do not realize it, because on the surface they seem right. What Aaron said sounded good: “This is your god, O Israel, that brought you out of the land of Egypt!” He did not say, “This is a golden calf, O Israel!” Had he said that, the Israelites would have been alarmed. But Aaron’s words

sounded right; they sounded just like something Moses would say. The only difference was that Aaron was talking about a golden calf. Today, the pastors in the denominations also hold the Bible when they preach. Their words are from the Bible, but they take men away from God's will. This is a very serious matter. May God open our eyes so that we won't simply listen to the words they utter, but examine the content of those words carefully. Otherwise, we will be misled.

Aaron could speak better than Moses. God said to Moses, "Aaron shall be as a mouth for you. You shall speak to him and put the words in his mouth. He shall be your spokesman to the people." Aaron could speak very well. And so can some preachers who are without the vision or God's calling, and those who preach an incomplete truth. They speak much better than us, and many of God's children have been misled by them. But God says that what they do is a great sin. Misled by false preachers, many earnest Christians offer money to build large church buildings. The bigger the building is, the further it takes men away from God's will. They sin against God and oppose Him. Saul was such a person. The more earnest he was, the more he arrested Christians and persecuted the church. Therefore, to know and recognize the leader whom God sets up for us is very important.

Following the wrong leader is molding the golden calf. Such service is condemned by God. What was the Israelites' punishment for following Aaron and committing the grave sin of molding the golden calf? Moses burned the calf, ground it to powder, and scattered it on the water. Then he made the children of Israel drink it. Drinking gold water! This is terrible! A person will die if he swallows gold. This teaches us that one will lose his life for turning away from the leader sent by God.

Elijah's Prayer on Mount Carmel

We have been saying that in these last days God has raised up a spiritual leader, and we must know him. But some people are skeptical. They say we are preaching, exalting and following man. This is untrue. Following the leader whom God sent is not following man, but God.

For this is God's working principle. Let us read 1 Kings 18:36, "And it came to pass, at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near and said, 'Lord God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, let it be known this day that You are God in Israel and that I am Your servant, and that I have done all these things at Your word.'" This was Elijah's prayer when he battled with the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel. It was a great prayer.

The prayer has two points:

1. *Let it be known this day that You are God in Israel.* I think everybody would say Amen to this. Don't you? It would be terrible if God's people did not know that the LORD of hosts was their God. But at that time, the Israelites did not know that the Lord God was the God of Israel. They thought Baal was also God. Many brothers and sisters today are also uncertain. They think that the New Testament Church is pretty good, but that the denominations are also good. Satan also tricks the world into disbelieving God or believing in many gods. But Elijah said, "How long will you falter between two opinions? If the LORD is God, follow Him; but if Baal, then follow him." But the people did not answer. They had acted foolishly, and their hearts remained hardened. Because of this, Elijah stood at the breach and made a burdened, solemn prayer: "Let it be known this day that you are God in Israel."

2. *And that I am Your servant, and that I have done all these things at Your word.* Would you say Amen to this prayer? Or would you murmur in your heart: "Elijah is really arrogant! He exalts himself. He wants to rob God of His position and glory. He does not only want people to know God, but also himself." Brothers and sisters, this was Elijah's prayer. But Elijah was not being arrogant. He knew God's working principle. That is why his prayer was recorded in the Bible—it is a truth and a principle to follow.

Why did Elijah want people to know him? Was it not enough to know God? No, it wasn't, because *this God manifested Himself through Elijah. He accomplished His will, and did His work through Elijah. The Throne was linked with Elijah. Only through knowing Elijah could one know God, His will and acts.* Elijah prayed for the heavens to be shut up, so there was no

rain for three years and six months. Later, Elijah prayed for rain and it rained heavily. Can mere men do this? Was Elijah that mighty? No! Elijah was a man with a nature like ours. At times, he also had weaknesses. But why was he so powerful? Because he was God's spokesman. Through him, God was manifested, and the operations of heaven were carried out. Through him, God's epochal will was made known, and heavenly blessings came upon the world. If God's people did not know Elijah, they could not live in God's will, nor could they receive God's blessings. That was why Elijah made such a prayer.

At that time, the people of Israel did not recognize that Elijah was the servant of God. In fact, everyone—from King Ahab to the average citizen—thought Elijah was the cause of their woes. Ahab said to Elijah, "Is that you, O troubler of Israel?" That was why Elijah had to pray so earnestly for God to make people know that he was God's servant.

Today, our beloved Sis. Kong arose and called God's children to leave the denominations and return to the New Testament Church. As a result of her ministry, many saints in the denominations who loved the Lord came to the New Testament Church one after another. The false shepherds in the denominations could not tolerate it. In Taiwan, one famous preacher charged that the New Testament Church hurt others' good sheep. Some people said that Kong Duen Yee had turned Christendom upside down. Some even said that Sis. Kong caused trouble all over the world. But Elijah said, "No! I have not troubled Israel, but you and your father's house have, in that you have forsaken the commandments of the Lord, and you have followed the Baals." Elijah had to refute all these accusations, so that the people of Israel might have a clear recognition of who he was, that they might come together before him to accomplish God's work on Mount Carmel.

It was important to know Elijah. If the children of Israel did not know Elijah, they would not come to Elijah, and would, therefore, have no way to worship the LORD God. For God was with Elijah. From Elijah's prayer on Mount Carmel, we understand that it is very impor-

tant to know the vessel of the era. *Everyone who loves the LORD and wants to serve Him, and everyone who wants His blessings and wants to enter His kingdom must know the one whom God sends.* If you do not know him, or if you disbelieve him, you will not please God and you will suffer grave consequences.

This Is the Work of God: That You Believe in Him Whom God Sent

Let us read Luke 13:34–35: “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, but you were not willing! See! Your house is left to you desolate; and assuredly, I say to you, you shall not see Me until the time comes when you say, ‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!’” These verses tell us the serious consequences of not believing in, but killing him whom God sent. The Lord Jesus grieved for Jerusalem. He sighed and cried, “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her!” God sent them prophets, and they killed them. Finally, the Lord Jesus Himself came, but they crucified Him. Many times the Lord wanted to gather them together, as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, but they were not willing. Instead they despised, rejected and killed Him. So they met a tragic fate—their house was left to them desolate!

Brothers and sisters, if we wish to do God’s work and prosper, we must believe in him whom God sends. *For by believing in the one God sends, we do God’s work, and we will be blessed and revived.* If you do not believe in him, you will become desolate immediately. And from then on, you will not see the Lord. When the Lord turns His back on you, you will fall into darkness and agony. It is a tragic thing when God’s people lose His presence. And how long will this condition last? Until they say, “Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!” Otherwise, nothing will change. If we do not believe in the one whom God sends, we will suffer great loss. May the Lord open our eyes that

we may understand the seriousness of this matter.

Brothers and sisters, with a leader comes direction, hope, growth advancement, blessings and the accomplishment of God's work. A spiritual leader (vessel of the era) is that important. Maybe there is nothing special about him, but God has chosen him. If you offend him, you offend God. Therefore, the first thing we should do is recognize the leader of the era. The leader of the era appointed by God has God's affirmation. Starting tomorrow, we will talk about how to determine the vessel of the era. This recognition has something to do with our future service. It will enable us to discern between true and false prophets. Please pray for me. By God's grace, I am willing to share with you all the works of God on me. But I fear that I will not be able to express the will of God clearly. I hope that brothers and sisters will be of the same mind as me, and pray for me to convey God's will to you thoroughly. Then we will know the present vessel of the era whom God has raised up, and follow him. This is God's earnest will for every era. Now, let us sing the hymn, "Believe In Him Whom God Sent" one more time.

Signs of an Apostle (1)

(April 23, 1968—Message of the Lord's Servant Bro. Hong during the Convention at the Church of Hong Kong)

Last night, we said that God's people must know the leader God raised up for the era, and maintain a life tie with him. If they do not know the leader of the era, they will not know of the will of God. They will not be able to serve God according to His will, nor work according to His ways. There will be no way for them to go forward.

In each era, God's people should know the vessel God has raised up for them. This is very important. In the New Testament era, God leads His church through the apostles. God reveals to the apostles the mysteries of building the church. He also chooses one master builder among the apostles to lay the foundation of the church. After it is laid, He builds His church on this foundation through the ministries of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. Together, they equip the saints for the work of ministry, till we all come to the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. The entire will of God and all His plans for this era are given to the apostles. Can God's will for today be done on earth? Can God's work be accomplished? It all depends on whether God's people acknowledge the apostles He has chosen.

The devil Satan tries to prevent people from knowing the apostles, or to make them reject the ministry of the apostles. The adversary knows that if he succeeds in overthrowing the apostleship, he will ruin God's plan for building the church. For the apostles are the key to building the church. Therefore, Satan wants to make God's people doubt, or even repel against the apostles.

We can clearly see this work of Satan from what happened to the Israelites in the Old Testament. Let us read Numbers 12:1: "Then Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman

whom he had married; for he had married an Ethiopian woman. And they said, Has the Lord indeed spoken only through Moses? Has He not spoken through us also?" Miriam and Aaron seemed to have spoken against Moses because Moses had married an Ethiopian woman. But actually, they were rebellious and insubmissive. They said, "Has the Lord not spoken through us also?" What they meant was: "You are not so special. God speaks to you, but He also speaks to us. You receive revelations from Him, and so do we."

Brothers and sisters, this is a very serious problem. If Moses' ministry was undermined, God's people would be thrown into immediate chaos. God led His people through Moses. He spoke with Moses face to face, even plainly, and not in dark sayings. Though Miriam was a prophetess, God did not speak to her directly. She was not happy with this. According to her, God should have spoken not only to Moses, but to Aaron and herself as well. She thought Moses had been dictatorial and that Moses should have been more open to suggestions. But since Miriam and Aaron held this opinion, they rejected Moses' ministry. They wanted to overthrow his position, and God would not allow it. When they spoke against Moses, God said, "Why were you not afraid to speak against My servant Moses?" Brothers and sisters, was Moses wrong in marrying the Ethiopian woman? Yes, he was. But God will be responsible for whoever He has chosen. He will not allow His people to oppose or speak against His chosen one, because if they do, they are not speaking against men, but God.

Numbers 16:1–3 says, "Now Korah the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, with Dathan and Abiram the sons of Eliab, and On the son of Peleth, sons of Reuben, took men; and they rose up before Moses with some of the children of Israel, two hundred and fifty leaders of the congregation, representatives of the congregation, men of renown. They gathered together against Moses and Aaron, and said to them, You take too much upon yourselves, for all the congregation is holy, every one of them, and the LORD is among them. Why then do you exalt yourselves above the congregation of the LORD?" Korah and his company rebelled against Moses. They believed that

Moses had taken too much upon himself and had exalted himself above the congregation of the LORD. But the issue here is not exaltation, but spiritual order. God fixes certain positions and ministries for His people. His house is orderly. It must not be in chaos. The devil was using Korah and his men to destroy the order in God's house. *The devil always wants people to overthrow the spiritual leader God has appointed, because when that happens, all of God's spiritual work will cease.*

The devil did the same thing in the New Testament era. God made Paul the chief apostle among the apostles, and wanted all the other ministers to coordinate with him. But the devil Satan worked among God's people. He caused them to question Paul's ministry and to want proof that Christ spoke through him. That was the rebellious spirit, one that sought to overthrow Paul's ministry. But it was not a man they were trying to overthrow, it was God and His anointed. This is a serious matter!

The devil Satan will either make people reject apostleship or confuse them so they will not be sure who the real apostle is. We often hear people say: "I know a pastor who is also an apostle. And there is a Bible scholar who is an apostle too. There's someone in the Christian Assembly, and there's a foreign preacher of a certain denomination—they are all apostles." There seems to be so many apostles! Who is the real one? People are confused. But God's people must know who the real one is. The disciples in Ephesus had the power of discernment (see Rev. 2: 2). So the need to distinguish between the true and false apostles is not something new.

How, then, do we distinguish between the true and the false apostles? 2 Corinthians 11:13 says, "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ." False apostles look like apostles, but lack the reality. Paul said, "And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light." So, we must ask the Lord for enough grace to distinguish the true apostles from the false. Otherwise, we will not be able to follow the anointed one of God and build the church with him. This is important. May brothers and sisters sustain these services with prayers. I know

the enemy is not happy. He does not want me delivering these messages. Today I was severely attacked by him. I feel suppressed in the spirit. We must battle through prayers, asking God to release His word and grant us the spirit of discernment He gave the church at Ephesus, that we may be able to distinguish between the true and false apostles.

Apostles Are Chosen by God

In Taiwan, people often ask, “How do you know if someone is an apostle?” These people are not against us. They are simply seeking the Lord. It is extremely important to know who the apostles are. It is useless if one only knows the importance of apostles, but not the apostles themselves. An apostle chosen by God will have the signs to prove his ministry. Today we want to find out what these signs are.

First of all, apostles are chosen by God. Acts 1:2 says, “Until the day in which He was taken up, after He through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen.” From this verse we know that the apostles are chosen by God. Acts 9:15 says, “But the Lord said to him, Go, for he is a chosen vessel of Mine.” Again, the Bible shows us that the apostles are vessels chosen by God. Galatians 1:1 states, “Paul, an apostle (not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised Him from the dead).” Therefore, one is an apostle not from men, nor through man, nor by men’s appointment or election. *Apostles are chosen by God.*

Not by Works, But by Him Who Calls

In choosing His vessel, God does not consider men’s suggestions or views. He chooses according to His purpose. We must understand *God’s purpose of election* to know the person He has chosen.

What actually is God’s purpose of election? Let us read Romans 9: 11–13: “Yet, before the twins were born or had done anything good or bad—in order that God’s purpose in election might stand: not by works but by him who calls—she was told, ‘The older will serve the younger. ’ Just as it is written: ‘Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.’” These verses

show God's purpose in election: Not by works, but by Him who calls. Before the children were born, and before they did anything good or evil, God made known His purpose in election. If God made His choice after the children were born, men might say that God chose the better one.

We have a concept that a person chosen by God must be well-behaved, obedient, upright and not cunning—someone who has been very good since youth. We also think that he should be of the upper class, well-cultured, respectable and well-known. But God's purpose in election is not of works. He said, "Jacob I have loved, but Esau I have hated." Many people would defend Esau. They would say that Esau was well-behaved, diligent and was a courageous hunter. Why didn't God choose him? Jacob was so cunning and crooked; he was skillful only at fighting for himself. Yet God chose him! What did God love so much about Jacob? And what did He hate about Esau? What was it in Esau that displeased God? We often argue with God. We often cannot agree with Him. And we often feel that He is unfair.

Brothers and sisters, this is God's purpose in election. God has the right to do things as He wills. Time will reveal that God's choice is perfectly righteous. God does not make mistakes; you need not worry for Him. Just believe and rest assured. When God chooses a person, He will find a way to accomplish His work on him. God did not choose Jacob for Jacob to play his tricks. He could not use Jacob's cunning either. Since He had chosen Jacob, He could mold and transform the cunning Jacob into honorable Israel. During his time, nobody revered God more than Jacob did. And before God, no one was more humble, obedient or courageous.

After Jacob was molded by God to become Israel, he was able to act on God's behalf to execute His sovereignty. When old Jacob went to Egypt, he was so honorable that he blessed Pharaoh. This refugee who had come to buy grain in Egypt stood before the king of Egypt. Had you been in Jacob's shoes, would you have dared to bless Pharaoh? But the cunning Jacob, who was skillful at playing tricks for his own good, had been completely cleansed by God, having gone through con-

stant molding. In the end, he was able to execute God's sovereignty on earth, and manifest His honor. This is God's wisdom and His work. Jacob's change shows the power of God's salvation. It shows that God's way is higher than men's ways. It also manifests *God's purpose in election—not of works but of Him who calls*. Therefore, *we must have faith in God's purpose in election. We must never judge God's chosen vessel with our own standards*.

When our beloved Sis. Kong was raised up by God, I could not accept her because of my old concepts. I wondered how this actress could be God's vessel. How could a person who had been married twice be God's messenger? There is nothing wrong with a film star repenting and believing in the Lord. And it would still be fine if she were to become a preacher. But to be a spiritual leader? A vessel of the era? No way! There are so many people in the world. Why does God have to choose Sis. Kong and not a renowned pastor, or someone with a doctorate in theology?

Those who do not understand God's purpose in election cannot accept His choice. They say, "The New Testament Church is run by a film star. Don't go there! It is not a good place." You may say that the church was run by a film star. However, our beloved Sis. Kong did not build the church as a film star; she was no longer making films when she began preaching. Sis. Kong built the church as an apostle chosen and cleansed by God. The person perceived as being wretched, God filled with the Holy Spirit and transformed through the sacred and complete truth. God chose her for the purpose of manifesting His wisdom and His power of salvation. He did it to show men what kind of salvation the Lord's complete truth can give.

