

《Collection of Newsletters and Watchman Nee's Testimony》

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PREFACE

Volume 26 of The Collected Works contains the final three issues of Collection of Newsletters which was published from late 1933 until July 1935 in order to facilitate fellowship between the churches and communication among the saints in various localities.

In addition, we have included in this volume the three testimony messages given by Watchman Nee in a co-workers' meeting held at Kulangsu, an island off the southeastern coast of Fukien province, China, in October 1936. This section of Volume 26 has been published previously by Living Stream Ministry as Watchman Nee's Testimony (1991 Edition).

COLLECTION OF NEWSLETTERS

ISSUE NO. 10

September—October 1934

A MESSAGE FROM BROTHER LAN CHIH YI

To my brother in the Lord, Mr. Watchman:

I returned to Hankow after the end of the Third Overcomer Conference and was dealt with deeply by God. Through the Lord's enlightenment I easily saw that my position in the orphanage was not according to God's will. Although I am able to work freely there, I have lost the strength to fight in the matter of testifying for the truth. The work in Wuchang and Hankow has not begun, because I have hindered God. My soul magnifies the Lord! The teachings in 2 Corinthians 6:14 and 17 persuaded me even more strongly into obeying. I dared not procrastinate any longer. I handed in my letter of resignation on April 11. Who could have expected that once I handed in my resignation, the hindrances would come? There has been the attack of Satan, the entanglement of emotions, the refusal of my superiors to release me, and their determination to keep me; I am still struggling to put them aside at this date. The road before me is even darker. But I deeply believe that the waters of the Jordan will part. The eye of faith sees the glory on the throne. I plan to send in another letter of resignation sooner or later. Please pray for this matter, asking God to eliminate every hindrance so that I can walk in His God-ordained way. Jesus Christ is Victor! Amen!

I heard that you will not go out in the summer but will study Revelation. Is this true? Please let me know. If the Lord is willing, I will go to Shanghai during that time to be edified.

I have had a question for a long time that has never been answered. I brought it up at the end of this last Overcomer Conference. Unfortunately, it was not answered at that time. My question is, "Can those with old debts (such as those who have gone bankrupt in business) work solely for God as a preacher (referring to a called one with a gift)?" Please write me a letter in response. I am praying for it. I send my solemn and respectful greetings. Peace in the Lord!

Your little brother,

Lan Chih Yi

June 12, 1934

A LETTER FROM BROTHER YANG LI JEN OF P'ING YANG, CHEKIANG PROVINCE

Peace to Brother David Hsu: Jude 20-21; James 5:7-8

I do not know whether or not you were able to receive the letter I sent you a few days ago. While I was thinking about you quite a bit, I read Collection of Newsletters. In it was a letter you sent to your friend Tsai Ch'ing, so I know that

you have moved back to Ningpo. Thank the Lord for His grace in initiating (through the brothers) Collection of Newsletters so that we can obtain a different kind of fellowship in Him with the brothers. Through it we also learn about the work raised up in each locality and the news of the individual brothers. This endeavor is very good. But we should also be wary of two things: (1) a kind of special fellowship that comes from the flesh and easily becomes one of the elements of a denomination (there has been the initiation of letters of recommendation); and (2) the abominable works of the flesh which might be mixed in if they have not been thoroughly dealt with by the cross; they "steal glory from God." Presently, everything is very good, but in the not so distant future, I am afraid that it will lose its original meaning. Brother, allow me to say a few direct words of sorrow: If a person is not completely of the spirit and controlled by the spirit, his fallen flesh and the fruit of his fallen flesh—denominations and stealing glory from God—will never be completely eliminated. O Lord, You know our corruption. May You search out everything and gain everything. May You also come quickly. I wonder what you think about this, brother.

You said, "We are busy...as if 'the master is returning quickly and the slaves are busily preparing,' and our hearts are truly like this." You also said, "In ourselves, we could pass through in comfortable rest, but our business now is because of Him—the Lord." This word really made me happy! Truly, our heart is like that of a servant; truly, we could rest comfortably in ourselves. Therefore, everything that we have or do must be because of the Lord.

In the last letter I sent you, there were a few matters to ask you to pray for. Thank the Lord! I already know about your recent situation, so I have plenty of material to pray for when praying for you. (Material does not seem to be such an appropriate word.) I ask that you pray to the Lord that my prayer life would grow and improve.

The news from P'ing Yang published in the sixth issue of Collection of Newsletters mentioned Sister Lin Chih Ming in the tenth meeting place. She has temporarily fallen because of her husband, and she does not come out any longer to meet or break bread with the brothers. However, Brother Su Chih San is much stronger than before and sometimes comes to the table meeting. The persecution these two are under is very heavy. May the Lord grace them with strength and be magnified in them. Please pray for them!

How has your health been recently? What is the condition of the meeting in your locality? Please write and tell me.

"The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you." Amen! The last verse of 2 Timothy 4.

Respectfully from your weak little brother,

Yang Li Jen

February 12

Note from Watchman: We should certainly pay attention to the two points that Brother Yang mentioned. However, I would like to clarify the first point: If our fellowship is not larger or smaller than what God has commanded, we will never be a denomination. I am afraid that many brothers have only seen the error of denominations but have not seen the connection of the Body. Even though everything has failed today, we should still act according to the principle of one Body. Those who do not understand will think that we have a special fellowship because we still want to keep the principle of the Body. Those who have left the denominations are standing in the position of the Body. They are not a disorganized mob. We definitely should not misunderstand and think that we must be a scattered rabble before we will not have denominations. A scattered rabble may not be a denomination, but it is definitely not the Body, nor does it have the principle of the Body. The book *The Assembly Life* will be published soon. The chapter "The Practice of Fellowship" is most crucial. I am afraid that the brothers might misunderstand after reading Brother Yang's letter, so I feel to especially add these few words.

A FEW WORDS FROM CO-WORKER TS'AI CH'I

Greetings to my dear brother in the Lord,

Mr. Watchman Nee:

I have not written to you for a long time because I have been too lazy to write since we parted. However, I have met with you often before the throne. I would like to mention some matters briefly so that we may thank the Lord together! He has raised up faithful children in all the localities of Wenchow and P'ing Yang to truly take up a heavier cross and live a more difficult life for the Lord. There are a few brothers who once worked in the denominations. Now they stand alone by relying on the Lord for the sake of obeying the Lord. This is completely His work, and we thank the Father for this matter.

There is something in all the localities that causes us to worry. Many brothers and sisters have not really been revived! They have only moved out of the denominations. Nevertheless, we have already seen "a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand" arising! Therefore, we hope you will pray for this. Peace in the Lord!

Your brother,

Ts'ai Ch'i

Some brothers who live by faith: P'an Huo Ling, 36 Beneath the Iron Well, Lan Hsing Temple, Wenchow; Lin Sheng Wu, P'u Men Horse Carriage Station.

A LETTER FROM THE JAN BROTHERS IN HANGCHOW REQUESTING TO LEAVE THE DENOMINATIONS

Greetings to the Directors of the Sze Cheng Chapel:

Because we have seen that in the Bible there are no denominational differences and that it is a sin to have denominations, please remove our names from the Sze Cheng Chapel's Book of Life. This is not a matter of personal emotions but of obeying the teachings of the Bible. Since we have done this, we do not need to mention it again. When we meet, we are still friends. We have no other motives. That is all we have to say. We greet you. Peace in your way!

Sincerely,

Jan Ch'i Yu, Jan Feng T'ien

July 10

**LETTERS FROM CHEN CHIA DISTRICT,
HUAI AN, NORTHERN KIANGSU**

One

Greetings to the faithful bondslaves in the Lord,
our dear brothers, Mr. Watchman and Mr. Witness:

Thank the Lord for His love. Its depth is immeasurable. Even a worthless and evil servant like myself has been graciously called by the Lord! The Lord's table was established in my home more than two years ago. In the beginning, when we were laying the foundation, more than twenty people believed and were baptized. A few of them had never been in the denominations. The rest came out of the denominations. Then we did not increase again until June of this year when two sisters were baptized into the Lord's name. They were both more than seventy years of age. Recently, three or four more who are seeking the Lord and trust in Him have been added. We are still in a period of waiting. Last year two people went to sleep in the Lord. My wife was one of them. Before she died she said two

sentences to me: "In the future, you do not have to stay in the house, you can go out to visit. On the Lord's Day come home." She shut her mouth and stopped breathing after these words. This proves she was saved. Our meeting place is less than two miles from a denominational gospel chapel. When the preacher of this group saw that we had left the denominations, he became contentious. He began to slander us before the people who went there to worship. He is very diligent in his labor of "sweat." Every Saturday he visits the homes of the worshippers to charge them to come worship on the next day. His diligent watchfulness shuts them in as tightly as the doors of the city of Jericho. We are really too immature. We can only drink milk and cannot take solid food, so our meetings are very low. I believe that God is almighty and a day of stirring up will come. If this were not true and He knew that I was cold, why would He grace me in the first place? I went to Shanghai in January to attend the Overcomers' Conference. I received both God's enlightenment and the brothers' help. During the conference, I first heard Mr. Lee speak on the living of a Christian. He said that toward the Gentiles we should be proper in everything, and we should keep our position in dealing with the brothers. Next I heard Mr. Nee say that if a Christian has not been sent, he should return to his own occupation. After the conference, I returned home. I prayed earnestly before God. I truly did not know what kind of occupation I should go into. I did not have the strength to be a farmer. I did not have the capital to open a shop. Thank the Lord, He opened the way for me. He enabled me to return to my old occupation of teaching. The school is in Hsu Chia Village about ten miles from my house. It is five miles from Ke Chia Village and seven miles from Chu Chia Kou. Although the supervisors are not brothers, they allow me to be free on the Lord's Day. At first I planned to rotate between these three localities on the Lord's Day. I did not know that I would feel a heavy burden once the Lord's Day came. So I still return home to meet every week. Although I walk twenty miles in one round trip, I am not tired. The glory for this should be given to the Lord Jehovah. He has made it more convenient for me to read the Bible at school than at home. In the early morning I read five Psalms. I read a few chapters of the Old Testament in the late morning and a few chapters of the New Testament in the afternoon. I have more than enough strength to do this and can also discuss the teachings with two or three students. There is no one to oppose. Now I would like to ask the brothers and sisters in every place to pray for us because the believers in Chen Chia Yu are mainly backsliders. Ask the Lord to revive the cold ones, uphold the weak, and

free the oppressed. I also ask you, brother, to teach such a useless one as myself how to walk in the Lord's way. Moreover, I ask that you pray much before God because the locality of Chen Chia Yu lacks gifted members. Pray that the Lord would raise up priests to blow the horn before the ark of God while walking around the city of Jericho. I will write more details about the other matters in another letter. Peace in the Lord!

Your brother,

Chen Ju Ni

August 13, 1934

P.S. I am more than sixty years of age. I am not very talented, nor have I studied in depth. My eyes are going bad. My writing is very illegible. Please tell the editor of Collection of Newsletters to feel free to delete, change, and make corrections as needed.

Two

Greetings to the faithful bondsman of God,
the brother whom I miss, Mr. Watchman Nee:

Last year I received a letter from Yi Lin mentioning the need for fellowship. I also heard about the publication of Collection of Newsletters. I am very much in favor of it. A few days ago, I received the fourth issue of Collection of Newsletters. I have not received the first three issues. I really thank the Lord that I was among those who attended the recent Overcomer Conference. I was enlightened by God during the meetings, so that my spirit sprouted new life and I learned something of His truth. I was very joyful to be able to fellowship with the brothers in the Lord in the Body. Although this was my first meeting with you, it was a great blessing in my life. Now that I have returned home from Shanghai, I cannot forget what happened there. Please allow me to tell you something of my experience. Since I left the denominations at the start of the year, two years ago, I believe that I have received God's grace and received His sweetness in my living. I began to meet in the Lord's name in my home. There were more than twenty people in the meetings. Not long after we had established the Lord's table meeting, we met with some experiences of suffering. I will not go into detail. Satan took the opportunity to work much in my home. It was something like the situation in Matthew 10:35-36. This occurred because I was weak and could not govern my own house. How can I govern the house of God? Therefore, I ask you to pray for me that I would overcome all the enemies. This is my greatest hope.

Unfortunately, the first time we met, we did not have the opportunity to communicate freely, so I am writing this letter to you in fellowship. I also hope that the second time we see each other, my joy will be full. If this letter can be used in Collection of Newsletters, please feel free to edit and correct it. Otherwise, you can discard it. There are other things I want to tell you, but I will do it next time. Peace! May the Lord bless you!

Your little brother in the Lord,

Chun Ju Nih

May 27, 1934

**A LETTER FROM BROTHER CHANG YU CHIH,
CHIA HSING, CHEKIANG**

Brother Lee:

I received your letter. It comforted and encouraged me very much because I was struggling, wanting the Lord to give me a meeting while at the same time feeling in my deepest part that I should wait for Him. Your word to pray and be patient caused me to rest.

The principal here is also a good brother in the Lord. He wants me to bear the responsibility for preaching the gospel with another brother, Lo Yung Tien. The school meets together for a short time to have so-called morning devotions every Friday and Lord's Day. The principal wants us to preach the gospel to the students during this time. Although we feel that this is a good opportunity, we feel a great pressure, as if we cannot bear this responsibility. We are praying that the Lord would give grace. If it is His will, we would be willing for you to come to preach the gospel for a few days at our school. If you are willing to come, please tell us.

There is not a table meeting in this locality. We are willing to watch the Lord Himself lead His flock step by step in Chia Hsing. "It is sufficient to have the Lord!"

Last Lord's Day I got dysentery and stayed in the hospital to rest for five days. I am completely well now. The Lord's keeping power got me safely through. Until we meet again. Peace in the Lord!

Your little brother in the Lord,

Chang Yu Chih

September 3

A LETTER FROM SISTER RUTH LEE IN HER TRAVELS

The following letter was written to Brother Witness and me by Sister Lee while she was traveling and working in southern China. She specifically requested that we not publish her letter in Collection of Newsletters because it is contrary to the position of head covering for a sister to talk about church matters. But feeling that this letter is profitable to the believers in each locality, we publish it. Brother Lee and I assume full responsibility for its content and anything pertaining to it.

Watchman Nee

Ruth Lee's Letter Reads:

Dear Brothers Watchman and Witness:

It has been one month and four days since I left Shanghai. I arrived in Swatow on June 13. I left Swatow on July 10 and arrived in Hong Kong on the eleventh. I arrived in Kung Ho City in Tai Shan on the twelfth. I already described the approximate condition in Swatow in my letter of July 9 to the sisters in Shanghai. On June 25, I wrote a letter to Mr. Watchman (which was delivered by the #215) in which I explained why I could not return to Shanghai for a time. I asked that the responsibility for editing the Collection of Newsletters be given to Mr. Witness in the future. I did not mean to place a heavy burden upon the brother, but I have a desperate reason for not being able to return to Shanghai—the sisters outside of Shanghai truly have a need. They do not have as many good opportunities as the sisters in Shanghai.

I will stay in Tai Shan until August 5. At the beginning of next week, we will start a sisters' conference. In general, the first week will be for preaching, the second week for studying the Bible, and the third week for preaching again. Every afternoon there will be a time for individual fellowship.

All work must pass through fire to prove its value. What can one do apart from the Lord?

At this time, in the various places, through personal fellowship with the brothers and sisters and from what I have seen and heard, I have much for which to be grateful to the Lord. Yet I also have some fear and sighings. Most of the brothers and sisters in Swatow are like a sheet of white—all that is needed is some good writing. They are also like a piece of good ground—all they need is proper sowing. Within a year's time, about twenty brothers and forty to fifty sisters have actually begun meeting together, not including those who only come for the

messages. The sisters in Taishan labor incessantly and offer themselves to the best of their ability. These are good signs.

I wish that from now on the brothers would pay attention to the following matters:

(1) If the brothers in a certain locality desire to have the Lord's table, they should at least know what the church is and the reason for the table. If some presume that simply because they have no name they are not a sect, and yet in many activities they are a sect in another form, and if they consider that only they are the church and are better than anyone else, then inevitably they will become the worst sect.

(2) The brothers and sisters in a locality who are lacking in gift should procure proper jobs and serve God with their jobs. Otherwise, they simply become dead preachers sitting in their parishes, where neither sinners are being saved nor brothers and sisters are growing in life. Consequently, the place is full of spiritual death. We may ignore any derision from the denominations, but what about our testimony? If a place is without a worker, it is best for the brothers and sisters there to pray livingly, remember the Lord, and give personal testimonies. It is not necessary to adhere to a set form. If a brother or sister professes to be called by the Lord yet is not gifted, then in the eyes of others, this calling is questionable. The problem with this kind of worker is that he is either presumptuous or lazy. Sometimes problems also arise in regard to material supply—those who are pure may suffer hardship, while others may make godliness a means of gain.

(3) If a brother or sister is gifted, it is best for him or her to serve God according to what he or she has. For anyone to go beyond their gift when they minister will unavoidably be unreal or in error.

(4) Even though we are standing on the "right" side, nevertheless, it would be best that our messages would emphasize what is in the Bible, without saying explicitly that this denomination or that denomination is right or wrong. We should let any seeking one, after hearing the truth and realizing the error in which he is, be willing to pay the price to follow the Word. Avoid arguing over minor points. To be divided because of different interpretations of the Bible, is not this the way of the Brethren? More and more I feel that every time as we break the bread, although our eyes can only see a certain number of brothers and sisters, yet, through the bread, what we actually see are all the saved ones. Otherwise, the testimony of Ephesians 1:23 is lost.

(5) When the authority of a local church is in the hands of the sisters, and the sisters are not clear, then the brothers should be frank to admonish them

concerning this. But if the sisters intentionally refuse to stand on the proper position, then the brothers will not have a standing there. However, there are some places where the sisters are very good, while the brothers are old, formal, and dead. In such cases there is need for some enlightened brother to deal with these brothers. If the brothers will not listen, then one cannot blame the sisters for backsliding or being disjointed. In cases like this, the brothers are still a sect, only with the word free added to it. It is excusable to be in this situation if one is unclear, but if he is disobedient after knowing, then it becomes a matter of motive.

The reason why I have said so much is not that the brothers in Shanghai have any strong points or special authority; I am only hoping that in your speaking or writing you would pay attention to these aspects. I am a sister, and in this letter I am simply conversing with you as a member of the family giving you a report of these matters.

The brothers in Swatow are very burning for the gospel, preaching twice weekly with two brothers responsible each time. In this matter I will be honest to say that the brothers in Shanghai are behind.

I really ask the Lord to supply the work and the need of the workers in each of these localities. Recently quite a few brothers and sisters in each locality were out of jobs, while the others mostly had only average jobs. Although many brothers and sisters have given their utmost, there is still a lack for the work and the workers. On the one hand, the workers should never tell the brothers and sisters directly or indirectly of their need by giving hints or speaking through others. Yet on the other hand, often some brothers and sisters either regard the responsible worker as a rich man, or sometimes care only for the work and not the worker. I say this not because I have a need, but because of my observation. Pardon me for writing about so many things. Peace in the Lord!

Sincerely yours,

Ruth Lee

Greetings to all the brothers and sisters in Shanghai.

A SMALL TESTIMONY

I lay sick in bed for thirty-one years just like the man in John 5 who was sick for thirty-eight years. Today I have been completely healed by the Lord Jesus. I began studying theology in a denomination in 1903. At first I was baptized by sprinkling, but later I went to another denomination and was baptized by

immersion. I have received salaries from several denominations and preached for a few denominations. It was just like in Revelation 3:1 where the Lord said, "I know your works, that you have a name that you are living, and yet you are dead." During these thirty-one years, I was living a life that shamed the Lord. Furthermore, because the denominations could not satisfy me, I also sinned for three or four years by not reading the Bible, praying, or going to meetings. I was sixty last year according to the flesh. In November I was sick for twenty days. My physical body was very weak. In March of this year, Brother Ke Ts'ung Yi came to Chin Chia Pien Elementary School, Kao Tze, to teach. He zealously exhorted me to obey the Lord. Later, I asked Brother Ke to clearly explain some of the things I doubted. After hearing his explanations, it seemed as if scales fell off my eyes. I was able to see. I thanked, obeyed, and praised the Lord. Now there are a few matters I would like the brothers and sisters in the Lord to pray for on my behalf. First, please ask the Lord to keep me and strengthen me to the end. Second, please ask the Lord Himself to do a good work in me and glorify Himself through this useless, weak vessel to testify for Himself. Third, please ask the Lord to save my wife, son, daughter, son-in-law, and my grandchildren, that our whole house may believe in the Lord and be saved. Fourth, please ask the Lord to establish a place for a meeting in the Lord's name so that those who believe in the Lord with a pure heart will have a place to meet and partake of the Lord's table. Fifth, please implore the Lord to work in my circumstances that I may always glorify and obey Him. Also pray that my home would be near a meeting in the Lord's name. Sixth, please pray that the Lord would add saved ones into His precious name every day so that the lost sheep may become a flock under the hand of the great Shepherd, our Lord Jesus Christ. Hallelujah, amen. Finally, I bless all the brothers and sisters in the Lord. Health in spirit and body!

The smallest brother in the Lord,

Feng Ching Yi

August 17, 1934

This letter was sent in by a believer in Kao Tze, Kiangsu who was helped by Brother Ke and was revived.

NEWS FROM LIEN SHUI, NORTHERN KIANGSU

Greetings to our dear brother in the Lord, Watchman:

May the Holy Spirit within each brother pray for us, the dried-up children. We have been believers in the Inland Mission for many years. We were all blindly zealous and knew nothing about being saved and overcoming. We often sought

the truth. We have seen the divisions among the denominations, and when we met brothers who believed in the Lord, we asked, "Which church do you belong to?" Then we praised his church for doing this or that or we discussed the salary the believers gave the preacher. Our spirits were not pleased that we did not speak of the Lord's grace, but we had no alternative. Thank and praise the God who loves man. He sent His faithful and obedient messengers, Chiu Jih Chien and Chi Yung Tung, to Chi T'ang Chi to begin the work there and to give us the truth. This was from July 26 to August 1, 1929. God laid hold of a few of us. Satan also worked by saying, "Chiu and Chi from Su Chia Tsue are speaking the devil's doctrine. The last days are here. There are false apostles and false prophets. The Lord has told us not to believe in them or be led astray." But in our hearts we felt that the Scriptures they quoted were all true. Later we bought some books from Ting Chung Shu, including *The Christian Life and Warfare*, *The Christian*, and *The Spiritual Man*. But we were still cheated; we did not understand, and we placed our flesh in this life at the forefront. We were unable to overcome for three years. The Lord placed us in trials, while Satan raised up some work. The Seventh-day Adventists preach a proper living, the law in the last days, and the commandments. Many worldly people followed. In April and May of 1933, thirty-six people were baptized. Oh, thank the Lord, He enlightened us to see 1 John 4:1-6. All the brothers and sisters in our locality were considering our love for God. The Lord who knows man sent His messenger, Brother Chiu, to us again. In more than ten days of work, God grasped a few brothers and sisters out of the many to meet, break bread, and praise. We were so joyful. We thank the Lord and remember how much He loves us. Our Lord and His cross were livingly depicted before our eyes. Our hearts could not help but respond; we each shed tears. After about fifteen minutes, we read the Bible, broke the bread, and received the cup. It was so sweet. There are seven brothers and four sisters who break bread together. The responsible brothers are Sun Tze Kang and Chi Ju Ch'un.

We received an issue of *Collection of Newsletters* and learned about the conference in Shanghai. Satan did a special work. Brother Chi wanted to go, but his wife persecuted and frustrated him. It is difficult to describe the situation in a sentence. The Lord caused him to overcome, and he arrived safely in Shanghai. The devil also worked so that he would have a recurrence of a chronic illness. When he suffers from this illness, it usually lasts for ten days. This time the Lord blessed him in that he was healed after two days. He asked Brother Chi Yung

Tung to tell the brothers and sisters who love the Lord to pray for him. Thank the Lord that He heard their prayers.

In February Sister Chin began a women's work in Yi Lin. The Lord moved a mother and daughter, Chi P'ing Ch'uan, and another sister, Chi Tao Hua, and her daughter, Chi An Yu, to go to Yi Lin for more than twenty days of learning. Chi P'ing Ch'uan and Chi An Yu were both baptized in Yi Lin. They entered into the Lord Jesus' death and are living to God. A sister was baptized here in our locality on April 15. Every Lord's Day, the attendance is more than thirty people. God's promise is true. He adds saved ones to us every day. Every Lord's Day many sick people come.

We are still meeting in the old meeting place that the China Inland Mission used to occupy. It is in Sun Tze Kang's house. He is saved and his wife obeys, but the rest of the people in the household are unbelievers. We hope that all the brothers and sisters who love the Lord will pray for us before Him. We do not know where God wants to put us because we are young and dry. We do not know what God's will is. Every Lord's Day, a brother who is led by the Holy Spirit gives some testimony. We do not know when God will give a gifted member to His church. May the Lord bless each one of you. Health and peace to your spirit, soul, and body!

Your little brothers,

Sun Tze Kang and Chi Ju Ch'un

July 3, 1934

We cannot write too well, and we are afraid that there are many misused words and incorrect characters. Please forgive us.

THE EXPERIENCE OF THE MEETING

IN CHEN HSIA KUAN IN P'ING YANG, CHEKIANG PROVINCE

(1) Before there was a meeting here, we listened to the Word and worshipped in the meeting in the Ao Nei denomination. At that time I listened to the Word, but I did not know that Jesus was crucified for me or that He died and lives for me. All we wanted was to change our behavior a little. Thank God, in 1928 Brothers Wang, Ts'ai, and a few other good servants of the Lord came from Wu Tai and Tai Sun to meet with us in Ts'uo Tze. At that time I heard that Jesus died on the cross for us to bear our all and shed His blood to cleanse away our sins. I immediately received, believed, and was saved. I was not only saved but also revived. I was not the only one who was revived. There were several other

brothers who were revived at the same time. Every Wednesday and Friday evening at 5:30 we went to Ao Nei for a two-hour prayer meeting and walked back home. It was a trip of more than ten miles over narrow paths and mountain roads. We returned home at 11:30. One brother told us that before he believed in the Lord, he could not walk five miles in half a day. After he believed in the Lord and was saved and revived, he could walk more than twenty miles with us on foot every Wednesday and Friday to the meetings. It was more than six hours round trip. This was truly the power of God overshadowing him. There are some other brothers who have been attending the prayer meeting for more than a year now. Thank God!

(2) In 1929 a few of us discussed the possibility of having a prayer meeting in our own locality. At that time the brothers were all in one accord and went immediately to rent a place for the prayer meeting. On Wednesday and Friday more than ten people, including old ones, young ones, men and women, met to pray. After discussing the situation, everyone prayed and waited before the Lord. Thank God for His marvelousness. At that time there was a five-room tiled house in which a demon had appeared. Nobody lived in it, and it was for sale for a very good price. They wanted one hundred twenty dollars. We had very few people and most were poor. We could not borrow money from other churches. We prayed before God; each person did his best. We wrote down our own offering and placed it in the offering box. Some for one, two, three, ten, twenty, thirty, fifty, or one hundred dollars. After adding them all up, it totaled two hundred dollars. The brothers then purchased this house. The house is about ten miles from Chen Hsia Kuan. Later, we set a time to tear down the old house. All the work was done by the brothers in the Lord. God gave us another miracle. The five-room house of wood and tile was torn down in one day. We carried the building materials, totaling more than two hundred baskets, to the river by hand and transported them by boat to Chen Hsia Kuan.

(3) In 1930 a four-room tiled house was temporarily completed. The entire cost came to four hundred fifty dollars. Thank God. We do not know where the money came from. We never expected God's grace to be so great. In our human mentality, we wanted a two-room straw thatched house. Who could have guessed that God would prepare a four-room tiled house for us to meet in? God really does everything beyond what we ask or think.

(4) We began meeting in September of 1930. There were six brothers in the table meeting. There were more than twenty people who came to the gospel meetings.

Now there are sixteen in the table meeting and more than sixty in the gospel meeting. God has cast out demons and healed sicknesses in many places. Now many people want to come hear the gospel. I ask the brothers and sisters in every place to pray for us. Peace in the Lord!

From,

Wu Tze Chien

June 18, 1934

THE TRAVELS OF THE CO-WORKERS IN P'ING YANG

To our two brothers in the Lord, Watchman and Witness:

How have you been recently? Are you still in Shanghai in the heat of the summer, or have you gone someplace to get away from the heat? We, the co-workers here, think about you often. You must be thinking of us just as we think of you. Therefore, we want to tell you something of our recent experiences and what the Lord has charged us with in the work. We hope you will not forget to pray for us.

