

SECRETS OF SURVIVAL IN THE SERVING LIFE

By Titus Chu

MESSAGE FIVE: THREE CRUCIAL PRINCIPLES FOR PRODUCING A GENUINE CHILD

In the Lord's recovery there are four pillars for our survival in the serving life. If we are proper in these four pillars, our service will be healthy. These four pillars are: the apostle, God our Savior, Christ our hope, and the genuine life relationship with the saints in the church life, as can be seen from the first two verses in Paul's First Epistle to Timothy. The last of these four crucial matters can be seen in the second verse, where Paul writes, "To Timothy, genuine child in faith." Paul had a genuine life relationship with Timothy. Paul had raised up a number of churches, written many epistles and accomplished so much. Here in his writing to Timothy can be seen one crucial principle of his labor; in his laboring he produced genuine children. The view of the genuine life relationship should be the principle of our laboring and our practice of the church life.

In the early 1970's I went to the Far East. I had seen reports in the church news of how thousands were in the young people's meetings. When Brother Lee sounded a call for full-timers, five hundred indicated they would go full-time after college. When I arrived I was surprised to find mainly older ones in the church meetings. When I asked regarding the young ones, I was told they had been damaged by a recent rebellion. That situation, however, had been cleared up seven years prior. In other words, during those seven years there had been no young people brought into the church, yet in a young people's conference there had been over one thousand, and five hundred had pledged to go full-time after college! Where were they?

It was at this time that I became very much aware of the crucial nature of the genuine life relationship. At that time I began to check into this and fellowship with the co-workers there. They all had impressive young people's meetings. Yet when asked about how many made the church meetings it was evident that nearly none did. Then I asked about the hundreds that had graduated that year from college. I found out they had simply disappeared. I was shocked.

It seemed that it didn't make much difference to the co-workers as to what happened to these young people. They could go out and preach the gospel again, or simply wait for the next group coming up in the church life. The co-workers' tradition had become to work on the young people until they disappeared, and then go and get a new crop to lose. They came together to report on how many were in the young people's meetings or how prevailing the work was on a certain campus. The young ones had merely become tools for the development of the work so that there could be some fellowship shared at the co-workers' meetings and a good report for the church news. The young ones, however, just kept disappearing.

THREE CRUCIAL PRINCIPLES FOR PRODUCING A GENUINE CHILD

What is the secret of bringing the young ones into a life relationship with those who serve them so that they can be properly perfected and have a way to go on? You must realize that there are three secrets. If you are short in even one of these three, you will never be able to raise up genuine children.

Never Utilize Those You Serve for Your Work

Many of you are handling some type of work involving young people. You must view them as what they are -- your dear brothers. They are not helpers for your work. You should never use them as tools for your work. Such utilization damages a

person. Companies hire employees seemingly with mutual benefit in view, yet they really only have the company's profit in view. What manager considers an employee's profit above that of his company's? They only consider how to utilize what you have to the company's profit. They are nice to you as long as you are useful to them, but once your usefulness is gone, they send you a note letting you know that your job has been terminated. Since you are no longer of use to them, the relationship is over. This should never be our practice or view. Never put the work in front of the person.

Yet when you carry a home meeting, high school labor or college-age service as a work, how can you not use a brother's talent? You may have even helped this brother come out of his coldness or dullness. Of course, we would never fire anyone as would a company, yet it seems very normal for us to consider a capable brother as a helper to us in our work. This means we only have our work in view; we do not have developing this person in view. I have rarely heard anyone comment on how much a service has helped a brother. I often have heard of how helpful a brother is in a service. That means in your corporation he is a useful staff member.

If you have this in view, whether consciously or unconsciously, you will not be able to develop a life-relationship with that brother. In fact, once you bring a promising brother into your labor mainly as a tool for you to advance your work, that brother's fate is sealed, for you are seeing only the work without seeing the person you are working with. We need both aspects in our labor, yet the work should never come first. Our labor should always be with the person in view, never only with a work in view.

The problem with many serving ones is that they see the brothers as those who can help push forward the work and then, upon afterthought, as those who need to grow. We carry things according to our premise. If our premise is that our work must be successful, we will use the brothers as tools. If our premise is that the brothers we are with must grow, we will fight to develop

a life relationship with them. Many workers sacrifice the willing brothers they are with to their work, not realizing that when you sacrifice the brother, you are sacrificing the church. It is only when you gain the brother that you gain the church. Once your view is wrong, there is no way for you to raise up anyone according to life. When you are old you will have no Timothy to write to. At most you will be able to write, "Even though you have forgotten about me I would like to remind you that you are still my fruit." You can only remind them of your seniority, not of your life relationship.

Paul's relationship with Timothy was firstly a life relationship, not a work relationship. Paul through the years would not utilize Timothy to develop his work. Paul was concerned more for Timothy's profit than for the work. He even tells Timothy to drink a little wine mixed with water for his stomach's sake. If we were writing this letter we wouldn't dare put such a word in. Wouldn't this give room for some to say that it is advantageous to drink? We probably would have put such a word on a separate sheet, not in our Epistle. But Paul seemed to ignore the work out of his concern for Timothy.