After receiving the complete salvation, a person who could not turn away from sin and the world would now be able to do so. With this salvation, a Christian who was unable to love the Lord can now love the Lord, and even give himself to Him. After being filled by the Spirit, one can turn away from sins and long for the path of the cross.

God's maidservant Sis. Kong was a living witness to the Lord's salvation. She did not have to deliver any messages. She only had to sit

there, and people would be touched by seeing her. What one saw in her was the reality of salvation. She didn't give empty teachings. Her life bore witness to the sacred, complete truth of the Lord Jesus Christ. This was God's purpose in choosing and molding Sis. Kong.

Not of Age, But of God's Choice

God has made known to us that He does not choose a person according to his works (conduct). You may be very good, but if God does not choose you, it is worthless. You may be very bad, but if God chooses you, He will find a way to mold you into His useful vessel. *So, God does not choose a person according to his conduct or age.* Esau was the older brother. It seemed logical that the older one should be chosen. But God chose the younger. This is God's purpose in election. God doesn't have to choose you just because you were born first.

I also used to think that people chosen of God should have served the Lord for many years and had to be very experienced. They had to be pastors or preachers for many decades, their hair white and their beards long. I could accept these people as leaders, but not those young juniors. We tend to think that the longer a person believes in the Lord, the more spiritual he is, and the more he attends theological colleges, the more competent he will be. But God ignores all this, and many cannot accept it.

People say, "Kong Duen Yee has believed in Jesus for only a few years. She has not attended any theological college, and she has not followed the Lord for long. And now she is God's chosen one? When I started preaching, she was not even a Christian! Now she is the vessel of the era? I can't believe it." Men always think that the longer you have believed in the Lord, the more spiritual you are. However, whether one is spiritual or not does not depend on how long he has believed, but on how obedient he is to God.

In Taiwan, there is a group of people who always boast about their seniority—especially those from the Christian Assembly. They think they know more than everyone else. They think they can preach about things others can't. When they open their mouths, you hear about Christ's

mysteries, Canaan's abundance, the surpassing Christ and His unfathomable riches. They are really competent. So they look down on Sis. Kong. When we gave them a copy of *A Living Testimony to the Truth*, and they glanced at the front and the back and then flipped through the contents and remarked, "There's nothing special about this. It's so elementary." When they read in part 2, *The Truth on Spirit Baptism*, that one must speak with tongues when one receives the Holy Spirit, they will say that speaking in tongues is the least of all the gifts—not important. However, God used Sis. Kong's book to accomplish great and glorious works. Because of this book, many people have found great grace. Since God chose Sis. Kong, He confirmed her work.

Dear brothers and sisters, what does being spiritual mean? To be very gentle? To not lose your temper? No! There are many people who do not lose their temper when irritated. They seem very tolerant. But they hold their anger inside. Their flesh has gone undercover. I also used to put a lot of effort into this. I did not want people to think that I was unspiritual, so I forced myself to be tolerant. But in this way, is our flesh really subdued? No. It does not disappear. Instead, it goes deeper into us and grows. A person with such a big flesh cannot be touched by others. Even if you touch him a little, he will explode in anger, red in the face, and cords standing out in their necks. They are a genuine hypocrite, no different from the scribes and the Pharisees. What do we mean by being spiritual? Is one spiritual by knowing the Bible? By memorizing it? Many people in the Christian Assembly are very earnest. They intend to read the entire Bible a hundred times during their lifetime. But reading the Bible a hundred times will not make you spiritual. God does not have to choose you because you read the Bible so much. So how can a person become spiritual?

Exodus 32:26 tells us that when Moses stood in the entrance of the camp he said, "Whoever is on the LORD's side let him come to me." Those who are on the LORD's side belong to God. They are spiritual. So, who is on the LORD's side? Those who come to Moses. Therefore, who are the most spiritual? Those who come to Moses. In other words, *those who are on the side of the vessel of the era are the most spiritual.* He may

not always do the right thing, be well-mannered, and speak softly. A spiritual person is on God's side; on the side of the vessel of the era. If you obey the truth as soon as you understand it, or if you come to God's side as soon as you know His will, you are spiritual. And the more resolute you are on God's side, the more spiritual you are. If you refuse to come over to God's side and obey the truth, you are the most unspiritual even if you pretend to be spiritual.

Being a senior does not make you spiritual either. If a senior refuses to be on the Lord's side, he is still carnal. Some people refuse to submit to God even after God tries to move them for many years. How can these people be called spiritual? Decades pass, and they are still carnal. The more they increase in age, the larger their flesh and "self" become. It is really frightening! Therefore, God does not base His choice on age. Eli was old, and had served God for a long time. He was well experienced. But God's words did not come to him. God chose to speak to the boy Samuel instead. Can you say, "O God, if You do things this way, You are not following the proper order. You should have spoken to Eli, not Samuel who was just a child. See? Three times You called the boy, but he still did not know it. You should have spoken to old Eli. With him, You would only have to say it once"? Brothers and sisters, though Samuel did not know what to do, God was determined to use him. He did not want to use old Eli, a senior. This is God's way of selecting people.

A person who serves God does not speak the words of men, but the words of God. He does not serve by natural men's knowledge and wisdom, but by living piously before God. Since we only speak God's words, we will have nothing to say if His words do not come to us. But if God gives us His words, we will have something to say. I may be weak, wretched and naive, but if God gives me His words, I will have God's words. I may be good and spiritual, but if God does not give me words, I will not have God's words—only men's words.

In the New Testament, we serve God in the Spirit. If the Holy Spirit does not motivate us, we cannot do anything. When those who lead hymns ask me, "Bro. Hong, which hymn would you like us to sing,

” sometimes I wouldn’t know what to tell them, even when the service was about to begin. Why? Because I would be waiting for God. Since God had yet to let me know His will, I could not speak. This is because I do not speak my own words, but God’s. If I speak and act before God speaks to me, I will give birth to Ishmael. But if I speak and do according to what God tells me, I will give birth to Isaac.

It is not easy to speak God’s words. Nobody can boast that he can. To receive the words of God, one has to prostrate humbly before Him, and surrender himself completely and unconditionally and wait for His appearing. For God is the source of His own words. Whether He gives us words or not, promptly or slowly, is beyond our control. You could try to deliver your own message before God gives you His words. You could also refer to Genesis or Revelation. But what you say would be man’s words and not the words God wants you to speak. Even if everything you say is right, the Holy Spirit will not confirm it.

I say all these things to let everyone know that God definitely does not choose and use us because of our age, experience or background. It depends on God’s choice, for He alone does wonders. So never say: “Sis. Kong only had a few years of education and had only believed in the Lord for a short time. What could she have known?” Brothers and sisters, many people have a through knowledge of the Bible. But few receive revelations on the truth from it. They understand the Bible through thinking, but Sis. Kong did not analyze the Bible with her brain—the Holy Spirit enlightened her.

Brothers and sisters, I say again that only God chooses the vessel of the era. And God does not choose according to man’s outward qualifications, but on His predestination. God used old Noah and old Moses. He could also use young Jeremiah, Daniel and even little Samuel and David.

Let’s use young David as an illustration. 1 Samuel 16 shows us how God selects His vessels: “Then the LORD said to Samuel, How long will you mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? Fill your horn with oil, and go; I am sending you to Jesse the Bethlehemite. For I have provided Myself a king among his sons.”

God said He had provided Himself a king. Jesse had several sons. Which one was the king?

Verse 6 says, “So it was, when they came, that he looked at Eliab and said, Surely the LORD’s anointed is before Him. But the LORD said to Samuel, Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have refused him.” Eliab was tall and had a good appearance, so the prophet Samuel was a little confused. When he saw the handsome Eliab, he thought, “This must be the one.” But God said, “I have refused him.” Why? Because the Lord sees not as man sees. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart. Man always sees whether a person is mature, good-looking, eloquent, learned and has high social standing. But God does not look at all these. He looks at the heart. There are some who look good outwardly. They seem very gentle and honest. But inside they are corrupt.

Next, Jesse called Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel. And he said, “Neither has the LORD chosen this one.” Jesse made his sons pass before Samuel one by one, but even the seventh was not the person. What now? Samuel was a prophet. It was surely God’s Spirit who instructed him to go there to anoint a king. How could he be wrong? Was Samuel a false prophet? Samuel was clear about God’s sending. He asked Jesse, “Are all the young men here?” Then Jesse said, “There remains yet the youngest, and there he is, keeping the sheep.” And Samuel said to Jesse, “Send and bring him. For we will not sit down till he comes here.” So he sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, with bright eyes, and good-looking. And the LORD said, “Arise, anoint him; for this is the one!” Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers. So among the eight sons of Jesse, God anointed the youngest son. This is *God’s purpose in election—not according to age.*

There is a train service in Taiwan with reserved seating. If you purchase a ticket, you have a seat. You don’t need to worry that you may not get a seat. When it is time to board the train, nobody will dare to occupy your seat. If someone does, he will get up as soon as he sees you standing there. The New Testament Church is the same. She is like

a train with reserved seating, bound for God's kingdom. Every person has his place fixed by God. Whatever place God gives you is yours. No one can take it away from you. But you also cannot take away what belongs to others. Moreover, nobody can use his own ways and efforts to get a seat other than the one assigned by God. So, the position of the apostles cannot be obtained through man's works. In the New Testament Church, if God has chosen you to be an apostle, then you will be one. If He has chosen you to be a teacher, then that's what you'll be. Whatever role God has assigned for you, that is the role you must play. It all depends on God's choice. I have served God for more than a decade, but God has not revealed me as an apostle. As for Sis. Kong, she served the Lord for only a few years, but since God had chosen her to be an apostle, she became one. Others may have been older and more qualified than her, but everything depends on God's selection. He has all the authority.

God will shoulder the responsibilities of the person He has called. He will be with him. This is God's purpose in election. God chose David and bore his responsibilities. When the Philistines came into the Israelite's land, Goliath challenged the army of Israel. And when King Saul and all Israel heard it, they were dismayed and greatly afraid. Only David arose to fight. But Saul said, "You are not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him; for you are but a youth, and he has been a man of war from his youth." Saul thought Goliath was invincible since he had been a man of war from his youth. He thought that David was too young. Must God use a boy to fight an experienced warrior? But David said to Saul, "Your servant used to keep his father's sheep, and when a lion or a bear came and took a lamb out of the flock, I went out after it and struck it, and delivered the lamb from its mouth; and when it arose against me, I caught it by its beard, and struck and killed it. Your servant has killed both lion and bear, and this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, seeing he has defied the armies of the living God.' Moreover David said, 'The LORD, who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, He will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine.' And Saul said to David, 'Go, and the

LORD be with you!” (1 Sam. 17:34–37).

Saul could not stop David, so he sent him. He wanted David to put on his armor. However, David could not walk with the armor on, so he took it off. Then, with his staff and his sling, he drew near to the fully armored Goliath, who greatly despised him. Goliath exclaimed that he would give David’s flesh to the birds of the air and to the beasts of the field. Today, many great pastors in the denominations also despise God’s maidservant Sis. Kong. They think they can easily pull her down by writing a few articles against her. But David, who was chosen of God, slung one stone and struck Goliath right on his forehead. And Goliath fell on his face to the earth. Then, David took Goliath’s sword and used it to cut off Goliath’s head. This was surely done by God. It is not of men’s age, but of God’s choice. God will bear the responsibilities of whomever He has selected.

Not of Gender, But of God’s Will

In these last days, God chose Sis. Kong. She might have been a weak woman and a film star, but we should not despise God’s choice on her. What God has cleansed, you must not call common. You cannot insist that the person chosen of God must be a man. If God wants to do something new and use a woman to protect a man, what can you say? Jeremiah 31:21–22 says, “Set up signposts, make landmarks; set your heart toward the highway, the way in which you went. Turn back, O virgin of Israel, turn back to these your cities. How long will you gad about, O you backsliding daughter? For the LORD has created a new thing in the earth—a woman shall encompass a man.” In these last days, God wants to heal His people of their backsliding so that the captives may return. God had revealed that this woman in Jeremiah 31 was Sis. Kong Duen Yee, whom He had chosen in the East. He gave her the position as an apostle and a prophet. He entrusted to her the task of restoring “The Complete Truth of Blood, Water and Holy Spirit,” and “The Holy Spirit rebuilds the New Testament Church.” He chose her to bring about the great revival in these last days and usher in God’s kingdom. This is God’s glorious and wonderful work. Tonight, I bear

witness of this. May all those with ears hear.

Dear brothers and sisters, let us prostrate before God and put aside our old concepts that we may behold God's glorious acts. God wanted His maidservant to accomplish His works in the end times. Do not think that it is impossible. If God wants it, it will happen. Do not say that the hearts of those in the denominations are so hardened that it is impossible for them to return. Those whom God calls shall return. In the Old Testament, when God's people were captured to Babylon, God wanted them to return, and they did. In order to accomplish the work of restoration, God has created a new thing on earth: He has used a woman to encompass a man. Dear brothers and sisters, *in making His choice, God does not look at a person's conduct, gender, age, or appearance. God chooses according to His will.*

I repeat: In these end times, according to the words of the prophet Jeremiah, God has created a new thing. He has raised up a woman to encompass a man. Why do you doubt? Why do you disbelieve? Why do you say it is impossible? Since God has done it, we should say Amen. We should praise God, be glad and rejoice. God says: "Again I will build you, and you shall be rebuilt, O virgin of Israel!" God has set up signposts and made landmarks for us that we may go to the spiritual heights—to Mount Zion, to the LORD our God! For God has created a new thing on earth! He used a woman to encompass a man! Hallelujah! Praise our Lord Jesus! Let us sing joyfully the hymn, "A New Thing." Let us sing with faith.

Signs of an Apostle (2)

(April 24, 1968—Message of the Lord's Servant Bro. Hong during the Convention at the Church of Hong Kong)

Last night, we discussed the signs of the vessel of the era, that is, the signs of an apostle. This is something very important. God accomplishes His work on earth through the apostles He has chosen. All of God's will and work are entrusted to the apostles. If we do not know who God's vessel of the era is, we cannot follow his leading.

An apostle is chosen by God. He is not ordained or elected by men. Men cannot ordain apostles. Neither can men become apostles by their own zeal, courage and effort. It is entirely God's choice. Therefore, man's works, age and qualifications are irrelevant. God will have mercy on whomever He wishes, and will choose whomever He desires. And through the person he chooses, God will reveal His wisdom and ways and demonstrate His glory and power.

An Apostle Brings the Riches of God to Man

Yesterday, we said that David was God's chosen vessel of the era. He did not fight or strive to be chosen of God. God's choice was revealed through circumstances. Samuel said to Jesse, "We will not sit down till he comes here." This was a proof of David's being chosen. If David did not come, no one could enjoy the feast. They could only start enjoying it when David came. The greatest blessing for God's children is to enjoy His provision, not just for one day, but every day. How pitiful it would be for God's children to go hungry every day.

The children of God in these last days are experiencing spiritual famine. They cannot touch God's blessings nor can they obtain the heavenly provision. They cannot enjoy the spiritual feast. Why? Because the spiritual leader is not with them. He does not come to them, so they cannot sit at the feast to enjoy God's riches. We all know of the desolate state of Christianity before Sis. Kong. There was a period

when the Christian Assembly was rising, but it began to decline around 1957. I won't even bother to mention other denominations. As a Christian myself, I was really starving. Many brothers and sisters who loved the Lord could find no spiritual food to eat. None of the spiritual magazines, gospel conventions and revival meetings was satisfying. As soon as those conventions were over, God's children would become cold again. There was a lot of Bible knowledge, but no spiritual depth. Hardly anyone wanted to listen to sermons. Still, people had to come sit for sermons. So preaching became a preacher's burden, while listening became the brothers and sisters' burden.

But in 1963, God did a wonderful thing: He raised up Sis. Kong Duen Yee. She sent her co-workers to Taiwan in 1965 to hold gospel conventions throughout the island. The rich presence of God was with the co-workers of the Grace of Jesus Christ Crusade wherever they went—in Hualien, Tainan, Kaohsiung, Taichung and other places. The Holy Spirit worked wonderfully. Those services were truly fresh and full of life. They were very satisfying. Among the many Christians who attended were several preachers and pastors from the denominations.

I wrote Sis. Kong and said, "Thanks be to the Lord. Though you are not here, God has greatly used your co-workers to expound the mystery of the full truth. Many believers have been baptized with the Holy Spirit and now speak in tongues. Their spirits have been revived, and everyone is strong." In her reply, Sis. Kong said, "This is God's wonderful work. This is His surpassing way and wisdom. He did not use great preachers to preach this holy truth, but a group of people despised by others. He has brought to nothing the wisdom of the wise, and those who think they have. He has chosen the base and foolish ones to reveal His wisdom."