Our Lord is to be praised because while we were walking in error, He called us and led us back so that we would walk according to His way. This is the Lord's special grace to us. However, most of the leaders of the denominations do not understand us; they have accused us again and again before the magistrate. They have used violent words to threaten our weak brothers and sisters, but the Lord's solid foundation has been laid. No one can tear it down.

Thank and praise the Lord! In this situation with enemies on all sides, the Lord gave us a new call to remember the souls of sinners. (For the past few years, we were busy with internal affairs and almost neglected to preach the gospel.) For this reason, we, the few useless ones, have been gathered together by the Holy Spirit to begin a gospel preaching work.

On July 19 we began our journey from Fang Yen. We wanted to go to the areas around Pei Kang to preach the gospel, but during those few days it was constantly raining and the river flooded. The steamboats on both sides of the river could not run. We had to wait for the next day to take a sailboat. Unexpectedly, the boat was stopped in the middle of the river by flooding torrents, and we could not reach our destination. We were forced to leave the boat and go ashore to continue our journey in the rain until dusk. We spent the night in a China Inland Mission chapel (because one of our neighbors was working there as a teacher). Although the rain stopped the next day, the flood

waters had not receded. Therefore, we had to take a detour over the hills and mountains. We finally arrived in a place called He Hsi around noon and rested at an inn. There was another place about five miles away called Hsia Hsi where several of our brothers and sisters meet in the Lord's name. We wanted to get there to break bread and remember the Lord on the Lord's Day, but the flood still had not receded, and we could not go on. We had to stay at the inn until the water went down. That afternoon, Brother Ts'ai passed out gospel tracts on the street and preached the gospel from door to door. Many people heard the Lord's name. But the people in the denomination were very unhappy. A young believer came to our lodging and solemnly told us, "Now the government has made a declaration that you are not allowed to disturb our church." Later a preacher walked past our hotel, and a woman called to him, "Mr. So-and-so, these guests are also preachers; why don't you give them hospitality in the church building?" The preacher raised his head and looked, but he did not say a word; instead, he raised his head high and walked away. This was suffering persecution for the Lord's name, so our hearts were very happy. In the evening, we preached the gospel to a few people at the inn and then went to bed. The next day (the Lord's Day), the water had not completely receded, but the road was only covered with water up to a man's knees, so we proceeded with difficulty. We wanted to hurry to a place where the brothers met to break bread, so we carried our luggage on our backs and carefully plodded along. While we were walking, there was a deep drainage ditch next to the road, and Brother Chen unexpectedly lost his footing and fell in! The water was rushing along, and the ditch was very dangerous. Fortunately, the Lord's hand held him up. We pulled him out unharmed. Even his suitcase was not damaged when we pulled it out of the water. We really thank the Lord unceasingly for His grace.

When we got to Hsia Hsi, the brothers' hospitality in the Lord's love was very warm. We spent the Lord's Day there. Beginning the next day—from Monday to Friday—we had gospel meetings every evening. During the days we had a few edifying meetings for those in the church. We preached the gospel by first printing red announcements that had the time, date, place, and an invitation to come hear the gospel on one side and John 3:16 on the other. The brothers took these announcements and delivered them door to door. In the evening the brothers went out to invite them again and pull them in. In this way we surprised the entire population of the village of Hsia Hsi. They all came, both men and women. All the seats were filled. It is often very difficult for unbelievers to remain

quiet in a meeting. But the Lord was among us, and He stretched out His powerful arm so that the whole audience listened quietly and solemnly from beginning to end without a single interruption. Many people in this place are Catholic. They came every time to hear the preaching. One Catholic head of a household locked his house up and brought the entire family to the meeting. He also gave us some things for the use of the meeting. Our meeting place was small, and there were not enough chairs; some of the people who came to hear the messages brought their own chairs. After the message, they carried the chairs home. Although they listened until the middle of the night, they did not act tired. The Lord was indeed drawing people to Himself. We thank and praise Him! On Saturday afternoon, we left the brothers, sisters, and new gospel friends in Hsia Hsi and walked thirty-five miles to Shan Men Street. There is a meeting there which recently left the denominations to meet in the Lord's name. They knew that we would come on that day, so they had made early and good preparations for our room and board. Four or five brothers also walked eight or nine miles along the road to welcome us. Once we got to the meeting place, we felt the Lord's grace and love enveloping us on all sides. Our hearts really felt sweet. That afternoon the brothers went out as usual to preach the gospel and pass out announcements and tracts. In the evening, one hundred people came to listen to the gospel. This time Brother Ts'ai got up to speak the message. He was blessed with power by the Lord, so the listeners were very moved. However, we did not make them sign their names. We do not like to do this. The next day was the Lord's Day. In the morning, there was an edification meeting for the believers. In the afternoon, we spoke on the necessity and meaning of baptism. After the meeting, five brothers and four sisters went to the river with us and were baptized. In the evening there should have been a table meeting, but because many people came to the meeting to hear the gospel, we had to preach the gospel to them first. After the crowd left, we had a table meeting late at night. The spiritual atmosphere in this table meeting was very thick. We all felt as if we had ascended to the heavens and seen the Lord face to face.

On July 30 (Monday) we rested during the day. In the evening, we preached the gospel outside in front of Brother Lee Shu Jen's house because the house was too small. Brother Lee had already contacted all his relatives, neighbors, and clan. By evening there was a great number of people gathered together for the meeting. The topic of that message was John 3:16. After hearing the message, all the people were filled with joy because they knew that God loved them.

On July 31 (Tuesday) we left Shan Men Street and walked for thirty miles to Shun Hsi. There are more than one thousand homes in this place. The population is about five thousand, but there are only five who believe in the Lord, counting both men and women. These five believed last spring when Lee Shu Jen, Hsu Chi Jen, and other brothers went there to preach the gospel. We spent six days there. In the mornings of the first three days, we rested. In the afternoons, we preached the gospel door to door and passed out announcements inviting them to come hear the gospel in the evening. The last three days we had meetings with the brothers in the morning and evening. They were for the edification of those who had already believed and those who had believed in the past three days. In the evening we still had a gospel meeting. We really thank the Lord for those six evenings of gospel meetings. He first prepared a large house for us. We only rented a small part of the building. We borrowed the courtyard and the halls around it. It could hold one thousand people. This solved the problem of overcrowdedness. Every afternoon the brothers went out to pass out announcements. In the evening they went out again to invite people in. If some did not want to come in, we very politely pulled them in. Every evening there were more than one hundred people. Sometimes a few hundred people came to hear the message. We did not speak anything to them but Jesus Christ and His crucifixion. Sometimes we also mentioned the coming judgment or the signs of the end times. God did a great work through His own Word. Every evening after the meeting, there were always a few who stayed there and would not leave. We spoke or prayed with them, or we asked them to stay for a snack, and then they received the Lord. On the last day of our work there (the Lord's Day), the new believers came and worshipped together with us and became our brothers and sisters. Thank and praise the Lord. If He does not draw people, what can His useless servants do? May many sinners be saved and the Lord's name be glorified more! Our hearts were satisfied. Hallelujah! Praise the Lord!

On August 6 (Monday) we left Shun Hsi. We were going to go to Chu Hsi. The brothers accompanied us for several miles out of town and said good-by to us in a pavilion. We picked up our luggage and went ahead. Unexpectedly, a farmer in his thirties came up to us and wanted to carry our luggage for us. We did not understand. When we asked him why he wanted to carry the luggage, he said, "I was not able to hear you preach during the few days that you were in my town of Shun Hsi. I was just leaving to come and hear you last night when something came up and I could not do what I wanted. This morning I heard you were

leaving, and I was very sad. So I came here especially to carry your luggage for you and walk with you for awhile. This way I can hear your doctrines. Please talk to me while we walk." Our hearts were filled with heavenly joy when we saw this. On the way we told him about man's sin, the punishment for sin, and the salvation of Christ's cross. We walked for more than ten miles through the mountains. After about one and a half hours, this friend left us. At that time he confessed Jesus as Lord and knew that the Lord Jesus had taken away all his sins. We stood on that mountaintop praying with him. Thank the Lord, this person got saved! After he left we continued ahead. We arrived in Chu Hsi around noon. There are more than ten brothers and sisters in the Lord's name here. We stayed for two days. There were gospel meetings both evenings. More than one hundred sinners heard the Lord's salvation. May the Lord bless His messages so that many may be saved from among the listeners.

We left Chu Hsi on the eighth and walked twelve miles to Ting P'u T'ou. Brother Wang Yu T'ing was there. We met with Brother Wang Yu T'ing and Brother Chang Wu Sheng and the other brothers. Our spirits were very happy. However, our bodies were a little weak, so we rested there. We will not go into any more details. We only hope you pray. Peace in the Lord!

Your brothers in the Lord,

Chen Hsiang, Ts'ai Ch'i

Wang Ch'ung Hsin, Lee Shu Jen, Chin Tze Fang

August 13, 1934

A LETTER OF IMPORTANT CLARIFICATION

Greetings to my dear brothers and sisters in the Lord:

In April I sent a letter to Collection of Newsletters with news of the co-working brothers. Today I suddenly saw that it had been published in the Newsletter Paper. Facts had been deleted and topics had been added. I was very surprised. There was no impropriety in the letter I wrote. But I have not read the Newsletter Paper very carefully this past year. In fact, I have forgotten the address of the Newsletter Paper. Nevertheless, I never wrote to it. Brother Chen Ch'in Fa and I saw this paper at the same time and think that the postman must have given the letter meant for Collection of Newsletters to the Newsletter Paper. This shows how the enemy will stop at nothing to attack us. I am making this announcement to dispel the doubts of the brothers and sisters. May the Lord bless us. Peace in the Lord!

Your little brother in the Lord,

Wang Yu T'ing

August 22

P.S. There will be a five-day conference in Nan Kang Fan Shan, P'ing Yang from August 29 to September 2. Brother Chen Ch'in Fa and I will be responsible for the messages. We hope that the hungry and thirsty brothers and sisters will be edified. We hope that the brothers and sisters who are in one accord with us in Shanghai will pray for us. It is very important.

Your brother,

Wang Yu T'ing

A LETTER FROM SHIH YU FANG TO JAN CH'I YU

Brother Ch'i Yu:

After you separated from Sze Cheng Chapel, I was not peaceful in my heart day and night. When Pastor Chen Ts'ung Kuei led the meetings in Bethany, I suggested that he go to your place. I was willing to pay his round-trip ticket. Unfortunately, he did not have the time to go to Hangchow. He stayed in my home for one night in Nanking. I spoke with him about this matter. He said that you [left the denomination] too quickly and that it was a pity. Before he came, I also wrote a letter to Pastor Cheng Chi Kuei asking his opinion. According to what Pastor Chen Ts'ung Kuei says, Pastor Cheng is most opposed to the Little Flock. He speaks from the Bible and is able to turn you back to the church. I hope Pastor Cheng can write a letter to you and that he can perhaps come to see you and explain everything in person. I am very willing to pay the round-trip travel expenses. I do not know much about the Little Flock, but I feel that you are taking the easy way and are not willing to bear the cross in the church to help the weak brothers more with the strength God has given you. It is difficult to make the weak brothers into good ones, but this is your work. The group you have now entered must be very holy. They are all of similar wills. But who will go to exhort and care for the weaker brothers? The Little Flock only wants better people (Christians) or more zealous people (Christians). Although the organization of the church has many problems and perhaps some errors, it needs some spiritual people like Wesley and Martin Luther to change things through the strength of God. Don't you agree? The church has a long history already. God has already done miracles in the church. I hope you have a peaceful attitude. If Pastor Cheng can speak correctly according to the Bible, I hope you can come back to help the church. I was planning to come to Hangchow today, but my house is being

repaired, so I will go to Hangchow next Friday (August 3). When I come, I will write again. Please do not come to the station to meet me; I will go to your house myself. Peace in the Lord!

Your brother,

Yu Fang

July 28 at sundown

P.S. Pastor Cheng is in the area of Honan leading some meetings. He will write an article against the Little Flock which will be published in a gospel magazine.

Jan Ch'i Yu's Answering Letter

I received your letter. I thank you very much for your kindness, but there are a few things that I must explain:

(1) What is the little flock? Please read Luke 12:32. It says, "Do not be afraid, little flock, because your Father has been well pleased to give you the kingdom." Can you oppose this little flock? The term "little flock" refers to all the saved ones who believe in the Lord's name at all times and places. If you oppose the little flock, you are opposing yourself and myself unless we are not saved. We who meet in the meeting place at 321 East Street Road are not called the little flock. We are called "The meeting place of those who meet in the Lord's name in Hangchow."

Outsiders call us "The Little Flock" because the hymnal we use is called Little Flock Hymnal. This really is not our name, because we do not have a name. We cannot take this broad name. If we have a name, we have become a denomination.

(2) What is the church? Ephesians 1:22-23 says, "The church, which is His Body." Ephesians 4:4 also says, "One Body." Therefore, the church includes all the saved ones who believe in the Lord's name in all times and places. Please look at 1 Timothy 3:15 also. The church is called "the house of God."

Then what is not the church? The church is not a chapel, nor is it a youth group, nor a sect or denomination. Every saved believer in the Lord's name is a member of Christ. The members are produced naturally; they cannot join anything. Therefore, I "meet in the Lord's name" on East Street Road. We have seen that according to the Bible there should not be "denominational" differentiation. Having denominations is a sin. I left Sze Cheng Chapel. I did not leave the church; I only left a denomination. My leaving of the denomination was not

because of individual preference but because of obeying the teachings of the Bible.

(3) In the Bible, the word sanctified in its positional aspect means that something is separated unto God. Please read the section beginning with Matthew 23:17, 1 Timothy 4:4-5, and John 17:19. In the Bible, holy and common are opposites. Holy and sinful are not opposites. Please read Ezekiel 44:23. The brothers and sisters who meet in the Lord's name do not all have a great knowledge of the Bible, nor have we all attained a high level of spirituality. However, we can say that everyone among us is saved. The level of salvation, however, varies. Some have been saved for two months, some for six months, some for a year, and some have just been newly saved. Our greatest work every week is to preach the gospel. Preaching the gospel is to bring unsaved ones in through the door of salvation. Many people misunderstand us and think that we only are trying to pull people out of the denominations. That is a great mistake, but it was also my previous concept.

(4) The organization of the church: The organization of the church is spontaneous just as the organization of a body is spontaneous.

The present chapels and denominations are not the church, so they need man's organization. Because there are many unsaved, unregenerated, and worldly ones in the denominations, they need man's organization.

If you come to Hangchow, I will welcome you very much. However, it is best if we do not discuss this matter because the light which we have individually received is different. You cannot understand the truth of leaving the denominations in your heart without "God's enlightenment." This is my answer to you. Greetings!

Your brother,

Jan Ch'i Yu

July 30, 1934

AN OLD LETTER FROM DAIREN, MANCHURIA

Dear Brothers Ho and Huang:

I have a small question that I hope you can answer for me. Brother Miao Wan Hsiu of the meeting here asked about the matter of registering the church with the government. When I was in Shanghai, Brother Liu Tien Min of Shantung also wrote a letter asking about this matter. Unfortunately, I did not pay attention to how the brothers answered him at that time. Therefore, I can only ask you

brothers to answer the question again. The condition here is certainly different from that in Shantung and inner China. (Parts omitted.) Peace in the Lord!

Your brother in the Lord,

Chang Chen Ming

January 28

Answer

Brother Chen Ming:

We received your letter a long time ago. Please forgive us for not answering sooner. If the local government requires the meeting to register, we should obey. However, we cannot register a name because we may not have names. We can explain to the local officials that we have a Christian meeting at a certain address and then tell them who the responsible ones are. Peace!

Answered by,

Witness

P.S. According to the brothers from Ch'ang-ch'un, the meeting there has already registered with the authorities. A few of the responsible brothers went to the authorities and explained to them the nature and origin of the meeting. They also promised the authorities that they would be completely responsible for that meeting. I have heard that not only were they able to do this without difficulty, but the authorities even complimented them.

A LETTER FROM BROTHER WITNESS LEE

(FROM SHANGHAI TO FUKIEN)

Mr. Nee:

I received your letter. I thank you for the thorough teachings it gave me. I hope you will be willing to teach and correct me often.

Thank the Lord, He really blessed Brother Luan's work in Chefoo this time. Brother Chao Pi Cheng sent a letter that said, "The condition of this conference was very good. Brothers T'ien P'ing Fang and Chang Tze Chieh were helped much by this conference...The sisters' work and fellowship is much better than before. The brothers and sisters seem to be a little revived." Brother Chao Ching Hai sent a letter, saying, "We thank God because He has heard our prayer and the prayers of all our brothers and sisters. He bound Satan for us; therefore, we were not bothered by him in this conference. He also caused us to see the Lord's victory. After we received your telegram that Brother Luan would be coming to Chefoo by the Tung Chou Steamer, the children in every home got sick...Some became sick from falling off the heated beds; some became sick from falling out

of their strollers. The rest were mainly sick with fever. They were all very ill...But through the desperate prayer of the brothers and sisters, all the sick children were well by the time of the first meeting...In this conference, God truly blessed us. We really see a revival in our brothers and sisters. We truly thank and praise our dear Father. He also preserved His servant, Brother Luan, so that he was very healthy physically...Many brothers and sisters who love the Lord in the denominations came to attend the meetings. All the seats in the meeting hall were filled every meeting, and we even added chairs in the corridor...Mr. Hsu Chu Lan, the leader of the home table meetings, was very touched. He bought many of our books...He said he would definitely be able to go to Hangchow to attend the conference there." Brother Chang Tze Chieh sent a letter, saying, "During this conference the devil attacked strongly, but in the end he was defeated. During the daytime, it rained often, but every evening it cleared up at meeting time. After the meeting was over, it rained all day and night. There were thirteen days of meetings. Brother Luan testified twenty-two times to us. One day he spoke for eight hours including the time he spoke to outsiders. When we were singing hymns, his voice was hoarse, but during the prayer, his strength increased...We really thank and praise God that His presence is so good! The atmosphere in every meeting was very living (one meeting was not so good); the flavor of the meetings gives us sweet longings. Brother Luan said many times that it was because some took up the responsibility to pray. I was edified very much during this time. May you brothers thank the Lord much!" Yes, we really should thank the Lord! May He preserve what He has done there through our brother.

I already answered the letter to the brothers in P'ing Yang and put the news into the Collection of Newsletters. A few days ago, I felt that I should leave the city, but I do not know where to go. After receiving your letter today, maybe I should go to P'ing Yang. However, I will wait for the Lord to give me the message and then make the arrangements. Please pray much for this.

There are great difficulties in the matter of visitation among the brothers in Shanghai. Brothers Tu and Wu do not have much time, and I do not have much either. I hope Brother Chang returns soon. We are now paying attention to the matter of the brothers' fellowship. It seems that recently the brothers have risen up. (We see it in the table meeting and their prayer.) I really need help and prayers now. Peace!

Your brother,

Witness Lee

August 17

P.S. Brother T'ien P'ing Fang returned to Ch'ang-ch'un on August 10. Brother T'ien Hsin Wu is still in Chefoo. Brother Chang Tze Chieh went to Tsingtao on the same day. Brother Luan went to Ch'ang-ch'un yesterday or the day before. He will return south on the Pei-ning and the P'ing-hu lines. Brother Chung Chieh sent a card saying that they are having a ten-day conference beginning August 16. The first three days are for preaching the gospel, and another brother is responsible. The last seven days are for edifying, and Brother Chung Chieh is responsible. Please pray for this.

Your Brother

THE SECOND LETTER FROM MISS RUTH LEE

(Please see the note before the first letter.)

Greetings to the brothers in the Lord, Mr. Watchman and Mr. Witness:

I think you have already received the letter I sent on July 13. I have already completed one stage of the work here (please see my letter to the sisters for the details). Tomorrow I will go to Kung Yi Pu (about ten miles from here) because there are more than ten sisters there. On August 6 I will go to Kwangchow. I have made the arrangements for my trip to Hong Kong for August 11. From August 13 to 17, I will have a Bible study with the sisters in Hong Kong.

This is a good place to work. Transportation is very convenient. If someone wanted to preach the gospel, he would have many opportunities. Brother T'ang is a pure brother. But there is still a question as to whether or not he has really been called to do full-time work. Perhaps he will have to find a job in the future. Perhaps he is still waiting.

The brothers in the country do not have much knowledge about how to meet. There are two reasons for this: They lack spiritual edification, so they do not understand how to touch and follow the leading of the Holy Spirit in the meeting. There is also no one to train them. They are often wrong even in the matter of applying the hymns in the Little Flock Hymnal. They cannot be blamed for this. Therefore, I hope that something concerning the truth of the church (the gospel also, because it is the foundation) can be published soon. The formal version of the Little Flock Hymnal needs to be published soon with an explanation of what

kind of hymn should be sung at what time so that this habit does not become so set that it cannot be changed.

Many things cannot be clearly understood unless one sees it with his own eyes. Therefore, I hope that the responsible brothers in the work will go to each locality to see for themselves when they have the opportunity. Then they will know the true shortcomings, needs, and strong points of every place and will be able to bear the responsibility to pray and help.

I feel even more that the gifted brothers and sisters should remember the entire church in the future. Once a meeting has been established for one or two years, the gifted brothers should not just sit in the same old place. If they do not travel, one locality will constantly improve while other places will never receive help or gain sinners for the Lord.

The publication is only good for some people. Many brothers and sisters need a face-to-face explanation. Therefore, every meeting place should have some who can speak directly to the congregation.

I really feel that the workers should come from the apprentices and not the schools. Those who were apprentices have assurance when they are working, while the students are prone to become idealistic.

It is difficult to say when I will return to Shanghai. (I am waiting for a letter from the co-working sisters before I will know.) During this time I have been praying that God would direct me concerning my path in the near future. Perhaps I will not be able to give myself to the publication work this year but will visit more places where there are sisters but which have no one to work among them. Therefore, I can only ask Mr. Witness to continue working on Collection of Newsletters. Thank God! There are more and more brothers in Shanghai now. May God choose more brothers to be co-workers in the literature work. May God bless you.

From,

Ruth Lee

July 31 in Kung Ho City, Taishan

THE RECENT NEWS FROM BROTHER HAN FU SHENG

Brother Nee:

The edification which the children of God received at the last Overcomers' Conference seems to be more than they received in the two previous conferences. Glory, praise, and thanks be to the God of blessing. Amen.

Not long after I returned from the conference, my eldest child died of tuberculosis. Although at first it broke my heart, thank the Lord; He breaks and then bandages, wounds and then heals, with His hands. Through this fiery trial, the truths I had newly received have become my experience. Praise the Lord!

When I was in Shanghai, I told you a little about the way I had been going for the past few years. But now the Lord's light has given me great enlightenment. Woe to me if I continue to disobey! At first I did not want to tell you what I had passed through. However, I can be silent no longer, because I need those who are in one accord with me to pray for me and instruct me.

I had a little knowledge about the denominations for quite some time, but because there are still a few faithful lovers of the Lord in the denominations, I really could not bear to separate from them (actually, it was not being separated from the brothers but from the denominations)! I was also slow to obey because I saw some who had left the denominations become a "I am of Christ" sect. They look on the brothers in the denominations like the Jews look at the Samaritans. If this is the case, the more they leave the denominations, the more denominations there will be. Therefore, I thought it would be better to "change the denominations" than to "leave the denominations." What is more, I could avoid many sufferings of the cross!

Last year I agreed to accept a job with the Chen Chiang Baptist Church. I was a preacher. I did not agree to being a pastor. This year Mr. Ma of the mission board returned to his own country. He wanted to hand over the control of the church to me. So I did my best to explain my idea of reforming the denominations. After many debates, I finally saw the characteristics of the denominations and knew them clearly to the core. At this point, I woke up and realized that I could only leave the denominations; they will never be dissolved. The command in the Bible is to "come out." My idea to reform the denominations was really absurd! I boldly and decisively announced that I was leaving the denominations during the last week of May.

In the first week of June, I had the first table meeting in my home. Sister Liu and Sister Liang came from the Chi Lu Medical School in Tsinan. They are now working as nurses in the Christian hospital here. They have much light of the truth, and they encouraged me very much! Step by step the Lord Himself led us to have a meeting in the Lord's name in Chen Chiang. We few were held fast by the Lord.

The news of our table meeting spread through all the denominations that very same day. They were so afraid of such a little matter that they created a storm in the whole city. I heard that they had emergency meetings on both Monday and Tuesday. Their first step was to forbid the two sisters working in the hospital to come to our meetings. If they did not receive the exhortations, the sisters would lose their jobs. Their second step was a plan to "deflect the tiger from the mountain." They tried to tempt me to leave Chen Chiang. I told the representatives they sent that I was not interested in any profit. If the Lord ordered me to stay here, I would not leave even if I would die! As of this minute, storms attacking us have not stopped.

We have had the table meeting six times. Every one likes to linger around the Lord's table. There are four or five sisters and two or three brothers in every meeting. Unfortunately, the brothers are still milk-drinkers. They cannot bear any responsibility. I am extremely lonely now.

We hope the Lord will give us a place to preach the gospel soon. It is not very convenient to have the table meeting on a mountain either. We would like to know whether or not our gospel hall could have a name like Gospel Chapel, Jesus Chapel, Testimony Chapel, or Preaching Hall. It seems that it is very difficult to attract outsiders to come hear a message in a place without a name.

How should we baptize a seventy-year-old person who cannot go all the way into the water? Some people kneel in the water to be baptized; then the baptizer pushes them forward and immediately helps them up. Is this the proper way? May you be blessed.

Your brother in the Lord,

Han Fu Sheng

June 12, under the lamp

P.S. How has your health been? I think of you often.

Note from Watchman: The Lord has really worked in every place to bring many of His faithful children into the way of obedience. We thank Him! We really praise the Lord for our Brother Han. With regard to whether or not their meeting is "standing on the ground of the church" or whether they know what the Body life is or whether they are expressing this life in a locality, I do not think we should make any hasty judgment. We should thank God for them. I think that in the future, it would be best if some of us went to visit people like Brother Han that are raised up in a certain place. Perhaps we can write letters to help them see that leaving the denominations is only negative and is not worth anything; they must

also express the Body life on the positive side and stand on the ground of a local church. Perhaps they will misunderstand our reasons for pursuing this. But if they do not receive this vision, we cannot go to fellowship with them, nor can we recognize their table as the table that God has established in the locality. However, when they understand these matters, they will see that we are right. This is God's requirement. May those who leave the denominations not think that they can be loose because everyone else is lawless.

WITH REGARD TO IDOLS AND MILITIAS

To the brother in the Lord, Mr. Kuang Hsiung:

After leaving Shanghai, I have often thought about the grace the Third Overcomer Conference gave us. We thank the Lord. We hope that our work increases in light and in a deeper obedience. There are twelve places with meetings in the P'ing Yang region of Chekiang province. There are twenty-one localities in Tai Shun and five in the Fu Ting region of Fukien province. In my prayer over the past few years, I have had the hope of taking a trip through Tai Shun. I had the opportunity to do so in March of this year. On March 17 I arrived in Ya Yang Hu Wei in Tai Shun and stayed there for four weeks. I held a conference for five days. Brother Lai Kun Ho translated for me because I spoke a different dialect. We also had a meeting concerning the needs of the work of the church. Brother Huang Lu Ch'uan also attended the meeting. I do not have time to write an article about the condition of the work and its results. If the Lord is willing, in the near future I will do my best to write something and to fellowship about the gifts from the Lord and how they edify and render help for people concerning their gifts from the Lord. There is a question now concerning the Lord's table and the sin of idolatry. If I have answered it well, please publish my answer in Collection of Newsletters with a note so that people can be helped even more. The idols are very strong in the locality where I am presently. May the Lord bless all those in Him to be victorious through Him and to glorify His name! Enclosed please find the questions and answers. Peace in the Lord!

Your little brother in the Lord,

Wang Yu T'ing

April 27

Question: A believer has a common inheritance with an unbeliever in an idol temple. When the year of temple duty falls on that believer, is it all right for him to

stay home and prepare the feast for the others, even if he does not worship the idols?

Answer:No. If the believer does this he has touched the sin of worshipping idols. The source of the feast is the feast of demons. It is a matter of worshipping idols, and believers should flee from it (1 Cor. 10:14). Believers and unbelievers should not be dissimilarly yoked (2 Cor. 6:14). We must come out from their midst (v. 17). This is what the Almighty Lord has said.

Question:A believer and unbelievers have a common inheritance with the family grave in it. In the year that the unbelievers take care of the grave, they sacrifice to the demons, and the believers attend their feast. In the year that the believers care for the grave, they do not sacrifice to the demons. The unbelievers take care of the sacrifice themselves, while the believers prepare the feast for them at home. What do you think of this arrangement?

