

SECRETS OF SURVIVAL IN THE SERVING LIFE

By Titus Chu

MESSAGE THIRTEEN: HONORING GOD'S GOVERNMENT CONCERNING OUR PLACE SPIRITUALLY AND PRACTICALLY

We have thus far covered how we must honor God's divine administration, God's divine administrative arrangement, and the place of a person while learning from that person. Now we come to another crucial point. We must learn to honor God's government in placing us spiritually and practically where we are. Rather than seeking a change, we should learn what God desires for us to learn where He has placed us.

It is very hard for some to be satisfied with where they are (spiritually and practically). They feel their church does not properly appreciate them and think they would be more manifested in another locality. My advice to you all is to learn to accept God's government regarding where you spiritually and practically are. Learn to be content if you are not manifested. Don't think the grass will be greener somewhere else. If you are not manifested it is because God has determined that manifestation is not your need, at least at this time. Perhaps the elders really are unfair, or the whole situation is wrong; God's government, however, is never wrong.

God arranged for a brother to continually block Watchman Nee's operation for a period of time. It seems wrong, but God is always right. God arranged for that brother to be there just to terminate Brother Nee, causing him to realize that he could do nothing. Miss Barber told him he must submit to this older brother. Eventually, Miss Barber even put a younger brother ahead of him. How would you react to such unreasonableness? If you were to run away, you would lose the opportunity to learn. If Watchman Nee had stumbled and rebelled at this point, would he have been able to develop into such a servant of the Lord?

You are in your locality due to God's government. Furthermore, your function in the church life is also due to God's government. The Lord placed me in Ohio. Sometimes I have wondered why I couldn't have stayed in Texas. Furthermore, Brother Lee wrote me a letter inviting me to come to California, but by the time I received it I could no longer go. The Lord's government placed me here. I left Ohio to study, but something caused me to return. I realized I needed to trust the Lord's government. Because I have remained here, some have criticized me saying that I am not "in the flow." Well, in Ohio I may not be in the "flow," but I am where God has placed me.

Those who jump from place to place eventually gain very little. If the Lord leads you to move, you surely should move, but not with the motive of becoming more manifested. The only reason anyone should move to another locality is the Lord's leading. We should never reason that a move may cause us to become more manifested. This is impure. How can the Lord honor such a move? On the other hand, if the Lord leads you to move, and it is confirmed through fellowship, by all means you should go.

When I was still in the Far East I felt a burden to move to India and I told Brother Lee of this. He just said, "That's a peculiar burden." Then I dropped this matter. But if I had some further feeling about it, I would have gone again to Brother Lee for more fellowship. You should always fellowship to the point that you are peaceful. We should not move according to our reasoning or our view of what is profitable for us. We should only change our place according to the Lord's arrangement and leading.

Some brothers move very often, trying one place and then another. Honestly, brothers, I just don't see how they can grow well. They are just like butterflies, going from flower to flower. We should all learn to be like bees, sticking ourselves to one place, doing our best to draw out the nectar there to produce the honey. This is the way to be productive.

Learn to stay where you are. Don't receive the thought that if you migrate, something profitable may happen. Very seldom do I tell a brother not to move if he wants to, but very seldom do I have a confirmation within concerning that move. If the brother is open enough, I tell him that he may be putting himself into a dangerous situation. One of the two greatest dangers a person who loves the Lord and the church faces is migration. (The other is marriage.)

If a brother or sister marries someone who is not for the Lord or the church, they really get caught. There is no way out for them once they are married. Your wife or husband is one of the greatest factors which determine your ability to follow the Lord. The elders really need to pray desperately concerning the marriages of the young brothers and sisters. I have seen many very good young brothers and sisters become limited in the church life just because the one they married was not a good match for them.

The other big trial to a person in the recovery is a move to another locality. Every time a person moves he puts himself into a totally new situation. That brother then has the opportunity to reconsider his church life. He may decide that he need no longer go on as he has in the past. Or, if a brother moves thinking he can become more manifested, he will find there are elders and deacons functioning already. He will either become a frustration to them or he will be frustrated as he tries to squeeze himself in. In many ways, a move to another locality can damage you rather than help you grow.

If you feel frustrated where you are, look unto the Lord to find out what it is that you should learn. If you are in a place for years without having learned and then move, you will only become more frustrated or more of a frustration. If you do become more manifested, you yourself will become a frustration to those where you are. Being peaceful in the Lord's government is not a small matter.

This is a hard word, especially for the ambitious young brothers among us. It is not easy to remain peaceful where we are. When I was in high school I met in Hall 1 with the other high schoolers, for that was the elders' decision. After graduating from high school, I had to change my place of meeting. According to God's arrangement, I should go to Hall 2, for that was the hall in my neighborhood. There were no students there, however, only older brothers and sisters with very little education. There was a nurses' college nearby, but that was only for women. There were no other college brothers there. All my friends went to Hall 3, for that hall had many college students. Even though they encouraged me to join them, eventually I felt clear that I should meet with the brothers and sisters meeting at Hall 2, for that was God's government. Actually, I learned so much there. I am so thankful that through all the years I have always taken this principle. Wherever the Lord places me, I stick myself there.

After finishing graduate school, I was well aware of where the good jobs were. But I was reminded that it was God's government to place me in Cleveland. Now I am thankful. Eventually it is here that I have learned the most. Since I had to start with so little there was so much to learn. I am glad that I didn't come into the eldership just by being able to give good messages to an existing church. I came into a leading capacity mainly by laboring with saints one by one. By the Lord's mercy some of them became somewhat perfected and were able to bear more.

I am very concerned about this matter. You have to tell the Lord, "I desire to abide in Your government. I am willing to stay here, or if you so lead, I am willing to move elsewhere. Whether things here are smooth for me or rough, I am here because of Your government. I will stay where You have placed me." If you cannot learn where you are, you will be unable to learn wherever you go.

Do not think that you will be better able to learn from those in another locality. You will also find fault with those in the place you choose to go. Only when such a person is alone taking the lead will he find peace, for he will be with himself. Then he will just be a frustration to all those under him. Learn to remain under God's government. If there is a change, it should be due to God's moving, not our selection.

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