Praise the Lord! The vessel of the era has come; everybody can now enjoy the feast. Even I, a preacher who had no appetite, found the food satisfying.

Brothers and sisters, the Bible is the spiritual food given by God. The word of God is rich and nutritious, strengthening and sweet as honey. But many can only read the Bible, not eat it. They read it over

and over, but the more they read, the less interested they are. They may be very energetic, but once they start reading the Bible, they get sleepy. The Bible becomes their bedtime story. Why does this happen? Because David (the spiritual leader) has not come. *Only when he (the spiritual leader) comes can everyone sit at the feast and enjoy all the riches of God.* This is a sign of God's choice on David (the spiritual leader).

An Apostle Has the Power of God to Deal with the Enemies

When David came, Goliath was destroyed. This is another sign that David was chosen by God. Goliath was the greatest enemy of the people of Israel, and the Israelites could not deal with him. Goliath made the Israelites look pitiful, desolate, weak and full of shame. Who could turn this situation around? Only David.

David did not deal with Goliath by his own ability, but by God, who bore his responsibility. God delivered the enemy into his hand. Many children of God today are in the same pitiful state the Israelites were in. Every child of God has a terrifying enemy—a Goliath. They cannot overcome him, and they shame God's name. Brothers and sisters, I do not know what your Goliath is, but you must have one.

I was the same. From my heart, I truly wanted the Lord, but I found it impossible to love Him and overcome temptations and weaknesses. With Goliath around, people could not see God's victory and power in us. We were under the threat of the enemy every day, and could not be freed from it. Every day, we lived a life of worry and gloom, a miserable life of a captive. This was the condition of many brothers and sisters.

But wonderfully, when the maidservant of God sent her co-workers to Taiwan to hold evangelical conventions, the children of God were revived. Scenes of revival could be found wherever the Grace of Jesus Christ Crusade went. Unless someone was numb or stubborn, all who loved the Lord with a pure heart were revived. Those who could not overcome, overcame. Those who could not walk, walked. Those who

could not go forward, went forward. Bringing revival to God's children is also a sign that one is the spiritual leader.

An Apostle Has God's Entrustment; He Knows the Mystery of Christ

The spiritual leader chosen by God has God's entrustment. Let us read Ephesians 3:1–4: “For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles—if indeed you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which was given to me for you, how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I wrote before in a few words, by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ).”

Here, Paul tells us that God had given him the dispensation (administration) of God's grace for His children. Since God had given him this administration, He made known to him the mystery by revelation. So Paul had knowledge in the mystery of Christ. Paul was not being proud, nor was he showing off by saying this. It was God's purpose in election. For if he did not have knowledge in the mystery of Christ, how could he be the master builder of that era and lay the foundation? How could he preach the doctrine of God fully? Therefore, the vessel chosen by God will have God's entrustment. This is yet another sign of an apostle.

An Apostle Can Present the Word of God in Its Fullness

Colossians 1:25–26 (NIV) says, “I have become its [the church's] servant by the commission God gave me to present to you the word of God in its fullness—the mystery that has been kept hidden for ages and generations, but is now disclosed to the saints.” Paul was a master builder with God's commission. He was God's chosen apostle, a ministry to care for the church. Through him, God's word was presented in its fullness. *How can we know whether a man is the vessel of the era chosen by God?*

It depends on whether he can preach the word of God in its fullness. This is another sign of an apostle.

We say that Sis. Kong was an apostle because she preached the full truth. Of course, before Sis. Kong, God used many other vessels, servants and maidservants. They also fulfilled their duties. So, what is the difference? Most importantly, one type of vessel can preach the word of God fully and the other cannot. *The full truth is God's law for building the temple. If you cannot bring out the law for building the temple, and cannot preach the word of God to its fullness, you are neither an apostle nor the vessel of the era.*

It does not matter whether you have courage, or whether God has ever used you. What matters is whether the mystery of Christ—the law for building the church—has been revealed to you. After Peter and Paul, there was no one who could preach the full truth of *Blood, Water and Holy Spirit* as completely as Sis. Kong. After Peter and Paul, there was no one who was as enlightened as Sis. Kong about apostleship. This further proves that Sis. Kong was an apostle.

The complete truth, the foundation of the church, is revealed to the apostles. It cannot be obtained through diligent pursuit. I used to read the Bible faithfully. But I did not understand the complete truth. I did not even manage to discover the two types of prayers and the two types of singing mentioned in 1 Corinthians 14. I had read 1 Corinthians several times, yet I did not see this point. It was as though I had never come across the verse, “For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays.” I had read it before. I even memorized it. But did I understand it? No. Why? No enlightenment. I was a fool pretending to be wise.

Then a brother said to me, “Bro. Hong, there are two types of prayers.” I was shocked. Why were there two types of prayers? He told me that he had been praying both with the spirit and with understanding as stated in 1 Corinthians 14. I could hardly believe it. I quickly asked him to show me where it was. He showed me the verse and read it to me. It was true. There was nothing I could say. I had been a preacher for more than a decade, yet I didn't know there were two kinds of prayers! There are probably many more preachers who do not know

that there are two types of prayers. Isn't that awful? It is not that they are unwilling to know it, but they are not apostles. Without this ministry, they cannot reveal the mystery. And since they cannot reveal it, they ought to humbly receive it. But many of them are not so humble. When others bring it out, they disapprove of it. They know they are wrong, yet they do not accept defeat gracefully. They remain stubborn.

I was the same. I couldn't deny that there were two kinds of prayers, but I tried to argue about what praying with the spirit was. That brother said that praying with the spirit was praying in tongues. I said, "Nonsense! You have no knowledge of the Bible at all! This verse is trying to tell us to retreat into our spirit. (As a matter of fact, I myself did not know where the spirit was.) And we should completely let our soul be subject to the spirit. Praying from the spirit is praying with the spirit. How is praying in tongues praying with the spirit? Are you saying that we who do not speak in tongues cannot pray with the spirit? When we prayed in the past were we not praying with the spirit? That would mean they were carnal prayers. Do you dare to say that those were not prayers with the spirit, but carnal prayers?"

I was quite rude. Hearing my words, that brother did not want to continue, as if he had lost the argument. Brothers and sisters, he might have lost the argument to me, but I lost to him concerning the truth. Men are proud, and always try to save face. Inside, they have collapsed, but outside they still proudly ride on high horses. There is a Taiwanese saying that goes, "A dead duck's beak is still hard." Men are just as hard. How pitiful!

I was not easily convinced about Sis. Kong. I felt that it was good that Sis. Kong was faithful to God according to His choice on her. But I was chosen too. I was also faithful to Him in my own position. Why did I have to listen to her and be associated with her? Besides, my ministry was no less important than hers. So I kept thinking of ways to overthrow Sis. Kong's preaching that *Blood, Water and Holy Spirit* was the complete truth. I was not convinced that these three things were complete. I thought to myself: "The Bible is such a big book, and *Blood, Water and Holy Spirit* is such a small part of it. How could it be

complete?” So, I diligently searched the Bible with what I received from the Christian Assembly and from Sparks. As long as I could find just one more thing, I could overthrow what Sis. Kong preached.

And finally, I found one—fire! Blood, Water, Holy Spirit and fire. I thought that if I could add something to Sis. Kong’s complete truth, I would not have to listen to her anymore. However, 1 John 5:8 says, “And there are three that bear witness on earth: the Spirit, the water and the blood; and these three are one.” The Bible clearly says that there are only three witnesses of God which He testified of His Son: the blood, the water, and the Spirit. It does not say that there are four that bear witness: the blood, the water, the Spirit and the fire. God said there were three. But I insisted that there were four. Was I greater than God? The Bible is the word of God. Nothing can be added to or taken away from it. If any man adds to the Bible, God will add to him the plagues that are written in it. So I did not dare to add anything to blood, water, and Holy Spirit.

I became convinced that *Sis. Kong was an apostle set up by God, for God had revealed to her the truth and mystery of building the church.* Whether or not a person is God’s chosen apostle depends on whether he can preach the holy truth to its fullness, and whether he can lead men to abide by the law for building the temple. If he can only preach in part, then he is not an apostle. There are many people who claim to be apostles but are not, because what they preach is not complete, nor pure. Therefore, they have no way of bringing the children of God into perfection.

Many people, especially the preachers from the Christian Assembly, do not receive the Spirit baptism. Instead, they oppose it. But they reject it in a way people can accept. They say, “We do not object to people receiving the Spirit baptism, or speaking in tongues, but we also will not force them. We give them the freedom to choose.” These are unfaithful workers. This proves that they are not apostles.

Paul was an apostle raised up by God. His attitude was not like theirs. He was concerned about whether God’s children had received the truth fully. If someone had not, he would urge him to (see Acts 19). He wanted men to be built on a foundation that is complete. Paul

was a faithful servant. But those false prophets and teachers, and those who preach for their own belly, give people the freedom to choose. They don't even understand it themselves and are not humble enough to admit it. They preach an incomplete doctrine and are not afraid of God's judgment. Jeremiah 23:29–32 says, “ ‘Is not My word like a fire?’ says the LORD, ‘and like a hammer that breaks the rock in pieces? Therefore behold, I am against the prophets,’ says the LORD, ‘who steal My words everyone from his neighbor. Behold, I am against the prophets,’ says the LORD, ‘who use their tongues and say, “He says.” Behold, I am against those who prophesy false dreams,’ says the LORD, ‘and tell them, and cause My people to err by their lies and by their recklessness. Yet I did not send them or command them; therefore they shall not profit this people at all,’ says the LORD.” Why was God against these prophets? Because they were not faithful in their ministries. They had fallen from grace.

Today, there are also many so-called servants and maidservants of God. They do not preach by the revelation of God nor from their life experiences. They only preach what they were taught by men in theological colleges. Their doctrines come from mental analysis and are obtained from books. They do not profit the children of God at all. Therefore, God is against them. Woe to the false prophets! They are fallen prophets who have left God. They are prophets who live in darkness and follow their own will.

You false prophets, woe betide you! God is against you! Repent quickly! You can't just do what you like. You should humble yourselves since you do not have the entrustment from God. You can't go on being stubborn. You have led God's children the wrong way, and you have all departed from the will of God. You must repent! If anyone thinks he is an apostle and above Sis. Kong, let him bring out the will of God on a higher level than she did.

A brother once said to me, “Bro. Hong, you still refuse to be like-minded with Sis. Kong. You keep saying that you are holding fast to the truth, or whatever it is. If God has really entrusted you with the truth, then it is your duty to preach this fresher, brighter, livelier, higher

and more thorough truth. But what you preach are the old, stale doctrines of the Christian Assembly and what you learned from Sparks. Every day, you warm up old leftovers to eat. You are presenting the stale manna which gives off a foul smell. This kind of manna cannot profit the children of God. So if you have God's commission, you should bring out what you have received from God. If you can't, then you should humble yourself. If you don't change, you are not holding fast the truth, but to your own opinion." I started to feel that this is indeed a very solemn matter.

Many people know clearly that God raised up Sis. Kong. But because they want to save their reputation, they go on preaching their incomplete doctrines, doctrines they have copied from someone else. This is speaking falsely in the name of the LORD, and God will be against them.

The Truth of Building the Church Is Revealed to the Apostles

The ministry of Sis. Kong is different from that of other vessels. We can see this comparison from the examples in the Old Testament. Acts 7:44–47 reads, "Our fathers had the tabernacle of witness in the wilderness, as He appointed, instructing Moses to make it according to the pattern that he had seen, which our fathers, having received it in turn, also brought with Joshua into the land possessed by the Gentiles, whom God drove out before the face of our fathers until the days of David, who found favor before God and asked to find a dwelling for the God of Jacob. But Solomon built Him a house."

Four people are mentioned here: Moses, Joshua, David and Solomon. And these four are in two groups: Moses and Joshua in one group, and David and Solomon in the other. We can say that Moses and Joshua were one person with the same mission and entrustment, and David and Solomon were another person. The tabernacle in the wilderness was made according to the pattern seen by Moses. And the temple of Jerusalem was built according to the pattern David received from God.

The time between Moses-Joshua and David-Solomon was the long period of the Judges. We can say that the era of Judges was the darkest, most corrupt period in the Old Testament. But God had mercy on His people. He raised up many judges to deliver them from famine and from the oppression of their enemies. Each judge raised up and used by God was strong and courageous. They all fought and were victorious in battle. Whatever they did was remembered by God.

However, we must know that the period of the Judges was not after God's heart. It was a transitional period. Then God found David, a man after His heart, who set his mind to build a house for the LORD. Later God built the temple through Solomon. *The tabernacle of Moses and the temple of David both signify the New Testament Church in the New Testament era. Building the glorious New Testament Church is God's most earnest will today.*

Though the judges were brave in battle and led God's people to victory, delivering them from the oppression of their enemies, they did not have Moses' revelation of the tabernacle, nor David's revelation of the temple. So they had no way to preach forth God's highest will—the law of building the church. It is not that they were unwilling, but God did not give them this ministry: He did not give them the blueprint for building the temple. So they had no way to lead God's people to be built into the body. They could only serve according to the small entrustment they received. Whenever one of the judges was raised up, the people of God were revived. And when there were no judges, the people became desolate and weak again.

This cycle went on until God raised up David to build the kingdom of David. David executed God's authority, and led His people to be built into the body so that His glory, fullness and power were greatly manifested. And after Solomon completed the temple, the glory, fullness and power of God reached the climax. The wisdom of Solomon was the first and last of its kind. All this symbolized what was to come in the New Testament era through the New Testament Church.

We have just mentioned that after the time of the apostles Peter and Paul, and before the time of Sis. Kong, God also raised up many

vessels and used them. The difference between Sis. Kong and these vessels is the same as the difference between David and the judges. The long period between the time of Peter and Paul and the time of Sis. Kong was a period of weakness and desolation for Christians. It was like the period of the Judges between the time of Moses—Joshua and the time of David. In the days of Peter and Paul (in the beginning of the New Testament era), the witness of the church was strong and powerful, and the testimony of unity was abundant and glorious. But after the apostles passed away, the children of God degenerated and became desolate. They were just like the Israelites who degenerated and became desolate after Joshua passed away. They were still desolate during the time of Roman Catholicism, when the church fell into her darkest period. During that time the entire foundation of the church of Jesus Christ was destroyed.

But God was merciful to His children; He raised up vessels who loved the Lord during this long weary period. They included Martin Luther, Osphan, Madam Cain, Muller, Wesley, Dr. Sung, Austin Sparks, Watchman Nee... These vessels were used by God to lead His children when they needed it. We do not deny the work they did. But they were like the judges, not like Moses, David or the apostles. They did not have the blueprint for building the tabernacle or the temple, so they could not bring out the law for building the church. It was not until Sis. Kong was raised up that the law of building the church was revealed. Then the testimony of unity reappeared. Therefore, Sis. Kong was the chief apostle and the vessel of the era God used to rebuild the temple.

Building the church is made possible through entrustment and ministry. Even if a vessel is willing to bring out the law of building the church, he can't unless he has entrustment from God. If he is not an apostle, he will not gain revelations from God, no matter how clever he is or how hard he tries.

Many people, especially those from the Christian Assembly, used to pay great attention to the testimony of the body. They would always say that since the church is the body of Christ, she must exhibit the traits of a body and strive for unity. They would say that the church is

one, and united, that there should only be one local church in one area, and that the church should not be divided into sects and denominations.

I was told that Bro. Watchman Nee was very intelligent. He only had to glance through a book, and he would understand it. With such an intelligent mind, he strove hard to read the Bible. He even studied the Greek version. Later, he wrote a book entitled *Church Affairs*. I had just changed from the Presbyterian Church to the Christian Assembly. I treasured the book the first time I read it. After going through it, I thought I understood everything there was to know about church affairs and had a way to serve God. Then Witness Lee gave a spiritual training course. He said that the church has three sides: spiritual, structural and historical. Knowing about these three, I felt that I had a good knowledge of the church. I thought I knew all there was to know.

So when Sis. Kong came to Taiwan, I was full of contempt. I called Sis. Kong an amateur raised up by God. I thought, "You may preach some of the gospel, and tell people to be filled with the Holy Spirit, but concerning building the church, you are still way behind. You may know more about the filling of the Holy Spirit, but concerning building the church, you need to learn from me." Actually, I was the amateur. I had only a theoretical understanding of building the church. I had no realistic way to reach unity.

Brother Sparks of England also studied laboriously about the building of the church. He also knew that it was wrong for God's children to be divided into sects and denominations; that it was not after God's heart and could not bring about a victorious testimony. He thought of bringing out this truth and telling God's children to build up the testimony of unity. He had this desire, but not the ministry, for he was not an apostle. The keys of the kingdom of heaven were in Peter's (the apostle's) hands. And just as you cannot unlock a door without the keys, you have no way to unlock the mystery for building the church without the apostles. No matter how hard you may try, there will still be no way. The keys on earth can be duplicated, but there is no place to copy the keys of the kingdom of heaven. You have to go to the Lord Jesus Christ. But the Lord says that He only gives the keys to the apostles.