Answer:If the believers do this, they have also committed the sin of worshipping idols. The Bible has very clear teachings about this. The Bible completely separates the table of demons and the table of men. If it is a table of demons (1 Cor. 10:14-22), whatever is on the table, even if it has not been sacrificed to the demons, becomes part of the demonic feast once it is placed on the table. A table of men, like the table at a banquet or a wedding feast, may have food that has been sacrificed to idols, yet it is still part of the banquet or wedding feast. It is not part of a demonic feast, and there is no sin of idolatry involved. Hence, we can partake of it. With regard to whether or not a believer should prepare a feast in conjunction with rituals at the family grave or participate in the cup of such a feast, the most important point he must ask himself is whether or not this feast of the grave ritual is a demonic feast! If the source is a demonic feast, we are eating and drinking of the table of demons, and what we prepare is also a demonic feast. If we do this, we will incur the Lord's wrath and cannot drink the cup of the Lord (v. 21).

Question:If a brother has a large common inheritance containing many graves that require sacrifices, what should he do?

Answer:If the brother is to take his rightful share, the parties involved must agree: (1) to give the brother his share separately; (2) that when it is the brother's turn to care for the graves, he does not sacrifice anything, nor does he spread a demonic feast. If they are willing to let these matters rest, then the brother can take his inheritance. If he cannot avoid sacrificing to demons or preparing a demonic feast, he should choose rather to give it up even if the inheritance is the

whole world. Incidentally, trying to settle the matter in court is also a damage to the Lord's glory.

Question: If a believer's wife does not believe and the believer allows her to prepare the demonic feast when it is their turn to care for the family worship of demons, or if a believer's father and mother are not believers and he cannot stop them from worshipping demons, does the believer have a part in either of these two sins of idolatry?

Answer: The husband is the head of the wife. The wife should obey the husband. If the husband allows her to sin, it is as if he had sinned himself. Children should obey their parents and not control them. The children cannot be held accountable for the parents' sin in worshipping idols. The two stand in different positions (Eph. 5:22; 6:1). However, the believer should stay far away from matters of idolatry (demonic feasts).

Mr. Nee, please read through the answers to these questions about idols and publish them in Collection of Newsletters. The local government here has recently set up a militia. Can the believers refuse to join it? It is a matter of law. I hope you will study this and give us some advice. Greetings to Mr. Chang Kuang Hsiung.

Additional Note from Wang Yu T'ing

Note from Watchman: Brother Wang's answers concerning the matter of idols are very correct. We believers should keep ourselves from doing these things which bring on the Lord's wrath. I deeply believe that even if we lose something of a worldly inheritance, God will bless us. Read Hebrews 13:5-6.

With regard to the matter of the militia, we must remember: (1) We should obey those with authority over us (Rom. 13:1); (2) we cannot kill, even in war (Matt. 26:52). Therefore, when our country organizes a militia, we cannot disobey. However, we cannot go to war for any reason. Therefore, I think:

(1) If they require us to be trained, we can go; but when there is a war, we cannot fight.

(2) Our training invariably leads to conscription so that when there is a war, we will be forced to go against our will. It would be better for us to not attend the training at all.

(3) If we believers cannot obey the authority by fulfilling the law, then we should obey our country by accepting the punishment. They may have a severe penalty

of a jail sentence or a fine for those who do not enter the militia, but we should obey them in this matter.

Brothers, we must be faithful unto death. We should not procrastinate in regard to our testimony for the truth.

A LETTER FROM BROTHER LUKE HSUAN

Brother Tu:

I have enclosed the draft of a letter I wrote recently for the purpose of leaving the denominations. Please look it over and notify the responsible brothers or all the brothers so that they will know that I am definitely walking in the same way with you. May the Almighty Lord lead me, as a weak and useless little lamb, to go on, and may He cover and protect me until He comes. May the Lord bless you!

Your little brother in the Lord,

Luke Hsuan

July 23

Mr. Pastor and the saints called in grace together by the Lord:

After being called in grace by the Lord, He enlightened me to know that a Christian is already in His name and cannot take on another name (i.e., Anglican). For example, a wife cannot add another man's name on to her husband's name. If she does this, what kind of woman is she? In addition, the Lord has shown us how much the denominations have deviated from the clear teachings of the Bible. He hates: (1) divisions (1 Cor. 1:10-13); (2) the flesh, which is according to the fashion of the world (3:3-5); and (3) factions, works of the flesh (Gal. 5:19-20). In order to obey the Lord, I have especially written this letter to ask you to strike my name from your record. From now on I have no relationship with the Anglican Church. Perhaps you will not agree with this action, but I still hope that you will be noble Bereans and search the Scripture to see whether or not this doctrine is right. May the Almighty Lord bless you personally. Amen.

A Christian,

Hsuan Hsiang Pao

I believed and was baptized in 1927 under the name of Hsiang Pao or Ling Sheng.

RECENT NEWS FROM THE CHURCH IN SU CHIA TSUI, NORTHERN KIANGSU

To the brothers and sisters in the Lord:

We greet you in the Lord. May the Lord keep you as He keeps us. The situation in northern Kiangsu is not very peaceful (because there are bandits causing trouble everywhere). The hearts of the people are fearful and worried, so in our locality (Su Chia Tsui) we have a meeting every afternoon to pray for this situation. Last night while we were sleeping, we suddenly heard rapid gunfire at about 2:00 in the morning. There were twenty or thirty bandits who stormed the streets firing their guns and breaking down doors. They were very fierce. (At that time we could only pray quietly before God.) The police and militia in our town could not hold them off, so the bandits plundered from door to door. When they left, they took thirty to forty women, old folk, and children with them. When the dawn broke, they went to the northeast. Thank the Lord, He preserved us in this situation and answered our prayer. None of the houses of the believing brothers and sisters in this town met with danger. All were blessed by the Lord with peace. Please do not worry. We thank Him a thousand times, even ten thousand times. May the grace of the Lord be constantly with us all. Amen.

From,

the church in Su Chia Tsui, northern Kiangsu

(Note from Watchman: There is no denomination in Su Chia Tsui, so they can call themselves the church in Su Chia Tsui. Localities with denominations cannot do this.)

A LETTER FROM BROTHER WANG K'AI SEN

(See the answer to this letter in the preceding issue)

Peace in the Lord to Mr. Watchman:

Last year the Lord gave me a special opportunity to meet you and talk at length with you. I really gained a great benefit from it. I have already told you something of the situation at Li gospel hall. I think you still remember. You exhorted me to bear the responsibility to deal with them and openly discuss their most important errors. After I left I told Brother Chang Chia Chi about your exhortation in detail. The two of us specifically prayed in one accord for this matter and asked for God's leading. If it was according to God's will, we were going to leave the gospel hall. We wanted to obey no matter what the cost. I recently learned from a Western brother the results of your work in England last year. He said that a new doctrine had been discovered which caused many churches in England to divide. He said that this doctrine had already spread to the gospel hall in Singapore. He told us to guard against it watchfully. He also said that the doctrines you preached in England had already been published in English. We were very

happy. Praise the Lord for His victory. But the Western brothers in Singapore already knew that our faith was not the same as theirs, so they paid careful attention to the messages we preached in the gospel hall. Three weeks ago, they made an appointment with Brother Chang and myself to have an open discussion with them. They said that Brother Chang's preaching about unwatchful Christians being punished and thrown into a place in the outer darkness to weep and gnash their teeth was a false doctrine. They said that Matthew 24 and 25 both refer to the Jews and have nothing to do with the believers. They said we were the children of God, not His servants. They said this preaching nullified the accomplishment of the cross and would cause the brothers in the gospel hall to stumble. Then they quoted Romans 8:1, saying that a believer would never be condemned again. Although I refuted them with some questions, they answered wildly according to their own will. We did not want to argue with them and could only prepare to withdraw from them. We have now stopped meeting at the gospel hall, but we have not clearly stated the reason we cannot join with them again. I am writing this letter so that you will know what has happened. You thoroughly know the content of the Brethren Church. Please tell us the details of the evidence that proves they are a denomination so that the next time we meet with them for an open discussion, we will be able to deal with and prove their many errors. Then we will be finished with this matter, and our hearts will have peace. This is a very important matter. It is best if you could spare some time to answer this letter no matter how busy you are with your work for the Lord. I am waiting for your answer. May you have peace that surpasses understanding. Greetings to the brothers and sisters in the Lord in Shanghai.

Your brother in the Lord,

Wang K'ai Sen

April 24, 1934

Please ask them to remember to pray for us.

COLLECTION OF NEWS FROM TAI SHUN, CHEKIANG PROVINCE

Tai Shun is one of the five counties in Wenchow. P'ing Yang is its neighbor on the east. It is bordered on the south by Fu Ting (T'ung Shan), Fukien province, and it is joined to Shou Ning on the west. It touches Jui An. Its topography is very mountainous. The standard of living of the people is very simple. Transportation is not very convenient, so the gospel has not been preached as quickly as it was

in P'ing Yang. The region is divided into two townships. To the north is Yi Yu Township; the denominations were established there a long time ago. To the south is Kuei Jen Township; it has twenty-four meeting places in the Lord's name. However, of these twenty-four, ten used to be with the China Inland Mission. The other fourteen left the denominations and then separated or were established after the brothers preached the gospel and brought people to believe. I will now describe how and why they left the denominations so that the brothers and sisters who are members together with us can know.

Brother Lai was the first one enlightened by the Lord to see that the denominational system was not according to the Bible. Nevertheless, he did not do anything immediately because he was the only one standing. He was led by the Lord to attend the first conference in Shanghai, and he received great help from the brothers during this conference. When he returned home, he boldly testified for the Lord in the two places of Chi Tan and Hu Wei in Ya Yang (name of the area). Some of the listeners at that time were surprised, and some opposed, secretly resisted, or spread rumors behind his back. They suffered all kinds of misunderstandings, criticisms, and difficulties and were even called "The Little Flock," "Watchman Nee's Group," or "Spiritual Group" along with some other names. But thank the Lord, praise God that in this situation the Lord still used His love and powerful arm to snatch a few sticks out of the fire. They were Chang Yung Chiu, Lee Pang Ch'uan, Wang Piao Chiu, Wu Hsien Ch'uan, and Ho Teng K'ai. Because they had just come out, they had difficulty finding a meeting place for rent on such short notice. They temporarily borrowed the upstairs of Brother Lai's old house. Although the room was small and there weren't many people, the Lord was with them. They were very joyful in the deepest part of their spirits. From that time on the Lord graced them often. Later the Lord did some work through this small number of brothers and also worked in the denominations. The Lord gradually opened their eyes and resolved their misunderstandings. It was not long before all the brothers and sisters in the churches in Ya Yang were like hibernating creatures who awake after a thunderclap in the spring. They had been shaken, and there was a strong revival. Therefore, they publicly announced to the denominations that they were leaving. The rest of the places were still in the realm of and under the control of the China Inland Mission: Nan Hsi (Sze Hsi), Ke Ling, Ts'ai Chai, Hsiu Hsi, Hsiu Hsi Pien, Ying Pien. This was the first church in Kuei Jen Township to leave the

denominations, and it was the principal cause in the raising up of meetings in this region.

In 1925 *The Christian* was published. Through the light in *The Christian*, the Lord opened the eyes of the brothers in Hsiu Hsi, T'o Ti, Ying Pien, Ts'ai Chai, and other places. They too saw that in too many matters the denominations did not match the Bible. However, they were not completely clear about the truth of the church at that time. Therefore, they hoped to do an improving work from within. Although Brother Chen Ch'ing Fa was among them at the time and helped them quite a bit with his work, the time was not ripe, and the co-workers were not one. There were also people who were doing a damaging work among them. Those in the group who were for keeping the denominations rose to oppose. Later Brother Chen moved back to his home town, but he was alone and brave in leaving! He alone resigned from his position with the denomination. He was the first person to formally leave the China Inland Mission in P'ing Yang, and he was also our pioneer in obeying the Lord by leaving the denominations.

Later, there was a meeting in Ch'iao Tun Men. God came in from another angle by leading old Mr. Ts'ai Chi Ch'ing and Brother Mao Ch'ing Shih of Hsiu Hsi to attend some meetings there. Through Brother Wang Yu T'ing's messages, they were touched. Although they had a doubting, questioning attitude during the first few days, by the end, their problems completely melted away and they obeyed happily. When they went home, they encouraged the brothers in Hsiu Hsi, T'o Ti, and other places to leave the denominations. This was the second principal cause in the meetings being raised up in the region.

According to the regulations of the China Inland Mission in P'ing Yang and Tai Shun, there were four meetings for teachers every year. There was also one large general meeting and one small general meeting. In the teacher's meeting, the teachers were divided into four levels, A through D. P'ing Yang and Tai Shun had their own small general meeting. The small general meeting for Tai Shun alternated between Yi Yu Township and Kuei Jen Township. The methods were full of man's will. It is difficult to describe in detail. In the large general meeting, P'ing Yang and Tai Shun joined together, but the location was in P'ing Yang. Every year at the time of the large general meeting, the local meetings had to select representatives to go to it. Once there, they had to select the meeting chairman, the assistant chairman, the general treasurer, the secretary, and other positions. They also had to decide on the tenets of the faith and many other bothersome matters. There were also many things passed at the large general

meeting which the representatives from each locality had to be responsible for, such as the cost and the service. Some of the brothers had already received the Lord's enlightenment. When they attended this meeting, they went in happiness and returned in sorrow. They passed through the bitterness of grieving the Holy Spirit for several years. In 1928, in the second month of the lunar calendar, it was time for the large general meeting again. The brothers from the churches in Kuei Jen Township, Nan Hsi, Ke Ling, Ts'ai Chai, Ying Pien, etc., all went to the meeting. Brother Pao Tze Ching of Nan Hsi got up boldly in the meeting and testified for the Lord, saying that denominations were wrong. He also said that if the error was not rectified, we would not return to a meeting of that nature. When the leaders of the meeting saw the troublesome situation, they realized that there was a danger of division if they acted with a one-track mind without calling for a change. They used trickery and changed the outward appearance without changing the inward substance to bring the brothers back and mollify them. They said that in the large and small general meetings changes could be made for the better. They concluded that only the matters of administering the teachers and the work, testing the faith of the candidates for baptism, and doing the actual baptizing had to be done by the pastors. Most of the brothers there were confused about the truth concerning the church, so they agreed to this method. Later, the leaders sent Mr. Chen Fang to Nan Hsi (Sze Hsi). In this way, we had partially left the denominations and were partially going along in the Lord's way for another two years. Nevertheless, thank God and praise the Lord because God's work is immeasurably marvelous! Although Mr. Chen Fang was sent by the denomination to Nan Hsi, he not only refused to preserve the denomination by being their faithful servant, but he humbly received the truth as soon as he arrived in Nan Hsi. Day by day he obeyed more and more until he finally completely obeyed. He was like this with respect to the truth and with respect to his needs. He did not look to the mission board but completely relied on Jehovah. When it was time for the large and small general meetings, he did not take part in them, nor did he attend the meetings. Therefore, in 1930, all the meeting places in the church in Kuei Jen Township completely left the denominations and broke off their relationship with them, with the exception of a few who wanted to preserve the denominations (they do not meet any longer). Later Mr. Chen Fang escaped to his home town because a gang went on a wild rampage and began to cause problems. This was the third principal cause of the brothers in Tai Shun turning from the denominations.

I have just described the three major factors. The other factors are very complicated, so I will stop here but will bring them out as I describe the condition of each meeting. Now I will describe the condition of the meetings that left the old denominations and how they erroneously divided, even though they did. I will also tell about their weak condition and how the Lord preached the gospel through the brothers, how people believed, and the condition of the newly established meetings in each locality.

1. The Condition of the Meeting in Nan Hsi (Generally Called Sze Hsi)

Nan Hsi used to belong to the China Inland Mission. In 1928 it left the system of denominations. All the brothers were in one accord in meeting in the Lord's name. However, the denomination would not let go because this locality is in a crucial location. They used the method of stubborn entanglement to keep them connected with the denomination. In 1930 the brothers finally were able to completely cut off their relationship with the denomination. Now the meetings are in a building on a mountain plateau. It is a quiet place in the midst of a noisy region. The meeting hall has its back to the mountain and faces a stream. The water sparkles as it flows by. The natural setting is very charming. The meeting hall is very pretty, and it has a lawn. It is very elegant and quiet. It is an ideal place for the believers to meditate and fellowship in spirit. There are more than thirty people in the meetings who have already partaken of the table. There are another twenty or more who come to hear the messages but have not yet taken the table. There are seven newcomers. In all there are about seventy people in the meetings. Every Lord's Day five brothers take turns giving the messages and bearing the responsibility for the meetings. They are Pao Ts'ung Hsien, Pao Tze Ching, Pao Kuei Ju, Ho Ping Wen, and Ho Tao Huang. Sometimes Brother Lai is home and he also helps with the messages. There are two sisters, Pao Lin Hsiang and Pao Mei Hsiu, who also work among the sisters, teaching them to read a little and to sing hymns. I am now living here. If I do not go out, I help them sometimes. However, some of the brothers and sisters are distracted by their business and are busy making money. Some must bear heavy responsibilities at home and have many family affairs to handle. At this time, no one has stepped forth to solely answer to the Lord. Brothers and sisters, please pray for this matter. Ask the Lord to raise up His people to be absolutely for Him. We have hoped for this for a long time.

2. The Beginning and Condition of the Meeting in Hsia Ch'iao

The meeting here split off from Nan Hsi after the latter left the denominations. They used to go to Nan Hsi to meet. Some brothers and sisters were from Hsi Yuan. Although it was only ten miles to Nan Hsi, they had to walk along the edge of the stream. The road is steep and narrow, and when it rains, the stream overflows its banks, so they had to walk on the mountain path in the water. It was very difficult for the sisters. If there was a meeting in Hsia Ch'iao, they would only need to travel less than half the distance to Nan Hsi. The brothers prayed for this matter. Later, everyone discussed it and felt that it was the Lord's will. In 1931 they began to split up and meet in Brother T'ang Li Ch'ing's home. He willingly consecrated his house to the Lord. At the time they began meeting, the total number in the meeting was a little more than ten, including both men and women. Later, they were blessed by the Lord, and the number increased gradually. Brother Li Ch'ing is now responsible in the table meeting and for the message. He takes responsibility for the affairs of the meeting, because he is very single for the Lord. His wife is also very much in one accord with him. They very gladly give hospitality to the saints. They only need help in the matter of edifying the brothers, because he does not have much gift for speaking. Brothers and sisters, please pray for them.

3. The Beginning and Condition of the Meeting in Ke Ling

This meeting originally belonged to the China Inland Mission. In 1929 they turned this way. There were several reasons for their turn. First, several brothers in the meeting had read The Christian and had seen the light concerning the truth of the church. Second, Brother Chen Fang was among them, and he taught them something concerning the matter of the church while doing an edification work. Third, the fellowship between the brothers in this locality and in Nan Hsi was very close, as close as lips are to teeth. When they were still in the denominations, the brothers here would discuss important decisions like the hiring of teachers or other matters with the brothers in Nan Hsi. They would bear the responsibility together. Therefore, when the Nan Hsi brothers left the denomination, it spontaneously affected them here. The other reasons for turning from the denominations are difficult to enumerate. There are fifty brothers and sisters who already take the table. There are another fifty or so who come to hear the messages but who have not taken the table yet. There are also a few

newcomers. Altogether, there are more than one hundred people in the meetings. Every Lord's Day morning there is an edification meeting. In the afternoon, they break bread to remember the Lord. Six brothers, Wang Yeou Kao, Wang T'ien Kuan, Wang Hsing Ch'ing, Wang Hsu Yuan, Wang Shou Tiao, and Wang Mu Ch'uan, bear the responsibility for the messages and the affairs of the meeting. There is also a brother named Wang Chu Yeou who used to be a teacher in the China Inland Mission but left the denomination in March of this year. Sometimes he also helps to preach a message in this locality if he is not traveling. On the surface, this meeting looks as if all the members obey the Lord and meet in the Lord's name. The number of those who have been inwardly revived, however, is very small. As for the rest, some are young in life, and it is difficult to say whether or not some have life, because they are just obeying. Brothers and sisters, please pray for this matter. I really hope that the Lord would bless them so that the entire congregation could be revived.

4. The Beginning and Condition of the Meeting in Sung Hsiu Yang

This locality is about ten miles from Nan Hsi. A few of them used to come to Nan Hsi for the meetings. With the exception of a few brothers who are clearly saved, it is difficult to tell whether or not the others are brothers. This locality did not need to establish a separate meeting. Before they saw the will of God clearly, and before God raised up some responsible ones, they should definitely not have established a separate meeting. However, there were some who did not want to walk such a long way; they wanted a separate meeting. Others mistakenly heard the brothers say, "Since God is everywhere, people can worship Him anywhere. We do not need to meet together and be bound by geography. The Lord also told the Samaritan woman that she did not have to worship on the mountain or in Jerusalem." These ones wanted to separate also. Some people saw that other localities had separated, so they wanted to do it. Although the brothers exhorted them to do it slowly, they could not wait patiently. So they started a separate meeting in 1929. When they first separated, there were more than ten brothers and sisters. Later, they gradually cooled off. Although the brothers from other localities go there on the Lord's Day to help them, it has been very hard to keep it going. Fortunately, some of the brothers also went to the conference in Lien T'ou and passed through some dealing. The condition of the meeting now is very

weak! Sometimes only a few people come to the meetings. I ask all the brothers and sisters who care for the church to pray earnestly for this matter.

5. The Origin and Condition of the Meeting in Hsiu Hsi

I already told you in the preface the general story of how the meeting here began, so I do not need to repeat myself. However, after they left the denomination, no one has continued to do a building work. Therefore, they became colder and drier, darker and weaker, day by day to the extent that it has become a kind of sickness. They were not able to rise up! Although Mr. Ts'ai Chi Ch'ing often works among them to help and encourage them, he is unable to do anything either! Nevertheless, thank the Lord and praise God! The Lord remembers and cares for His poor little lambs! He does not cast away the church He purchased with His blood. In April of this year, He led His faithful servant, Brother Wang Yu T'ing to the churches in Ya Yang. The brothers in Ya Yang also invited the brothers in all the localities to the meetings there. They also sent brothers to Hsiu Hsi especially to invite the brothers! The conference was not long. It only lasted five days, but the Holy Spirit Himself worked in them through His useful vessel to meet their needs in all aspects and to heal all kinds of wounds in them. He watered all their dryness and exposed all their weaknesses. The brothers from Hsiu Hsi came to the conference sad, but they went home rejoicing. Since that time, the Lord has continued to work among them. The dark and weak atmosphere has receded gradually. Their internal condition has been getting brighter and brighter. Even though they have not been fully revived inwardly, their spiritual condition has begun to spring to life. The meeting place is close to the neighbors, and noise from the outside often disturbs the people in the meeting so that the brothers cannot peacefully worship God and remember the Lord. The brothers prayed for this matter in one accord and asked the Lord to arrange a place for them. Thank the Lord, He heard their prayer and has already arranged the land. If there are no special frustrations, the brothers hope to build a meeting place at the end of this year. There are fifteen brothers and sisters in the table meetings. There are fourteen who come to hear messages but have not taken the table yet. Every Lord's Day, Brothers Ts'ai Chia T'ien, Ts'ai Chia Ta, and Ts'ai Er Chia are responsible for preaching the messages and caring for the affairs of the meeting. Old Mr. Ts'ai Chi Ch'ing does not go out of his home often, but he sometimes helps in giving messages. Brothers and sisters, please do not forget to pray for them.

6. The Beginning and Condition of the Meeting in the Village of Wu

Originally, no one in this locality believed. In 1930 the Lord led Mr. Ts'ai Chi Ch'ing of Hsiu Hsi to preach the gospel there. The Lord blessed the work and several brothers believed. One among them is very precious. His name is Brother Pao Ting Ming. He was originally a famous fortune-teller and master of the Taoist principles of Ying and Yang. After he believed in the Lord, he not only repented, but he also cast off his special privileges and was very zealous for the Lord. He offered his home for the meetings and opened it to the brothers for fellowship. He is very good in the matter of hospitality. The church in Hsiu Hsi has borne a cluster of wonderful fruit since leaving the denomination, despite the fact that they were weak. We really thank the Lord and praise God. There are nine brothers and sisters in the table meetings. There are more than ten people who come to hear the messages but who do not take the table yet. Altogether there are more than twenty people in the meetings. The atmosphere in the meetings is very good. If a brother from another locality comes on the Lord's Day, they let him share the message. If no one comes, Brother Ting Ming bears the responsibility. Now the Lord has given them more grace. Their numbers are gradually increasing, but they are young in life and need edification. Brothers and sisters, please pray for this matter.

7. The Condition of the Experience of the Meeting in Ts'ai's House

This locality was originally a part of the China Inland Mission. In 1928 they turned and began to meet according to 1 Corinthians 14. Before they could accomplish the turn, they went through a period of fighting for about two or three years. Most of the brothers obeyed the Lord, but a few brothers wanted to preserve the denominations. They had arguments over the issue. Brother A said, "There should be organization." Brother B said, "There should not be organization." Brother A said, "There should be a chairman for the meeting." Brother B said, "The Holy Spirit is the only Chairman in the meeting." Brother A said, "We should have the large and small general meetings to maintain the fellowship among ourselves." Brother B said, "We should not have the large and small general meetings. We are joined by the blood, and our fellowship is in spirit. We should not have a special fellowship." Brother A said, "The offering should not be put into a box. It should be designated. If it is not designated, we should not have it."

Brother B said, "The money for the offering should be put into the box. It should not be designated. The workers should also live by faith in Jehovah, and the brothers should be happy to give to God for the workers' use." It is difficult to describe the details of all the debates. Brother Chen Ch'ing Fa was living among them at the time, and they received much help from him. However, a small number of them had a hard attitude! They could not enter into the truth. Soon afterward, Brother Chen left that locality to return to his native place. The denominational leaders sent another worker to them to continue working. Although the brothers still received him as before, they were completely different in the matter of receiving the truth. So they always had debates with him. Through these debates, many brothers who had blindly followed listened quietly and woke up to the error of denominations. They obeyed the Lord then. When the teacher of the China Inland Mission could no longer do anything, he left. At that point nearly everyone met in the Lord's name. There was still one family of three, a father and two sons, who were for preserving the denominations. Thank the Lord, his two sons have obeyed now, and only the father will not come to the meetings. The meetings are in the house of Brother Ts'ai Wei Ts'ung, who faithfully loves the Lord. He and his brother are happy to offer their home for the Lord's use. There are twenty-two brothers and sisters in the table meetings. There are sixteen people who come to hear the messages but do not take the table yet. Brothers Ts'ai Wei Ts'ung, Ts'ai T'ien Cheng, and Ts'ai Tze Chu bear the responsibility for the messages and the affairs of the meetings.

8. The Beginning and Experience of the Meeting in Hsiu Hsi

This locality originally belonged to the China Inland Mission. There were more sisters than brothers in the meetings. It is very difficult to say how this locality left the denominations. Probably it began when the Lord led one brother, Chiu Chi Po, to a conference in Shanghai in 1930 and revived him there. Then Brothers Mao Ch'ing Shih, Lai Chi Ho, Chen Ch'ing Fa, and Ts'ai Ch'i did some edification among them. They left the denomination in 1931, but the denomination did not want to let them go. It still sent a worker there. The brothers continued to receive them as they had in the past, but their meetings were no longer according to the denominational way. They were according to the principles in 1 Corinthians 14. Later, the brothers discussed firing the denominational teacher, but he found out about it and stopped coming. In this way they broke their relationship with the denomination. Now the church meets in Brother Chiu's house which he has

joyfully offered for the Lord's use because he loves the Lord very much. There are nineteen brothers and sisters in the table meetings. There are also more than ten people who come to hear the message but do not take the table yet. There are more than thirty people in the meetings altogether. Sometimes brothers from other localities come to help with the messages, and sometimes Brother Chi Po takes care of the speaking. He is also responsible for the affairs of the meeting. The sisters believe in the Lord and love Him, but some among them are not free because their husbands or families stop them from coming to the meetings or cause problems and persecute them. Brothers and sisters, please pray for this.