To develop such an attitude requires vision and the Lord's grace. We are all tempted to become successful. Why is it that we put the work first in our service? Because we place our success ahead of our brother's growth, particularly when we realize others are checking with us about how fruitful we have been. Because of such pressure, how can one not consider how to find someone to help him? Full-timers have to aim at fruitfulness. Hence, it is tempting to view a brother as a tool. In fact, once you have a successful work in view, you see every brother as a potential tool.

Some have used their number as a bargaining chip for advancement in the Lord's recovery. Once a brother has such a thought he has no chance of giving birth to a genuine child. Some in the Far East were always testifying about how many young people had been gained. Yet none of their fruit remained. I told the young people that unless they came to the Lord's Day

meeting they could not come to the young people's meeting. The co-workers were afraid that the work would be finished. Actually, it was blessed. Before this, the young people left the church life as soon as they graduated because they only knew how to come to young people's meetings. They never came into the church life because they were never brought into the church life; they had only been brought into a work. That decision I made kept so many of the young people in the Lord's recovery. Such a decision seemingly sacrificed the work, and if I had been asked to submit something for the church news, I would have had to report "we had one thousand, and now we have six hundred." However, I did not have a work in view. These young people were gained for the church. They were to be raised up as brothers in the Lord's recovery, not as instruments for a work.

Raise Them Up With A High Vision

To raise up a genuine child in the church life, firstly you must have them in view. Secondly, you must raise them up according to a vision. You should not merely raise them up according to their need. We usually help others according to their seeming need. If they need to learn to pray, we help them to pray. If they need to read the Bible, we help them in this. Even if some need financial help, we may do our best to help. Yet very few know how to raise brothers up to the standard of the vision they have received.

You all should have seen something after this nine-month labor together. If you were to tell me you do not know why you are in the church life, I would be quite surprised. You should raise up people according to what the Lord has unveiled to you.

Don't be afraid that they might be offended or unable to comprehend. In perfecting the saints, you must realize the higher the vision the better. All people have a desire for the high things. Give them your vision of God's economy. Don't think that if the ministering is too high they will become frustrated and drop the

church life. If you baby them they certainly will eventually drop the church life. They will get fed up with you.

You all had close friends when we were growing up. Where are they today? They have disappeared out of your life. Why? Because although they met a need for a period of time, they did not give you the goal of your life. We should serve others by giving them the goal of their existence. This develops a life relationship. Such persons will be thankful to you. Because of your insistence they realize the meaning of their life. Because of you they are able to love the Lord and give their lives to the Lord's recovery. Their lives have found purpose because of your exercise.

When you see Brother Lee, don't you feel that you are his child? He may not know you, but when you see him you just have the feeling, "This is my father." It is because of his ministering that your life has found its purpose. Because of him the goal of your life is set. Without him you would be unable to be who you are. On the other hand, you may have spent hours with other brothers and yet you are able to forget them quite easily. You cannot help it, because nothing was produced out of your relationship with those brothers.

We all have experienced natural friendships. Perhaps you have had the opportunity to meet an old friend after many years, but when you finally met, you found that person was not the person you were looking for. This is because your friendship had contained only a natural element; there had been nothing divine. If we are with the brothers in a natural way, this will be our experience as well. We will find in time that the saints will seek to be with those who give them what is divine; they will not desire to remain with us in our naturalness.

When we are practicing the church life, we must learn that our relationships must be high. If some don't see as we do, we must struggle to bring them into the view we have. Once your high vision concerning God's purpose is infused into someone through you, it will be very hard for that one to forget you. He will always remember that you are the one that gave him the

vision that regulates his life. For his whole life he will feel that he owes you so much and that he is your genuine child.

Be Fresh and Buoyant in Life

The third principle with regards to having a life relationship with others has to do with our freshness and buoyancy. Actually, the only way to infuse a new one with a high vision is by being buoyant in life with the truth that you have. We can only produce genuine children if we are fresh and buoyant.

If we are full of Christ and the enjoyment of Christ, something comes out of us which draws the life in others. All the saints, in principle, love the Lord. What affects them will not be just what you say; what affects them will be how you are. If you are fresh and buoyant according to Christ, then when what is within you will draw up the life within others. Your buoyancy will affect their Christian life, and it will cause them to feel close to you. You feel close to a person who is buoyant even though perhaps you have never been with him. Why is this? Because the life within just comes out of him as he ministers or speaks and comes into you. That generates something very close. You feel an intimacy with such a one.

Your ability to beget others and to have a life relationship with others in the church life fully has to do with what you see, who you are, and what you practice. In our practice we must realize that the brothers are not tools for us to use in our work. They are to be loved, cared for, infused with life, furnished with truth, perfected in their function and raised up through our labor. With this realization we can be very effective. With you a few brothers can be raised up who are furnished with truth, have caught a vision and enjoy their spirit. This is of real value.

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