So only by coming to the apostles can one obtain the revelation of the kingdom of heaven.

The keys to the kingdom of heaven have been handed to the apostles. That's final. If the apostles do not come, we will have no way at all, and we will know nothing at all. We once rented a house in Taiwan. We asked the landlord if we could make some renovations, and he agreed. The carpenters came, but they did no work. So I said to them, "It's getting late. Why don't you get started?" They replied, "No way. The master builder is not here yet." I thought these guys were really lazy. They had the wood and the nails. What was stopping them? Then they said, "The blueprint is with the master builder. Without the master builder, we have no idea where to begin." Brothers and sisters, this is the importance of the apostle's ministry. If one is not an apostle, he will not have the law of building the church. If someone claims to be an apostle, but is not able to bring out the law for building the temple, he is not an apostle. If he does not humbly listen to the apostles' teachings, he will suffer loss, and all his works will be judged and demolished by God.

Let us read Ezekiel 13:10–16: "Because, indeed, because they have seduced My people, saying, 'Peace!' when there is no peace—and one builds a boundary wall, and they plaster it with untempered mortar—say to those who plaster it with untempered mortar, that it will fall. There will be flooding rain, and you, O great hailstones, shall fall; and a stormy wind shall tear it down. Surely, when the wall has fallen, will it not be said to you, 'Where is the mortar which you plastered it?' Therefore thus says the LORD God: I will cause a stormy wind to break forth in My fury; and there shall be a flooding rain in My anger, and great hailstones in fury to consume it. So I will break down the wall you have *plastered with untempered mortar*, and bring it down to the ground, so that its foundation will be uncovered; it will fall, and you shall be consumed in the midst of it. Then you shall know that I am the LORD. Thus will I accomplish My wrath on the wall and on those who have plastered it with untempered mortar; and I will say to you, 'The wall is no more, nor those who plastered it, that is, the prophets of Israel who prophesy

concerning Jerusalem, and who see visions of peace for her when there is no peace,' says the LORD God." Here we are told that some people had plastered the wall with untempered mortar.

What does plastering the wall with untempered mortar mean? It is building with an incomplete and impure doctrine—a distorted and tainted truth. God says that this wall will fall, and those who plaster with untempered mortar will be consumed in the midst of it. Those who plastered the wall were the prophets of Israel, and the wall was the people of Israel. There are many so-called servants of God today who preach an incomplete and impure truth filled with human will, heresy and lies. They cannot establish the people of God. Therefore, their work will be smitten and judged by God. God will surely raise up circumstances to break down their work of lies. God says that those who preach a false, incomplete and impure truth, and those who listen to them, will come to the same end. Therefore, not only must those who preach be careful, but those who hear them as well. Don't simply let anyone plaster you with untempered mortar.

God has raised up His apostles and prophets in the last days to bring forth His highest will. So we need to discern the truth from falsehood and find out where God's anointed one is. He who cannot bring out the law of building the temple is not an apostle. Who, apart from the apostles in the early days, could bring out the truth on apostleship and the building of the church like Sis. Kong? Who discovered the mystery of this truth? Many people said that the Christian Assembly had this truth long ago. I also used to think so. The Christian Assembly has said before that the church is built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets. But they do not understand the mystery of this truth. Their idea of apostles is different from what God has entrusted us to preach today. To us, *apostleship is the only spiritual ministry that can build up the church. The body cannot be built up without apostles. The church must give herself to the Lord and to the apostles.* If the church does not respect the apostles and obey their teachings, she will not attain unity. This is what God wants us to preach.

The Christian Assembly also preaches about apostles, but does not

tell people to obey the apostles' teaching. They only tell people to obey the teaching of the anointing. When they hear about obeying apostles' teachings, they become irritated and say, "You're exalting men. You tell people not to listen to God, but to the apostles' teachings." This shows that they do not understand the ministry of an apostle. The apostleship they speak of is not from revelation, but from analysis. So they do not understand the mystery of the truth.

God raised up Sis. Kong Duen Yee to expound the mystery of the truth. Do you say Amen? Will you obey? Even if you do not want to, you have to, because this is God's work. At first, I also found it hard to obey. But obedience is a blessing, and disobedience is loss. I am a man of low estate. But by His grace and mercy I finally obeyed His leading. So I gave myself to the apostles whom He has chosen and obeyed the apostles' teachings. Then, God also made me understand this mystery. What He had revealed to Sis. Kong, He has also made known to me. Now I can bear this witness before God's children. It is all by His grace.

Dear brothers and sisters, I repeat: Whether or not one is an apostle depends on whether the mystery of building the church has been revealed to him, and whether he can bring out the law for building the church. May the Lord be gracious to us and plant these words in us. May He grant us a God-fearing heart so we won't take these words lightly. God will not blame you if you have never heard these words before. Now that you have heard them, it proves that God is gracious to you. This is an opportunity for you to obtain mercy and grace. If you humbly obey the truth, blessings will come to you. But if you continue being stubborn and refuse to put away your own ideas, you will suffer loss. May the Lord be gracious to us and let us obey His commandments together. Depart from the denominations and return to the New Testament Church. Let's observe the apostles' teachings, and give ourselves to them to advance in one accord. Let us sing the hymn, "A New Thing."

Signs of an Apostle (3)

(April 25, 1968—Message of the Lord's Servant Bro. Hong during the Convention at the Church of Hong Kong)

Apostles Lead the Way to Church Unity

At a special meeting in Tainan, on July 21, 1966, the New Testament Church preached the truth on Apostleship—the ministry of building the church. This truth had been buried for more than a thousand years, but it is now made known to this generation. During the meeting, the New Testament Church proclaimed that Sis. Kong Duen Yee was the apostle raised up by God in this generation. Since then, we have been constantly defending this truth.

There are two types of people who oppose this truth. The first type doesn't understand it. They don't know that the apostles are needed to build the church. They think that the apostles are just one of the many ministries in the church. The second type recognizes the importance of apostleship, but cannot agree that Sis. Kong is the apostle raised up by God today. They don't want to submit to Sis. Kong's leading. They think that the New Testament Church preaches a false gospel and exalts men.

Brothers and sisters, we are introducing God's anointed one to God's children. This is not exalting man. And since we are clear about what we have seen, we preach with confidence. We want God's children to be clear about this truth. Only then can they know the way. What God's children need is a practical way, not some empty theories. The denominations have many doctrines and teachings, but they don't have a way to put them into practice. All God's children know that the church must be united. They know that it is not God's will for them to be divided. And they all hope that the testimony of unity will appear. But who is able to show them a clear way? Only the apostle chosen by God. So *another sign of an apostle is that he shows God's children a clear way to*

attain unity.

The “Blood, Water and Holy Spirit” and “Apostleship” preached by the New Testament Church are not only true, but also practical. This is like the gospel preached by Paul—clear and absolute. It comes from revelation and life experience. Paul said, “For if he who comes preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or if you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted, you may well put up with it” (2 Cor. 11:4). Was Paul an extremist? Was he conceited? Was he too obstinate? No. This was Paul’s steadfastness to the truth.

As we preach the full gospel today, we also point out that others do not preach the complete truth. As we preach that the Holy Spirit rebuilds the New Testament Church, we also proclaim that God wants to demolish denominations. Like Paul, we are being steadfast to the truth. People think one should never be too demanding on others: don’t ever mention their wrongs, just tell them their good points. But that’s a misconception. Brothers and sisters, we never dare do things according to our own feelings—speaking good or evil as we please. We will speak against and rebuke what God wants us to speak against and rebuke. We would rather please God than please men. To us, Yes is yes, and No is no. What is wrong must be wrong. We cannot be vague and unsure. We have to be steadfast to the truth.

Paul said that if anyone preached another Christ, whom he had not preached, the believers might well put up with it. Paul didn’t say these words out of pride—he was not boasting of himself. Paul was a servant chosen by God. He was sure that what he preached was revealed to him by God. Therefore, he had to be faithful in assuming his ministry. At the introduction of each of his epistles, Paul stated that he was an apostle. He introduced himself before he introduced Christ! Was he being too proud? No. Paul was not boasting of himself. He was respecting the ministry given to him by God—he dared not despise such an entrustment. Paul was an apostle by the will of God to care for all the churches. This is a ministry which leads God’s children to unity. If he refused to admit that he was an apostle, God’s children would have

never known it. Then they would not come under his leading and achieve the testimony of unity. So this is not being humble, but unfaithful. This is showing disrespect for the ministry given by God.

When I first accepted the Lord, I was too humble. Although I was born again, if anyone asked me if I was saved, I would say, “I dare not say I am.” I thought I would be acting too proud to say I was saved. Brothers and sisters, do you think this was being humble or foolish? The Bible says clearly that he who believes and is baptized will be saved. As long as you believe and are baptized, you will be saved. This is something definite. But why didn’t I admit it? The Bible also said that once you believe in Christ, you become a child of God. If we say, “I am a child of God,” is this being proud? No. This is not being proud, but being sure of God’s grace. Being afraid to admit that you are one of God’s children is not being humble; it is being ashamed of God’s salvation. Men’s concepts are extreme, and they often cause us to misunderstand God’s will.

Brothers and sisters, we must be sure of the Jesus Christ we preach. We cannot be vague. The truth we preach is not an empty theory, but a realistic way. When we preach on apostleship and its importance, we also tell people that Sis. Kong is the apostle raised up by God in this generation; we also guide others to submit to the apostles. We are not being proud or promoting a person, but we are imitating Paul in being steadfast to the truth and respecting the apostle’s ministry. We tell people about the apostle chosen by God so that they may submit to her. We show them the way to unity. Let’s see the example John the Baptist left for us.

John 1:29 tells us: “John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, ‘Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!’” And verses 35–37 say, “Again, the next day, John stood with two of his disciples. And looking at Jesus as He walked, he said, ‘Behold the Lamb of God!’ The two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus.” Brothers and sisters, this was how John the Baptist testified for the Lord Jesus. On the first day He only said, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” But he did not make it clear

who this Lamb of God was. If he stopped there, the Jews would have had no way to do God's will. The Jews knew that the Lamb of God would take away the sins of the world. But who was the Lamb of God? How could they follow Him if they were not sure? On the next day, John made it more clear. This time, *looking at Jesus as He walked, he said, "Behold the Lamb of God!"* John testified clearly, indicating that Jesus was the Lamb of God. Now the Jews had a way.

John's ministry was to open a way for Christ and introduce Him to all men. If he didn't point Christ out clearly, the Jews would not know Him or find the way. Then he would have failed in his duty. With confidence, he had to make it clear who Christ was. If John dared not point out who Christ was and tried to please men by saying, "I'm not so sure. You're free to believe what you want. Go back and seek on your own," then he would have lost the whole significance of his mission on earth—to prepare the way for the Lord Jesus, and to give people a way.

John 1:32–34 says, "And John bore witness, saying, 'I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and He remained upon Him. I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, "Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit." And I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God.'" John said that he had seen and testified. John the Baptist was very sure about what he saw. He was anxious to testify for the Lord Jesus. If you testify without having seen Him, you would be sinning against God. But if you have seen Him, and fail to testify, you will also fall short of God. Today, many renowned preachers boast of their experience. They say, "Oh, I was baptized with the Holy Spirit and spoke in tongues many years ago. Sis. Kong is only preaching it now? So what? She's too late!" These people have condemned themselves. Since they knew it long ago, why haven't they testified to it? Others may say, "Sis. Kong is not the only one who overcame, just like Elijah was not the only one who overcame Baal. There were 7,000 during Elijah's time who did not bow to Baal." However, Ahab's forces were evil in Elijah's time, but only Elijah

stood up to testify for the LORD. Why didn't these 7,000 imitate Elijah to arise and testify? Why did they hide in caves?

God has raised up Sis. Kong as an apostle and entrusted her with the mission to build the church. Therefore, we have to testify for her. We will testify regardless of whether people believe it or not. If people do not like it, we still have to preach. Woe to us if we do not testify! Not many people will welcome what we preach. We may even make enemies, just as Paul became an enemy of the churches in Galatia after preaching to them. We must testify, for only then will God's children have a clear and practical way to follow God. If people reject what we preach, we will pray for them in tears. We believe that God's will shall be done.

Someone had also prayed and wept for me, such a lowly person. That is why I can testify for God here today. Perhaps some of you had heard of a Bro. Hong in Taiwan. Everyone thought he was hopeless, because this Bro. Hong was very arrogant and stubborn, and was deeply opinionated. His spiritual concepts were very conventional, and his thoughts and intents primitive. But because someone wept for me, God let me accept the truth. The words I have preached these few days seem to be simple. I said that we must respect the apostles raised up by God and abide by their teachings in order to bring about the testimony of unity—the church. And if a Christian wants to be built into the body, he has to respect the ministry of the apostles and abide by their teachings. These words can be said in less than a minute. However, it took more than a decade of trials for me to understand this truth.

Let me speak foolishly for a moment: I am not a fool—I would never blindly follow a woman. Many people thought I had some hidden reasons for following Sis. Kong. But let me ask you: What is so desirable about walking the way of the New Testament Church? On this path, you have to offer yourself unceasingly. If you think you can gain anything, come and try it yourself. What is there to be gained here besides fasting and praying or vigil prayer? And our fasting and praying means three days without food and drink! Moreover, we do it often. We fast and pray for God's will, for His sacred work and for the souls

of this world. We even pray throughout the night while fasting. If I had any ulterior motives, I would have left the New Testament Church long ago. You can try to get something out of being in the New Testament Church if you want to, but you will probably grow old and die before you do.

There are too many doctrines out there, and people are becoming tired of them. What God's children need is a practical way. Thanks be to the Lord. For, what we preach is from our life. *So our messages are sure. They lead God's children onto the right track.* None of us have come here to hear more doctrines, but to seek a sure way. The testimony I bear here is sure. *We are not only here to tell you that the church is built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, but also to tell you exactly who the chief apostle raised up by God is.*

People cannot believe the one sent by God because they have their own opinions and standards and tend to stick to them. Before Christ came, the chief priests, the scribes, the Pharisees and even the Samaritan woman were all waiting for the Messiah. But when the Lord Jesus finally did come, they did not believe in Him. Were they really waiting for the Messiah? What went wrong? The problem was that the Messiah the Jews had imagined would come did not match the One who came. So when they saw Him, they stumbled. Men's standards and opinions are terrible; they can dim men's eyesight. May God remove the scales from our eyes and make us see the one sent by God, along with today's acts of the Holy Spirit. Then we will be able to go forward. If we do not recognize the leader God has raised up for us today, we will not be able to please God's heart, nor serve Him. *This is God's principle: God always works through the one He anoints—the vessel of the era He chooses.*

God's grace does not come directly to the world. It must first go through the vessel He has chosen. When God's grace was to come to Cornelius' house, it had to first go through Peter. It could not bypass Peter. Although God sent an angel to speak to Cornelius directly, God's angel only told Cornelius to send for Peter and listen to Peter. Does this make a man greater than God or His angels? No. God wants to exalt and honor men so that men may have a share in His sacred work.

This is the grace and mercy of God.

God gave the keys of the kingdom of heaven to Peter. God wanted to use Peter to open the doors of heaven. If Peter did not open them, then no one would be able to enter. God would not give the keys to Peter and then open the doors Himself. If so, He would have proved Himself unfaithful. He makes covenants with men and keeps them, because He cannot go against Himself. Therefore, if Cornelius wanted to find grace, he had to first find Peter. He could not get it directly from God. It was not that God would not listen to his prayers, but God wanted Cornelius to understand the way He worked. For God had destined to bless Cornelius' family through the apostle (Peter) He had chosen. So Cornelius could not receive God's blessing without Peter.

This does not mean that Peter was a great man; it was all God's choice and mercy. If Peter did not use the keys that were given to him, he would have failed to fulfill his duty. He would have fallen short of God and men. But we thank the Lord. After denying the Lord three times, and going fishing by the Sea of Tiberias, Peter was molded by God and no longer dared to trust in himself. He no longer even evaluated himself. Later, he stood up by the power of the Holy Spirit and represented all the servants of God and His kingdom to speak to God's people. He did this all by the grace of God.

Yesterday we talked about the signs of an apostle. We said that the apostles chosen by God have God's entrustment. By revelation, God makes known to them the mystery, so they can present the word of God in its fullness. The apostles also bring out the law of building the church. God's glory filled the tabernacle in the Old Testament because the tabernacle was built according to the pattern Moses brought from the mountain. But the church is not a physical building. Nor is it just a group of people worshipping together. The church is also not a congregation with a pastor and a Christian audience. So exactly what is the church?