9. The Origin and Recent Condition of the Meeting in T'o Ti

The brothers and sisters in this locality used to meet in Hsiu Hsi. Although the brothers in T'o Ti received the enlightenment of the truth at the same time as the brothers in Hsiu Hsi, they were keener than the brothers in Hsiu Hsi in their obedience to the Lord. Therefore, while the brothers in Hsiu Hsi were still in the denominations, the brothers in T'o Ti separated from those in Hsiu Hsi and began their own local meeting in Brother Mao Ping Ch'i's house. When they were just starting, there were only about ten or so, but they solidly obeyed the Lord's truth. Although the building was simple, they were very happy in spirit. Brother Mao Ch'ing Shih was originally an old master carpenter. After believing in the Lord, he was faithful and strong for the Lord. He later saw that the Lord's will was for him to set aside his occupation and do the Lord's holy work, so he obeyed. The Lord saved many sinners through him; the number in the meeting increased gradually until there were too many for the small house to contain. The brothers prayed for the Lord to make provision in this matter. In 1932 the Lord blessed them, and they built a new meeting hall. It was not very large, but it could hold around eighty people. The meeting hall is upstairs. There is a kitchen and living room downstairs. After the meeting hall was finished, Brother Mao Ch'ing Shih's health became unexpectedly weak. He ran a fever day and night, and it became a kind of bone disease. He must stay in bed night and day and cannot get up. The sickness began in the second month of the lunar calendar last year, and he is still not better. But thank the Lord and praise God, he has not backslidden. On the contrary, he is much closer to the Lord than before and has grown in life. He often testifies for the Lord from his bed so that many are established and comforted by him. I have heard some friends say that recently his health is much better. Brothers and sisters, please pray for him. May the Lord bless him so that

he can leave his bed soon. This brother is useful to the Lord. The meetings in several localities were started by the Lord through him and helped through his visits. Because of his sickness, those localities are having some difficulties now. There are twenty brothers and sisters in his own locality who partake of the table. There are sixteen who come to hear the messages but have not taken the table yet. There are eleven new ones this year. Every Lord's Day Brother Mao Ch'ing Shih (mentioned above) and Brother Chen Wan Pi bear the responsibility for the messages and the affairs of the meetings. The rest of the brothers farm tomatoes for a living, so they have great difficulties in the necessities of physical life. Brothers and sisters, please pray for them. May the Lord bless them that they might become rich in the faith.

10. The Beginning and Condition of the Meeting in Tung Hsi

After the meeting in T'o Ti left the denominations, Brother Mao Ch'ing Shih and Brother Lai Chi Ho were led by the Lord to come to this locality to preach the gospel. The Lord blessed them, and many men and women believed. At the time there was not a local meeting, and it was too far to go to another place. One of the brothers, T'ang Ling, rose up and was willing to offer his house to the Lord for the use of the meeting. The brothers continued going there to work, and the Lord continued to bless them. The numbers gradually increased. Although there are not many in this meeting, their spirit is very good. They are young in knowledge but precious in their obedience. Although they have not believed in the Lord for very long, they have already grown in life. Although their material offering is little, their heart of love is sweet. We really thank the Lord and praise God! God bore a cluster of good fruit through His dear servant after he left the denomination. There are twelve brothers and sisters in the table meetings. There are more than ten people who come to hear the messages but who have not yet taken the table. There are around thirty people. Every Lord's Day they meet in the morning to break bread in remembrance of the Lord and in the afternoon to first worship the Lord and then the brothers preach a message. Sometimes the brothers from T'o Ti or other localities come to bear the responsibility of giving messages. If no one comes, two young local brothers, K'e Yen and T'ang Yu, bear the responsibility. Brothers T'ang Ling and T'ang Yu bear the burden of the affairs of the meeting.

11. The Beginning of the Meeting in Chang K'eng Crossroads

The meeting in this locality began when the Lord first worked in Brother Lin Ch'uan Ch'un. He used to go to the China Inland Mission in Shih Yang to worship God and remember the Lord. Some brothers in that place, however, were not behaving like brothers. Their worship was not like worship. Therefore, he came out from there to worship God and remember the Lord individually in his home. Later, the Lord blessed him, and several believers rose up. After this, they officially established a meeting in his home. There are five brothers and sisters in the table meeting now. There are eleven people who come to hear the messages but who have not taken the table yet. Most of the time Brother Ch'uan Ch'un alone is responsible for the Lord's Day meetings. This place is isolated in the steep mountains. The brothers from the other localities do not go there often because the way is inaccurate. Brothers and sisters, please pray for them.

12. The Condition and Experience of the Meeting in Hsia Hung

This locality is one of the most superstitious in the region. They have large and small idols, large and small Buddhas, more than any other place! It goes without saying that the corruption of their customs and the spreading of their sin runs rampant. In 1928 the Lord led Brothers Mao Ch'ing Shih, Lai Chi Ho, and Chiu Chi Po to preach the gospel in this place. The Lord blessed the work, and many women who used to worship Buddha came to believe in the Lord. This shocked the entire village and captured their attention. Many idol worshippers began to oppose them. The sisters were persecuted, suffered difficulties, and were slandered much for the Lord's sake. Being in their infancy, they borrowed the upstairs of a sister's house for the meetings, because they could not find a place to meet. The sister's husband was not saved, but he was very happy to extend hospitality to those in the Lord. They had not been meeting for very long when a local gang began to cause problems. The people of that village hated the gang, so the mayor led the local militia to stand against the gang. The gang won, the people lost, and the mayor was captured. He was beaten to death. The people's property was stolen by the bandits, and many of their houses were burned. The houses and property of these sisters went up in smoke. The things that the brothers had brought there for use in the meetings and their bedding were burned to ashes. When we heard the news, we were very worried in our spirits and secretly thought that these sisters could not stand firm. I went with a few

brothers to strengthen them. On our way there, we thought that the sisters were probably very sad. To our surprise they were just the opposite. When we arrived, we found them not only standing firm, but also filled with joy. The first thing they said was, "Thank the Lord! Praise God!" Later they spoke many words of faith to us. Sister Ch'ien Ai Ling had a husband who loved the world and was unwilling to believe in the Lord. Through this, he saw the emptiness of the world and came to believe in the Lord. Oh, we really thank the Lord and praise God! His works are marvelous! The sisters' faith passed through a fiery trial and was shown to be more precious. But who would have thought that one wave would barely have passed before another one came! Sister Ch'ien's husband had believed only for a short time when he suddenly caught encephalitis. He was dizzy and had a headache for a few days. Then he died! He left four people in his family: three children and his good wife. His eldest son was eight years old, and the youngest child was still nursing. Brothers and sisters, if we were in that environment, it would be so difficult! Thank the Lord! Praise God! Our sister stood firm and gave a good testimony for the Lord. Sister T'ao Kuei Yi, a widow whose husband had passed away when she was a little more than twenty, had a son who was eighteen. In the first month of last year, she arranged a marriage for her son. All the brothers and sisters were happy for him. (He had not believed in the Lord.) Not long after his engagement, he tripped and fell into the stream while fishing and was knocked unconscious. His hands developed convulsions, and he was in a coma for more than ten days. The sister's relatives and the Gentiles came to make trouble. They scolded and shamed the sister. They persecuted her to the uttermost. They even hired wizards and Taoist priests to come to bring her son's soul back and to pray to their gods and demons. Although this sister opposed this very much in her heart, she was outwardly alone and not strong enough to stop them. She could only let them do it. Alas! Before the wizards and Taoists priests could get there, her son died. Brothers, the sisters in this place have been in a terrible way since they believed in the Lord! They have had such difficulties! They have really suffered one thing after another. If the God who comforts man's hearts and our dear Lord had not been with them, these sisters would be in Hades already. There are now three brothers and eight sisters in their meeting. Six of the sisters and one brother attend the table meeting. There are more than ten of them altogether. Every Lord's Day, brothers from other localities come to bear the responsibility for preaching the messages. If no one can come, the sisters praise and worship God and remember the Lord. Recently old Mr. Ts'ai

Chi Ch'ing has gone there to help them. Brothers and sisters, please do not forget to pray for them.

13. The Beginning and Development of the Meeting in Ying Pien

This locality is on the westernmost border of our region. It is joined to Shou Ning. Although it used to belong to the China Inland Mission, its roots are somewhat different than the other localities. A brother from among us, Ts'ai Ch'i, did some edification work among them not long after the denomination had been established. Therefore, they understood the truth more easily than the brothers in the other localities. Furthermore, one of the brothers among them, Su Pi Chung, loved the Lord very much and did much for the church. He was very hungry and thirsty in the pursuit of the truth. He read The Christian and other publications from the Gospel Book Room in 1925. We can say that he was a burning star and was instrumental in turning them away from the denominations. Later, they were helped by the co-workers; they left the denomination in 1929. The leaders of the denomination would not let them go. They often sent workers to them. Although the brothers still received the workers, they would not let go of the matters of the truth. Although the denomination used many methods to try to accommodate them, they stood fast to the end and even debated with them hotly. In the end, the brothers discharged the workers boldly. In 1931 they completely severed their relationship with the denomination. Later, because too many people were meeting in a very small place, they built a meeting hall in 1932 with a capacity of one hundred people. The condition of the meetings is better and more zealous than before because God manifested His special protection among them last year. The region had a severe epidemic of dysentery. Many Gentiles died from it, but not one person in the Lord died. This was a great wonder to the Gentiles, and many in the believers' families also believed. After this epidemic, the number of Gentiles who believed increased gradually. Now there are twenty-one brothers and sisters in the table meeting. There are twenty-eight people who come to hear the message but who do not partake of the table yet. Brothers Su Pi Chung and Su Ting K'ai mainly preach the messages on the Lord's Day and handle the affairs of the meeting. There are a few older brothers who help sometimes. These elderly brothers are very precious because they are so zealous. They are like old eagles who have returned to their youth. They can be a pattern to us all in coming to the Lord.

14. The Condition of the Meetings in Chou Pien and Shih Yang

These two localities originally belonged to the China Inland Mission. They were originally shepherded by the same teacher as Hsiu Hsi Pien and Ying Pien. When the brothers in Ying Pien and Hsiu Hsi Pien left the denomination, the teachers left. The denomination considered these two localities as a burden and abandoned them. The members of these two localities did not leave the denomination for the sake of the truth but instead followed us after being spit out by the denomination. Therefore, we dare not confess that their meetings are of God. There are jealousies, strifes, and sins among them. Although our brothers go to visit them, they have no way to correct them! They have no strength to change anything! The only thing we can do now is let them go on in their own way. There are only two or three people left in one of these two places. Although there are a few more people in the other place, the brothers are not at peace with each other. Among two flesh brothers, if the elder meets downstairs (the meeting place is downstairs), the younger will go upstairs to worship. If the younger is meeting downstairs, the elder will go upstairs to worship. They are like fire and water; they do not mix well with each other. Oh, this is such a pitiful situation!

15. The Beginning and Condition of the Meeting in Lien T'ou

This locality originally belonged to the China Inland Mission. It is difficult to say when or why they left the denomination. They probably left at the same time as Yang Ya or a little before that time. They left because Brother Lai from among us worked among them for a little. Not long after, they left the denomination. Later, Brother Lai left and no one continued the work there. The brothers got colder and colder over time, and many sins occurred among them. There was also a brother who had great compassion and who also loved and gave himself for the church, but unfortunately he was too bold and not wise enough. He did not do things in a measured way. If this brother had had another brother who could have directed him and could have been a helper to him, he would have been a great help to the church. Unfortunately, he did not receive any edification! He was not completely clear about the matter of the church and only understood the other truths partially. Therefore, he always acted independently. His own locality suffered, and other localities were influenced quite a bit by him. Thank the Lord and praise God! He knows the ignorance of His children and sympathizes with them. This year He prepared a brother, Yang Teh Huei, to go there to teach school on the

one hand and to help the church on the other. When Brother Yang Teh Huei arrived and saw the church in this condition, he was very sad! Not long after this, Brother Lai came home from Wenchow and passed through this locality. The two of them discussed how to deal with the church there. They decided to invite the responsible brothers from a few of the localities in the area to meet with them on July 8 to specifically deal with those who had committed the six kinds of sin mentioned in 1 Corinthians 5:11 and with other matters of the administration of the church. Thank the Lord! The sinners in this locality were dealt with as were those in Hsiao Chien, Sung Hsiu Yang, and Chang An. This individualistic brother was also dealt with. He repented, grieved, shed tears, and confessed his past errors. His wife was as sad as he was! There are now twelve brothers and sisters in the table meetings. There are more than ten others who come to hear the messages but do not yet take the table. Brother Yang Teh Huei is mainly responsible for the messages and edification on the Lord's Day. Brothers Ho Teng Ch'in and Ho Teng Yung are responsible for the other affairs of the meeting.

16. The Beginning and Condition of the Meeting in Chang An

Originally, there were a few brothers in this locality who met in Lien T'ou. It is not far from here to Lien T'ou (about seven miles). Why did they separate? It was probably because a few brothers preached only one side of the truth. They gained part of the truth but had not seen the whole picture. They erroneously explained the matter of worshipping God and made up a new term—"New Testament Assembly"—and said that the church is not restricted by location or numbers, and that as long as two or three were gathered in one accord, they could meet in any place. Many brothers heard this and wanted to separate immediately. Although the experienced brothers exhorted them to wait before separating, some of them wanted to meet closer to home and were afraid of the distance, so they had much to say. The brothers then separated. When they separated, there were just a few people. They have not increased at all, nor has their spiritual condition improved. In fact, they have backslidden and are not clean now! Fortunately, after the conference in Lien T'ou, they were dealt with. If they had not received this dealing, they would be in danger now. Many brothers are exhorting them to go back to the meetings in Lien T'ou, but they still do not really want to. Oh, it is really easy to separate but difficult to combine. There are

five brothers and sisters in the table meetings. There are also about five or six people who come to listen to the messages but who do not take the table yet. Brother Chang Yung Fu is responsible every Lord's Day.

17. The Beginning and Condition of the Meeting in Hsiao Chien

This locality did not have a meeting originally. It is a newly opened place. A brother from Lien T'ou came here to preach the gospel in 1929. Some people believed, and they began to meet in a brother's home. Their numbers increased gradually. Some of the brothers and sisters among them are very godly and precious. Unfortunately, the brother who led them to believe had a heart of love but did not have any talent for leading. Neither was he clear about the characteristics of the church. Therefore, he allowed a few unclean ones into the meeting and allowed them to do what they wanted. Fortunately, after the conference in Lien T'ou, they were dealt with, and the unclean ones were sifted out. There are now five brothers and sisters in the table meeting. There are seven others who come to hear the messages but who do not take the table yet. The brothers from Lien T'ou bear the responsibility every Lord's Day. The brothers in Ya Yang have already given a report about the condition of the churches there, so I will not be repetitious.

Your little brother,

Huang Lu Ch'uan

August 14, 1934

NEWS FROM HU SHAN, P'ING YANG, CHEKIANG PROVINCE

To my dear brother in the Lord, Mr. Nee:

Thank God! He led me to your conferences in Shanghai twice. I gained much benefit. Unfortunately, I was attacked in my mind this year, so I have not written to greet you. I am sorry. I have recently been freed somewhat by the Lord's grace. I will tell you something of what happened and of the problems in our locality.

In 1931 I was enlightened by the Lord to see something of myself. Afterwards, I did not want to live and work in the way that I had been. I decided to spend more time praying, reading the Bible, and waiting for the Lord's will. Satan came in at this time to strongly attack my mind and to work in my environment. (My nephew got sick and died, my wife and daughter became ill, I lost some possessions, and the brothers misunderstood me, etc.) These things caused my mind to be

darkened, and I felt there was no way out. I suffered much in this condition! Thank the Lord, at the proper time, the news of the third conference in Shanghai came. My heart desperately prepared to go. The hateful enemy frustrated me on many sides, but the Lord heard my prayer, and I was able to attend the meeting. Praise and thank God! In the ten days of the conference, I really felt the Lord's presence and seemed to see His face with my own eyes and hear His voice with my own ears. I was very touched by the message of testimony on how to receive spiritual blessings. The messages that solved my problems were on Christ as my life and the experience of sufferings. The dark clouds in my heart dispersed, and darkness became light. My heart was very happy. My spirit really wanted to stand up and testify in the last testimony meeting, but I was frustrated by my utterance. Hallelujah! My previous condition has passed. However, my wife's illness is not completely healed. A call to go out and work appears to have come, but I dare not move lightly. Please pray for this much that God's will would not suffer loss in me. With regard to the small problem in our local meeting, there is a brother who has committed the sin in 1 Corinthians 5. The brothers' exhortations are useless, so we can do nothing but cut him off. His evil nature unexpectedly exploded, and he troubled the responsible brothers with a loud voice and evil looks. When the brothers saw his condition, they were grieved to the point of tears. What is the best way to deal with this matter? Please advise us. We also hope that the brothers and sisters in Shanghai will pray for us much so that the Lord's work would not be affected.

Please send five issues of Collection of Newsletters beginning with the sixth issue to me in care of Ho Wei Ch'i, Hsiao Chia Crossing, P'ing Yang, Chekiang Province. Peace in the Spirit!

Your little brother in the Lord,

Chou Ta Ch'ing

February 8, 1934

Greet Brother Chang Kuang Jung, Brother Witness Lee, and Brother Shih Chiu Jung.

Note from Watchman: If this brother really causes this many difficulties for the brothers, he must be cut off. This proves that the brothers were correct in cutting him off. There is nothing to do but use prayer in authority. This is the time for us to prove Christ's victory and the strength of our prayer.

**THE PROBLEM OF MEMORIAL SERVICES
(IN MEMORY OF MR. SUN YAT SEN)**

To our fellow members in the Lord, our dear brothers,
Mr. Watchman Nee, Mr. Chang Kuang Jung, and
Mr. Witness Lee:

We are writing this letter to you because we want to place a problem we have before all the brothers and sisters so that we can all seek God's will and He may be glorified.

There is a Brother Ts'ao here (Brother Chang knew him well in Tsinan) who works for the local office of public works. This brother wants the Lord very much, and he is willing to partake of the Lord's table, but every week the department of public works has a memorial service. All government employees must attend the service. They strictly enforce it. At first we thought that this was a matter of worshipping idols and that it could not be accepted. So we temporarily set aside the matter of accepting this brother.

A few days ago, several brothers thought about the same passage in the Bible without discussing it beforehand. They remembered that the Bible gives us a pattern for this kind of matter. We thought of the record in Daniel 3. They did not worship, but they obeyed the command and stood before the idol. So we are asking, if a brother stands before the picture of a dead person (of course he cannot bow to it), should we receive him at the table or not?

We also thought that attending a memorial service can be considered an attitude of sin, but can we say that he is serving an idol or worshipping an idol? On the other hand, we felt that if we passed over this matter loosely, we might encourage some of God's weaker children to enter into another temptation. We will be faced with this matter before long. We confess that we do not have clear light, nor do we want to act independently among the brothers. So we are writing this letter to you who are leading us in this way. We hope that you can give us an answer soon. Peace in the Lord!

Your little brothers,

Ts'ai Chih Wen, P'an Huei Sheng, Chou Hsing Yi

August 3, 1934

P.S. By the Lord's grace, the brothers are continuing to stand firm in the meeting since Brother Chang returned to Shanghai. However, we will soon move our place of meeting. Two weeks ago, two brothers and two sisters were baptized in Ta Ming Lake according to the teaching of the Bible. (One of these was Brother

Ts'ao, whom we mentioned.) Our hearts are really rejoicing because we saw the Lord's victory again, and some were gained for the Lord's side. We are really young and ignorant before the brothers (this is not polite humility). We have many (spiritual) weaknesses and lacks, so we ask the elder saints to pray especially much for us before the Lord.

Answering Letter

Dear brothers:

Your letter caused us to consider much before the Lord, because we should not be stricter than the Bible, nor should we be more lax than the Bible, lest we miss the will of God.

We really express our sympathy to Brother Ts'ao in this matter. We know how difficult it is for him. We hope that what we write will be of some help in God's hand.

(1) We agree that it would be best if he could completely avoid the memorial service.

(2) If he attends the memorial service, it is all right if he does not bow to the picture, because the memorial service is the government's command to remember Mr. Sun Yat Sen. It does not matter what our personal opinion of Mr. Sun Yat Sen is. We should obey the authority (Rom. 13:1). Furthermore, the apostle clearly says, "Render...honor to whom honor is due" (v. 7), which means to obey those over us. If the country wants to remember Mr. Sun Yat Sen, we should not disobey. But some believers feel that the memorial service is bad because the memorial service involves the ceremony of bowing to his portrait. A report, a minute of silence, an exhortation, or a speech in the memorial service do not contradict the Bible. The only thing in the service that contradicts the Bible is bowing to the portrait of a dead man.

As believers our principle toward our country is that we should obey anything which is not contrary to God's commandment. If there is a conflict, however, we would rather pay any price to obey God and not man.

The memorial service is not wrong. We have nothing to say against the service, so we should obey. However, we cannot agree with their method of memorial. In other words, we are willing to obey the goal of their memorial, but we cannot obey their procedure.

Why is it wrong to bow to the portrait of a dead man? Our brother, Jan Ch'i Yu, has a good explanation. Do you remember what the second commandment says? "Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them [graven images], nor serve

them" (Exo. 20:5). God forbids two things: One is bowing down to the image of anything in the heavens, the earth, under the earth, or in the water; the second is serving them. First, He forbids us to bow down, no matter the reason. Second, He forbids us to serve them. This refers to service with a religious significance. The first cuts off the factor that leads to corruption. The second forbids the real problem.

Portraits of dead men are included in the images of things in the heavens, on earth, under the earth, and in the water. Therefore, we cannot bow to memorial portraits, even if it does not have religious significance.

This matter is very simple. We should obey in the matter of the memorial service, but God forbids the practice of bowing to the portrait during the service. This is something we cannot do.

Therefore, it is all right if our brother goes to the meeting as long as he does not bow to the portrait.

The passage in Daniel 3 which you mentioned is a good proof of this. They only rejected the part of the ceremony which God had forbidden. Furthermore, there is a passage in the Bible which gives us a great deal of light. Do you remember the passage where Naaman the leper was cleansed? He went into the Jordan River and came out clean. After he was cleansed, he said to Elisha, "Thy servant will henceforth offer neither burnt offering nor sacrifice unto other gods, but unto the Lord. In this thing the Lord pardon thy servant, that when my master goeth into the house of Rimmon to worship there, and he leaneth on my hand, and I bow myself in the house of Rimmon: when I bow down myself in the house of Rimmon, the Lord pardon thy servant in this thing" (2 Kings 5:17-18). How did Elisha, the prophet of God, answer his request? "Go in peace" (v. 19). Therefore, with regard to this matter, God wants us to be gracious to the brothers as He is gracious to us.

However, there is one thing we must guard against. We cannot lie to people. If they ask us, we must explain why we do not bow. This is our testimony. We should also say that we are willing to use any other method to respect the things that our country requires us to respect, but we cannot bow down.

Brothers, we can also say, "Go in peace!"

We hope that what we have written is a help to you. May God give us light to know how to act according to His will. Please greet Brother Ts'ao for us and greet the brothers in the meeting. Peace!

Your brothers,
Witness Lee, Chang Kuang Jung, Watchman Nee
September 15, 1934

**NEWS FROM BROTHER CHANG WU SHENG
IN P'ING YANG, CHEKIANG PROVINCE**

Greetings to the servants of God, my most respected and beloved brothers, Mr. Watchman and Mr. Kuang Hsiung:

I have not written for a long time, but I think of you often. May the Father God pour out His rich grace upon you and all your work. May His grace and peace always be with you and with the brothers and sisters in the Lord in every place. Glory to the Lord forever. Amen.

My dear brother, Wang Yu T'ing, was led by the Father God in March to go to the meetings in the Lord in Ya Yang, Tai Shun to do some work (a five-day conference). He also fellowshiped with the brothers and discussed the Lord's way. He stayed there for a month. The work was very blessed. The messages and testimonies were very effective. We should praise the Lord. In the past few months, he has been at Ting Pu T'ou resting in their meeting place. He also hopes to spend some time there to do some publication work. Unfortunately, in these past months, his body became unexpectedly weaker, and he was sick inwardly and outwardly. He is often in pain. In the beginning of May and June, his life was in danger twice. This was Satan using his dark army and his authority of death to attack him fiercely. During those times, he almost died, but the special grace and care of the Lord carried him through. God had mercy on him and not only on him, but on me also, that I might not have sorrow upon sorrow among all these dangers and problems. He has now overcome the illness by the Lord Christ's victorious resurrection power, which swallows up death. It is difficult for him not to feel exhausted in both heart and body after such a long fight at the brink of death. A few days ago, some brothers came to say that he was better, but that he was not back to normal. He still does not have an appetite, and he needs much rest. The responsibility he has is quite crucial at the present time. He would really appreciate the dear brothers and sisters in the Lord and you praying for him.

I have another brother in the Lord who hopes you will pray for him much. He hopes you will help him with the light of the truth so that he will know how he should serve the Lord single-heartedly. He wants to be one who obeys and is

praised by the Lord. The brother's environment and all his business have had a sudden change since he was enlightened. Then his trials began. His troubles continued to come. He is oppressed even today and surrounded by attacks. All the persecution, opposition, criticism, scorn, and suffering from sickness, etc., rarely stop. (Thank the Lord that His grace is sufficient! Amen!) But is this situation from God the Father's discipline or from the attack of the enemy? I ask you brothers to give us some guidance. He still does not know which way to go though he has considered for a long time. He says that he does not have the strength to farm, and he has not received a clear revelation to go into business; furthermore, he is afraid that if he moves loosely, he will fall into sin. I hope you do not drop this problem but use the light of the Holy Spirit to guide him so that he will know God's will and how to go ahead, and that he will not just stand around watching and spend the entire day empty-handed. Please ask the brothers and sisters who love the Lord to pray for him often so that he may overcome to glorify the Lord's name.

The brothers and sisters in the meeting here—Ch'iao Tun—have been blessed with peace in this year. There have been several newly saved and baptized brothers who were added to us. Thank and praise the Lord! We now feel that we are too immature in our spiritual life. We also feel poor in the gifts. Our meeting place is very small, dilapidated, and noisy. In the future, if the Lord's grace does not prepare a way to enlarge it, we feel it will not be enough for our use and will hinder the Lord's work. With regard to the meetings near to us, the brothers and sisters are all at peace in the Lord. But their gifts of administration and offerings and their gospel work are lacking. Please do not forget to pray for us. Peace in the Lord. Greet all the brothers and sisters!

Your little brother in the Lord,
Chang Wu Sheng

NEWS FROM KAO TZE, KIANGSU PROVINCE

Greetings to the brothers and sisters in the Lord
who walk together with us:

I received both the seventh issue of Collection of Newsletters and The Glad Tidings. I read them several times and saw that an unworthy person like me can partake of God's grace only because I have been chosen by the Lord Jesus and sent by God. My heart and spirit are very joyful.

When I first came here, there was no place to meet, and I did not know any who were believers. Every day I only saw the evil environment, worse even than that of my home town; I often hated it here. As I was hating it, the Lord suddenly revealed something to me. Once in Ta Tung Chuang, Huai An, Brother Ma Yun Ho told me to look to the Lord in everything to see how He overcomes the environment. Should we not also walk in His way so that He can be glorified? After that, I bowed down, confessed my sin, and accepted His arrangement, waiting for His will to come.

In May someone told me that Feng Ching Yi, a schoolteacher who lives in Pao Hsiang Yao, used to believe in Jesus. On the next Lord's Day, I went happily to testify for the Lord. But when I met with him and spoke of the matter of believing in the Lord and being saved, he spoke with quite a bit of confidence and composure. There was nothing for me to say. I went back discouraged after seeing his condition. The school began its wheat vacation at the end of June. I lent him a copy of The Christian Life and Warfare to read to receive the Lord's word with his spirit and in honesty.

Now he says to me, "When you first testified for the Lord to me, I did not really refuse it, but there were several questions in my heart which had not been resolved, so I did not want to accept it loosely." I asked him to tell me the questions so that I could answer him with the Bible.

Brother Feng saw the proof in the Bible and was suddenly enlightened; the questions in his heart were resolved. He felt that his presence in the Presbyterian Church or the Baptist Church was part of the divisions and sects mentioned in the Bible. He immediately decided to serve the Lord zealously, walk in the Lord's way with us, and glorify the Lord daily.

I recently gave him a copy of Collection of Newsletters and The Glad Tidings. He wrote me in response. After reading his letter, I am sure that he has truly obeyed. We really thank and praise the Lord! His grace is truly great. He could not bear Brother Feng's remaining in darkness, so He had to call him out again into His name.

Brother Feng and I now pray together morning and evening to ask the Lord to establish a meeting place in the region of Chin Chia Pien and Pao Hsiang Yao. We ask the Lord to lead His children to come join with us to break bread in remembrance of Him. We also ask Him to increase our life so that we may participate in the kingdom of the Lord. Brother Feng's eldest daughter is married and lives in Chin Chia Pien. One day I heard her husband say that she believed

in the Lord. The next day I took some books and studied the Bible with her for about two hours. It seems that she will be able to obey the Lord. She also feels that the doctrine she heard in the Methodist Church was not very solid.

Recently I have seen that the Lord did not just bring me to this place to teach school. He wants to shine His light through me, a useless shell, and lead His children back into His kingdom. May the brothers and sisters who walk with us in the way of the cross pray much for us so that Satan will not frustrate God's work and so that the glory will completely be to the Father God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

May the brothers and sisters in the Lord be full of the power of the Holy Spirit to give overcoming testimonies for the Lord. Amen.

