

SECRETS OF SURVIVAL IN THE SERVING LIFE

By Titus Chu

MESSAGE SEVEN: THE PRACTICAL EXERCISE TO RAISE UP GENUINE CHILDREN

Thus far we have covered four basic realizations necessary if we would raise up a genuine life relationship with a saint, as Paul did with Timothy. First, we should treat that person as a beloved brother rather than as a help to our work. Second, we should help them according to the vision we possess rather than merely according to their apparent need. Third, we must infuse them with life rather than mere knowledge. Fourth, we have to suffer and travail in our person for their growth. Now we must come to the practical application. How does one practically raise up a genuine child?

YOU MUST BE CLEAR ABOUT THE MEANING OF YOUR OWN HUMAN EXISTENCE

In order to raise up another brother or sister, you must be regulated by a vision. The meaning of your life must be clear to you. In your daily life you may possess shortcomings and weaknesses, but this is not serious if you are clear about what your life is for. You may have problems, but the meaning of your life must be clear. You must know why you are living on the earth. You must be clear about what God is after. You must see Christ and the church. If you are clear about what your life is for, others will be affected by you.

Some of you are considering what to do after this period of labor is over. As long as you are clear on the meaning of your life, whatever you do will be profitable to the Lord. If you take a job, you may give it up after a period of time. If you become full-time, there is nothing wrong with picking up a job.

Whatever you do you must be done with God's eternal purpose in view. You should realize that being full-time has nothing to do with how victorious or how defeated you are. Your decision to get a job or to be full-time should be due to what you view as necessary at that time in terms of God's plan.

This is very crucial in relation to how you are able to help others, for in your labor to produce a life relationship, it is not what you say, what you do, or even how you spend your time that will cause a life relationship to come about. What really produces this relationship is who you are. As a good brother you may encourage others to pray, to read the Bible, and to make meetings. But if you are not really charged with the meaning of your human existence, all the things you speak or do won't mean much. If you only talk about how God has a purpose and yet you really don't see God's purpose, your labor will produce little. If you are clear about the purpose of your existence, even your weaknesses and failures cannot prevent you from forming real life relationships with others.

If we are unable to see the meaning of our own existence, we will have little impact on others' lives. Others may still love us, but the freshness of the life relationship will be missing. Others can become your genuine children only when the meaning of your own existence becomes clear to you. When your stand is clear and you have such a firm standing, knowing exactly what you are on the earth for, then others are affected by your person. Even though you may possess limitations, the Lord will still be able to use what you are controlled by to control those with you. When the meaning of your life is so clear to you, your realization will gradually be infused into those close to you to become the meaning of their life. Thus you will bear proper fruit in life.

Most full-time servants of the Lord are quite pure and consecrated, but for some reason many are unable to produce genuine children. They seem quite close to the saints they are with, but once they move on to another place to labor, the relationships they have with those they have been serving disappear.

Even one who loves the Lord enough to give his life to serve the Lord may not be geared with God's commitment and God's desire, and thus will not be able to raise up genuine children. May the Lord save all of us from such a lonely future!

BE REGULATED BY OTHERS AND HAVE THEM IN YOUR HEART

You must be clear about what God expects of you as a human being before you are able to produce genuine children in life. Then, you must allow yourself to be regulated by them. Your living must be regulated by those you are caring for. Your life must be regulated by those you love and serve. They should regulate your days, your evenings, when you eat your meals, when you take your vacations. They should have every right to utilize you. You should fit yourself into their schedule, even if that means visiting them at midnight. One brother visited a new one seven days a week at six in the morning for a year and a half until eventually that new one became more established in life. What he did was not too much! Your manner of life should be determined by those you are caring for. If they like a certain kind of food, you have no right to provide something else. This is not hypocrisy, just as it is not hypocrisy for parents to be regulated by their children. And the younger the children, the more you have to be willing to be adjusted by them.

We should learn to allow the saints to occupy our hearts as they did Paul's. How many saints occupied the apostle's heart! Once a saint occupies your heart, it becomes very easy to pray for that one. When you see him you feel different, and he feels the same. There is a genuine warmth and glow in your expressions. Oftentimes, however, when we meet some of the saints, our greeting is shallow and without any feeling. The saints know whether or not they are in your heart.

As the saints are in your heart, spontaneously you consider them and are concerned for them. You consider how to render them the greatest profit, how to help them grow, and how to insure their health in the future. This produces a kind of fragrance when you see each other. We should never view caring for the saints as a kind of job. The saints should be in your heart. Then your exercise towards them becomes full of genuine concern and love. Your whole being will have a different kind of presentation around them. Having the saints in our heart causes a life relationship to spontaneously develop.