The church is a congregation built upon the foundation of apostles and prophets. It is built according to the law of building the church revealed to the apostles. Therefore, not just anyone can build the church—

only the apostles. If someone is an apostle, he will bring out the law of building the church (the will of God) to God's people. If he cannot, then he is not an apostle.

Apostles are not self-ordained. They must have God's commission and revelation of the era. In these last days, *the Lord's maidservant Sis. Kong has preached the full truth of Blood, Water and Holy Spirit. She has presented to us God's will for this era and the law for building the temple. She is, without a doubt, the spiritual master builder set up by God.* Therefore, we have to submit to her leading and follow her teachings. For this is the way for God's children to achieve unity today.

The Teachings of the Anointing and the Teachings of the Apostles

When I was in the Christian Assembly, I only heard of the teachings of the anointing, but not the teachings of the apostles. I thought that the anointing teaches us in all things, and that all things included every matter, big or small. However, the anointing I received did not teach me the full gospel, because I did not have such a high ministry. God has His wonderful arrangement for all the members in His house. *He lets each person understand His will according to his individual ministry. The anointing will only teach you as much as you need to know, according to your part in the body.* You will not be told things you don't need to know. If you were told everything, and knew everything, then you would become difficult to coordinate with.

There was a brother in Taiwan who believed that the anointing would teach him everything. So he wanted to show off. One day his younger brother wrote him: "Dear brother, your sister-in-law is three months pregnant." When he read this, he prayed, "O Lord, will my sister-in-law have a boy or a girl? Please tell me. If You tell me, then I will testify to my brother and say, 'My God is true and living. He is in me and what I say is true. You have to listen to me.'" His intentions were good, but he did not understand that the anointing will only teach a person what

he needs to know. So the devil Satan gave him a false revelation after he prayed. He felt all hot inside; he just had to speak! So he wrote to his brother: “Dear brother, I have received your letter. My God has told me that my sister-in-law will give birth to a girl. You must name her...”

Seven months after the letter was sent, he was trembling with anxiety. He could not rest. He prayed continuously, saying, “Lord, you have to listen to my prayer. Don’t let me be ashamed!” Finally, his sister-in-law gave birth. His younger brother wrote to him: “Dear brother, thank and praise the Lord. Your sister-in-law has safely delivered.” She has delivered? Was it a boy or a girl? He was bathed in cold sweat. His brother had a good sense of humor. He continued, “Brother, what God gave us exceeded what we hoped and asked for. Your sister-in-law has given birth to a baby boy.” He cried, “A boy? O Lord, how could it be a boy? Why didn’t You listen to my prayer? What shall I do now? How can I testify to my brother?”

Brothers and sisters, I mention this story to let everyone know that the anointing teaches everyone according to the part he plays in the church. God will tell you everything you need to know within the limits of your ministry. God will not tell you things beyond your position, otherwise people will collect information and spread gossip everywhere. That would not be edifying at all. Some people love to spread news around. Before they hear the end of the story, there they go, passing it on. They do not know when is the right time to speak. They talk about things they know they should not. What should not be spoken in public, they discuss at length. They have no discretion at all.

The Lord Jesus always acted with discretion. When He mentioned the Samaritan woman, her name was not even stated. But Nathanael’s name was recorded. So people don’t have to know everything. Don’t ever be too curious or think that you have the teaching of the anointing and can know everything. If you know so much, then you must be an apostle! We have the teaching of the anointing, and so do the apostles. However the teaching of the anointing in the apostles enables them to understand the mysteries of the church. If you are not an apostle, the

anointing in you will not teach you as much. God uses the apostles to expound the mystery of the building of the church. This is the teaching of the apostles. Therefore all saints must abide by the teachings of the apostles and be built together into the church.

Apostles Equip the Saints to Build Christ's Body

Ephesians 4:11–13 says, “And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.” *The apostles bring out the mystery of building the church, that all the saints may come to the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.* A true apostle must have this desire and burden: To bring all saints to the unity of the faith. For if the church does not have the same faith, then she will not reach the full stature of Christ.

I used to listen to Sparks' teachings. He pointed out that throughout its more than one thousand-year history, Christianity has always been in a state of complete chaos. So it is impossible for Christians to come to the unity of the faith. He said, “Everyone has his own opinions, enlightenment and beliefs. Everyone says that he conforms to God's will most. Christians also feel that revelation and enlightenment are relative, not absolute. Therefore, Christians can only serve God according to their individual understanding and knowledge. We cannot expect them all to have the same recognition.” Sparks held such an opinion because he did not understand the ministry of the apostles.

The Bible verses we just read clearly show us that God gives ministries of apostles, prophets... These ministries are to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. The Bible is the word of God. It clearly states that God will cause all people to come to the unity of the faith (the truth). But how shall we reach the unity of the faith? We must first receive the truth preached by the

apostles. This is because God entrusts the apostles and prophets with the responsibility of delivering His truth. The church is built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets. God raised them up so that all saints may be equipped by them, and come to the unity of the faith.

It is definitely possible for all saints to come to the unity of the faith. God has predestined it, and shall accomplish it. He will bear the responsibilities of the apostles and prophets. When the time comes, this great work of unity shall be done. Therefore, *another sign of an apostle is preaching the truth so God's children may come to the unity of the faith, and build up the body of Christ.*

I used to imitate others and preach on “The Abundant Body of Christ.” Yet, at the same time, I said that it was impossible for all saints to attain the unity of the faith. I have contradicted myself! I spoke according to man’s viewpoint, and not by faith. You may think it is impossible, but does God? Do you think God is like men? In the past, people thought it was impossible for the captives to return from Babylon. But God wanted them to return. And when the time came, they did. Nothing is impossible to Him. If God’s children believe Him with a simple heart, they will surely see His glory.

Why are there so many denominations and chapels? Why are the believers there unable to progress? Why are they still like infants after believing in the Lord for 20 to 30 years? It is all because they have no apostles to tell them the truth on Christ’s mysteries. Without apostles, it is impossible for them to reach the unity of the faith or come to the knowledge of the Son of God, and grow up to a perfect man. They are not the body of Christ—they cannot even begin to grow into the full stature of Christ.

On the other hand, the New Testament Church is Christ’s body built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets. So everything she has is in one body: her serving, her knowledge of Christ, her growth before the Lord... Therefore, God set up apostles and prophets to deliver His word so that all Christians may come to know about the faith and abide by His will as one body.

What the denominations preach is incomplete—it is a different gos-

pel. Not even in the Assembly of God (a pentecostal group) does every member receive the Holy Spirit. The Assembly of God do not require their members to receive it, but are given the freedom to choose. But the apostles are not like that: they don't give people options when they preach the truth. In the church built by the apostles, everyone must receive the full truth. If you do not receive it completely, then you are not completely built into the body of Christ. When apostles assumed their ministry, they not only asked if someone had believed in the Lord, they also asked if they had received the Holy Spirit. They lead people to receive the truth completely so that the believers might be united in the truth. These were true apostles. They always made sure that all Christians might be united in the truth, and be built into the body of Christ. These are the signs of an apostle.

The Apostles' Evil-Hating Spirit

The apostles will lead all saints to attain the unity of the faith. They will not let anyone ruin this testimony of unity or break up the body of Christ. They will deal with every division, even hidden motives within men's heart. When Paul saw contentions in the church at Corinth, he immediately dealt with it. For the spirit of strife and division is the spirit of the denominations and of destruction. The apostles hate this spirit of dividing the church. From God's point of view, not a single denomination is good—they are all to be destroyed. But many Christians have no feelings about this at all.

If anyone commits physical adultery, he will be condemned by every Christian. And if a person loves the world and commits adultery in his soul, he will also be condemned. But the denominations defile the spirit of God's children and hinder them from coming to the unity of the faith. This is spiritual adultery; a spiritual defilement. However, God's children have no feelings about this. They even praise the denominations, saying, "Thank the Lord! They have built another chapel. The gospel is furthered! Thank the Lord!" They praise the spiritual harlot! So the Presbyterians will not criticize the Baptists; the Lutherans will

not criticize the Methodists; the Christian Assembly will not say anything about the True Jesus Church; nor will the Assembly of God criticize the others. You go your way, and I'll go mine. We all serve the Lord. We are all the same. Of course they are all the same. All harlots are the same! But the bride is not a harlot. So those without an evil-hating spirit are not apostles. This is another sign of whether someone is an apostle.

In Exodus 32, Aaron made a golden calf. The Israelites worshiped the golden calf fervently. However, what did God say? What did God tell Moses to say? Moses said to Aaron, "What did this people do to you that you have brought so great a sin upon them?" The Israelites thought that they were serving God, but God said it was a great sin. The Israelites did not kill or commit adultery, so what was their great sin? Worshiping the golden calf. What is worshiping the golden calf? A worship not according to God's law, but according to man's ideas. This is the sin of the denominations.

The Bible mentions "the sin of Jeroboam, son of Nebat" in many places. God could not forget his sin. Whenever a king committed this sin, God would mention the name of Jeroboam, son of Nebat. God truly abhorred his sin. Yet if you look at Jeroboam's story, it does not seem that he committed any great sin. He only made two golden calves; one in Bethel, and the other in Dan. He told the Israelites that they did not have to trouble themselves to go all the way to Jerusalem to offer sacrifice. They could worship and offer sacrifices at nearby Bethel or Dan. Another thing he did was to change the feast days. He did not tell God's people not to worship God, or not to offer sacrifices. He only changed some dates and locations. That was all Jeroboam did. On the surface, there didn't seem to be anything evil about it. However, in God's sight, this was a great sin!

Brothers and sisters, can you tell the difference between the worship in Jerusalem and the worship in Dan and Bethel? Can you understand how evil God sees the worship outside Jerusalem? Jerusalem is the place where God wanted His people to worship Him. Altars should not be built for worship outside Jerusalem. Worshiping God outside

Jerusalem is sinning against God. Therefore, as you worship God, it is important to consider where you are worshiping Him. Not all services or offerings to God are good; it depends on where you serve and where you offer. That will determine whether it is done according to God's will.

Today, the Christians in the denominations condemn Jeroboam. They hate the golden calves he made at Dan and Bethel. Yet they do not know that they are committing this same great sin. People who do not understand the will of God will hate us for preaching this truth. God has raised up apostles and has built the glorious New Testament Church. God's children should return to the New Testament Church and serve and worship God here—today's Jerusalem. May the Lord destroy Satan's wiles, open His children's eyes, and wake up their spirits so they may depart from the denominations, obey the apostles' leading, and be united in one faith.

When we preach this way, many people think we are too arrogant. They say, "Is it true that if we do not worship at your New Testament Church, we will not please God? Is it that only your New Testament Church is right and everyone else is wrong?" Brothers and sisters, we do not like to say these things. We also know that people will not be happy to hear it. However, I am a servant of God. My mouth is offered to God. I can't speak what people like to hear. I can only say what God wants me to say. Therefore, we are not arrogant, nor do we condemn others. Nor are we without love. We often weep and pray and fast before God for the brothers and sisters in the denominations. Today, I sincerely tell you God's will. It is not enough just to serve God; you must know where you should serve Him. God hates the great sin Jeroboam committed. He made God's children serve God in places other than where God wanted them to serve. God would never overlook this sin. May the Lord open our eyes to see that God has rebuilt the New Testament Church. He wants His children to come to the unity of the faith and to be built up as the body of Christ. This is God's highest will in these last days.

Give Yourself to the Apostles

*(April 26, 1968—Message of the Lord's Servant Bro. Hong
during the Convention at the Church of Hong Kong)*

Last night we mentioned that God's chosen apostles will have entrustment and revelation from God. They are absolute about what they preach and can give God's children a clear way. Paul's goal was to bring all men to the unity of the faith and to the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, and to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. This is evidence that Paul was an apostle. In a church, all the members grow up together in Christ. It is not a body with some members having profound knowledge while others are ignorant, or some making rapid progress while the rest are stagnant. Since it is the growth of a body, all the members grow up together. You may be wondering how all the brothers and sisters can grow up together. Right? This doesn't make sense to our human mind. But it is normal for all the members of a body to grow up evenly.

In the body, if you understand the spiritual order, you will be able to understand how brothers and sisters grow up together in Christ, and how the body's various functions are manifested. This is a great mystery. It is the law of spiritual life—a law which the human mind cannot comprehend. Yet it can be realized in the Holy Spirit under the leading of the apostles. For God raises apostles to build His church—the testimony of a body. And whoever can unite God's children as a body is an apostle. You may claim to be an apostle, but if you cannot bring all saints to the unity of the faith, nor join and knit them together in Christ, nor cause the growth of the body, then you are not a true apostle.

Great Revival of 1966— the Restoration of the Truth on Apostleship

In 1964, Sis. Kong, the maidservant of God, prophesied: "The great revival of 1966 will begin from the Isle of the East." Many people

wanted to see how this prophecy would be fulfilled. They decided not to argue any longer about whether she was a true or false apostle. They would just wait to see if her prophecy would come true.

Then, on July 21, 1966, a convention was held in Tainan, Taiwan. God, through His ordained apostle, disclosed the truth on apostleship, and revealed three other apostles at the same time. A lot of people could not agree with these three being apostles, even though they were confirmed by God Himself. However, those who loved the Lord with a pure heart accepted it. Without delay, they willingly put aside their prejudices, ways and constructions, and gave themselves first to the Lord and then to the apostles—they merged completely into the main flow of the Holy Spirit. Since then, the truth on apostleship was preached in more than 20 churches in Taiwan. All the co-workers and saints who accepted the leading of the apostles were able to advance in one accord to display the testimony of unity.

At the end of 1966, the apostles of God were moved by the Holy Spirit to hold a full-gospel campaign in Taipei, Taiwan. It fell on the last seven days of the year. We rented the Taipei Sports Stadium which could hold 15,000 people. The lease alone was almost NT\$10,000 per day. Many co-workers and brothers and sisters in Taiwan came to Taipei to fight this spiritual battle hand-in-hand. Wearing their spiritual armor, the gospel team took to the streets, proclaiming the gospel and distributing flyers all over Taipei. We lost count of the number of tracts handed out. Spiritual books, numbering in the tens of thousands, piled up like a mountain. A great amount of money and manpower was spent for this campaign. Many brothers and sisters of the denominations and even some members of the New Testament Church were waiting to see what would happen. We hoped and thought that something great might happen to fulfill Sis. Kong's prophecy on the great revival of 1966. But what was the outcome?

The seven-day gospel campaign was over, and many could not understand why the spacious stadium was never filled with people. Also, not many people came forward to accept the Lord. The lame did not stand up and walk, the blind and the deaf remained as they were before

and very few people cried remorsefully over their sins in the light of God. So those who judged by outward appearance began to doubt, saying, “What kind of revival is this? And what kind of apostles are these?” They concluded that the prophecy on the great revival of 1966 did not come true, and that the gospel campaign was a complete failure.

But God does not look at “success” and “revival” the way man does. People tend to think that revival means closing down cinemas, amusement parks and courthouses, as during the great revival of Wales. During the revival of Wales, the chapels and post offices became the busiest, because everyone was going to church services and writing letters to confess their sins to one another. People think that such a revival was the descent of the kingdom of heaven. But the revival of 1966 was not like the revival of Wales. How could it be called a revival? Until now, many people cannot understand the revival God accomplished in 1966.

The Bible says that John the Baptist came to revive all things. But what did he do? What kind of revival did he bring? On the surface, it seemed that he did not bring about much of a revival at all. Moreover, in the end he was executed. But who would dare deny the biblical claim that John the Baptist brought about revival? John certainly brought about a great revival: to pave the way for the Lord Jesus, and to bring Jesus to God’s people. This was all John the Baptist did. After this mission, he was jailed, and then put to death. Although this was all he did his whole life, the Bible said that he revived all things. Brothers and sisters, do you believe the Bible—God’s viewpoint—or your own concepts and viewpoints? We must view the great revival of 1966 from God’s viewpoint.

God looks at things from an eternal and surpassing point of view. But we are near-sighted, shallow and superficial. We all know about the Israelites’ exodus from Egypt to Canaan. When the Israelites were enslaved and oppressed in Egypt, did God hear their cry? Did God care about their agony? Yes, God heard their cry and cared about their sufferings. So He wanted to set them free and revive them. But God had His own way of reviving His people—a way quite different from the ways of

man.

First of all, He spent 80 years molding Moses. For the last 40 years, He put Moses in the wilderness where no one could see him. God did not do this work on every Israelite, but only on the vessel of revival. When the vessel was ready, God began to revive His work. In the eyes of God, as soon as the spiritual leader was established (as soon as Moses was ready to be sent), His revival work was done. After Moses was molded by God for 80 years, although the people of God were still in Egypt, their exodus from Egypt was already successful. This is how God sees His revival work.