Your little brother in the Lord,

Ke Hsueh Meng

July 22, 1934

BRIEF NEWS, (SEPTEMBER 15)

(1) Miss Peace Wang's father, the senior Mr. Wang, was convicted for political crimes and sentenced to jail a short time ago. The brothers and sisters cared and prayed for him; his sentence is up and he has returned home. On the one hand, we are happy for Miss Wang because God has comforted the heart of His maidservant so that she will be able to work in peace in the future, knowing that God is the responsible One. On the other hand, we are happy for Mr. Wang because he has now leaned strongly toward the Lord. We hope the brothers will pray much for him.

(2) Brother Chang Kuang Jung has returned to Shanghai from Hangchow. Next week he will go to Chou Chia Pu in Chekiang province to work.

(3) Brother Watchman Nee has returned to Shanghai from Fukien. After doing some work in Shanghai, he will go to Hangchow because the conference in Hangchow will begin soon.

(4) Brother Witness Lee left for P'ing Yang on the eleventh. The saints in that region will have a conference from the eighteenth to the twenty-fifth of this month. Brother Lee is going there to help them.

(5) Miss Wang is now in Shanghai. She will go to Hangchow soon.

(6) After Miss Ruth Lee returned to Shanghai, she was weak physically. We hope the brothers will pray much for her.

(7) Brother Philip Luan had excellent results in his work in the northeastern region. He left Shanghai yesterday for Hangchow. We hope that some of the brothers will report something on the condition of that work.

(8) Brother Shen Ting Ling is still very weak physically. Brothers, please pray for him.

SOME WORDS FROM THE RESPONSIBLE BROTHERS

Collection of Newsletters is a publication for the circulating of news within the family. It is absolutely not for the public and is available only to those brothers who walk with us. We mail it to you because we trust that you are having fellowship with us and are sharing the responsibility of intercession with respect to the news contained in it. We mail it to you because we trust that you will not publicize it to the ordinary people "outside the circle" but will call upon God for its sake "within the veil"!

We also believe you understand that our work is spiritual and that our emphasis is life. We are clear that God wants us to manifest the life of Christ in the local churches. Hence, the reality of our work is the life of Christ, and the outward expression of our work is the local church. In this present time, when the outward church is desolate, we do not have the slightest intention to start a new "movement," "group," "organization," or "denomination." We dare not even call ourselves the churches in the various places. We stand only on the position of the local church. This publication, therefore, carries the news of the assemblies which are standing on the position of the local church in each locality. As to its content, there is nothing but Christ.

We have no headquarters. Concerning the localities, we have neither the power to control any of them nor the right to interfere with any of their activities. All that they have, they each have received from their Head, the Lord Jesus. The fellowship of prayer and the direction in various matters are all mutual. This prayer and direction come about because of the need and through the Lord granting us the strength. The answers to all questions are spiritual, not official, and their source is gift, not position. We do not wish to be the "Diotrephes" among God's children, nor do we wish to become the class of Nicolaitans.

All brothers who go out to work are sent by the Lord. We are co-working with them. We hope that you can bear some spiritual responsibility with us.

Watchman Nee

Witness Lee

ISSUE NO. 11

February 1935

THE BEGINNING OF THE MEETING IN SINGAPORE

(A HEART-RENDING LETTER ABOUT

LEAVING THE DENOMINATIONS, RETURNING TO THEM, AND LEAVING THEM ONCE AGAIN)

To our brother in the Lord, Mr. Watchman:

We received your answering letter. Thank you. We separated from the Brethren about four months ago. Thank the Lord that He Himself led us this way. We felt quite awhile ago that the Brethren were a denomination in a different form because they have much of the color of the denominations that is contradictory to our faith. At the time we wanted to move carefully, so we prayed earnestly before the Lord and waited patiently for about three years. Although we suspected they were a denomination very early on, we never heard of any precedent of leaving the Brethren. In addition, we also heard brothers in other localities say that the Brethren were not a denomination. For this reason we were forced to go before God to consider our doubts carefully because we were afraid that separating from them would be a careless move which would divide the Lord's Body. Therefore, we patiently waited for the Lord's leading. When the Lord's time came, we could not but obey God and separate ourselves from them.

We never thought that we would first leave a denomination, only to enter another by mistake. We really feel ashamed. Every time we think of it, we break out in a sweat! The second time we left the denominations, the circumstances were even more difficult to deal with. The other party does not understand our faith and suspects that we have entered into a heresy. However, the Lord gave us an opportunity to testify of the truth concerning the church. We did not separate from them over different interpretations of the Bible. We separated because we have clearly seen that Christ is the center of our meetings; the truth is not the center. We discovered that the Brethren have two points of error: (1) They do not allow Christ to be the Head in everything, and (2) they have the regulations of man's will and an invisible organization everywhere.

We thank the Lord that in this experience He showed us what to be careful about. If our flesh is not dealt with by the cross severely, we may also become a different form of denomination! A study of the history of the Brethren shows that they began when many Western brothers left the denominations. They too announced that the denominations were not according to the Bible.

Unfortunately, they became an invisible denomination. We confess that the Brethren Church is the best denomination among denominations, but our question is not what kind of denomination it is but whether or not it is a denomination. If a meeting has been stained with any color of the denominations, it is an abomination to God. We should separate ourselves from it.

Thank the Lord, although there are not many people meeting in the Lord's name in Singapore (56 Hsiao P'o Hu Lau Lueh Sha Lu, Singapore), the Lord is to be praised because His light shines on our way. May the Lord Himself lead us from now on so that we do not go astray by mistake. Our present need is the prayers of the brothers. Peace in the Spirit!

Your little brothers in the Lord,

Wang K'ai Sen, Chang Chia Chi, Tseng K'ai Hao

November 16

A LETTER FROM BROTHER SIMON MEEK

Dear saints:

We received both The Glad Tidings and The Christian. Thank the Lord for His messages in them. The need in our locality is very great. We hope you can continue to send them. (We need at least thirty copies of each publication. I will pass them out carefully.) May the Lord continue supplying Himself to us. Amen, amen.

I would like to say a few personal words. The Lord Himself has recently cared for many aspects of the work in our locality. We really thank Him for His grace. However, there is still much need. We ask you all to pray for us. Recently, I have been very weak physically. I feel in particular that I cannot keep up. I am in the mountains for a short rest. Soon I will have to return to my place of work. I hope you all will pray for me both in the meetings and individually. I also hope you will pray even more for the work so that the believers may be perfected and sinners may be saved and added to the Lord's church daily.

I hope that Brother Watchman can come for a visit and help us. Please pray for this so that the Lord's will may be done. Amen.

The time is pressing; the Lord is coming quickly. The fiercer the battle, the greater the tribulations. We should be watchful and pray, endure, and be bold to be overcomers waiting to be raptured. Greetings to Brothers Watchman, Kuang Jung, Shou Ling, and Witness.

Your brother,
Simon Meek
October 6

LETTERS FROM CHU CHI

One

To my dear brother in the Lord, Brother Shou Ling:

I have twice received your letters; in my earthly loneliness, I have received comfort by the Lord's grace so that I could taste "gaining a hundredfold" in this life.

By the Lord's love I have received a copy of the book *Worshipping God*. Please do not send me another copy. I have already read it, and it gave me much help concerning the truth of the Lord's table. For this reason, whenever I thank the Lord, I often remember Sister Lee, the author. The brothers in this locality desperately need the help of this book so that they can truly worship the Lord. If they do not get it, they will be, as I used to be, Christians who have never worshipped God.

It has been two months since I moved to Chu Chi. I went to the denominations and testified. The Lord allowed me to gain a few brothers and sisters for fellowship. I used to misunderstand others and think that they stole sheep; now I am being misunderstood by others. It is really too bad that I am not worthy of being misunderstood. If I were, I think that in that day I would rejoice at being misunderstood!

The newly gained brothers and sisters are willing to tear down what they had before and build anew, but they are not very clear about the truth of regeneration. They are as I used to be. They want the doctrine of Jesus but not His person. They want the grace of salvation, but they do not want the Lord who loves to give grace. You know how immature I am—I am not being polite. Although it is not a matter of the blind leading the blind, it is a matter of the newly born leading the newly born. There are many things I cannot do, so I can only testify something of my salvation. For the rest, I keep the teaching: "Let your yes be yes, and your no, no." I also have learned the secret of saying "I don't know" from Mr. Chang who begot me in the gospel. I once heard him say that he was going to travel for the work and intended to ask Mr. Nee for explanations to some matters of the truth in preparation for dealing with difficulties. Mr. Nee told Mr. Chang that he needed to

take a few "I don't know's" on his trip. This secret often becomes the answer in our prayer meeting—every Wednesday from 7:00 to 9:00.

Chu Chi is the central point of the Hangchow-Kiangsu Railway. It has a population of five hundred thirty thousand. The history of the denominations here is like that of Hangchow, but there is not a real, pure church to this date. The most marvelous thing is that the denominations in Chu Chi are almost finished for various reasons: The mission boards have stopped sending funds; some have gone bankrupt; people are worshipping in their homes because they have left the denominations over man's will; some denominations have also closed their doors for lack of attendants to listen to the preaching. There is a Jesus Church in the city—the biggest and —that has already sold its meeting place for thirty thousand dollars to an individual for his business. There is an Anglican Church, a Seventh-day Adventist Church, and a Catholic Church, but none have many members. Furthermore, it appears that most of the members do not have life. They come flushed with wine, and their cigarettes never leave their mouths. Some of their members even smoke opium, having come to the hospital to be cured. Those who worship on the Lord's Day are mostly people hired by the denominations. They are there in body but not in soul. Some glance sideways, while others take naps. They take up the collection in two western metal plates. The noise is really loud, but if you look inside, there are only copper pennies, no silver dimes. I have heard that the most they collect is half a dollar or twenty or thirty cents. At first they thought that I was a member of the Anglican Church (although I clearly stated that I left them); therefore, they hoped that I would go back there, and they often asked me to go there to testify. However, recently they have paid attention to my actions, and their welcome is changing to a refusal. I have heard that several pastors have criticized me as being one of Nee's group. They say we only speak of salvation as a present matter and do not speak of works, causing people to become arrogant and complacent. They say people are vulnerable to our teaching and can easily become poisoned; furthermore, they say that the ones who are led astray are always the best members of the denominations. Once a member of the group passes through, they steal the cream of a meeting and establish their own church. Therefore, once they learn about me, I cannot testify there. I am now meeting in a brother's house. This brother often criticized the denomination, so he gave up his position and left them long ago. The denominations do not care about him.

According to one brother, there are thirty or forty people who meet every night in Yang Chiu Nu's home in Plum Hill, about ten miles outside the city. The Yang home in Village 18 has a meeting of thirty to forty believers. The Chu and Chen homes in Village 19 also have more than fifty people meeting together. They all left the denominations because they were not satisfied. They now meet in their own homes to worship the Lord. They meet on the Lord's Day to sing hymns and pray. There is no responsible person, nor is there a preacher. Although they feel that the denominations are wrong, they do not understand the truth concerning the church. I have heard that they often come into the city to invite zealous preachers to their meetings. They take care of food, lodging, and other expenses for the trip. In Hung Li in Hsu Village there is a brother called Chou Tien Tzu. He does not read very much, nor has he believed in the Lord for very long, but his faith is very good. He often prays for people and heals them. Wherever he goes, the sick are healed. Now there is a group of twenty to thirty completely new believers who have risen up to meet, sing hymns, and pray. We really see that the harvest is great but the workers are few. Brother, please pray earnestly before the Lord of the harvest that He would send out workers to reap the harvest. In the few places I mentioned above, there are very few brothers. There are mainly sisters. The sisters have heard of Miss Peace Wang and hope that she could come to help them. Until we meet again! May your body, soul, and spirit be healthy in the Lord!

Your little brother,

Yu Hsiung Fei

November 23

Note: Brother Yu used to live in the brothers' apartment in Shanghai. He has fellowship with us. He is now working in the County Hospital in Chu Chi.

Two

To the Lord's faithful servant, Mr. Nee:

Although your name is misunderstood among the public, may the Father God greatly bless you. Amen!

I am not writing this letter to apologize to you, nor am I trying to comfort you, but I want to testify concerning the Lord who loves sinners with His marvelous salvation, glorious freedom, and inscrutable guidance.

When my two younger brothers began pursuing and desiring the Lord, they were cheated by the miserable gospel of relying on works, keeping commandments,

and hoping they might be saved. Their experience hindered me from knowing God; I had difficulties with the true gospel and could not be born easily into the Father's house.

Ears to hear the truth, eyes to know God, and a mouth to drink spiritual milk are all part of the uncreated, spiritual life which God gives, just like our human life. This life is very important. We must first receive the promise by faith that it would be produced—this is regeneration! If a person does not know whether he is saved, this proves he has not been born into God's house. How can he receive the Father's inheritance, let alone represent Christ while living on the earth, fight with the powers of darkness, shut the mouth of the enemy and those who would take revenge, fulfill God's will, or satisfy God's heart's desire?

It is more difficult to preach the gospel to people in denominations than to any other kind of person because you must first tear down before you can build up. I used to be a member of the denominations. Thank the Lord for His enlightenment. I was baptized into His name in June of this year and have partaken of the Lord's table. I have also seen that the denominations are the fruit of the flesh, are sectarian, and cannot be counted as the church of God. Furthermore, there is no way to correct them. God has already rejected them. They are filled with incurable darkness. We can only "come out from their midst" (2 Cor. 6:17)! Therefore, I left the yoke of the denominations in July. I remember that I did not want to leave at the time because of human affection, but God always gains the victory. He used strong words to lay hold of me so that I could not get through, including Luke 16:10, 12:47, and James 4:17. For three weeks I could not finish writing my letter of resignation, but I finally obeyed and sent it by registered mail. Before I came to Shanghai someone told me, "You can go to hear preaching anywhere in Shanghai, but you must stay away from Mr. Watchman Nee and his group because they make a business of stealing sheep with their knowledge. You must be careful lest you stumble." I was so foolish that I did not know who you were then, but this was a strong introduction. Oh, we cannot be separated from the love of God! After coming to Shanghai, I asked whomever I saw whether they were related to Mr. Nee or knew him.

What inscrutable leading! One day I accidentally met a sister who had left the denominations and was walking in the same way as you. At first I was afraid of her because of the bondage of Satan. Now I often remember her as my Martha and Mary. She was the first person to pray for me before the Lord, saying, "Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick!" (John. 11:3). The Lord sent His servant to me

so that I would understand that salvation is by grace, not by works, that it is a present matter, according to Acts 26:17-18, which says, "I send you, to open their eyes, to turn them from darkness to light and from the authority of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me."

If Moses had not been misunderstood by the Israelites, he could never have brought God's chosen people out of Egypt. If your name had not been misunderstood, I could never have been led to know God. We should thank the Lord that He has fed us bread until we are full! May the Lord bless this loaf.

May the brothers and sisters in the Lord thank God unceasingly whenever they hear of or encounter a situation in which an individual or a church is misunderstood or persecuted, because the Lord is again using His marvelous salvation, glorious release, and inscrutable leading to call His children out of darkness. The Lord is Victor. His will will be done. In Him is the yes. All things work together for good to those who love the Lord, just as the persecution of the saints in Soochow and Hangchow turned into a victorious miracle.

I am only a newborn babe. I am weak and powerless. I hope that you will instruct me with Christ's love, so that I do not shame the glory of God. May the Lord bless you. "It is more blessed to give than to receive." Amen! Greetings to the brothers and sisters in the Lord.

Respectfully from your little brother,

Yu Hsiung Fei

A LETTER FROM CHUNG CH'UN KENG

To my dear brothers in the Lord, Shen Ting Ling and Mark Shen:

It has been two or three weeks since I parted with the meeting in Hangchow. First I went from Hangchow to Shanghai where I took a steamer to Foochow. In Foochow I finished my business at home and took Chiu Hao, Chiu P'ing, and Chiu Ch'ing to Ku T'ien. Last Saturday (the third) we had a funeral service and buried my father outside of the city. Because of this, I have not had any free time until today to write letters and communicate with you about some of our family matters and the condition of the meeting in Ku T'ien. I pray that God would direct me as to how to arrange my future so that I would glorify Him in all things. This sudden blow was really from the hand of Satan, but he who relies on the Lord will overcome all things. After boarding the steamer in Shanghai, I was not well physically. I got a cold and became seasick. It is difficult to travel alone. But

thank the Father God for His care. It did not rain while I was on the boat; therefore, I was able to rest even though I had to sleep outside. When I got to Ku T'ien, some bandits had been on the rampage. A few days before I arrived, bandits and soldiers had been fighting there. On the day I traveled, however, everything was peaceful. It really was the protection of the Father God that I arrived home safely. My family had prepared everything for me, so the funeral was taken care of smoothly. Everything that I went through on this trip saw the care of God.

Regarding the condition of the meeting in Ku T'ien, God has really begun a good work there, adding saved ones to the church. Although the denominations have used all kinds of methods to stop the meeting, they have been unable to do so. The meeting place is at 1 Pao Hou Alley. Some new brothers, Cheng Tao Kung, Yu Chung Chang, and Chou Hua Nan, and Brother Chen Pi Ying are temporarily living and working together there. In Chao Ku School there are twenty or more new ones who desire the Word. These three new brothers testified to almost every one of them. Through Brother Chen's teaching and the Holy Spirit's own work, several are preparing to obey and be baptized, but they are afraid that the authorities in the school will not permit them. The rest of the students are not able to come and listen to the Word. There are one or two teachers who have a good foundation; the rest also desire the Word. May God Himself work. We also ask you brothers to pray. Yu Hsing and Yu Ching are two girls' schools. The principals of these schools do not let the students come to hear the Word, but several people are trying to find a way to come secretly. The work of Satan behind the scenes is very strong, but the Lord is the Victor. I believe that the Lord will open the way in these two schools. The brothers in the meeting plan to have a Bible study for new ones during the winter vacation. They are still praying about it and looking to the Lord to lead them in everything. I do not know whether the brothers who will come to visit south China can also come to Foochow. If they can, perhaps they can also visit Ku T'ien in northern Fukien and testify for the Lord. There are about ten brothers and sisters in the table meeting. May the Lord bless them and quickly increase their number. How is Brother Ting Ling's health? If you have time, write me a letter and tell me, and I can pray for him. Every time I pray, I do not forget your health and spiritual condition. Brother Mark, what work have you found? I hope you will tell me. I hope, brother, that you patiently and quietly wait in Shanghai. On the one hand, you can receive the truth, and on the other hand, you can learn the truth and learn to serve the brothers. Please greet

Brother Tu for me. I have been very busy, but I asked a brother concerning the condition of the church in Foochow, and he said that the meeting in Shio Er Jien Pai has improved markedly. Now there is also a brothers' meeting. They want to do everything openly and bear the responsibility together. Brother Chen Ke San stands in the same position as we do concerning the truth, but he is still waiting. Brother Chang Ch'i Chen does not dare to completely disavow the truth concerning head covering either. May the Spirit of God move them so that the meeting in Foochow will not be separated from the Body. There are not many brothers in the meeting in the Inner City who understand the truth, and there is no one to testify for the truth. Sister Lin Tuan Yu has testified among the sisters. However, as I returned through there today, she seemed very weak. A group of brothers accused her because they thought that what happened in the meeting in the Inner City was the result of her maneuvering. Therefore, she has stopped meeting. I exhorted her a little that one should always testify for truth and that she should not worry because the Lord knows all things. Brother Hsu's will is very strong. His heart will not change even though he and his relative Ch'ung O are the only ones meeting in his home on the Lord's Day. I really thank the Lord that there is a brother who stands firm for the truth. I hope the brothers pray for the work in the city. Although I am in Ku T'ien, I do not forget God's work in Foochow. When I began my trip from Foochow, Brother Hung Kuei came to see me in Brother Shao Hua's home. We walked and talked together. We really could not bear to part. Our eyes were filled with tears. He hoped that Brother Mark and I could teach and guide them after we returned from Hangchow. But now there is no one there, and he is very sad. Brother Chin went to Professor Sung's "Revival Meeting" and offered himself to the evangelistic band. Brother Hung Kuei exhorted him, but he would not listen. He was very impatient, and I did not have time to explain the truth. It is difficult to describe all these situations. I talked to Brothers Wei Kuang and Wei Kuei all night, and they did not want to let me go. It seems that in the Inner City, the sheep are without anyone to care for them. I do not know whether or not Brother Chan has returned home or the condition of his health. Has he improved in the truth this time? Has he come to a decision? How is Brother Nee's health? How is he doing in the work after being newly married? Have there been any storms from the outside? I hope that God gives us grace regarding every truth so that we can carry it out. I will tell you the rest later. Peace and progression!

Your brother in the Lord,
Chung Ch'un Keng
November 5

NEWS FROM P'O NAN SHIH YANG, P'ING YANG

To my dearest brother in the Lord, Mr. Nee:

Thank the Lord who cares for us! When I did not have a place to live in August of last year, He suddenly prepared a place in P'o Nan Shih Yang of P'ing Yang for me to live. There is no meeting here in the Lord's name, but there are a few brothers who live with me. Every evening we meet, and I speak something of the truth to them. We have been doing this for about a year. After the brothers received a little light of the truth, they still went to the denominations, but they felt that it did not help them as much as it once did. They wanted to leave the denominations to meet in the Lord's name, but there was no one to bear the responsibility (because I travel often). I was afraid that they did not have the assurance of the truth and were only leaving the denominations to follow their emotions, so I was not really confident about them. I could only place this matter in the Lord's hands.

Thank God! He has recently led a brother, Yang Shih Ch'ing, to move here. He walks in the same way we do and is very gifted. The brothers prayed about this matter earnestly, and the Lord's grace worked in their hearts; they really saw the error of the denominations. They boldly left the denominations and began to meet in the Lord's name. Although the so-called pastors and teachers in the denomination tried to hold them back with warm words, they could not make them look back.

Thank God! He causes His children not to fear angry looks, rolled eyes, or rudeness but to only care about faithfully going on for the Lord. Our first meeting was in September. There are now seven brothers and sisters in the table meeting. There are more than twenty people who come to the other meetings. Although they have partially obeyed the truth, their spiritual life is still weak and immature. Please ask the brothers and sisters who fellowship with us in the Lord to pray for them. Peace in the Lord!

Your brother,
Ts'ai Ch'i
September 16

A LETTER FROM PENANG, MALAYSIA

Peace to the beloved brother in the Lord, Brother Nee:

Thank the Lord. He Himself led us to leave the denominations in the past. Now He has given us light again to see the deeper truth that our meetings should have the Lord as the center. We cannot have any name but the Lord's name. For this reason, we who walk in this way feel in our prayer that the Lord will have a meeting that is directly in His name in Southeast Asia. We should obey the Lord to accomplish His will. There is now a meeting in Singapore. According to the Lord's arrangement, we may be able to have a meeting in the Lord's name in two months. Since the work has just begun, we hope to have a gifted brother come and bear the responsibility, one who can edify us to be useful to the Lord. We have now placed this need in prayer! We hope that you, brother, also pray for this!

There is one matter that needs your help. Brother Chang You Ts'ung from the meeting in T'ung An Wu Ni, Fukien province has moved here recently with his family. Brother Chang feels that there are not enough brothers who can bear the responsibility in Southeast Asia. His son, Brother Ling Chen Kuo, studied at, but did not graduate from, the Hunan Bible School. Brother Chang has told him to leave Hunan and go to Shanghai to live with you for a time. He hopes to go to the next Overcomer Conference in Hangchow. He will have a letter of recommendation from Brother P'ei Jan. Please examine him when he arrives in Shanghai. If you think he has received a gift from the Lord and can be edified, please edify him in the matters of the truth and help him grow in spiritual life so that he can be a useful vessel to the Lord. We are enclosing a check for thirty dollars in this letter. Please keep it and give it to Brother Chen Kuo when he arrives in Shanghai to use for his expenses. Thank you for the favor. May you receive your rightful reward before the judgment seat of Christ! Peace in the Spirit!

Your brother in the Lord,
Yang Chien Hsiung

A LETTER FROM WANG T'AN CH'I

Greetings in love to my brother in the Lord, Mr. Watchman:

I really miss you because we are so far apart. I often think of writing you, but since my business is very busy, I do not have time to put a pen to paper and communicate with you. I am very sorry. I can only fellowship with you in my prayer before the Lord. I listened to messages for six or seven years, and I was a

preacher for one year, but I still did not know whether or not I was saved. Fortunately, you came to Changchow in 1928 to lead a meeting. I went to the meeting with my wife. We were touched from beginning to end and we knew about salvation for the first time. We were so happy in our hearts that we wept. I stood up in the meeting to testify and consecrate myself for the Lord's work. However, our economic situation was very tight because we were very poor and I had been a preacher for one year. Therefore, I went into business. I wanted to have some savings for our family before I began to work by preaching full-time. I was not able to do what I wanted after consecrating myself in the meeting because of my home situation. Fortunately, I began working for the Hsia Yu Feng Bank the year before last. They are closed on the Lord's Day, so I could use the time to help the church in Amoy and comfort myself some. But since coming to Shih Ma Wai City to work last year, I have had too much to do. I do not have any time from morning to evening. I cannot take a break on the Lord's Day either. My heart is suffering greatly. If I do not get out of business, it will be difficult for me to work for the Lord. But I feel that I cannot do this because my family is still very poor. Consequently, I have placed this matter before the Lord to ask for His leading. At the same time, I am asking you, brother, to trouble yourself and give me some guidance. This is my hope. I have received much benefit from your teaching in The Present Testimony and Notes on Scriptural Messages. I have also come to know the condition of the meeting in Shanghai through them and that the Lord has raised up many of His children to obey Him in every place. I rejoice much because of this. I received a card on the twenty-second of this month that said you had been married on the nineteenth on Tung Chieh Road in Hangchow. I was very comforted to know this. I only hate that I did not find out sooner; therefore, I was unable to make preparations to attend the ceremony myself. (Parts omitted.)

If you are willing, please give me some advice. This is my greatest hope. I am so full of emotions that it is hard for me to say everything. I will tell you more later. Peace in the Lord!

Greetings to the brothers and sisters in the Lord!

Your little brother in the Lord,

Wang T'an Ch'i

Mailing Address: Yu Yu Bank, Shih Ma Wai City

**THE HISTORY OF BROTHER WITNESS LEE'S WORK
IN THE REGION OF P'ING YANG, CHEKIANG PROVINCE**

One

Greetings to Mr. Nee and the brothers and sisters
who meet on Hardoon Road:

Mr. Witness Lee arrived in Sha Chiang at 8:00 p.m. on the thirteenth and spent the night in the brothers' meeting place in Fang Yen. At 6:00 a.m. on the fourteenth, he took a small boat to Wu Shih Ling and walked fifteen miles to Ts'ao Hsi where he had lunch in a brother's home. After 2:00 p.m., he went on by sedan chair. It was pouring rain and stormy; the curtains on the sedan chair were soaked and even Mr. Lee's clothes and shoes were wet. In addition, the mountains were high and the slopes were steep. The sedan chair was tossed and pulled by the winds. The bearers of the chair almost fell down several times. This journey was long and continued until the end of the day, and it became dark on all sides. It was difficult for the bearers to take each step. If the Lord's grace had not sustained, the danger would have been unimaginable. We arrived in Fan Shan a little after 8:00 p.m. The brothers welcomed us with much love. The next day we went from Fan Shan to Ma Chan and met with the brothers for a short time in the afternoon. In the evening we had a fellowship meeting. The formal meetings did not start until today. About six hundred people attended the meeting. Mr. Lee is bearing the responsibility for speaking the messages. He speaks two times a day. Today he spoke on how the believers should love and serve the Lord. Many brothers and sisters were very touched that they did not have a heart that loves the Lord. They wept. Starting tomorrow he will speak a series of messages on the Body of Christ. We expect that the loving Lord will bless us greatly through these messages. We will tell you the rest later. Peace in the Lord!

Your brothers in the Lord,
Lin Sheng Wu, Chen Ch'ing Fa, Su Ti Sheng,
Ts'ai Ch'i, Chin Tze Fang
September 18 at 10:00 p.m.

Two

Greetings to Mr. Nee, Mr. Kuang Hsiung, and Mr. Shou Ling:

Our brother Mr. Witness Lee has already finished the work in P'u Men Ma Chan. This time he preached messages along two lines: the Body of Christ and the truth of the gospel. Thanks be to God the Father. He really blessed us through the truth that was released; many brothers and sisters learned what the Body of

Christ is all about. They also learned that being joined to Christ is so practical. Many people came to listen to the word this time. More than four hundred brothers and sisters slept in the meeting place. Together with those who did not sleep and eat here, there were more than seven hundred. This was a great conference such that P'ing Yang has never seen before.