BE WITH THEM WHERE THEY ARE, YET ACCORDING TO YOUR VISION

Furthermore, in our exercise with the saints, we have to keep the vision before us. This is a hard lesson. The brother you care for may be in a low condition. You cannot just go to him and be with him where he is at and as he is. You must come to that brother where he is at and gradually bring him into your realization. You must exercise at their level to bring them into what you are clear about.

This is how a parent helps a young child to grow. A mother feeds her baby with a view to his full development. When parents speak to their child they build his vocabulary by using words the child can already understand. A father helping his son learn to walk does not walk at full speed. How could the little one keep up? The father walks as slowly as the child, yet with the vision to bring that child into what he himself can do. The father knows the steps in the process of growth. To bring his child into the next level, the father begins where his child is at and passes through each stage together with his child. If we do not possess the patience to exercise in this way, we will never be able to produce genuine life relationships with those we are caring for.

LEARN TO INFUSE LIFE BY STRUGGLING FOR OTHERS SPIRITUALLY

Besides having the saints in our hearts, we must learn to infuse life into them. Develop the ability to infuse life into the saints with a spiritual struggling. Life is not infused without struggle. You may visit the saints often, and even have an enjoyable time with them, yet nothing much is produced. Why? you did not struggle on their behalf. Without someone's struggling, no saint can be perfected. Without someone's struggling, no soul can be saved. The more you struggle for the saints, the more you are able to infuse life into others.

The reason a brother is able to receive life from you is either because you have struggled before the Lord for him or because you have developed a struggling exercise which has caused you to become a life-infusing person. Actually, out of your struggle for one brother, you are more enabled to infuse life into another. You need a long period of time to learn how to struggle in this way. This struggling over the years provides you the ability to infuse life. This is the only way to become a life-infusing person.

Today, in the Lord's recovery, it seems we take many things for granted. We know how to experience the Lord's blessing, to be "in season," but we may not know how to exercise "out of season." "In season" means the blessing just comes from the Lord without any labor on our part. During the early seventies, one hundred were added to the church in Akron in one year. That is "in season." It spoils us. When the Lord holds back His blessing somewhat, we find we don't know how to handle it. The Lord still expects us to bear fruit; He just won't add it automatically. Yet we seem unable to bear *any* fruit. Those we labor on don't seem to grow, and those who do come in don't come in because of our labor. This is simply because we don't know how to struggle. We are not willing to go out of our way for others or to be inconvenienced for someone else's sake.

Struggling means paying a little extra price, going a little further. It means you exercise a little bit outside of your normal pattern. Your normal pattern may be a thirty minute dinner. Your dinner perhaps now, since you are caring for another, can only last fifteen minutes. You usually prefer a twenty minute shower. Now you can only have ten minutes. You drop some meals. Your person is under an “extra” exercise. Only those who can practice that little “extra” are those who can infuse life into others.

You may think that it seems easier for people raised up in Chinese culture to be won over to Christ and to be raised up to love the church. Perhaps it is because those who labor among the Chinese simply know how to pour themselves out a little “extra”! American culture does seem to produce a different kind of worker. I have seen Chinese co-workers take college classes just to be with students for the gospel’s sake. How many of you have this kind of mind?

A serious problem today in the church life is the lack of struggling for others in this way. If we do not like something, or if something doesn’t fit us or our schedule, we lay it aside. Therefore few brothers have been raised up among us. We have not learned to go out of our way. If you learn to go out of your way to exercise, to struggle for the saints, to pray for their sakes, to read the Word more, to exercise in the meetings, eventually you will be able to develop life relationships with others. Because of you, others will receive life.

FURNISH TRUTH TO OTHERS WITH THEIR UNDERSTANDING IN VIEW

Another crucial matter we must learn is how to furnish truth to others with their understanding in view. You cannot assume they understand, you must always assume they do not understand. When with a new one, assume that all three words in “God’s divine economy” need explaining. (To us the term “born again” seems simple, but we should not assume it is understandable to someone who is not regenerated.)

Even Nicodemus, a wise and experienced gentleman, was unable to understand the words “born again”!) You cannot just leave someone a copy of a Life-study and tell him to read it. You have to have his understanding in view. It is good to encourage others to get into a Life-study, but have you helped them get into it? Did you fellowship with them concerning it? Did you ask if they had questions? This is to have their understanding in view. This is a great need. Very few saints know the truth, and among those that do, few are able to bring the saints into a real understanding.

Don’t be afraid to go slow with the saints. Step by step we must bring others into the truth. Those you care for do not need to learn terms, they need the reality that comes out of the full knowledge of the truth with the full assurance of understanding.

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