So, *what was the great revival of 1966? God restored the truth on apostleship and revealed His chosen apostle.* This is a tremendous matter. Therefore, to God, the end-time revival work is already done, and it is moving toward success. This end-time great revival is one that leads people not only to repent and to believe in Jesus, but also *to be built up by the apostles into the New Testament Church.*

The revival of Wales merely made people repent and believe in Jesus. But the truth on apostleship was not restored. So the converts could not be built into the church. Since the church's testimony of unity did not appear, the believers could not grow into the measure of the fullness of Christ, nor could they be adorned as a bride for Christ Jesus to receive. They surely could not deal with God's enemies. So the revival of Wales was short-lived. If Christians are not built into the body, they cannot grow. This type of revival will not last long. Every revival since the death of Peter and Paul had the same outcome.

Genuine revival is the restoration of the testimony of the body. God has now built the church through the apostles and has displayed the testimony of unity. God began this end-time great revival in 1966. This is the greatest testimony and the greatest revival.

Today, God is going to make His children put down their own views. He is going to let them know His anointed one, have them submit to His anointed's leading and obey his teachings so that they may all be built into the body.

God's will was made fully known during the three gospel cam-

paigns held in Taiwan. Although only a few thousand people received the truth, the whole of Taiwan was shaken up. All the denominations heard that the Holy Spirit had rebuilt the New Testament Church. The brothers and sisters, and especially the preachers there, were frightened. What is so awesome about the New Testament Church? Does it have a huge membership? No. The New Testament Church is so powerful because she submits to the leading of the apostles, acts as one body and displays the testimony of unity. In this way, the body of Christ is revealed.

Our three gospel campaigns were different from the ones run by denominations. The denominations join hands across the walls. “You’re a Baptist, and I’m a Presbyterian. Since we’re having a gospel campaign together, let’s unite for a while. You send your invitations, and I’ll send mine. And when the campaign is over, take your guests back to your Baptist Church, and I’ll take mine back to my Presbyterian Church. After that, you mind your own business, and I’ll mind mine.” This can best be described as joining hands; it is not being united in Christ.

In these last days, God has restored the truth on apostleship. He has also used the apostles to preach the truth on building the church. All those who have received the truth preached by the apostles are required to first give themselves to the Lord, and then to the apostles to display the testimony of unity. This is unity in Christ. It is not unity by joining hands like the denominations.

Come to the Vessel of the Era (the Chief Apostle)

Brothers and sisters, most of the co-workers of the New Testament Church were “somebodies” when they were in the denominations. Many were talented. Some of them had been preachers for a few decades. Some were good in literary works, and others were formally involved in theological research. But all of them are humble enough to deny themselves. This is certainly done by God. Whoever refuses to stand on the side of the chief apostle will find himself in spiritual darkness.

He will wither and backslide. But whoever stands on the side of the chief apostle will feel the presence of God and be strong in the spirit. I am not preaching heresy, nor am I exalting man. This is the wonderful work of God and a biblical truth.

When the Israelites were making a golden calf, Moses said to them, *“Whoever is on the LORD’s side, let him come to me.”* Why didn’t he say, *“Whoever is on the LORD’s side, let him come to the LORD?”* Why didn’t Moses ask the people to come to God instead of to himself? Was he exalting himself above God? No, not at all. Moses was respecting the ministry given to him by God. Where was God during the time of Moses? He was with Moses. Moses was not God, but *he was God’s spokesman and representative. God spoke and worked through Moses. If you came to Moses, you came to God. Therefore, you had to stand on Moses’ side.* All those who went to Moses were on God’s side and were spiritual; all those who did not go to Moses were not on God’s side and were not spiritual.

Elijah said the same thing Moses said. The people of Israel had departed from the law of God to worship Baal, and God wanted to revive His work. So He commanded Elijah to gather all of Israel at Mount Carmel. And what did Elijah say to the people? He said, *“Come near to me”* (1 King 18:30). Both Elijah and Moses asked the people to come to them. They were not abusing their authority. They understood that since God had given them this entrustment, if the people came to them, God’s work would be done and revival would come.

The hymn we sang tonight, *“This Is the Work of God, That You Believe in Him Whom He Sent,”* clearly expresses God’s will and the way He works. Everyone will say Amen to this Bible verse when it applies to the Lord Jesus. But when this verse is applied to the present-day chief apostle, they don’t believe it. They say that Sis. Kong is more fanatical than Witness Lee, and that the New Testament Church preaches heresies. They say, *“We exalt God, not man; we go to God, not to man; we listen to God, not to man.”* The more they say these things, the more dispirited, hardened and carnally minded they become. They shout their slogan, *“Exalt Christ!”* but they have no idea how God works. So

they don't exalt Christ, just their fists. It is right to exalt Christ, but where can you find Christ? *Christ is with the vessel of the era (the chief apostle) chosen by God.* If you are not united with the vessel of the era, how can you exalt Christ? Can you bypass His anointed vessel to unite with Him? Impossible.

A co-worker in Kaohsiung was not happy about the gospel campaign in Taipei because it did not meet his expectations. So he thought, "I don't have to be so closely knitted with the chief apostle. As long as I don't go against her, everything will be fine. When I go back to Kaohsiung, I will do what I like, because the church is localized. Since the apostle's ministry is not confined to one location, she can bring us some doctrines, but she cannot interfere with our church's administration." This is what he had learned from the Christian Assembly, who say that the elders should administer the church. The Christian Assembly can never build up the church because they do not know the truth on apostleship.

Let us take the army's chain of command as an example: The commander in chief is the one in control of the whole army. Would it be proper for some commanders of the military units to say, "Sir! Give us some money, food and ammunition. That's all we want. But please stay out of our administration." Would this be proper? Isn't this rebellion?

Brothers and sisters, the apostles and the church are closely related to each other. Not only do the apostles provide for the spiritual needs of the church, but they also direct and supervise her administration. Therefore, if the local churches only want spiritual provision (doctrines) from the apostles, but refuse to obey their leading, they will never be able to build up the body.

The Apostles Govern and Supervise the Church

I do not write these things to shame you, but as my beloved children I warn you. For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet you do not have many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through

the gospel. Therefore I urge you, imitate me. For this reason I have sent Timothy to you, who is my beloved and faithful son in the Lord, who will remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach everywhere in every church. Now some are puffed up, as though I were not coming to you. But I will come to you shortly, if the Lord wills, and I will know, not the word of those who are puffed up, but the power. For the kingdom of God is not in word but in power. What do you want? Shall I come to you with a rod, or in love and a spirit of gentleness?

(1 Cor. 4:14–21).

This portion of the Bible tells us that Paul had not only begotten the church in Corinth through the gospel, but had always cared for its spiritual growth. Apostles treat the church as parents would his children. No parent would only feed his children and neglect their other needs. Not only had Paul begotten the church, he also directed and supervised her. And by God's authority, he punished the lawless in the church. Some people think that apostles only need to build the church and not govern her, and that each local church should handle its own affairs. This is wrong. It is correct for each local church to handle its own affairs, but she also has to abide by the apostles' doctrine and accept the leading of the chief apostle. If she refuses to submit to the leading of the chief apostle, she is building a denomination, not the church.

In these last days, God has revived the truth on apostleship. God uses the chief apostle to correct the incomplete doctrines, and to unveil the heavenly revelation. All the churches are to be built up together in this revelation. So the apostles will be strict towards those who disobey. The scriptures say: "It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and such sexual immorality as is not even named among the Gentiles—that a man has his father's wife! And you are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he who has done this deed might be taken away from among you. For I indeed, as absent in body but present in spirit, have already judged, as though I were present, concerning him who has so done this deed. In the name of our Lord

Jesus Christ, when you are gathered together, along with my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus” (1 Cor. 5:1–5). When lawlessness or a sin was committed against the body, Paul judged the offender. How solemn it was! Paul also said, “And the rest I will set in order when I come” (1 Cor. 11:34).

So should apostles interfere in the affairs of the local churches? The Christian Assembly still doesn’t think so. They say: “The apostles may provide for the church’s needs, but they do not have to make any arrangements for the church, because we have many elders who can do that.” However, the things in the church at Corinth were not set in order until Paul went there. So the Christian Assembly’s concept is unscriptural.

Apostles govern the churches. The chief apostle is responsible for the local churches and sends co-workers to care for them. Paul said, “Now if Timothy comes, see that he may be with you without fear; for he does the work of the Lord, as I also do. Therefore let no one despise him. But send him on his journey in peace, that he may come to me; for I am waiting for him with the brethren” (1 Cor. 16:10–11). Paul did not ask, “Corinthians, should I send Timothy to you? What is your opinion? If it’s okay with you, I’ll send him; if not, I won’t insist. Please let me know your decision.” Paul understood the condition of the church at Corinth, so he sent Timothy there. He didn’t have to ask for the Corinthians’ permission. This was how Paul showed his concern for the churches.

Under the leading of Paul, the chief apostle, all the churches obeyed the apostles’ doctrines in one heart, built up the body of Christ and displayed the testimony of unity. But the churches did not grow up overnight. There was much carnality in the church at Corinth. However, no matter how carnal one may be, as long as he is in the flow of the Spirit (follows the chief apostle), he can still advance. One day his carnality will be removed. But if he departs from the flow of the Spirit, he will not go forward. What God has done in Taiwan, Hong Kong, Thailand, Singapore and Malaysia convinces us that the ministry of the

chief apostle is a ministry to build the church. Anyone able to bring all saints to the unity of the faith is an apostle. If he can't, he is not an apostle. Therefore, the great revival of 1966 has come because the apostles have been revealed.

Deny Your Own Way, and Submit to the Apostles' Leading

The Holy Spirit builds the church through the apostles. If you disagree, you will lose God's presence. Before the New Testament Church was established in Tainan, I led a denomination of over 30 members, which later increased to more than 50 members. Everything was going well: we had the speaking and the interpretation of tongues, we prophesied, healed the sick and cast out demons. It appeared to be so fruitful. But since the day the New Testament Church was rebuilt on September 24, 1965, our membership began to dwindle. I thought there might be some problem within my church. But I did not suddenly lose my eloquence, and the brothers and sisters did not all leave at once. It all happened gradually. Why was the sun setting on us? I later found out that since the New Testament Church had been rebuilt, the will of God and the acts of the Holy Spirit were with the New Testament Church, and no longer with us.

Before the New Testament Church was rebuilt, I could serve God on my own. I was like the Jews of the Old Testament. Before the temple was built, the people of God were allowed to make offerings on the high places. But after the temple was built, they had to serve God in the temple, for God no longer accepted their offerings on the high places. This is a solemn matter.

This is how you can test an apostle's ministry: *The more you advance in one accord with the apostles, the higher your spirit will be, the more acute your understanding in spiritual matters will be, and the faster your spiritual life will progress.* But if you refuse to be in one heart with the apostles, you will not find the way to serve God.

In Taiwan, there were some co-workers and brothers and sisters

who thought they could do without the apostles. So, after the gospel campaign in Taipei, they went back and began to pray and preach very earnestly. They wanted to show people that they could do as well as the apostles. However, the more they prayed, the softer their prayers became; and the harder they tried, the weaker they were. At first there were fifty people or so. Then, after all their praying and striving, only a few remained. Later, they could not even afford to rent the church premises and were forced to hold their meetings in a house. But those who were in one accord with the chief apostle remained fervent and strong. One day, when those co-workers could no longer go on by themselves, they confessed their sins to the chief apostle in the presence of the Lord. The apostle received them, and once again they merged into the main flow of the Holy Spirit, and were filled with joy.

In these last days, God has raised up His apostles to lead all the saints to advance as a body. This is the glorious hope of God's people. *All saints must put down their own concepts and ways, and together, give themselves first to the Lord and then to the apostles. They must advance until they attain unity. The Lord Jesus will be glorified and His spiritual abundance manifested.* May all the churches of the New Testament Church become one body under the leading of the apostles and share the same battlefield, the same mission, the same entrustment, the same footstep and the same goal.

Brothers and sisters, we want to praise the LORD, for there is a leader in Israel. Our heart is with the ruler of Israel who offers himself willingly among the people and leads us forward. Let's rejoice and sing, "God Has Raised Up a Spiritual Leader."

The Chief Apostle

(April 27, 1968—Message of the Lord's Servant Bro. Hong during the Convention at the Church of Hong Kong)

We said last night that God wants to gain the testimony of unity in these last days. If someone has the ability to build God's children into the body, it is proof that he has been appointed by God as an apostle. God chooses and sets His apostles in different positions, just as He sets the apostles in a position different from other ministries. The master builder is the chief apostle and God entrusts him with the task of building the church. Once we understand the order of the spiritual ministers in the church, we will be able to coordinate together and build up the body of Christ.

Spiritual Order and Body Coordination

To help brothers and sisters understand the importance of spiritual order, let's read some passages of the Bible: "Great Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen and my fellow prisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me" (Rom. 16:7). This portion tells us that while there were many apostles, Andronicus and Junia were of note among them. "For I consider that I am not at all inferior to the most eminent apostles" (2 Cor. 11:5). This verse tells us that Paul was not inferior to the most eminent apostles in the least.

There are different levels among the apostles, whose ministry is the first of the five ministries God sets up in the church. God only revealed the mysteries of building the church to the apostles. But as the apostles build together, they must coordinate with one another according to their spiritual order. Why do we mention this? Because we must not only understand apostleship, we must also recognize who the chief apostle is. If we know the truth on apostleship but do not know the chief apostle, we will still be unable to build up the body.

In an army, there are many commanders, but only one commander

in chief. In the church, the apostles are like the army commanders, and the master builder is like the commander in chief. All commanders know the national strategies, but in times of war, the one who gives the highest command is the commander in chief. If the army does not know who the commander in chief is, it will not be able to act as one unit. There may be many commanders, but there is only one commander in chief who has the standard for the whole army. If a commander thinks he has a better strategy than that of the commander in chief and claims that he will directly bear responsibility to the president, will he be allowed to lead the army?

The New Testament Church is often confronted with various battles. So God raised up the chief apostle to lead the co-workers and the saints to fight as one body. Therefore, we cannot have more than one strategy. It is unscriptural for someone to have a strategy different from that of the chief apostle, thinking he can go directly to God. As we build the church, deal with the enemies, and preach the gospel, we cannot be insubmissive to the chief apostle.

The Bible says, “Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God’s elect and the acknowledgment of the truth which is according to godliness in hope of eternal life which God, who cannot lie, promised before time began, but has in due time manifested His word through preaching, which was committed to me according to the commandment of God our savior” (Tit. 1: 1–3). The preaching of the word was committed to Paul and no one else. Verses 4 and 5 state: “To Titus, my true son in our common faith: Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Savior. For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders in every city as I commanded you.” Preaching the word and building the church were committed to Paul. God gave him co-workers Titus, Timothy, Silas, Mark, Tychicus, Apollos, Prisca, and Aquila to assist him. They did not have direct entrustment from God. They shared Paul’s entrustment and worked as Paul commissioned them.

As we administer in the church, we must submit to the spiritual order. If the

spiritual order is confused, we will not be able to build up the body. Paul left Titus in Crete to set some things in order. Titus was in no position to say, “No, I don’t want to stay in Crete, nor do I want to set those things in order. I’m also chosen by God. Why should I listen to you, Paul? I have my own revelation.” If Titus said this, he would not be able to advance with the others as one body to display the testimony of unity. Therefore, among the apostles, God chooses a master builder. And all the co-workers and brothers and sisters are given to the master builder to assist him. They must respect and submit to his ministry. Only in this way can they be united and fulfill their common mission in Christ.

“But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you shortly, that I also may be encouraged when I know your state. But you know his proven character, that as a son with his father he served with me in the gospel. Therefore I hope to send him at once, as soon as I see how it goes with me. But I trust in the Lord that I myself shall also come shortly. Yet I considered it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, fellow worker, and fellow soldier, but your messenger and the one who ministered to my need” (Phil. 2:19, 22–25). “Nevertheless you have done well that you shared in my distress” (Phil. 4:14).

Why would these people become Paul’s fellow workers, fellow laborers, fellow soldiers and companions in afflictions? Because they knew God gave them to Paul to work with him. They did not have their own works, but served Paul’s mission entrusted to him by God. So when Paul sent them, they went willingly.

Tychicus, who is a beloved brother, a faithful minister, and a fellow servant in the Lord, will tell you all the news about me. I am sending him to you for this very purpose, that he may know your circumstances and comfort your hearts. With Onesimus, a faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you. They will make known to you all things which are happening here. Aristarchus my fellow prisoner greets you... And Jesus who is called Justus. These are my only fellow workers for the kingdom of God who are of the circumcision; they have proved to be a comfort to me.