Brother Lee spent the entire strength of his spirit and body in this conference. He spoke twice each afternoon and evening; each time he spoke for almost two hours. When the evening meetings were over, he would sit outside under the stars with twenty or thirty responsible brothers surrounding him and speak about all the points of the truth and the matter of the church. The benefit we gained from these conversations was greater than what we received in the formal meetings. On the morning of September 26, he left Ma Chan, but it was 7:00 p.m. when he arrived at a place near Chiang Nan Road. He spent the night in a brother's home. Although Brother Lee was physically tired at the time, he still forced himself to keep going. He passed through the localities of Yi Shan, Fang Yen Hsia, and Feng Chuan on the way back to fellowship and converse with the brothers. This made him even more tired. The situation was so bad that he became sick with a headache and fever in Feng Chuan. Fortunately, the Lord's grace protected him; he began to get better last night. He felt somewhat better this morning. Brother Lee was very impatient to get to Hangchow to attend the conference, so he did not want to stay any longer. He left Feng Chuan at 6:00 a.m. and planned to get to Wenchow in one day. However, when he arrived in P'ing Yang, the little steamer that runs along the river had already left; he had to stay at Brother Ts'ai Ch'i's house. Whether or not he can go to Wenchow tomorrow all depends on his health.

In conclusion, Brother Lee's sickness came from the following natural causes: (1) On the round trip from Chiang Nan to P'u Men and P'u Men to Chiang Nan, he encountered rain and stormy weather; (2) there was too much work so that he was overtired; (3) the places he stayed were not quiet, and the food was not suitable to him; (4) our hospitality was insufficient; we did not meet his needs. These causes weakened our brother, so he returns with sickness. Our hearts are so ashamed! We really blame ourselves! We are very foolish and thickheaded. We do not know how to serve the brothers. Brother Lee forgives us because of the Lord's love. He has not blamed us. We hope that you will remember our immaturity and not blame us either. Peace in the Lord!

Your brothers,
Yang Shih Ch'ing, Ts'ai Ch'i, Chen Ch'ing Fa
October 1

A LETTER FROM BROTHER CHEN CH'ING FA

Greetings in love to my dear brother in the Lord,
Mr. Yueh Chiao:

My home received both your card, dated August 9, and your letter, dated August 14, a long time ago. I left my home in the middle of July to travel and only returned yesterday, so I am answering them after a long delay. Please forgive me in the Lord.

You asked about Mr. Su Sheng Ch'uan of Yi Shan. I will speak a few direct words in the Lord. Superficially, he appears to be walking in the Lord's way, but in reality he is going in the opposite direction from the truth. This person is a great hindrance to us in the work here. Please do not publish his writings in Collection of Newsletters or send him Collection of Newsletters. He is speaking about his personal matters and not about the meeting in Yi Shan.

About three weeks ago, four co-workers and I sent a long letter to Mr. Nee and Mr. Lee about the recent condition of the work here. We addressed the letter directly to the editor of Collection of Newsletters. Have you received it yet? I am worried about it.

Two weeks ago I read the Newsletter Paper and discovered something called, "The Condition of the Nondenominational Churches in Fu Ting, Tai Shun, and P'ing Yang." It was signed by Brother Wang Yu T'ing and myself. After reading it, I did not know what to think. I wondered whether Brother Wang Yu T'ing had really sent this news to that newspaper. I think that many of the brothers and sisters who walk in the way with us must also have had suspicions after reading it. I met with Brother Yu T'ing later and learned what really happened. Some brothers from Tai Shun and Fu T'ing wrote letters to Brother Wang telling him about the condition of the churches there. I also wrote a letter to him telling him about the condition of the work, and at the end of the letter, I told him about the beginning of the meetings in a few places. Brother Wang put these letters together and sent them to the editor of Collection of Newsletters. But the mailman was very careless and he delivered the letters to the office of Newsletter Paper. The editors of the paper deleted all the portions that described the grace of God and that would edify the brothers. They only published the hard words about leaving the denominations and thought it was church news. I do not know

what their motive was in doing this! Whether they are trying to slander or praise me, it is not important. The most important thing is that I hope the brothers and sisters who walk in the way with us know what happened in this instance and do not have any misunderstandings. Please send me a regular subscription to The Glad Tidings. Peace in the Lord!

Your little brother in the Lord,
Chen Ch'ing Fa
September 8

A LETTER FROM SWATOW, KWANGTUNG PROVINCE

To my elder brother Watchman:

After arriving in Swatow, I looked back on the past few days. There was a great struggle and wrestling in my heart. I am such a failure. I am so weak and faithless. I have told many people to trust in the Lord, but I myself did not! I am really abominable! After meeting and speaking with you twice, I will never forget the lessons I learned. When Brother Chung Chieh and I arrived in the port of Swatow, we did not do many things, but we first bowed down before the Lord with the brothers and sisters to learn to rely on the Lord. We were just as a serving maid relying on her mistress. May the Lord edify us through the work.

Brother Chung Chieh is really a dear brother. Before now I did not realize how dear he was. He has learned more before the Lord than I have. There are many areas in which I cannot catch up with him. He and I are more and more in one accord. The innocent spiritual condition of the brothers and sisters here makes me not want to go home. Peace! Brother Chung Chieh greets you.

Your brother,
Kuang Hsiung
November 20

A LETTER FROM HANGCHOW

Greetings to Brother Watchman:

Brother Sun Shao Shan returned to Hangchow. He informed me that you wanted me to quickly prepare for the trip to the south and inquired about Brother Chen Fang's recent condition. I should have given you a timely answer, but there was nothing moving in me, and I had not yet prayed about the matter. In addition, I had a fever; therefore, I have delayed until now in replying to you.

I have already received an answer before God concerning the trip south: "Hear Him." But I do not think it will be easy for me to leave in the next few days

because there will be a baptism meeting in Hangchow on the twenty-fifth. Therefore, the earliest I can come to you is after the twenty-sixth. What do you think?

Brother Chen Fang has completely left the denominations and found a house in Hu Shu new port. He is in the middle of preparing to move! The house has four big rooms. Brother Chen will live in one of them, Brother T'au Ch'un Yen will live in another, two brothers who are in business have rented another, and the assembly has rented the fourth. They are preparing to begin with a prayer meeting there. They will still crowd into Tung Chieh Road for the table meeting. If possible they will preach the gospel to outsiders from there every Lord's Day morning. But they must put everything in the Lord's hands.

We are very confident about Brother Chen's future because he is very clear that the way he is going is God's will. He is also clear that God the Father is leading him to come out and walk this way.

Brother Yu Hsiung Fei sent a letter from Chu Chi a few days ago and said that God has raised up two brothers who obey God in Chu Chi. They are now with him in one accord and have begun to meet to pray and wait for God's will through the prayer.

The elderly brother, T'ien P'ing Fang, sent a letter from Tientsin recently reminding us to remember the work in Manchuria.

Brothers Chin, Chen, and Ts'ai of P'ing Yang and Brother Hung Lu Ch'un of Tai Shun have sent letters saying that they were protected by the Lord; they have arrived home safely.

Sister Wang arrived safely on the express train in Hangchow last night. My fever has become better in the last few days. Chih Hsien and the brothers and sisters in the meeting are all healthy. Please don't worry about us! Peace in the Lord!

Your brother,

Philip Luan

November 21, 1934

A LETTER FROM BROTHER CHOU HSIN YI

Dear Mr. Nee in the Lord:

Yesterday I sent two drafts of articles concerning the question of head covering and one notebook. I hope you can check them and correct them for me. There are many mistakes in the second article. It would be best if someone could copy it over after you have corrected it.

Last week I started to compile and translate the record of the last conference. It is very strange, and I do not know why, but this time there are more difficulties than usual. I had originally decided to spend two or three days transcribing one message so I could finish it in two months. But as I have been writing, many unexpected things have occurred. I am barely able to put a message together in four days. It has become a great strain on me. I feel that I cannot use my brain. I cannot remember anything, and it is hard to focus my thoughts. I do not have any strength in my prayer either. My whole being feels weak, and I do not have mental energy. I cannot resist all these conditions! Before, I only had to resist with some strength, and then my energy would return. Nothing works now, it seems as if there is not even the slightest bit of warmth. In my heart I want to do this, but something hinders me. The worst thing is that I have forgotten many of the things that I used to remember. Nevertheless, I think that I will be able to do it well, Mr. Nee. I will need your help, however, to get through this difficult situation. I must not fail in this matter, no matter what. I hope you will give me some leading to get through this kind of situation.

I received the 1913 and 1914 issues of The Overcomer from England a few days ago. I finally obtained the books that I wanted for so long. I am really happy! May the Lord allow me to gain the riches from it.

Brother Shen Wei Chih came to Hangchow to rest. The three of us live together. Every day he helps me do some transcribing work. Peace through the winter!

Your little brother in the Lord,

Hsin Yi

November 8

NEWS FROM SISTER YU SU CHEN

Greetings to Mr. Nee:

A few days ago Miss Lee and the sisters passed through Nanking on their way to Hankow. I went to the boat to see them. I heard that you were sick, and I wondered whether you had gotten better. Thank God for His grace, I received much spiritual training in the last conference at Hangchow. Of all the conferences we have had over the past few years, the last one was unprecedented. I constantly thank and praise the Father God! Although I constantly fail, He is never willing to let me go. His holy hand is always stretched out to deal with me. I have been in Nanking for more than six months. A few sisters meet together on the Lord's Day to pray and read the Bible. After coming back from Hangchow, I planned to terminate this sisters' meeting to wait for the Lord's time to bring

brothers to Nanking. I also planned to do some individual work so I did not announce that we would meet again. But the sisters came of their own accord; for the last three weeks we have had sisters' meetings. I heard that the Chin Ling Men's Seminary has some brothers who love the Lord, who want to invite you to Nanking. There is a Brother Wang among them who was clearly saved through you. He once told a sister that if you could come to Nanking to meet in any place, they would have many people who would come to hear you. (Their students often ask, "What should we preach when we go out?") The sister told me this later, and I have prayed for this often since then. On the twenty-ninth Sister Rachel Lee told me on the boat that you bear the responsibility for the regions of Chenkiang and Nanking, so I mentioned this matter to Sister Rachel Lee. If you can come to Nanking, we invite you to stay with us. It is very convenient. The meeting place can hold fifty to sixty people. This is my respectful report.

There is another question that I hope you can answer. A sister used the train with a free ticket. After she was enlightened, she decided to pay back this money. According to the principles of the Bible, property should be returned to its rightful owner, but the person who got the free tickets for her is a member of a denomination who is in the middle of committing a great sin. If she gives this money to him, he would not give it to the government or the railroad, and it would give him more opportunity to sin. Although this sister was saved when she used a free ticket, she had not consecrated herself. Now all that she has is given to God, so this amount is consecrated. Whom should she return this money to? Please advise us. This sister will also add a fifth part so that the total comes to about one hundred fifty dollars. Where should she send it? We are waiting for an answer. Peace in the Lord!

From,
Yu Su Chen
November 7

Answer from Brother Tang Shou Ling

Use a post office money order and send it in a double registered letter to the Railroad Authority. Enclose an explanation: She rode the train on a free ticket which was obtained unlawfully. Since she has believed in the Lord Jesus and has been saved, she knows that this is unrighteous. In addition to the amount of the tickets, she is adding on twenty percent interest and returning the money. She does not need to mention who got the free tickets for her.

A LETTER FROM BROTHER CHIANG CH'UAN CH'ING

To Brother Watchman who helps me to rely on God
and teaches me how to walk in the way of obedience through his publications in
the Lord:

In the ninth issue of Collection of Newsletters, I read a paragraph you wrote concerning this publication that closely matched what I had felt in my heart for a long time. This spring my life was dry and withered, so I had the idea to put away my Bible and was in a dilemma. I wanted to go into the world, but nothing could satisfy my heart. I wanted to take up the cross, but I was weak and powerless. I was really without the strength to live but not able to die. Even when the brothers who are in one accord exhorted and comforted me, it did not work. I passed through half a year in this half-living, half-dead condition. But through all this, the light of the truth of leaving the denominations and being baptized was not quenched in my heart. When I was the weakest, I continued to receive Collection of Newsletters and I felt the burden and strength in my heart to write the letter that was published in the ninth issue as "A Letter from Dairen" telling you of my condition and asking for your prayers. After this Brother Luan (Hung Pin) was led by the Lord to stay with us for three days on his way from Chefoo to Changchun. He baptized me and through the Bible helped me to know how to go in this way and how to read the Bible to cultivate life. I was helped very much. When it was time for the conference in Hangchow, I decided to quit my job and attend the meetings without caring for anything else. As I was about to leave for the conference, unexpected frustrations stepped in that made it impossible for me to go. I was very bothered about this and complained that God did not listen to my prayers. Then I thought that no matter what, it must be God's good pleasure, so I submitted. Thank God, I gained joy and peace from this which continues to this time. I also came across The Christian's Secret to a Happy Life and read it with much interest. The doctrines concerning life in it were very clear. Now I can read the Bible and pray with peace in my heart. If I have time, I testify some or fellowship with the brothers by letter. I do not pay attention to sins. I pursue holiness by the Lord's Word. For example, if I read in James 3, I would be circumspect in my speech. If I read Proverbs 3:27-28, I would give what I have according to my strength. In this way I am led by the Lord through each day.

I am now going to stop living with my elder brother. I often ask the Lord to give us a proper way to divide our inheritance. I have found the secret of escaping greed in Luke 12:13-15. Thank God, my brother has become closer to me recently.

With regard to the matter of consecration, I feel that everything is the Lord's. Are only giving money and preaching the gospel consecration? In my view, it seems that the greatest consecration in the Bible was when Joseph offered his grave to the Lord, because although the worldly people will give something to the poor, no one is willing to sell his burial plot. However, the Lord's crucifixion is already over, so what can we offer up now? Please take the trouble to answer in Collection of Newsletters. I bless you with peace. Please greet all the brothers and sisters!

Your little brother in the Lord,

Chiang Ch'uan Ch'ing

Note from Brother Philip Luan

Consecration does not only refer to preaching or giving money. You must receive God's choosing and calling before you can be a preacher. Similarly, you must have the ability to give before you can actually give. Consecration is to give yourself to God to do His will. The meaning of consecrating yourself is to give your all, whether it is time, money, talent, occupation, family, or all aspects of your living and place it completely in the Lord's hands, following God's will in all your decisions. Hence, consecration is not just becoming a preacher or giving money. The only proper consecration of a Christian is the kind in which your whole life and living are consecrated to do God's will.

A LETTER FROM BROTHER HUANG LI CH'UAN

Greetings in the Lord to Brother Watchman Nee,

Brother Chang Kuang Jung, Brother Witness Lee,

and all the brothers who bear the responsibility of the eldership:

I have met a person named Shang T'ien Hsing (James). What kind of person is he really? He came to our locality when Brother Lai Chi Ho and I were not home, so the brothers received him. Later they were a little worried after hearing the things he said; Brother Ch'ai called me and Brother Lai home. Brother Lai and I first asked him whether he had a letter of recommendation. He said he did not. He only had a letter of recommendation from a brother in P'ing Yang who does not meet in the Lord's name. (It was from a former pastor in a denomination in Sze Hsi.) We quizzed him several times, and he seemed to keep something back in all his answers. He did not really come to the point of our questions, and he seemed to say yes and no at the same time. I thought he was a Seventh-day Adventist, but he also seemed to be like a person from Zion's Church.

The topic he preached was "Returning to Zion." For this reason, we dared not receive him. (His goal was to have a preaching meeting among us.) A few

brothers disagreed and argued that it was wrong for us not to receive him. They spoke many words of misunderstanding. Please tell us about his work, denomination, and the details of his living so that there will be no misunderstanding among the brothers.

We have heard that he has some drafts ready and is preparing to put out a publication called The Preaching Paper. He also recorded the names and addresses of our brothers in his book. We also heard that he did some of the same work in P'ing Yang and Wenchow. This matter is very crucial, so for the sake of the Lord's love, we ask the brothers who are ahead in the Lord to remind, teach, and help us who are behind you, lest we receive one who should not be received. Until we meet again!

Your brother,

Huang Lu Ch'uan

November 11

Answer from Brother Tang Shou Ling

With respect to Mr. Shang T'ien Hsing, we only want to say this: He advocates the doctrine of keeping the Sabbath, emphasizing the law and the doctrine that a person is not saved once for eternity. In summary, he is not one who walks in the same way with us.

A LETTER FROM BROTHER DAVID HSU

To my dear brother in the Lord, Brother Nee:

I really am like a wounded soldier who has fallen near the line of battle in a remote border region. I am both fearful and sober! The sound of the battle is close. Although the battle is not yet fierce, my boldness for battle has already vanished. This has caused me to become nervous. I am afraid that I will shame the Lord's name! I do not know what more I can do than to look to Him for these days. Oh, I am so weak and ignorant. I am also in such a solitary, cold, and remote situation. I do not know to what extent I will fail!

I have gone to a high place a few times and looked out to see the environment around me. It is as if the wind and snow in the wilderness have pierced my skin; I shiver with cold and shake. I look at my inward faith, which is so weak that I have almost been disappointed to the point of retreat. Oh, if His love had not given me a little warm strength and encouragement, I would have fallen into the disqualified crowd long ago. My cry is, "Lord, all else is up to You; just grant me

one thing: to hold on and endure to the end of the road so that even if I die it will be in glory!"

There have been a few times that it seemed as if I had no hope to continue working, so I asked God "not to send me." I never received any answer, however. On the contrary, I felt as if the burden were heavier. So I dare not move loosely. Brother, think about it; this environment is so difficult to bear! What sickness is it?

It is the same with my prayer. I only feel the "need," but when I kneel down, I "cannot" open my mouth; I can only sigh. It is as if I have the burden to pray, but I do not have the unction to pray. Sometimes I do not even have the burden to pray. What is this? Is it the separation of sin? Is it the attack of the enemy?

From the time I left Shanghai until now, I have not broken bread once, nor have I prayed with brothers in the way. The brothers I have met have either had their faces toward the world or their hearts toward another spirit. Oh, this condition makes me cry. Although it is possible to remember the Lord alone, it is not as meaningful as when brothers "dwell in unity"! I can say that the former is less than one ten thousandth as meaningful as the latter.

I returned to Ting Hai this time because my mother is sick. There was a group of so-called Christians who asked me to preach to them. I preached the gospel to them in the beginning. There was much grace, so they felt very satisfied. When the cross gradually became manifested, no one was willing to receive it. It was as if they did not even have the heart to pursue the crown behind the cross. Man's heart is only to receive the blessing, not the Lord who gives it! According to their opinion, "Being spiritual is important, but the flesh is also needed." Oh, what kind of a saying is this? But thank the Lord, those with ears really heard. There was a "pastor" among them who was touched by the Lord in his heart. He saw that his work in the past was just straw and wood. He also saw that we should only honor the Lord. He has set his heart and his will. Now he just desires the time of the Lord's glorious appearing. May the Lord keep him and allow him to realize his desire to go to the conference in Hangchow. He is a brother with a good foundation and talent. He is also the product of Shanghai and Kiangsu.

When I worship with my mother in Ting Hai, we can only weep. She left the sisters in Shanghai, and if she does not return to Shanghai, she will never (while she's on earth) have the chance to take the cup again. May the Lord's truth prosper in the whole earth so that the unwarranted loneliness and remoteness of His children can be reduced.

Tomorrow, if the Lord is willing, I will take the 8:15 train to Shaoshing. There I will learn again from the Lord how to give Him the first place in the work and obey Him in all things. After the conference in Shaoshing, I will perhaps go to Hangchow. Maybe I will be able to partake of the table of love.

May the Lord who loves us protect you in all things. May your spirit, soul, and body be hidden under the blood so that you may not be attacked by the enemy. May the Lord bring the heavenly messages to earth through Christ and His Spirit so that you may have more revelation to tell all your brothers. May the Lord cleanse your mouth and heart so that His all may flow through freely without frustration. I can only exercise my function as a member through prayer to bind and command the enemy.

Please forgive me for writing so much in a letter without order or politeness. This is a little of what has flowed out from within. We have never spoken much. Hence, there is the need of forgiveness. May you be satisfied in the Lord.

Your brother in the Lord,

David Hsu,

The twenty-fourth

RECENT NEWS FROM CH'ANG-CH'UN, MANCHURIA

To my dear brother in the Lord, Brother Shun T'ien:

May the grace, peace, and strength of the Lord fill you.

Thank the Lord for His sweet will. He calls His children from hundreds of miles away in Feng T'ien and causes us to submit to the light of the truth. My first two months in Ch'ang-ch'un saw old opinions and prejudices blocking my heart and spirit; there was an indescribable bondage, and I felt much suffering. Looking back now, it was terrible. Thank God, He does not cast us away but gives us revelation in His Word to know our previous errors. It is very dangerous to live according to the feeling of the soul. He has also showed us that He does not want outward activity but inward submission to the small voice in our spirit; He wants us to do what He wants us to do. At the first table meeting, we could not help but submit to Him. The Lord is really among us! Therefore, we uttered cries of joy from our hearts and spirits and do not feel it is a bother to tell you. God's household now has one more obedient child, Brother Chao. We received different direction before, but God has given him extra revelation so that he is more clear and obeys the truth. Praise God, He is not a respecter of persons! We read the letter from you and Sister Chang after the table meeting. When we knew

about the topic of the conference in Hangchow, we all simultaneously realized how very important and serious this matter was! In these last days God has allowed His children to see His will and to deal with Satan. We really praise the Lord! He is the Victor. If we stand in Him, we will also be overcomers.

I received your letter of the twenty-fourth on Monday. Brother Liu Wen did not come to the meeting on Tuesday because he had some affairs to take care of; he did not give it to me until Friday. I read it carefully. Thank the Lord for giving us the good news. We remember you often in our prayer. We believe that God will grace you. Tomorrow after the table meeting, we will ask each one to read the portion of the Scripture that God has asked us to read.

Now let me tell you a little about the current condition of the assembly. We read the letter from you and Sister Chang about the condition of the brothers in Shanghai and Hangchow, and we were really ashamed. We know even more that we are weak and do not live out the Lord's love. We can only pray before God that He would give us grace. If God can give this grace to the brothers and sisters in Shanghai and Hangchow, He must also give it to us. After you left, this little flock of children was in fear and trembling before God asking Him to care for our meeting. We believe that our meeting is built upon the foundation of the Lord and that man cannot do anything. Therefore, every time that we meet, the Lord always sends His children to lead. Thank the Lord, in the last month and a half He has given us a quiet spirit so we could still meet. On Tuesdays and Fridays, there are not many people because it is too dark, but the Lord's Day morning meeting is still in the same condition. In the Lord's Day meetings we speak more about the aspect of salvation because there are outsiders. (Parts omitted.)

Thank the Lord, He has graced us in the past. We believe He will continue to care for us. We also believe that one of His servants will come to lead us. (We have given it to God.) All the brothers now realize that the one (you) we relied on before is no longer here! "Arise!"

We hope that the Lord will grace us. After Sister Chang and elderly Mr. T'ien return to Changchun, we would like to continue the fellowship meeting and the meeting to learn to sing hymns. Peace in the Lord! Greetings from all the brothers and sisters who meet in the Lord's name in Changchun.

Your member in the Lord,

Lo Ch'un P'u

November 3

NEWS CONCERNING THE MEETING

IN P'U T'IENT, FUKIEN PROVINCE

Its Beginning, History, and Most Recent Condition

To all the brothers and sisters who have received the same gracious calling in the Lord:

Grace to you and peace from our Father God and the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord Christ loves us, died and rose for us, obeyed the Father's will, and delivered us from so great a perdition; He is still saving us and will save us in the future. Therefore, we should give praise, honor, glory, and authority to the Lamb upon the throne forever and ever, amen.

We praise the Lord that despite the failure in the garden of Eden, there is the victory on Calvary. Although Jerusalem is desolated, Zion has already been raised up. The number meeting in the Lord's name in P'u T'ien is very small, and the work is still young, but each believer has had the experience of coming out of death into life, and there is much to tell about the marvelous things which the Lord has done in this locality. Therefore, we now want to report the news concerning this assembly through Collection of Newsletters to the brothers and sisters who care about us. We hope that each reader prays earnestly and much before the Lord for us humble and weak ones, asking the Lord to grace and protect us and to give us the leading of the Holy Spirit as we walk in His way so that we would obey His will and serve Him faithfully until the day of His coming, amen.

The Beginning

In the very beginning there was only a group of women meeting in a sister's house. No men attended the meetings (unless there was a special meeting). Later, the Lord's servants came to preach the Word a few times, and the Holy Spirit of the Lord worked at the same time. A few people in the denominations were touched to know the gospel and to be saved clearly. All the believers felt that there was the need for a brothers' meeting to be raised up. They prayed in one accord to give this matter to the Lord who bears our burdens. Thank and praise the Lord, He heard the petitions of His children and led His servant, our dear Brother Faithful Luk, to move here with his family at the Lord's appointed time (1932) to be responsible for the Lord's work. Before Brother Lu arrived, the believers asked the Lord to arrange and prepare the place and building for a meeting (because there are many denominational chapels, and they are very pretty outwardly). Thank the Lord, His will can never be wrong. What He

prepares will always come to pass. He finishes what He has begun. The Lord chose an appropriate location for us and a very good building. (It is at our present address, 6 Riverside.) This place is one where those who love the denominations dare not come. It is a house where the superstitious people in the area dare not live. Nevertheless, our Head, Christ, is the victorious Lord, the Lord of peace. He surprisingly has led us from past to present in this terrible environment. He is also the eternally unchanging God. We deeply believe that He can look after and protect us to the end. After the meeting place was decided upon and the Lord's servant came, we began meeting with the brothers and sisters in one accord in the winter of 1932. We established the Lord's table at the same time, and the lampstand of the truth began to shine forth. The trumpet of the gospel also was blown. This good work was begun by the Lord Himself. Glory to His holy name, amen.

During the first Saturday afternoon Bible study meeting, Brother Luk began by reading the passage in Acts 16:11-15 where it says, "We went..by the river, where we supposed there would be a place of prayer" (v. 13), and also "a certain woman named Lydia." She was the first believing sister in that locality, and she also led her whole household to be baptized into the Lord (vv. 14-15). Brother Luk read this passage which seems to be just like the beginning of the meeting here in our locality. Our meeting place is also right beside the river, and the first believers were a group of sisters who loved the Lord fervently (we are referring to the believers who have fellowship with us).

The History

We thank the Lord for leading us step by step so that we could pass our days in His grace. With regard to the news of the meeting, I think that the brothers and sisters are happy to hear it, so we must tell you something of the condition of our history. We hope you will continue to pray for us constantly. We have told you how the meeting was started. There are a few points to mention concerning our history.

The Times and Nature of the Meetings

There is a Lord's table and worship meeting every Lord's Day morning at 9:00. We continue with all the brothers mutually exhorting each other in Christ. At 2:30 p.m. we proclaim the truth of the gospel. (In addition to the responsible workers, the brothers also testify or preach the message.) On Wednesday afternoons at 2:30, there is a sisters' meeting. On Wednesday evening at 7:00, there is a brothers' meeting. On Saturday afternoon at 2:30, there is a prayer and Bible-

study meeting. On the first Tuesday of every month, there is a combined meeting with the believers in Han Chiang (about twenty miles from here) that is an all-day prayer meeting. Whenever a brother or co-worker from another locality comes here, there are also conferences or other special meetings.

The Believers' Experience of Passing from Death into Life

Each believer which the Lord has purchased with the high price of His precious blood has passed through different situations. Some were separated out from the denominations. Some left the sects quietly. Some were disciplined and punished before they turned around. Some were healed and saved from great sickness and difficulties. Some lost their jobs, but gained the Lord. Some were stumbled with coldness, but were revived. Some passed through thirty years of being pastors before they were clearly saved. Some sought the meaning of religion in many different kinds of denominations and were finally willing to obey the truth. Some were enlivened after being dead in sins and transgressions. Some turned from darkness unto light. Some still stand firm despite persecution from their families. Some stand without wavering despite losing their positions. Some have been threatened by teachers, warned by pastors, counseled by evangelists, and advised by co-workers, but they still have not changed. Some have been misunderstood by their relatives and taunted by their friends. There have also been all kinds of attack, opposition, temptation, and shame, which have been overcome by completely relying on the Lord. In conclusion we are what we are today by the grace of God. We thank the Lord and give glory to Him! (1 Cor. 15:10; 10:12).

The Persecutions and Frustrations on All Sides

We know that this truth is blasphemed in every place (Acts 28:22). After we began meeting in the Lord's name, Satan was very unhappy, of course. Therefore, he did his best to oppose us through men. The strongest of this opposition came from the denominations. They opposed us, saying, "These people have come into the sheepfold to steal the lambs. They pull the fish out of our fish baskets." They were afraid that their members who were like sheep would be released by the truth and saved by the gospel. Therefore, they used every method to frustrate people from coming to the meetings. The pastors and people with positions among them also spoke bad things from the pulpits about us. They said that if you want to be scriptural, you should do everything

according to the Bible, including wearing Jewish clothing, being baptized in the Jordan River, and breaking bread in that nicely-prepared upper room, etc. This kind of criticism was nothing but Satan's attack through men. We relied on the Lord who loves us, we stood in His victory, and we were not stumbled. "If God is for us, who can be against us?" (Rom. 8:31).