(Col. 4:7–11)

Paul was the chief apostle, so the work of God was entrusted to him. He was responsible to God for everything he did. As a good steward, he sent and arranged the co-workers according to God's will. Paul wrote: "As I urged you when I went into Macedonia—remain in Ephesus that you may charge some that they teach no other doctrine" (1 Tim. 1:3). He urged Timothy to remain in Ephesus. Timothy could not say, "No, I won't stay here. I want to go with you. You always like to leave me here. I don't like it here. I want to leave." Timothy could share his feelings with Paul in love, but Paul did not have to ask for Timothy's approval to send him. He gave his co-workers assignments as God instructed him to.

This charge I commit to you, son Timothy, according to the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you may wage the good warfare.

(1 Tim. 1:18)

Paul charged Timothy with the command of God. Timothy received it from Paul, and worked and fought together with him. Therefore, he could wage the good warfare. If Timothy refused to listen to Paul, thinking that his way was better, he would surely lose in the warfare. Brothers and sisters, the messages, feelings, and thoughts spoken by the chief apostle are from God. Therefore, to wage the good warfare all co-workers, brothers and sisters must submit to his leading.

"These things I write to you, though I hope to come to you shortly."

(1 Tim. 3:14)

Before Paul went to Timothy, he wrote Timothy and wanted him to serve God according to what he wrote.

I charge you before God and the Lord Jesus Christ and the elect angels that you observe these things without prejudice, doing nothing with partiality.

(1 Tim. 5:21)

Paul gave orders. He was a faithful steward, so he charged his co-workers according to the revelation he had received. Therefore, he spoke in a commanding tone. He did not say, “Timothy, let’s discuss this. I want to know your opinion.” Many people are “spiritual.” They often tell you to pray and see how the Lord leads. They seem considerate of others’ feelings.

It is right to be considerate of others. But we have to know this: The position and ministry given by God differs from one individual to the next. The higher one’s position is, the closer will be his feelings toward God. *The revelations given to brothers and sisters can never be higher than those received by the master builder. God will never move the ordinary brothers and sisters to do something and not move the master builder.* Therefore, to build the church, brothers and sisters should not be allowed to do things according to their own feelings.

I urge you in the sight of God who gives life to all things, and before Christ Jesus who witnessed the good confession before Pontius Pilate, that you keep this commandment without spot, blameless until our Lord Jesus Christ’s appearing. O Timothy! Guard what was committed to your trust.

(1 Tim. 6:13–14, 20)

Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner, but share with me in the sufferings for the gospel according to the power of God. Hold fast the pattern of sound words which you have heard from me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.

(2 Tim. 1:8, 13)

Paul did not say, “Timothy, do you think I am right? Do you think I am considerate enough? If you do, then keep the commandment; if not, you may pray to the Lord and see how He leads you.” Paul commanded these words.

And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, com-

mit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. Consider what I say, and may the Lord give you understanding in all things. Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead according to my gospel.

(2 Tim. 2:2, 7–8)

Paul wanted Timothy to consider and remember everything Timothy had heard from him. He also told Timothy to teach others according to his doctrines.

I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: Preach the word!

(2 Tim. 4:1–2)

Paul gave this command to Timothy in the presence of God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom. Paul was not impulsive, but was inspired by God when he instructed Timothy. Paul was not being outrageous, but faithful and respectful to his ministry. Since God made him the master builder, he had to faithfully arrange his co-workers to help him accomplish God's work. If the work was not properly done, God would hold him accountable. Therefore, Paul did not care whether others would consider him proud, but with a clear conscience before God and men he worked as a faithful master builder.

Be diligent to come to me quickly; for Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world, and has departed for Thessalonica—Crescens for Galatia, Titus for Dalmatia. Only Luke is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for ministry [for he is very useful in serving me (RSV)]. And Tychicus I have sent to Ephesus. Bring the cloak that I left with Carpus at Troas when you come—and the books, especially the parchments.

(2 Tim. 4:9–13)

This portion of the Bible tells us how Paul, the chief apostle, assumed his ministry faithfully and how the co-workers coordinated with him to accomplish God's work. Paul did not discuss things, but gave orders. Paul did not disrespect the co-workers. He knew that they were willing to cooperate with him. So he did not need to use any persuasive words. To those who were not like-minded with him, Paul had to be more polite. Paul could speak more frankly to those who closely co-worked with him, bore the same yoke with him, and shared the same destiny with him.

Paul said, "Get Mark and bring him with you." Why? "For he is very useful in serving me," he said. Was Paul selfish and arrogant? These workers came to serve God, not Paul. Brothers and sisters, do you think Paul had gone too far? No. Paul was dedicated to the Lord's work. He was not being selfish, nor did he seek to be pampered. All he wanted was to fulfill the will of God. He wanted Mark to serve him, not to comfort his flesh, but to further God's word. As long as he was clear about how to arrange his co-workers he would do it fearlessly. He was frank and sincere, not crooked at all. If something could benefit God's work, he would certainly arrange it.

Brothers and sisters, Paul was a good steward and a faithful master builder. He was faithful to His trust, and all the co-workers and churches accepted his leading with all their hearts. Therefore, they were able to walk in one heart with him and build up the body together. This is something very important.

An example of the relationship among the co-workers, churches and the chief apostle can be found in the Old Testament. Many people know that a church is a congregation of people whom God has separated from the world. But what about those people God brought out of Egypt? It is written: "...all our fathers were under the cloud, all passed through the sea, all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea" (1 Cor. 10:1-2). The Israelites were all baptized into Moses (not into Aaron). So they were the army of the LORD, and the church. If they were not baptized into Moses, they could not become the church. If they were not led by Moses, they could not be built into one body,

even though they were the people of God.

Moses' standard was the highest standard for all Israel, for Moses had the revelation about how Israel should advance, fight, and serve God. There was no other revelation given besides that of Moses. Although Aaron had often spoken to the people on behalf of Moses, he only repeated what Moses told him. Without Moses' instruction, Aaron could not speak for God. And the Israelites could follow no other command apart from what Moses told Aaron. This was critical.

Why did the Israelites worship the golden calf? Because they listened to Aaron's command. Actually, it was not wrong for them to listen to Aaron, but this time Aaron did not speak Moses' words. Moses did not ask Aaron to say these words. So his words were not from God. And the Israelites ended up making the golden calf. All workers given to Moses to help him build the tabernacle had to accept Moses as their standard. So when Aaron spoke, the Israelites had to ask themselves: "Did Moses say that?" They could also discern in the spirit whether it agreed with Moses' vision and leading. If it didn't, then they shouldn't listen.

But Aaron also should not have given instructions to the people on his own behalf, because he was not the leader, and God's mission was not entrusted to him. Whether God's people ended up good or bad, strong or weak, victorious or defeated, Moses was responsible, not Aaron. For when Moses made a mistake, God would deal with him severely. Since the whole mission was entrusted to Moses, God wanted him to be responsible for everything. Therefore, we must take the master builder's feeling as the only standard: apart from the master builder's feeling, we should never take others' as our standard. If we do, we will gradually depart from God. This is a solemn matter.

Let's say that the chief apostle is moved by the Holy Spirit to hold a co-workers' convention and invites all the co-workers to attend. A co-worker reads his invitation, but still goes on his knees to seek the Lord's guidance. After praying, he feels that the Holy Spirit has not moved him to attend the convention, so he doesn't go. This is having a revelation apart from that of Moses. This is the ministration of the

golden calf. In this way, the people of God will not become the congregation of God but a disorderly band. What God wants to gain in the New Testament era is a church. This church must do everything in one body (whether in ministration or warfare) under the leading of one leader. When all the saints accept the command of this leader and act as a body, they will be built into the church, defeat the enemy and fight the good fight.

Take the Chief Apostle's Feeling as the Standard

In all things, we must take the chief apostle's feeling as our standard. If the chief apostle does not feel the way we do, we will have to wait. God will always first tell the chief apostle what to do. When I was in Tainan, some brothers and sisters said, "We have worked according to the will of God. Our works are really wonderful. As soon as we have an idea, God confirms it through circumstances. When we wanted to build a church premises, God provided us with the building materials and a piece of land. Moreover, He prompted brothers and sisters to work with us. Some of them were moved to offer money for the project. The whole building was completed in fifty-two days. It was just like Nehemiah rebuilding the city wall with the confirmation of God."

Brothers and sisters, do you think this was initiated by God? I told them that what they did was completely out of their flesh. Many brothers and sisters were offended. They said, "Bro. Hong, are you jealous? Are you unhappy because our church premises is built but not yours? You're being impulsive." But I wasn't being impulsive at all. I was clear about what I was saying. Was I being too bold and speaking foolishly? If the brothers and sisters had followed God's command and I had regarded God's work as carnal, how would I be able to give an account before God in the future? So, I did not care whether they understood me or not. Frankly and sincerely I told them that their work was out of man's will and not God's, because at that time Sis. Kong had already written an open letter which read, "Don't busy yourselves with building church premises. The literary works are most important

at the moment. The gospel of God will be quickly preached through the literary works. Therefore, we should put all our money in the literary works. Don't be anxious to build any church premises unless it is absolutely necessary." That was the earnest request of the chief apostle. That was the feeling of Sis. Kong which she received from God. But these brothers and sisters did just the opposite! Yet they claimed that they were moved by God and that God wonderfully confirmed them through circumstances. Could God contradict Himself? True enough, some time later the Holy Spirit revealed that they had built the church premises out of their flesh. I mention this in hopes that we may know how to understand the will of the Most High.

For example, all of us have watches, but they all show slightly different times. So whose time is right? None of us should assume that his own watch is accurate. Since we know that the standard time is accurate, we have to check our time with it. Similarly, we must often check our spiritual "time" with the spiritual "standard time." Many brothers and sisters have their own ideas, and so do the co-workers. When every one of them speaks out on his own, each says something different from the others. Some thoughts may appear similar, but somehow they are not quite alike. So who is right? *Where can they go to check the spiritual standard time? They must go to the chief apostle, the spiritual leader. If we want to know the will of God, we must go to the spiritual leader, the chief apostle. With him we may check and adjust our feelings.*

There was a church in Taiwan where the brothers and sisters were divided into two groups. They all loved the Lord and wanted to obey His will but they just could not agree with each other. One group of them came to see me in Taipei, weeping as they told me their problem. They were grieved to see the church's condition. They complained about the mistakes of the other group. They said, "We're not here for ourselves, but for the will of God. Our glory or shame are nothing to us. The Lord's testimony is everything. What can we do? Brother Hong, we have come to discuss with you today. We are not here to accuse the others. We have come for the sake of the Lord's testimony." A few days later, the other group also came to me, weeping as they related

their problem. They, too, had come for the Lord's testimony and complained about the mistakes of the other group.

Brothers and sisters, how would you judge this matter? Which of them was right? It is easy. Just check them with the spiritual standard time and you will know. The one who takes the feeling of the chief apostle as his own, and minds the heart of the chief apostle is right. *For the feeling of the Throne and the heart of Christ are made known by the chief apostle. If we often check and correct our feelings, recognition and point of view with the chief apostle's, we will be able to do things according to God's will and advance with the body.*

I once said to the co-workers: "All we have to do is bring God's people to the vessel of the era (chief apostle) whom God has chosen. We must let God's people know the vessel of the era and help them to be closely knitted with him. If we can do that, our mission is a success. Otherwise we will fail, no matter how hard we do our gospel work. For doing our own work is not in the body and is not building the church. *The testimony God wants to gain should be within the body. We must bring all people into the body and unite them with the chief apostle. For "this is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent."*

One day when I recalled this truth, my spirit began to rejoice. So I said to the Lord, "Lord Jesus, I thank You for letting me understand Your will. This is so easy. We do not have to waste our energy. All we have to do is believe in the one You send, and Your work is done. I thank You for opening a way for me, and for leading me to serve You. Thank You, Lord!"

Brothers and sisters, the one whom God sends is entrusted with God's work. He knows what we should do and where we should stand, just as Paul knew where the co-workers should serve and where they should learn their lessons. The co-workers had to obey the leading of Paul: If he said they could go ahead, then they could; if not, they had to stop. Barnabas left Paul because he thought differently from Paul. Paul felt that Mark should not come with them, but left him behind for some time to learn his lessons; for Mark had left Paul halfway in their previous journey—like a warrior who gave up fighting when the battle

was still on. But Barnabas was determined to take Mark along because Mark was his cousin. Paul did not agree. Barnabas should have obeyed, but he did not, for he had a mind of his own. So Barnabas took Mark with him and went his way. Then Paul chose Silas and departed.

Paul was sent off by the church. He was knitted with the church. He did not break away from the church's testimony. But it is not mentioned anywhere in the Bible that the church sent Barnabas on his way. This shows how serious a matter this is. Both Barnabas and Paul were apostles. Moreover, Barnabas was an apostle before Paul. Barnabas even went to visit Paul to help him once. Barnabas was a more prominent apostle at first, but later their positions changed and Paul became the chief apostle. So Barnabas had to obey Paul. Regrettably, Barnabas did not obey. He went his own way, and from that point, his works were not confirmed by the Holy Spirit or recorded in the Bible. The Acts of the Apostles only records the journeys of Paul. How solemn this is!

The Standard of God Is with the Chief Apostle

All co-workers and brothers and sisters have to regard the chief apostle as their standard. The one who knows the feelings of the master builder knows the feelings of God; and the one who shares the mind of the master builder shares the mind of God. We need to experience this with our own lives as we serve God. There are twenty-seven churches in Taiwan. The church whose congregation unites with the chief apostle most, and who often tells him their condition, progresses most quickly in faith. The more they share the mind of the master builder and come under his leading, the more enlightened they become, and the more God's work is carried out at that place. It does not matter whether the workers there are eloquent. This is something wonderful. Some of the co-workers there are elderly. What kind of sermons can an old person preach? But because they knit themselves closely with the master builder, often pray for him and tell him their difficulties, God blesses their work, and the brothers and sisters whom they shepherd progress in spirit. Some say this is superstition. Brothers and sisters, superstition cannot make people

fervent in spirit. Ask some denominational brothers and sisters to pray for someone, and see if they become fervent in spirit. Pray for the world famous preachers and see if you become spiritually strong. However, when you pray for the chief apostle, your spirit will become alive. But as soon as you stop praying for him, your spirit will begin to weaken. How wonderful! Do you think I am preaching heresy? No, I am not. I am preaching from my experience and from biblical truth. For God is with the master builder who fellowships with God. If you pray for the master builder, your fellowship is with him, and with God (*see* 1 John 1: 1–4). Therefore, your spirit will naturally be filled with life, peace and joy.

Imitate the Chief Apostle

Paul said, "Imitate me." Paul also asked Christians to follow him. In what way? The Bible says: "But you have carefully followed my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, perseverance" (2 Tim. 3:10). Not only in doctrine, but also in manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, and perseverance. Brothers and sisters, have you ever heard such a sermon? According to man's concept, doctrine concerns the will of God, but manner of life and purpose are something about man and are personal. You may say to Paul, "It is enough for us to follow your doctrine. Why do we have to follow your manner of life, purpose, and even your faith, longsuffering, love and perseverance? All this is your conduct before God. Why do we have to follow that? You are a heretical and dictatorial preacher!" But you would be wrong if you felt this way. Paul was not a heretic, nor was he dictatorial. What he said was biblical truth.

Paul was a vessel of God. God molded this person and took control of his behavior. His doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love and perseverance were all God's glorious works on him, and the manifestation of God in his flesh. He was a masterpiece of God. If we imitate and follow him, we are imitating and following God, and minding the heart of God. Some said that as soon as they saw

Sis. Kong's picture, God's light would shine upon them. Others said they wept whenever they came up here to the sixth floor. These are personal life experiences. So why did Sis. Kong make such an impact? Because the image of God was reflected on her, and because God was manifested in her flesh. This is neither superstition nor exaltation of man.

Peter's shadow could heal sicknesses, so could Paul's aprons and handkerchiefs. Actually, it was not the shadow, aprons or handkerchiefs that could heal, but the ministry of Peter and Paul. These two were chosen vessels of God. They walked completely in God's will. God could take control of them in everything, including the things they used. Therefore the Holy Spirit confirmed even their belongings. And because of man's faith in His chosen vessels, God allowed those people to be healed as soon as they touched His vessels' belongings. This is recorded in the Bible. What we are preaching today is no heresy. This is why I say that the way to progress, be strong and revived in spirit is to come to the chief apostle.

Before I came to Hong Kong, I went to visit all the churches in Taiwan. I asked the brothers and sisters, "Do you know what the highest and most valuable ministration is in the New Testament Church? Do you know what kind of ministration is in the leading of God and touches the heart of God?" Brothers and sisters, catching up with the feeling of the vessel of the era is the highest ministration. It is also the ministration which pleases and satisfies God most; one which will receive the greatest reward and blessings from God.