The End of the History

(1) Every Lord's Day, twelve brothers and more than twenty sisters meet together to remember and worship the Lord. Approximately one-half had been baptized previously by sprinkling, smearing, or immersion, but after being saved and receiving the leading of the Holy Spirit of truth, they were all baptized into the Lord's name and into the Lord's death, being buried together with Him and resurrected together with Him. Most marvelously, an old gentleman of more than seventy years of age joyfully obeyed the Lord. There are still some people who are waiting for the leading of the Holy Spirit concerning the matters of baptism and the breaking of bread.

(2) With regard to the work, we sometimes go out to pass out tracts and preach the gospel to the unbelievers. Sometimes we preach the gospel on the street corners and speak of salvation to the merchants. Sometimes we go to the prisons or work in the hospitals. Sometimes we go to every house and every place looking for people to preach to. In addition, there are many neighboring villages, towns, and cities that we have not yet gone through completely. Oh, in this great wheat field, "the harvest is great, but the workers few." We really sigh about this! We hope that you will all remember to pray for us that the Lord's Spirit would operate greatly in this area to move people's hearts and revive His work!

(3) It has been two years since the meeting began. Among the believers, one sister has been loved by the Lord and peacefully left this earthly tabernacle to be with the Lord for eternity. The rest have been touched by the Lord's gracious care and strengthened by His power to peacefully pass through these dangerous and confused days. Whatever our case, we all want to praise the Lord for what has passed, and we still want to rely on Him for the future.

The Present Condition

A few believers from this locality have recently scattered to Changchow, Hsien You, and Fu Ch'ing because of their jobs. They are doing proper jobs in these counties. Thank the Lord for opening the way for His children, lest they be taunted as "jobless believers." Although it seems that there are more empty

seats every time we meet, we believe that the Lord who wants all men to be saved will add more brothers and sisters to us.

In September of this year, two brothers and nine sisters obeyed and were baptized. May the Lord's Spirit continue to work in the hearts of those who are waiting to be baptized and take the table. We hope that they will obey the Lord one by one in the near future so that they will remember the Lord and have fellowship together with us.

In the denominations there are also quite a few who have been helped either directly (through face-to-face discussions) or indirectly (through the tracts or publications), to the point that they can believe God's Word and understand the truth of the Bible. Unfortunately, because of friendship, reputation, authority, position, occupation, or other matters of their living, they do not dare practice and obey the truth to walk in the Lord's way. May the Lord's hand touch these people's hearts and complete the good work He has begun.

This is the general condition of the meeting in P'u T'ien. It is really nothing and is not worth recording, but we have the obligation to fellowship in mutuality in the Lord. Since this is the result of the Lord's labor, we dare to write what we know of these matters. These have really been the marvelous doings of the Lord. We are merely useless servants. "You have also performed all our works for us" (Isa. 26:12). May that which is of ourselves be completely brought to naught. May the Lord only be elevated and glorified here eternally!

Dear brothers and sisters, we have told you our history. For this reason, we would ask you to pay particular attention to the fact that there is a group of immature and weak ones here who have just begun a work. We all need your prayers very much. Therefore, we hope you will pray for us publicly and in private and that you will remember us constantly, mentioning the work here often. This is our last request of you in this letter.

We deeply believe that the Lord who loves to hear our prayers will open His eyes, listen with His ears, and smilingly open His heart of love to receive our prayers in one accord from different localities. Furthermore, He is the faithful, almighty God; He will do everything beyond what we ask or think. We should sing Hallelujah loudly together. Praise the Lord! Amen. May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all unceasingly. We bless you with peace, joy, and victory!

Your brothers in P'u T'ien,
Tai Hsien Hsin, Chen Chieh P'ing
October 30, 1934

Mailing address: 6 Riverside, P'u T'ien, Fukien

A LETTER FROM BROTHER CHEN TSAI SHENG
(From P'u T'ien to Shanghai)

Peace to Brother Luk:

Since parting I have thought of you in my prayers. I was comforted by receiving your letters. I am happy that Brother Nee has someone to help him but sad that Brother Chung's father had a tragic encounter. It really makes me sad and worried. Members are related to each other, and it is natural for them to express their sympathy to each other.

After the end of the conference in Hangchow, the Lord gained the glory. Although I did not attend, I received the good messages through letters, and they have given me much edification. I agree that it is the right time to talk about the matter of appointment in Shanghai. Of course, we cannot lay hands on others hastily; the matter must be carried out soberly.

There is a good opportunity in Yu Hsi. Brother Wei Chih sent a letter of invitation. We will wait for your return to make the decision. I am enclosing a picture he took so you can see it.

The truth that Brothers P'an and Nee spoke concerning the matter of head covering gave me much light. I do not plan to speak on this matter now. It is equally a lack for the sisters in P'u T'ien and Han Chiang not to cover their heads as it is for the brothers not to take care of things.

I heard that they are planning to start an oil factory in northern Kiangsu and a soap factory in Amoy to help the unemployed brothers. This is really a good move. We can only help with our prayer.

The gifts are for all the churches. Do your best to remain free. Do not worry about me. May the Lord lead you concerning the matters of work and moving your family.

Brother, because of the shining light of the truth, I have entered into a deep valley where it is difficult to move forward or backward. When we were in Ya T'an, I felt that our way and work did not match the truth, so I parted with them and followed at your side, helping you as Timothy followed Paul and learned from him. Now I feel that the way I am taking is right, but because of the light of the truth I feel that the work I am engaged in presently is not right. Therefore, I have

shed a few tears of sorrow. The Lord's grace is sufficient for me. I am patiently waiting for His revelation. Please do not forget to help me with your prayer.

It is good that the brothers in Shanghai think I should be responsible for the work in at least two localities. However, the burden for the work in two localities has been given by God to the elders and deacons to bear. Since I am not a local believer nor a gift of a shepherd, I dare not continue the evangelist's work or the teacher's work. According to the principle of work in the Bible, the evangelist begets the children first, the shepherd continues by feeding them, and the teacher continues by teaching them. Later the elders and the deacons rise up to oversee and help them. After this, various gifts often come to work to perfect the saints, allowing the Holy Spirit to pour out other gifts on the local saints so that the gospel will be preached by them to other places. This is the principle of the development of the work. In another aspect, the saints come to understand the truth, know their own gift, and stand in their ministry in the Body in their own position to serve God and perfect the saints. This is the way to build up the Body. If one takes charge of a locality or controls one place, this is the beginning of a sect. It will fall into the danger of collapsing. Brother, this is my ignorant opinion. What do you think? I would be very grateful if you would teach me.

Brother, the two years that I have been in P'u T'ien have been a time of preparation for me to be a useful vessel. On the one hand, I have learned from you, and on the other hand, I have been striving to know my gift. In this time of preparation, I am waiting for God's revelation. I am also testing the result of my labor so that I can serve the Lord well for my whole life. I do not want to run the race in vain or do a vain labor. According to my present endeavor, what position should I take in the Body and how should I function?

Brother, I still have many difficult questions, and I hope Brother Nee can come soon, so I can ask him. Please tell him this and also congratulate him for me and greet him.

Your brother,

Tsai Sheng

October 30

THE HISTORY OF THE FIRST OVERCOMER CONFERENCE IN HANGCHOW

The Beginning

During our prayer meeting in the middle of May 1934, the brothers meeting in the Lord's name in Hangchow perceived a hunger among God's children for the truth

in our age of desolation, and felt that we should pray that God could have a conference through the Hangchow brothers to serve the brothers and sisters in the various places.

Decision

After much prayer, the Lord's Spirit led us, the brothers and sisters in Hangchow, to be of one mind in acknowledging this to be the Lord's will. A brother drafted a plan concerning the date of the conference, whom we would invite to speak, and the plans for every aspect of the conference.

We have been meeting in Hangchow for less than a year, and we do not have many people. There are very few rich brothers among us. In man's eyes it did not seem that we were worthy to hold such a large conference, nor did we dare do it. We are not like other institutions which have an economic supply or other sources of income, nor are we like other organizations which have money prepared for the work. The "offerings" that we receive just barely cover the rent, and there are many unemployed brothers among us who need help. Under these conditions we did not think that we could do it; even the brothers with experience in the Lord thought that it would be impossible.

Promise

However, thank God, He is our God and our all in all. Two months before the conference, God gave His promise to the brothers with the words "Jehovah Jireh" and "Abraham believed the God who gives life to the dead and calls the things not being as being." The brothers grasped these two promises and prayed to God. So they decided to have this Overcomer Conference. Our brothers continued to bear the responsibility for prayer for another two months.

The Living Quarters

Our living quarters could at most accommodate about two hundred brothers and sisters from other provinces. To our surprise, about four hundred registered, more than twice the original number. Shortly before the conference, there was the problem of not having enough accommodations. Thank the Lord, three days before the conference, He gave us a large building that could hold five hundred people. It was more than we expected.

Those from Other Provinces

Although not all who registered actually came, there were more than four hundred people at the conference, including those from our province and Southeast Asia. This was something we never expected.

The Date of the Conference

The date of the conference was October 6-17.

The Expenses

The daily expenses for both before and after the meetings and for supplying the brothers were great (for this reason many brothers were worried for us), but God never allowed us to lack in anything. We thank God most heartily for showing us the reliability of His promises. The second afternoon of the conference, we had only ten cents, but we had a large bill that we needed to pay immediately. Praise God, He not only kept us from losing our credibility before man; He also allowed us to see His glory in this matter and comforted the hearts of this weak, useless group of servants. We cannot but thank and praise God, and we also want to thank the brothers and sisters who prayed for us.

The Preaching

During the ten days, the preaching in the morning and afternoon meetings was borne by Brother Nee. The meetings were very good. A separate report will be given of the topics and outlines of the messages.

The History

We have to thank God for many points concerning this conference. There were brothers and sisters attending this conference from twelve different provinces. Although they spoke different dialects, had different ways of living, different personal backgrounds, and different levels of spirituality, most of the people were of one mind in seeking God's eternal purpose, in pleasing God, and in expressing Christ's heart of love in the testimony of oneness. This is the first point for which we give thanks.

The brothers and sisters from the various places were not only served by us but also served us. The Lord used this to teach us, the brothers and sisters in Hangchow, a lesson so that we would know how to serve His members from now on. This is the second point for which we give thanks.

Brother Nee has been physically weak, but during this conference he showed no sign of weakness. Every time he spoke, his spirit was living and his body was strong. The audience was attentive throughout. This is the third point for which we give thanks.

The work the sisters did in serving one another surpassed us, the brothers. This is the fourth point for which we give thanks.

Our brothers were tested much this time with fatalities, physical injuries, robberies, and all manner of trials. Thank God, these did not discourage our

brothers; on the contrary, our brothers really saw God's glory manifested through us. This is the fifth point for which we give thanks.

In this conference, God did not just edify us spiritually; He also made our hearts joyful because our Brother Nee was married after the conference (October 19). Elder Brother T'ien P'ing Fang from Ch'ang-ch'un was the witness, while the head of the groom's household, Mr. Nee Wen Hsiu, and the head of the bride's household, Mr. Chang Ju Lin, were the directors of the wedding. More than two hundred people attended the wedding. From now on, our Brother Nee will have the good wife God gave him to serve him. This is the sixth point for which we give thanks.

The preceding few points are a simple record of the conference in Hangchow. May all the thanks, honor, glory, and riches be to our heavenly Father forever and ever, amen.

Your brother,

Jan Ch'i Yu

January 18, 1935

A LETTER FROM T'ENG YUEH, YUNNAN PROVINCE

Brother Yueh Chiao:

I received your package of books a long time ago. There were fifty-six books all together, both large and small; thank you. Those books have already been laid out in the Gospel Book Service Room in Yi Lo County for anyone to read. Brother Lee K'o San recently came here from Shun Ning. He comes to the Book Service Room every day to read the books sent by the Shanghai Gospel Book Room.

It is not easy to gain a brother in this place because many people smoke. The tobacco in Yunnan is famous for its good flavor and low price. Business and industry are not well developed in this region, so there is a lot of free time. They have nothing to do all day, so they smoke to pass the time. We have to do two kinds of work here. Before we preach the Word to them, we must first exhort them to quit smoking. If they want to quit, we help them with medicine for quitting smoking. Thank God, the brothers who come to the meetings quit smoking first and then turned to the Lord. Unfortunately, my knowledge of the Bible is very shallow, and I am very busy with official business, so I cannot lead them well. I hope I can leave my position in customs to testify for the Lord full-time. This place is too remote and communication is too difficult, so it is very inconvenient to invite Christians to come here. You can say that no one has been here before. I want to take this opportunity to work a little for the Lord here. I am sending you

a check for twenty dollars to be used in the costs of sending the books by registered mail and as a small help to the cost of publication. Furthermore, I plan to print more copies of some of the smaller books put out by the Gospel Book Room. Could you advise me about this? May you have peace in the Lord. Greet Brother Nee and the other brothers for me.

Your brother,

Ts'ai Ying Ming

December 8, 1934

Mailing Address: Custom House, T'eng Yueh, Yunnan province

NEWS FROM KIRIN, MANCHURIA

One

Peace to my brother in the Lord, Brother Luan:

It has been more than a month since we parted on the ship at Shanghai. I remember you every time I pray. Thank and praise the Lord that He led me to Hangchow and caused me to obey Him. I remember how rebellious and disobedient I used to be. Now God Himself has enlightened me so that I completely obey Him. Before I went to Hangchow, I thought, "I definitely cannot enter the 'Little Flock' even though I was baptized in Ta Chiang." Brother Chiang Shun T'ien exhorted me to go the meetings in Hangchow, and I said at the time that I would go, but I never went. Thanks be to the Father who loves us. He did not let me go and caused old Brother T'ien P'ing Fang to come to Kirin. He only said one word, and I changed my mind about going to the conference in Hangchow. I used to oppose the "Little Flock" to the uttermost. I did not only oppose it myself, but I also told others to oppose. However, I was very willing to read books by Brother Nee, and I often told others about them, but I was unwilling to go that way. At first I felt that the "Little Flock" was a sect, but now I know that if I call others a little flock, I myself am part of the big flock (the world) and am not saved! Thank the Lord for allowing me to completely understand the meaning of Luke 12:32 in this conference in Hangchow. It refers to all those in the Lord from the past and present and all over the world. They are those purchased by the Lord's blood, all the believers with the Lord's life. It also helped me to understand that sects are a sin which divide the Lord's Body into thousands of divisions. I also understand that the life I used to live, like a life in Haran, was a suffering. Praise the Lord; He caused me to leave these hateful denominations and walk in His way.

After returning from Shanghai, the Lord led three of us safely back to Kirin. We did not meet with any difficulties. After returning to Kirin, we suffered a little. One person came to exhort us, and another person came to visit, and some from the denominations despised us. The Lord led us all through these things. I also went to Hsin Ying Kou Bible Seminary and resigned from my position as a financial board member. Last Wednesday a denomination in Kirin also elected Mr. Hua Su Sheng and myself as deacons. We did not accept. Sister Chang En Chao resigned from her position as a worker in the deacons' meeting last Wednesday (thirty-five dollars a month) so she could walk in the Lord's way. The way is narrow and difficult; please pray for us much.

Three Lord's Days ago I went to Changchun for the table meeting and gave a short testimony. There are three brothers and two sisters in Kirin. We do not have a table meeting yet, but we meet on Thursday and the Lord's Day evening for prayer and Bible study meetings. On Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday evenings we pray. There are also two brothers from the denominations who come to pray with us. All the denominations in Kirin are afraid of us. They say, "The Little Flock has come, so we must be more careful; they steal lambs like the Seventh-day Adventists." There were a few times when I wanted to send a letter to the denominations in Kirin, regarding my intention to leave the sects, but I have not done it. Brother T'ien said I should wait quietly first. It will still not be too late to wait for Brothers Nee and Luan to come. I am afraid of frustration from the denominations, so I have not done it yet. Tonight is Thursday. During the prayer meeting we received your petition booklet and a letter from Brother Ma saying that Brother Nee's illness was better and that he would come to Manchuria in February. We heard before that he would come in December. Now it has changed to February. It must be February of next year, right? Brother Chiang Shun T'ien's letter said that Brother Nee was waiting to get well from his sickness before coming to Manchuria. I think he must mean that he will come after his illness is better. We are praying unceasingly to the Lord to heal Brother Nee's illness. We also are begging God to take away Satan's frustrations so that you can come quickly. The brothers and sisters desperately need you to come!

Presently we feel very lonely. We really do not want to enter the denominational cathedrals. (Since returning from Shanghai, I have not gone once.) Therefore, the few brothers and sisters really want the Lord to quickly give us a place to meet and to raise up more people to walk in the way with us.

Brother, the work in Manchuria is very critical. We need you brothers to come quickly. We believe there will be a big change in the denominations in Kirin. God will call out His people personally to maintain His testimony. We are looking to the Lord and waiting on Him. We ask Him to arrange all matters. The Lord's grace is sufficient for us. Thank and praise the Lord. Please greet the brothers and sisters in Hangchow for me!

Your brother in the Lord,

Luke Kuo

December 7, 1934 in Kirin

Two

Peace to my dear brother in the Lord, Brother Shun T'ien:

I received your letter of January 1 on the ninth. I had already sent a letter on the eighth with Brother Yi Sheng's letter. I sent a letter one day and received yours the next day. Thank and praise our Lord. When I read your letter, it filled my heart with happiness because you and Brother Ma are going to come back soon and because Brother Nee is somewhat better and can go out on the street. I really thank the Lord for this. Although we are not sure when he will be able to come to Manchuria, we do not cease in our prayers. If God wants him to come, he will come. If God does not tell him to come, it would be useless for him to come anyway. We can only pray quietly and wait for God's time. We believe that the lambs without a shepherd here will be cared for by the Lord Himself who is able to send a faithful servant to feed them.

Satan is formally opposing us through those in the denominations. (Parts omitted.)

There were twenty-four people in yesterday's Bible-study meeting (Thursday); among them was a deacon from the denominations. We allow anyone from the denominations who wants to attend to come to this meeting. We pay particular attention to the prayer meeting and the table meeting. We are all well here. Please do not worry about us. May you have peace in the Lord! Please greet the brothers and sisters there for me!

Your little brother in the Lord,

Hua Su Sheng

January 11, 1935

A LETTER FROM CH'ANG-CH'UN, MANCHURIA

Peace to Brother Shun T'ien who walks together with me in the way in the Lord:

Thank the Lord, He truly and especially loves us; He has led us to walk in the way today. May we all walk in the Lord's will, amen. I went to Chu Chia Cheng Tze a few days ago to visit the brothers and sisters there. I stayed there for four days. Brother An K'o Pai is doing pretty well, but he is very troubled and tempted by the devil. There is a certain man there who uses all kinds of persuasive methods and has drawn several brothers away from our fellowship. Thank God, He is still enlightening them, and a few have already returned. We gave them completely to the Lord and asked Him to take care of them. I came back and stayed two or three days and then returned to Kirin. Brother Luke Kuo and Brother Hua Su Sheng sent a letter asking me to go to them quickly because they had something to discuss with me. Kirin began the Lord's table to remember the Lord on January 6, the first Lord's Day of this year. Fourteen brothers and sisters came that evening. Later, I spoke a little concerning the truth of the table meeting and the responsibility we should bear. Six brothers and two sisters eventually partook of the bread. Thank God, their condition is very good, but there is no one to cultivate them. This is a great need at present. It is the same in Ch'ang-ch'un. (Parts omitted.)

I heard that Brother Nee's illness was somewhat better. When will he come to Manchuria? We will give it to God. That is God's business. We only have to bear the responsibility to pray. May you have peace! Greet all the brothers and sisters in Shanghai!

Your brother,
T'ien P'ing Fang

A LETTER FROM CHU CHIA CHENG TZE, CH'ANG-CH'UN

To my brother in the Lord, Brother Shun T'ien:

I am very, very sorry because I received your letter from Shanghai a long time ago. The attacks we have received in the last six months have been hard to take. I really know our position now. The Lord places those who obey Him in the battlefield to manifest the victory. When I received your postcard that was sent before you left, I thought that I could go by any means to Ch'ang-ch'un to see you before you left. Then something came up, and I could not go to Ch'ang-ch'un, nor could I answer your letter. My heart was very sad until I received your letter. Then I was somewhat comforted. In these six months there have been many difficulties on all sides. Not only have there been problems in my home, but also

the assembly has had some. There were only four brothers to begin with—Brothers Hsiao, Kao, Yu, and myself. (There is another brother, Chin, but he is a worker, so he is very busy and does not come to the meetings often.) In the fall Mr. Kung Hsiang from Harbin came to visit. He is Brother Yu's brother-in-law. He is in the Assembly of God and only speaks about the baptism in the Holy Spirit and the doctrine of speaking in tongues. He came among us and caused much trouble. Ultimately, Brother Yu was drawn off by him to speak in tongues. There was a great problem. He set up another meeting in Brother Yu's house. It hurt all our members. I was very sad because of this. I deeply felt that I have offended the Lord much because I did not take care of our brother in love. Shortly thereafter, the denominations gave us difficulties. They kept distracting Brother Kao so that he suffered much. We were really in danger for a few days. Satan used many different ways to divide our brothers. Finally, Brother Hsiao, Sister Hsieh, and myself gave the whole matter to God in prayer and begged God to protect His children. We deeply believed that God had opened a door that no man could shut and that He would protect us. We asked the Lord to give us strength to overcome this attack. Thank the Lord, we stood firm by His blood. A few days ago I went to Ch'ang-ch'un to visit old Brother T'ien and Sister Chang. I learned about the conference in Hangchow from them. I really thank the Lord that He raised up Brothers Lo and Chao to serve the brothers and sisters. They are very clear about the truth and bear the responsibility of deacons in the assembly. (Parts omitted.)

The assemblies in Manchuria will continue to suffer if gifted workers do not come to lead them. It will not be easy for them to go on either. We entreat the Lord to send Brother Nee to Manchuria soon. (Parts omitted.)

Please greet Brother Ma Mei T'ang. May you be clearly dealt with by the Lord in this time so that you might have more strength to bear an overcoming testimony for the Lord, amen. Please read the entire fourth chapter of 2 Corinthians.

Your brother in the Lord,

An Ching T'ien

December 4, 1934

A LETTER ABOUT THE CONDITION OF THE WORK IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

Peace to my brother in the Lord, T'eng Ming:

Yesterday, Brother P'ei Jan passed your letter on to me, and I got to know that you have placed me in the Lord's love and remember me continually. I really thank the Lord for His grace, and I thank you for your love. I sent a letter to you previously with some old letters that Brothers Wang and Chang of Singapore had sent to me. I think you must have received and read them. The Lord has led the brothers meeting in Singapore to break through the difficult situation caused by problems they have encountered. They have withdrawn from the Gospel Hall, and the Lord has established His table in Brother Kai Sen's home. Before they held their first table meeting, I was led by the Lord to go to Singapore in June and have some deep prayer with Brothers Wang and Chang to seek the Lord's will concerning our future. Our brothers are of the same mind, which is that they really cannot join together with the Gospel Hall. Although the door is the same (referring to the first step of salvation), the way is very different. We take the Lord Himself as our center, not the Lord's truth. The Gospel Hall takes another name apart from the Lord's name; therefore, we are not satisfied and dare not go along with them. Our brothers had some disagreements with the brothers from the Gospel Hall concerning the interpretation of the Bible. If they came out from them immediately, we were afraid they would misunderstand and think that our brothers were dividing the Lord's Body over the interpretation of the truth. They might have placed the burden for division onto our brothers' shoulders. Therefore, we first cleared up the dispute over the truth and then began the table meeting. We continue on by following the leading of the Holy Spirit, lest we fall into error once again. May the brothers and sisters who have the same mind in China pray much for the assemblies in Southeast Asia.

If the Lord is willing, I will probably take Brother Cheng Kai Hao from Jou Pu to visit my brothers and sisters in Sitiawan with me. We want to combine the work in the three localities of Shir Li, Bi Nun, and Sitiawan, making Sitiawan the center of the work. We hope that a gifted brother could come to Sitiawan and serve the brothers full-time so that the brothers in all the localities could receive the Lord's edification. We are placing this matter in prayer and asking the Lord to do it. The brothers and sisters with the same mind in Bi Nun still meet in the Gospel Hall because some of the brothers have not seen that the Gospel Hall is a sect; therefore, they do not want to divide from them. We still need to wait for the Lord's time. My responsibility in the leper colony is not binding. I can go ahead with all work according to the light the Lord gives me. I am now learning the lesson of serving the Lord. It suits me to live on this quiet sea island. The Lord

has already begun a good work in Southeast Asia. It will be impossible to avoid battles in the future, but we few brothers in Southeast Asia have not been edified deeply. I am afraid that we will not be able to handle the oppression of our environment. If the Lord does not send someone to bear the responsibility in Southeast Asia, we entreat Him to open the way for one of the brothers among us to go to Shanghai and be trained by the Lord in Brother Nee's place. We hope that the shameful would leave their shamefulness to become holy and useful to the Lord. Please bear the burden to pray for us. Brother Chang Nai Tsung is working in Singapore. If it is the Lord's will, he will live there for some time and serve the brothers. The Lord recently established His table in Jou Fu. A few brothers there testified to His grace. They are now very much alone because they are too far from me. I cannot visit them often. They often go to Singapore and receive comfort and encouragement from Brothers Chang and Wang. The work here really needs your prayers. May our gracious Lord support us in finishing the course He has appointed us. May all the glory be given to His name.

Your brother in the Lord,

Yang Chien Hsiung

August 19, 1934

NEWS FROM CHEFOO, SHANTUNG PROVINCE

One

Dear Brother Luan:

Several months have gone by since leaving the conference at Hangchow. My hunger has increased. I received your last letter and have already passed it on to the brothers and sisters in Chefoo. We thank you for giving us a distant hope. We have been calling on God for you in our prayers, asking that your body would be strong and that you would have enough strength to serve our Lord Jesus Christ and the brothers and sisters in all the localities.

We received the petition booklet that you sent us on December 1. Thank you. We really thank the Lord that He truly loves us. We can see so many brothers on the earth. Although we cannot be together in one place, we often meet together before God. When we think of the brothers, we think of Christ; when we think of Christ, we think of the brothers. This is a very sweet matter!

Please deeply thank our dear brothers in the Lord for us— Brothers Lee Kuan Hsun, Ma Ti Sheng, Chang Yang Teh, Jan Ch'i Yu, Yang Chen Chung, and all

the other brothers. When I was in Hangchow, I enjoyed so much service from them.

How has Brother Chang Ming Ching been recently? I think of him often. Brother Witness Lee came to Chefoo some time ago (I think you know this) to shepherd the brothers. There was a six-day conference, and the condition was very good. Please remember the assembly in Chefoo especially in your prayer. Ask God to raise up faithful ones to serve the Lord. May you be blessed with peace!

Your little brother,

Chao Pi Chen

December 1, 1934

P.S. The brothers in many localities hope that there can be a conference in Chefoo next summer. Please pray for this so that the responsible brothers would understand more and pursue the Lord's will more. Sister Miao is better now because we anointed her and prayed for her. She is still physically weak, however, but we thank the Lord for this.

Two

Dear Brother Witness:

It has been more than a month since you left Chefoo, and we haven't received any letter from you. We really miss you. You are probably very busy. We are all very well now; therefore, we really thank the Lord. He causes us to see His blessing in everything among us. The atmosphere in the meetings is very free. The brothers and sisters are striving in one accord for the furtherance of the gospel of God. In the last few Lord's Day meetings, we have seen some revival. On the Lord's Day of January 20, we had another baptism meeting. Five brothers and five sisters were baptized. Two of the brothers were baptized in obedience to the Lord, but they can also be counted as finally being clearly saved. The other three are new believers. Two sisters were baptized to obey the Lord, and three were newly saved. We baptized them indoors because it was too cold outside.

Brother Chung Wen Shao, who used to be responsible in Nanking, came from Tientsin to Chefoo on business. We really thank the Lord that he came with Brother Cheng Liang P'u, who is the younger brother of Brother Cheng in Shanghai. He was also baptized into the Lord this time. They went to Tsingtao around the twenty-second.

Sister Hsia Yu Chieh of Lung Kou came to Chefoo to fellowship with us on January 19. Please pray much for the assembly in Chefoo. Ask the Lord to revive and keep us. May you have peace!