From their recent letters to us, we understand that the Taiwan brothers and sisters have not only given their hearts to the vessel of the era, but also their money. This is an offering made in the main flow of the Holy Spirit. They don't keep the offerings in their local church. Contributing all that one has in the flow brought out by the chief apostle is an abundant ministration. This is a most satisfying service to God, a service in the flow of the Holy Spirit. All you have to do is drop what little you may have into the main flow of the Holy Spirit, and all the abundance of the flow will be yours. But if you are not willing to put

all you have into the main flow and accept the leading of the chief apostle, thinking that you can still preach, work, write and do all you want, your consequences will be dreadful. Because you are not in the main flow, you will dry up and die. But as soon as you completely deny yourself, merge into the main flow and submit to the leading of the chief apostle, all your works will be in the main flow, and be instantly spread to all the world. How dynamic the result will be, and how satisfied God will be!

I repeat: *The standard of God is with the chief apostle.* Many people who understand this truth hope very much to be close to the spiritual master builder that they may progress quickly in life. For God is with him abundantly, and you can easily see God through him. His feelings are God's. So whatever he says, believe; and whatever he asks of you, do. The work of God is done if you believe in him whom God sent. How blessed we are!

Brothers and sisters, how greatly you have been blessed, for you can often be with the chief apostle. Many overseas brothers and sisters wish they could be here like you, for you can see the anointed one every day. So do not take it lightly. If you have many good things to eat, you will finally be tired of them. I tell you that the mouths of the Taiwan brothers and sisters are watering!

Dear brothers and sisters, I hope we can all see how precious it is for us to be able to see the anointed one of God and be knitted with him. God will be extremely pleased if we are. For only in this way can we do the highest will of God and display the testimony of unity. I ask you again: Where do you have to go to check your spiritual time? To the chief apostle! Amen! May the Holy Spirit preserve these words in us. May the words of the Holy Spirit fall on good ground and bear fruit greatly. Tonight, I have told God's children His words for these last days. Blessed are those who receive them. But those who disbelieve and oppose shall suffer great loss. Let us be inclined toward the leader God has ordained and He shall bless us. Let us sing again, "God Has Raised Up a Spiritual Leader."

Apostles Beget and Cherish the Church

(April 28, 1968—Message of the Lord's Servant Bro. Hong during the Convention at the Church of Hong Kong)

This special convention has focused on the ministry of the apostles. We said that the church is built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets. We have also talked about the signs of apostles. Apostles are chosen by God, and they understand the mystery of Christ. They preach the truth to its fullness, and they lead the saints to be built into the church. To build the church, God sets up apostles, and chooses one of them to be the master builder. He reveals the law of building the church to the master builder, and uses him to lead the church to walk in His will as one body, to attain unity. The chief apostle is the spiritual leader and the spiritual commander in chief. Under his leading, all the co-workers and churches are united in one body. So they can labor, suffer, battle and be victorious together. When the ministry of the chief apostle is honored by the church, the church will be able to display the testimony of unity which God desires.

Apostles Suffer Bitter Travail for the Church

Let us read a few portions of the Bible:

“And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ: that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness by which they lie in wait to deceive, but speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the

head—Christ—from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love” (Eph. 4:11–16). Notice that the last line reads: “For the edifying of itself in love.”

I do not write these things to shame you, but as my beloved children I warn you. For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet you do not have many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.

(1 Cor. 4:14–15)

Paul warned the believers in Corinth as a father would warn his children. For though they might have had ten thousand instructors, yet they did not have many fathers. He had a father-child relationship with the church at Corinth.

Nor did we seek glory from men, either from you or from others, when we might have made demands as apostles of Christ. But we were gentle among you, just as a nursing mother cherishes her own children. So, affectionately longing for you, we were well pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God, but also our own lives, because you had become dear to us. For you remember, brethren, our labor and toil; for laboring night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, we preached to you the gospel of God. You are witnesses, and God also, how devoutly and justly and blamelessly we behaved ourselves among you who believe; as you know how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you, as a father does his own children. That you would have a walk worthy of God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.

(1 Thess. 2:6–12)

Paul said that as apostles of Christ, they were gentle among the saints, just as a nursing mother cherishes her own children. He said that they exhorted, comforted and charged every saint as a father does his

own children.

As an apostle of Christ, Paul shepherded the church, just as a nursing mother cherishes her own children. Such a master builder was not only a leader and commander in chief, but also a spiritual mother and father. He was a parent to the church, revealing the love of God. Brothers and sisters, why must God make Paul an apostle and a parent at the same time? Parents not only give birth to their children, they must also feed them and raise them. Especially mothers. A mother travails in birth and labors more in bringing up her children. So God makes the chief apostle both the spiritual leader and the spiritual mother, because the church needs a leader to lead her and a mother to take care of her. Apostles will never abandon the church after begetting her through the gospel. They cherish her, take care of her, and raise her. This is how the church grows. Giving birth is not easy, but bringing up a child is even more difficult. In giving birth, the mother has to go through bitter travail. But raising a child takes a long time, and the mother will suffer much pain.

Children need both parents, but babies especially need their mothers. Without their mothers' nursing, babies will not live or grow. There is no child who does not need his mother's love; and there is no mother who does not love her own child. Likewise, the apostles will love the church with the love of God. This is one of the signs of an apostle. They love the church just as parents love their children.

Parental love, especially maternal love, is great. I was cherished as a child, and now I am cherishing some myself. I know how difficult it is for a mother to cherish her children. Babies are most difficult to take care of. Unlike adults, babies have little resistance. They can take neither heat nor cold; they cannot be overfed or underfed. Some babies are born unhealthy and deformed. Taking care of such babies is even more difficult. But mothers will not neglect or forsake them; no mother would be so heartless. Mothers will definitely love their own babies. They will always be concerned about them and will never forget them. They do not need to be taught what to do—it is a mother's instinct. Sometimes mothers may be annoyed and angry with their children, but

they will never abandon them. As difficult as children can be, mothers will still take care of them. Some children are born disabled or retarded. They don't even know how to call you Mom or Dad even when they are old enough to do so. Although the parents will be sad, they will never abandon their children. They will feed them until they themselves grow old. This is also how the apostles love the church.

Some children fall sick easily, so the parents need to be more careful with them. Some kids do not want to sleep at night; they want to stay up and eat snacks. When you are most tired, they are most active and they may wake you up many times at night. When babies wet their diapers, mothers will have to change the diapers quickly. Otherwise, when the babies get diaper rash, the mothers will have an even greater problem. Many mothers were pampered girls who never did any household chores. But as soon as they become mothers, they have to do lowly and dirty jobs for their babies. Yet they do them willingly. As the parents see their babies growing up and learning to call them Mommy and Daddy, they will be overjoyed. When the children finally grow up to be like their parents, the parents will be so comforted that they will be willing to do anything for them and will forget all their labors. This is parental love in which children grow up daily.

This is also how the apostles care for the church. God has raised up a spiritual mother for us. The spiritual mother begot us through the gospel. And with the love of God she cherishes us so that we may grow up. In recent years, God has revealed the master builder to be the leader. She is leading the churches to fight a good fight for the truth. When the master builder stands on the pulpit to preach messages of destroying the denominations and man's organizations, she looks like a great general; she is so majestic, so brave, so dynamic and so powerful! On the other hand, God has also revealed the master builder to be the spiritual mother who is so gentle and kind, and who always reveals the love of God. Therefore, without apostles, especially the chief apostle, the children of God will not be able to understand God's leading, nor will they be able to experience God's love.

We often say that God is love, but where can God's love be found?

Have you ever experienced it? Have you really enjoyed it? Where there is an apostle, there is God's love. God's love is so great that not only does He move the apostles to preach the gospel to us, He also moves them to die willingly for the church. That is why Paul said, "So, affectionately longing for you, we were well pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God, but also our own lives, because you had become dear to us."

As children grow up, they often become naughty. Out of love, parents may reprimand them, even though the children don't like to hear it. Parents may even spank their children. This kind of love often makes your child angry with you. I wonder if you parents have ever been disliked by your children. If you cook good things for them and let them play and have fun every day, but never punish them at all, they will be very happy and will not be angry with you. If you urge them to study and not to play too much; if you force them to do something which they dislike or spank them for being disobedient, they will be angry with you. But should parents stop giving such love to their children just because their children get angry with them? No. For this reason, Paul said to the Corinthians: "And I will very gladly spend and be spent for your souls; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I am loved. Again, do you think that we excuse ourselves to you? We speak before God in Christ. But we do all things, beloved, for your edification" (2 Cor. 12:15, 19).

Sis. Kong and the other apostles had begotten the churches through the gospel. They have not left us alone, but continue to endure the hardship of bringing us up. The churches in Taiwan are not easy to look after. Brothers and sisters there have come from various denominations. There are all kinds of people. Many of them are conceited. Others are hypersensitive: If the chief apostle does not look at them, they think that the chief apostle does not care about them and that she is unfit to be an apostle and so forth. Before the problems at the Church of Chiayi are solved, problems begin in the Church of Kaohsiung. The master builder is like a mother with many children. She takes one in her left hand, carries one on her back, holds another in her right arm and

has another in her belly. This one has just got his diaper changed and another's is soiled. It is difficult to take care of so many.

When the New Testament Church was first established, the local churches often quarreled. The Church of Taipei, in particular, was like a battlefield. Many denominations would say: "How can this be the church established by the Holy Spirit? How can they be filled with the Holy Spirit? Look, they argue during every meeting! Is this edifying?" However, the chief apostle patiently advised, consoled and taught the saints. She often prayed tearfully for them. Wonderfully, through all of her quarreling, the church has finally grown up.

Some carnally minded and hard-hearted brothers and sisters have caused many problems in the church. They were stubborn even in front of the chief apostle when she came. We thought the chief apostle would reprimand them severely or drive them out of the church. But she had the love of God, and God's love was shown through her. She did not rebuke them, but gently and patiently advised them to repent and put down their own self. Their hard and stubborn hearts were melted by the love of the apostle. The apostles are always loving. They will not cast one of their children out and disown him just because he has been disobedient. If parents were to drive their children away, the saddest people would be the parents themselves. Don't you think so? If the children were thrown out of the house by the parents and dared not return home, it would be the parents who could not sleep at night, not the children. So love never forsakes. For the past two years, God has been doing this work on the chief apostle. God has given the apostles a parental spirit with which they love and cherish the church that they begot through the truth.

Brothers and sisters, God chooses apostles as our leaders to guide us, and as our mothers to cherish us. They travail in birth and take pains to nurse us. The love of God is revealed to us through the apostles, who help us grow into a perfect man. The church is built up in love. If the apostles do not show the love of God, the church will not grow up, and the testimony of unity will not be established. When God's love is poured out through the apostles, all the co-workers and saints will be

built up together.

Everyone Built Up in Love

Everyone loves and cares for himself. He who lives in “self” will not be able to show the love of God. If he refuses to come out of “self,” it will be impossible for him to be built up together with others. Some time ago, in Taiwan, God let us understand the ministry of the chief apostle and learn to accept her leading. Most of us have passed that test. But among the co-workers and the brothers and sisters, who is to lead and who is to submit? Whose ministry is higher? Who is next in rank to the master builder, you or me? What is my position? Everyone seemed to be equally smart and capable. So for some time they were polite to each other and tried not to argue. But inside, they were all against each other. They dwelled in “self” and could not show love; therefore they could not be built up together.

To deliver us from this condition, God raised up circumstances to force us to stay together in one place. There, He began to mold and crush us. We had no problems submitting to the leading of the chief apostle, but several problems submitting to each other. The master builder sacrificed herself to serve the church, but we protected ourselves as we served. Each of us had a mind of his own. We would always try to save ourselves. For fear of being hurt, we hid our feelings. We refused to speak out and surrender ourselves. Then God broke us.

He first picks out the person who tries his best to conceal himself. God exposes his ugliness and wretchedness and makes him feel extremely bitter. There was a co-worker who used to be next in rank to the five pillars of the Christian Assembly. After he came to the New Testament Church, he still took pride in his old concepts. So he was bound by “self,” and his prayer in tongues became frightening. He would say “Ooo... ooo... ooo...” for a long time like a car that wouldn’t start. It sounded so awful! Something had to be wrong with him. The co-workers asked him what was the matter, but he refused to say. He was afraid others would look down on him. So, since he kept it to himself, God

made him sink deeper and deeper as he “ooooed” along. After some time, he could not take it anymore; he could no longer live if he didn’t speak out. So he opened up and told us about all his ugliness. He came out of “self” and felt free. He could love the co-workers, and “ooo...” was no longer heard in his prayer in tongues.

There was another brother who was proud of himself. He would pay any price to be the best, and was well-known for being thoughtful and perfect in everything he did. He was so faithful that he would watch the clock down to the last second before he ended a fast. For a while, he was assigned to buy vegetables and to cook with another brother. One day he took that brother out on his motorcycle to buy food. On their way home they had to stop for a passing train. After the train had passed, he accelerated so abruptly that his companion fell off. So as he rode his motorcycle back home, he kept talking aloud, thinking that his companion was still behind him. After a long time he began to wonder why there was no reply. He looked back and... oh! He was gone! Too bad. His companion had to walk all the way home. This brother, who considered himself so thoughtful and flawless, was now struck down by God. From then on, he rode a bicycle.

After a few days, his companion began to annoy him. If he wanted to buy something, his companion would either insist on buying something else, or complain that it was too expensive. This bothered him very much. He thought to himself: “Well, I may not be good at some things, but in cooking, I can’t be beat!” So he asked if he might go buy vegetables alone. He said that it was too difficult to take another person on a bicycle. But actually, he could no longer stand his companion. When he arrived at the market, he set his bike by the curb and went inside. After doing his utmost to buy the perfect groceries, he came back out... “Hey! Where’s my bike? Where is it?” he said, as he looked for his bicycle. It was stolen! He was so worried. What could he do? He thought, “When I went with that brother, I lost him half way. This time, I went alone and lost my bicycle. What am I going to say? Haven’t I always been so careful and thoughtful? How embarrassing!” But thank God. After being smitten by God, he became humble. Now he is no

longer self-righteous, but can coordinate with others in love.

I also used to be absolute, thorough, careful and serious in learning lessons. As long as I knew it was God's will, I would not hesitate to follow with all my heart. I thought if we had to submit, we should submit entirely. I did not like those who took things lightly. I said, "If you people choose to be cold, be cold; if you choose to be hot, be hot. Don't stand in between." I could not wait to judge those who remained lukewarm. I would criticize one for being useless and another for being worthless. Many brothers and sisters were useless to me. But how could I build the church alone?

I reprimanded the brothers and sisters: "If you want to serve God, then do it. Otherwise, forget about it. After all, only a few people can walk the way of the cross." I picked on the flock, complaining about their weaknesses. If one of the sheep was sick or had problems, I would scold him! How could a person like me serve and establish others? One day, the light of God came upon me. God revealed to me that all flesh is weak. He let me know that it was all His grace that I could be obedient, resolute and absolute toward Him—it was not by my own strength. So for a period of time He took back His grace from me and I could do nothing, not even pray. I became a useless person. After God deprived me of strength, I understood my true nature and was no longer conceited or self-righteous.

I used to condemn a certain brother. I said, "This brother confesses his sins in the morning, but commits them again at noon; he confesses them in the afternoon, but commits them once more at night. Such an unstable and unreliable person cannot do the work of God, he should be rejected." I felt we should teach such a co-worker a lesson. I showed him no mercy at all. But to my surprise, the chief apostle did not remove him. Instead she prayed for him every day. Later, I myself became unstable. I was obedient the night before but stubborn the next morning; I was submissive at noon but turned harsh at night. I became a completely different person. Even I wondered what was happening to me. God wanted to strike me, to deliver me from conceit and self-righteousness. Otherwise it would have been impossible for me to

coordinate with others and build up the church.

God uses the chief apostle to show His divine love. Such love makes him willing to die for brethren and suffer travail in birth for the churches. It enables the saints to grow up in love, causes all the co-workers to come out of “self,” and makes everyone love one another with the love of God. Then, gradually, we will not only obey the leading of the chief apostle, but also submit to and love one another. This is how the testimony of unity appears.

Brothers and sisters, I repeat: Such love is from God. It flows down to the chief apostle, then to the co-workers, and then to the churches. Now it has flowed from Taiwan to Hong Kong and Macau. Soon it will spread to Singapore and Malaysia, the West, and to all parts of the world. Then every one of us will be established in love.

May we all see the great love of God manifested on the chief apostle. The chief apostle loves the church as parents love their own children. He sheds tears for the churches and prays for all the souls in the world. The love of God is manifested on the chief apostle, through which the church will grow up to a perfect man. This is something we have experienced. It is also the great work of the Holy Spirit. Under the loving care of the apostles, all the saints are bonded in life to become the body of Christ, displaying the testimony of unity. This bond of love will never corrupt. This unity shakes the dominion of hell, tramples the enemies and manifests the glory of God. This bond of love endures forever and ever. Hallelujah! Praise the Lord Jesus. Let us sing “Travail in Birth” again.