Your little brother,
Chao Pi Chen
January 21, 1935

Three

Dear Brother Witness:

We received your letter on January 23. Thank you for letting us know how you are doing in Shanghai. We really thank the Lord for loving us so much and giving us His Word. Thank the Lord that we have gained much help and strength. It is really marvelous that the Lord gave Brother Pi Chen a word from two places, but it was still the same word. Not many days after we received your letter, Brother David Hsu in Ningpo also sent a letter with the same word. It really strengthened Brother Pi Chen and made him bolder.

Brother, you know how weak he is. We can only ask you to remember him in your prayer so that God's grace and power can be expressed in him.

We should have answered your letter sooner. Many brothers and sisters were coming and going, and they needed rides to and from the station; there were also many other small matters that took up all our time, so we must ask you to forgive us. Brother Pi Chen will go to Mou Pin to visit the brothers on the third day after the Chinese New Year. (Parts omitted.)

We could not rent the hall on West Road. Some of the brothers suggested we make a big tent that could be moved any time to any place. We are still praying about it. (Parts omitted.)

Your brothers,
Chao Ching Hai, Chao Pi Chen

Four

Peace in the Lord to Brother Witness:

We received all the letters you sent us. Thank you very much. I really thank the Father God that when I was suffering in my heart, He caused you to give me a verse from the Bible that really helped me. It was the time Abraham was ninety-nine and Jehovah appeared to him, saying, "I am the almighty God." I was comforted very much by this verse. Every sentence in God's Word is powerful. His promises are reliable. I really thank and praise Him because He is the almighty God. (Parts omitted.)

We had a good conversation with Mr. Wang Kuo Hsiang yesterday. He has obeyed the Lord and wants to walk in the same way we do. This Lord's Day he

will be able to break bread to remember the Lord with us. He sang hymns and prayed with us yesterday. When he was praying, he really praised and thanked the Lord through tears! When he was singing, he constantly shed tears. We hope he can really gain the Lord and that the Lord can gain him. We hope that you do not forget to remember the assembly in Chefoo in your prayer. Brother Pi Chen has gone to Mou Pin to give some testimony of the gospel in Brother Wang Hsin Wen's home. From there he will go to Wei Hai and testify. Please pray for him much in the Lord so that the work he does in Wei Hai will be the Lord's will. The brothers and sisters in Chefoo are all in peace. Your family is also well. The wife of the third brother in the Lee family also comes to the meetings. Please do not worry. I will tell you the rest later. May you have peace in the Lord!

Your brother,

Chao Ching Hai

February 8, 1935

LETTERS FROM P'U T'IENT, FUKIEN PROVINCE

One

Greetings to the holy brothers, partakers together of the heavenly calling in the Lord, with the brothers who bear the responsibility as elders and deacons. May grace and peace be added to you from our Father, amen.

I received good hospitality some time ago in Shanghai and was given many gifts which were really a sweet savor, an acceptable sacrifice, well-pleasing to God. My God will fill your every need according to His riches, in glory, in Christ Jesus (Phil. 4:18-19).

It has been four weeks since I returned to P'u T'ien. I have been able to combine my work with my private affairs. I met with Brothers Ke San and Tsai Sheng in P'u T'ien, Han Chiang, and Yu Hsi. We will meet together for about four weeks. It is a good opportunity; thank the Lord for His grace. I apologize for not writing a letter of greeting sooner! Please forgive me in the Lord! (Parts omitted.)

Please let me know about the condition of the work in Shanghai and Brother Nee's health. May you be blessed with peace, joy and victory!

Your brother,

Faithful Luk

Two

Greetings to my beloved brother, Witness:

May the Lord's grace be with you, amen!

I received your letter and read it all. I heard that Brother Teng Ming was seriously sick; how is he now? I am very worried about him. May the Lord heal him!

Brother Nee is away, so your burden must be greater and heavier, but the grace of the Lord is sufficient for you. May the Lord use you much to edify many believers. I am ashamed that I am so useless. Please pray for me much.

Last night I hurriedly translated several short stories. I enclose them to meet my responsibility. Please do your best to edit them. There are places that are not fluent. I know that I cannot avoid them. I would not mind if you laughed at them, because you are beloved to me in the Lord. Please forgive me!

When can you come to P'u T'ien to lead a meeting? There are seven or eight brothers from Amoy who have all signed their names to a letter asking me to come with my family to work in Amoy. My future is unclear, and I do not know where to go. I am sure that the Lord who created me will lead me step by step.

I am not sure about my trip to Hong Kong. I can only place this matter in the Lord's hands. I believe that when it is the appropriate time for the Lord, He will lead us. Has Miss Lee returned to Shanghai? Did Brother Chiang go ahead to Amoy to work? May you have peace!

Your brother,

Faithful

A LETTER FROM AMOY, FUKIEN PROVINCE

To our dear brother in the Lord, Witness:

How is Brother Teng Ming's illness? I hope you can keep me informed so that I will not worry.

When will the second issue of The Christian be published? How much will it cost to order one thousand copies? When can it be sent to me? I hope you will answer me so that I can wire the appropriate amount to you.

Brother Faithful Luk can come to Amoy to work tomorrow. Please pray for this time of work! I will tell you the rest later. May you have peace!

Your brother,

James Chen

February 8, 1935

A LETTER FROM SWATOW, KWANGTUNG PROVINCE

Peace to my brother in the Lord, Yueh Chiao:

We weighed anchor on the twenty-sixth and arrived here on the twenty-ninth. God protected us on this trip; the winds and waves were calm on the entire

voyage. We did not suffer any seasickness. We really thank the Lord who loves us!

I have no words to express my thanks to you for your loving care in the Lord while I stayed in Shanghai this time. I only hope that our rich God will reward you for your love.

Our three brothers, Watchman Nee, Ma Wen Chia, and Yu Wen P'o arrived here last night. They passed through Han Yang, Changsha, Nan Chang, Shao Kuan, and Chao An on their way to Swatow. It took them twenty-eight days. They were cared for by God along the way and arrived here safely. This is also something to thank the Lord about. They will probably stay for one week. There will be a meeting every night. All the brothers and sisters are very happy.

My whole family is well. Please do not worry about us, but continue to pray. Please greet the brothers—Witness, Wei Chih, Chin Chou, and Chin T'ang. May you have peace in the Lord!

Your brother,

Chiang Tze Hang

The fourth

A LETTER FROM YI LIN, NORTHERN KIANGSU

Greetings to my brother in the Lord, Mr. Witness:

I received your letter of January 29 and read it. Thank you for asking after my health. I thank the Lord for His grace that I have gradually begun to get better. Please do not worry about me. With regard to the present condition of the work in northern Kiangsu, there was an open letter sent from Taichow to Mr. Nee. Have you received it yet? The letter talked about the condition of our work in each locality after returning from Hangchow. Please go to Mr. Nee's home and greet Mrs. Nee; then read the letter. On February 7, we began to have a gospel meeting every morning and an edification meeting for the brothers and sisters every afternoon. There is work in Taichow, Su Chia Tsui, Tung Kou, and Hsin Cheng. I pray that you do not forget to pray for this. May the Lord bless you with peace! Please greet the brothers and sisters who meet in Shanghai.

Your little brother,

Wu Wei

February 7, 1935

NEWS FROM CH'IENTS'ANG, P'ING YANG, CHEKIANG PROVINCE

Greetings to our brother in the Lord, Mr. Nee,

and all the brothers and sisters:

We really thank the Lord that in these last days He Himself has worked in P'ing Yang to manifest His truth and cause us to deeply feel the sin of sects, which do not have the real worship. Thank the Lord that He raised up a small number of brothers and sisters to leave the denominations in spirit even though we still met with them at that time. On the Lord's Day evening there are six brothers and sisters who break bread in one accord before the Lord's table. We have done this since the spring of 1934, when the Lord led us to completely separate from the denominations. On the first Lord's Day of the third month of the old calendar, we began to have meetings in the Lord's name in Brother Ma Hsien Yi's home. There were about fifteen men and women all together. Five brothers and five sisters partook of the table. After we had a meeting like this to worship the Lord, we were attacked and persecuted by the denominations. But it was the Lord's will that we follow in His footsteps to patiently stand firm. Brother Su Chih San was oppressed by his father. Sister Lin Chih Ming was misunderstood by her husband. Therefore, we prayed much for this. Thank the Lord, He freed Brother Su to worship the Lord. Only Sister Lin cannot be completely free now. Please pray for her.

In the seventh month of the old calendar, Brother Ma met with great difficulty. His eldest son (fourteen) died suddenly. Thank the Lord, he was already saved. Brother and Sister Ma were very sorrowful. After the Lord comforted them through the brothers and sisters, they were able to recover their former composure. May the Lord's victorious power swallow up the attacks of the enemy and keep the brothers and sisters in the way before them. May He also cause the brothers and sisters to stand firmly on the foundation. Brothers and sisters in the Lord, please do not forget to pray for us. May you have peace in the Lord.

Your little brothers in the Lord,

Su Chih San, Liu Hsing Kuang, Ma Hsien Yi

September 28, 1934

Mailing address: c/o Hsieh Yu Tai, Ch'ien Ts'ang, P'ing Yang, Chekiang province.

**A LETTER FROM SZE HSI, TAI SHUN,
CHEKIANG PROVINCE**

Greetings in love to my brother in the Lord, Philip Luan:

(Parts omitted.) I will be conducting a conference in this town from the twenty-fifth to the thirty-first. The first three days will be message meetings, and the last four

days will be administrative meetings (all the responsible brothers and sisters from all the localities in this region will be there). Please ask the brothers and sisters in Shanghai and Hangchow to pray for us earnestly. Before this conference, I feel deeply in my spirit that the enemy is attacking us from all sides, both directly and indirectly, visibly and invisibly. It is really difficult to endure this; however, we deeply believe that the Lord Jesus is always victorious. We rely on Him and receive His victory, and we are not frightened in the least. Although darkness surrounds us and the clouds are thick, we know that it will not be long before "the Sun of righteousness" appears. Therefore, we still accept the negative things from the Lord with fortitude and proceed on as usual. Although our hearts are wounded sometimes, our spirits are always rejoicing. May the Father God bless you and us in the last stage of the way so that we would be able to walk well and arrive at God's goal. We would not stay in the world like the two and a half tribes stayed on the east of Jordan.

Your brother,

Huang Lu Ch'un

December 24

**A LETTER FROM CH'I HSIEN CH'IAO, P'U TUNG,
EAST OF SHANGHAI**

To my brother in the Lord, Brother Shih:

I was graced by the Lord to have the opportunity to see you again on Monday. We do not fellowship often because of the Lord's sovereignty and the limitations of our environment and because of the fact that I am too lazy to write. In the Lord's Spirit, however, we have fellowship almost every day.

After seeing you this time, I discovered that the brothers and sisters who meet in Shanghai still care for me and the assembly here in the Lord. I was really touched and grateful. Although I have met with great difficulties and temptations since leaving the denominations, I deeply know that I am walking in the Lord's will. Therefore, my experiences of spiritual joy, peace, and victory are more frequent than before. I know that there is a new battle to fight and a new course to run in the future, but by the Lord's victory, I deeply believe that the Father will give me the grace in the Lord to endure to the end.

This Sunday someone brought Mrs. Ts'ai, who had been possessed by a demon for three or four days, into our meeting. Since becoming possessed, she had screamed and hit people night and day. She could not sleep. It was terrible. Her family was afraid of her. They had done everything that man could do but could

not cast out the demon. After she came to our meeting, the demon caused her to have convulsions and then left her soon afterwards. She is saved now, along with her husband and children; the entire family of seven has turned to the Lord. Praise the Lord.

I have wanted to talk with Brother Nee several times, but because I did not know his address or have much opportunity, we never were able to talk to each other. This Monday, you drew a map for me to find his home. I went to find it the next morning, but after looking for forty-five minutes, I could not find it, so I took the boat home at noon.

There will be a conference beginning in our locality on the first day of the Chinese New Year. We would like to invite you and Brother Nee to come to our meetings. The brothers and sisters in our locality would welcome you very much. I have already written a letter directly to Brother Nee. Please invite him again for me. Give me a letter in the next two weeks telling me whether or not you can come. May you be blessed with peace!

Your brother,

Chu En Sheng

January 5, 1935

A LETTER FROM NAN CHANG

To my dear brother in the Lord, Brother Wu:

It has been three months since we parted, and I really miss you. I also mention you often before the Lord. How have you been recently? I worry about you.

Since Brother Mu left the hospital and returned home, I have had no news of him. Is he well?

The so-called Christmas is here. It is still the busiest time for the denominations in Nan Chang...Therefore, I did not go there...Actually, you cannot blame them. Were we not just the same before? I really thank God! He has clearly shown an error that has existed for more than one thousand years to a small number of His children. May we not receive His grace in vain but be faithful to Him daily. (Parts omitted.)

I have been constantly praying since I came to Nan Chang, hoping that God would raise up His loyal soldiers to walk in the way with me. I wrote a letter to Brother Mu before with this idea. God also clearly tells us in the Bible, "Not abandoning our own assembling together, as the custom with some is." It is so pitiful! The church is desolated to the uttermost. This condition is also true in Nan

Chang. I have gone to listen to the messages in the denominations a few times, but they all speak..things that are fashionable to men. They do not even have the remembrance of the Lord. My requests are: (1) Please instruct me in love concerning all things related to the "Brethren Church." (2) What are the difficulties in establishing a table meeting? (3) Can questions regarding the church be sent by mail?

There are also some other matters that I would trouble you about: (1) Please greet Brother Chou Wei Ku, Brother Chi, Brother Yang, and Brother Shen. (2) Please find some news about Brother Mu.

I am writing in this year, but you will receive it next year. I ask the Lord to bless us with new life from the heavens in the coming year. May you have health in your body and spirit!

Your brother,

Chin Yi Min

December 28, 1934

A LETTER FROM TIENTSIN

Greetings in love to our beloved brothers in the Lord, Philip, Watchman, and Witness:

We think of you often because we are members one of another in the Lord. We are also brothers and are drawn into oneness by the Lord's great love.

Not long ago, we heard that Brother Nee's health was not good, and we were very worried. In our prayer we asked God to heal him quickly. Brother Nee has a commission to preach the gospel, and this is a time when the harvest is great and the workers are few. We deeply believe God will hear our prayer.

Has Brother Witness arrived in Shanghai yet? Since he started out, the brothers in Chefoo pray for him often. We believe that he is very safe in his travels.

The assembly in Tientsin has become more living lately. Brothers Liu Huan Hsin and Tau Meng help us much. Thank God, He recently opened a door for us to preach the gospel. Every Sunday we preach the gospel in the district court jail. Please pray for this.

A friend of the Salt Inspection Office named P'an Yi Yuan received the Lord Jesus as his Savior recently. He has now been transferred to the Tax Department in Nan Hsiang. He will go south soon. When he leaves we will give him a letter of recommendation.

Sister Miao Hai Ch'en of Chefoo was completely healed after the saints anointed her and prayed. She is still weak physically and cannot get out of bed. We ask

the brothers and sisters to continue praying in love—the Lord will hear. May you have peace.

From,

Chou En Kai, Miao Hai Ch'en

January 2, 1935

A LETTER FROM WENCHOW, CHEKIANG PROVINCE

To my dear brother in the Lord, Yueh Chiao:

I received your letter on the evening of the eleventh and learned of your charge to me to preach the gospel to Mr. Chin Tao Pen. That evening I gave the brothers and sisters the responsibility to pray and ask the Lord concerning His leading. After the prayer meeting on the nineteenth, the brothers decided to go to preach the gospel to him that evening. Thank the Lord, before we got up to leave, he came into our meeting place. He said that he had received a letter from Sister Chin (Mr. Chin's aunt) at 6:00 p.m. that evening, asking him to come. He left his house at 6:20 p.m. and did not find the place until 8:00 p.m. A few brothers and I preached the gospel to him. Thank and praise the Lord, His Spirit began to work in him immediately. He confessed his sins and received the Lord. He came to the Lord's Day afternoon meeting the next day and to the Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday evening meetings. Last Lord's Day afternoon he also came to hear the gospel. After the meeting, two brothers and I went to his place to talk to him. He declared that he was saved by grace. We see that he has really gained life. He has honestly repented and believed. He said that in August and September of last year, he went out every night to gamble, drink, and do all sorts of evil things. He even spent the entire night out. Although he went to the denominational chapels to listen to the messages last year he did not feel that they were interesting; therefore, he stopped going. Now that he has heard the gospel, he spends every evening in his room reading the Bible and praying, except when he comes to the meetings. He is very joyful. This is really a special blessing from the Father. Please thank the Lord with us and tell Sister Chin about this. I will not say anything more now. I will write later. May the Lord's Spirit be with you all!

Your little brother,

P'an Huo Ling

A LETTER FROM TSINGTAO, SHANTUNG PROVINCE

Peace to my brother in the Lord, You Yen:

I received and read your letter. We go to Mr. Hsu Hsiao Feng's home every Lord's Day. Sister Hsu has become much better recently. We can say that the Lord's work has a beginning in Tsingtao. We have seen the Lord save some. Brother Ching Ch'ing and I are too weak. He is very busy, and he told me tonight that his stomach illness was acting up. I am too pressured. My brother's illness has already turned for the better. We really want the brothers to cry out to God in one accord for us! (Parts omitted.) May the Lord bless you with peace and goodness. Please greet Brother Lin and Brother Tu for me.

Your brother,

Tze Chieh

January 8, 1935

Can Brother Nee pass through Tsingtao on his way to Manchuria? We hope he can stay here for a night or two.

A LETTER FROM CHIA HSIN, CHEKIANG PROVINCE

Peace to my brothers in the Lord, Brother Tu, Brother Lin, and Brother Wu:

I received your letter. You really were right. We began the Lord's table today. Six people came to the meeting, three brothers and three sisters. We believe the Lord's promise is eternally faithful. He will remember our weaknesses, care for our immaturity, increase our strength, give us wisdom, not leave us orphans, lead us, and keep us. We only have to believe and trust in the Lord and stand firm in this place. As long as we thank and praise Him for His victory, we will be in peace.

Please pray and ask the Lord for the following:

- (1) That a door for the gospel would be opened so the number of those who testify for the kingdom would increase.
- (2) That those who are already saved would have more heart to love the Lord.
- (3) That gifted ones and responsible ones would be raised up.
- (4) That He would keep those walking in the way.
- (5) That everything of the enemy would be destroyed.

May you have peace in the Lord!

Your little brothers in the Lord,

Lo Yung Tien, Chang Yu Chih

January 27, evening

LETTERS FROM BROTHER CHANG KUANG JUNG

One

Brother Chi T'ang:

Thank you for taking me to the train station recently. Brother Luan and Brother Chen from Hua She came to meet the train when it arrived in Nan Hsin. The train over the river was very crowded, but thank the Lord, we all had seats. When the train arrived in Ke Ch'iao, Brother Chou was waiting to pick us up. We took a paddle boat to Hua She, and my third elder brother was the first to come out to shake our hands and receive us into the house. Our room and board were very convenient. My second elder brother took special care of us. We did not spend any money on the way from Nan Hsin to Hua She. The brothers from Hua She who came to pick us up paid for everything. Therefore, of the X dollars you gave to the Lord, I gave X dollars to Brother Luan. We really thank the Lord.

We had meetings for six days in Hua She, (from the Lord's Day the tenth until Friday the fifteenth). There were three meetings a day. Fortunately, I had Brother Luan and Brother Hsu to help. Tomorrow I plan to leave Hua She and go to Yi Lung. I will probably stay for only four days in Yi Lung, from the Lord's Day the seventeenth, until Wednesday the twen-tieth. Brother Hsu and I will go to Lan Hsi on Thursday.

The brothers in Hua She are very dear. I have seen with my own eyes how much they hunger and thirst. If the Lord sends me again, I will still go there. They really have a great need. I will not go into the condition of the meeting here. May the Lord gain something, and may I be more humble in learning to serve the Lord. Peace!

Your brother,

Chang Kuang Jung

February 15, 1935 in Hua She

Two

Dear brothers in the Lord:

I left Shanghai in a hurry to go to Hua She, so I did not have a chance to ask for a letter of recommendation from you. I am very sorry. I will now go from Hua She to Yi Lung and Lan Hsi. Perhaps I will go from Lan Hsi to Hangchow. Please give me a long-term letter of recommendation so that I can fellowship in any place where there is the Lord's table. I really thank you and hope you can do this. It would be best if the letter of recommendation could be sent to Brother Luan in Hangchow to keep for me.

Thank the Lord, during this trip Brother Philip Luan and Brother David Hsu are both working with me. Please pray for Hua She, Yi Lung, and Lan Hsi. I will be

very grateful. Please greet Mr. Lin Kuang Piao, Mr. Wu Hsi You, and Mr. Lin Chung Ch'en.

Your brother,

Chang Kuang Jung

February 14, mailed from Hua She

A LETTER FROM HU SHAN, NAN KANG, P'ING YANG, CHEKIANG PROVINCE

To my dear brother in the Lord, Mr. Witness:

It has been more than a month since we parted, and I miss you. Thank the Lord, when my younger brother returned home I learned that you received special grace from the Lord and your illness has been healed. My heart is full of joy. May the grace of the Father be with you always so that you can accomplish God's plan in this last age, amen.

My brother and the co-workers were all cared for by the Lord, so they arrived safely home. Please do not worry about them from afar.

Brother, in a place called Hsia Huei Hsiao (about three miles from Hu Shan), there are some brothers, Hsiao Lien San, Chiang Kuo Ch'en, and others. They have received the Lord's enlightenment and know that denominations are wrong. As they have gone on, they have felt more and more that if they did not leave, they would not have peace. Therefore, they recently left the denominations (the Tu Lung Independent Church). They often come to our locality to meet. The way is rather far, and the women feel that it is not convenient. In addition, there are some language barriers. For these reasons they have decided to meet in their own locality. The Lord has arranged a meeting place and some to bear the responsibility for the meetings. The only thing they lack is one with the gift of giving messages, so they often come to ask the brothers from our locality to bear the responsibility for the work there. I do not have any light concerning this matter, and I do not know how to deal with it. (Can we agree to their requests?) Furthermore, can the table meeting be started without sisters? I ask you to give me some clear teachings about these matters so that the Lord's name is not shamed because of my ignorance. May you have peace in the Lord!

Your brother in the Lord,

Chou Ta Ch'ing

Answering Letter

Dear brother in the Lord, Ta Ch'ing:

I received your letter long ago. I am sorry for the delay in answering; please forgive me in the Lord. According to the principle in the Bible, a local assembly should care for the nearby localities which have assemblies raised up after it (Acts 8:14-15; 11:22-23). Since the locality of Hsia Huei Hsiao is close to Hu Shan and the brothers there want you to help them, you should visit and help them.

It is best if there can be sisters when the table is established. However, it is not necessary in the beginning. When the Lord established His supper, the Bible shows us that there were only the apostles—no sisters—eating with Him (Matt. 26:20; Mark 14:17; Luke 22:14). Peace.

Your brother,

Witness Lee

February 18, in Shanghai

**A LETTER FROM P'U MEN MA CHAN, P'ING YANG,
CHEKIANG PROVINCE**

Greetings to our brother in the Lord, Mr. Witness:

I am sorry that I have been too lazy to pick up a pen and write a letter of greeting since you left our locality. Because I am not very learned, I am afraid to show you my letter. We are face to face, however, before the throne of grace. We miss you very much. We are sure that you also miss us and care for our locality. Although the brothers here have been enlightened to obey the truth and have learned some about walking in the Lord's way, we are still ignorant in many matters. Therefore, we asked you to come and preach to us and to direct in everything because our spiritual wisdom is shallow and our life is immature. You did not reject us and still loved us in the Lord. You traveled a long distance over rugged mountain roads and came joyfully to teach us. We received much edification. Although the brothers in the denominations do not obey or walk the Lord's way with us, we thank the Lord much for one thing: God has blessed our meeting so that every day our number increases. There are two matters that we do not understand yet; therefore, we ask you to give us some guidance.

A housewife is saved (although her life is not strong), but her husband does not believe and he opposes strongly. He commits the sins of fornication, gambling, and idol worship. Sometimes the husband gets very sick, and the wife invites the brothers into her home to pray for her husband although he does not like this. Can the brothers do this?

I read the book *The Assembly Life*. I did not understand many portions regarding the appointment of the elders. According to the Bible, the elders are appointed by God. Why does the apostle have to appoint them again? (The answer in the book is that this confirms the will of the Holy Spirit.) Can we skip this step of confirmation? After the time of the apostles, is there the appointment of elders in the church? If there is, are not today's sectarian denominations a tradition that has been handed down? If so, has it become corrupted?

Brother Fan P'ei Chun already asked Mr. Nee the rest of the questions, so I will not repeat them. I am sending this hastily composed letter in hope that you will answer it. If you publish it in *Collection of Newsletters*, please correct my language and edit the letter. May you be blessed with peace in the Lord.

Your little brothers,

Fan Yun Shan, Wen Ching Yi

Answering Letter

To my two brothers in the Lord, Yun Shan and Ching Yi:

I received your letter long ago. Please forgive me in the Lord for answering so slowly. The first question you asked is not a matter of whether you can but whether you should. If you have the burden and feel you should pray for that sick man, then you can go.

With respect to the elders in the church, you are right that according to the Bible, elders are established by God and appointed by God through the apostles. God does it because the eldership is an office, not a gift. It is a matter of position, not of ability. A gift or ability can manifest itself; it does not need to be appointed. However, office or position is different; it needs to be appointed and announced to all. The offices in the New Testament—the elders—are not the only ones who need to be appointed and announced. The offices among the people of God in the Old Testament—the kings—needed to be appointed and announced. Saul and David were both chosen by God, and both were appointed and announced by Samuel. As long as it is a position or an office, it needs to be by appointment and announcement. Without this, the authority of the office has no place to rest, and it will be difficult to avoid confusion. Furthermore, God appoints and announces the ministers He has established through men—His sent ones—not only for the sake of establishing the authority of the office, but also for the sake of restricting man's flesh. Unavoidably, some among God's people will act according to the flesh or not remain in their position. The flesh of these ones has not been dealt with. In the church, they like to be the head and control things that

they should not—and even cannot—control. Those whose flesh has been dealt with, who are after God's heart, and who can be used by God are often very humble and hide behind others. If God did not use His sent ones who understand His will to appoint and announce those who are useful to Him, it would be difficult to avoid power struggles in the church. In the Old Testament, God originally appointed Solomon to inherit David's kingship, but when David was close to death, Adonijah plotted to usurp the throne before David could appoint and announce Solomon, who was according to God's desire. Later, David found out about this and appointed Solomon as the one whom God had established to inherit his kingship. In this way, Adonijah's usurpation of the kingship disappeared (1 Kings 1). If David had not pointed Solomon out to the people, there would have been confusion in Israel after David's death. God's goal of governing the people through Solomon and building a temple for His name could not have been accomplished. David's appointment expressed God's desire on the one hand and limited the activity of Adonjah's flesh on the other. In the same way, the apostles' appointment of elders expresses God's will on the one hand and limits man's flesh on the other. Therefore, in the church we must appoint and announce the elders that God has established.

Since God left us a pattern for appointing elders, we should do it without having to ask for a reason. With any matter we should only ask, "Did God say this?" We should not ask why God said this. We should only ask what God said, not the reason for what God said. Our greatest right before God is obedience. The patterns that God has left us are all necessary. It is always good, necessary, and acceptable to God if we act according to "the pattern that was shown..in the mountain."

We do not need to worry about whether there is the appointment of elders after the apostles, or if the appointment of elders in today's sectarian denominations is a tradition with them. We are not following the pattern of the church after the apostles' time, nor are we imitating the sectarian denominations of today. We should follow and imitate the church in the apostolic age only. We should follow only the principles given to us by the apostles. We should imitate only the patterns they gave us. We can and should follow only the apostles. We cannot follow anything apart from or after the apostles. The pattern of the church given in the apostolic age for establishing elders is as follows: God first raises up people to be elders in a local church, then He appoints the ones He has raised up through the apostles so that they can be elders to govern that local church.

Today in the time of the desolation of the church, we know that there are no more apostles, but we have seen workers who fulfill a small portion of the work of the apostles. They preach the gospel in every place and establish assemblies. We also confess that in the assemblies which stand on the ground of the church today, God will raise up men like elders who can govern the assemblies in the various places. When men like elders are raised up in the local assemblies, the workers, who participate to a limited extent in the work of the apostles, should designate them among the brothers, according to the principle of the early apostles appointing elders. The appointed ones should then bear the responsibility of the elders in that local assembly and govern that local assembly. This is necessary, right, and according to the principle of the Bible. May you have peace!

Your brother,

Witness Lee

February 19

LETTERS FROM HANGCHOW

One

Greetings to Brother Witness:

I was just thinking of you, when I suddenly received your letter. (Parts omitted.) According to my plan, I intended to go to Shanghai to be instructed, but because of different kinds of frustrations, I am unable to fulfill my wish this week. On the Lord's Day, February 3, Hangchow is having a fellowship and baptism meeting, so the brothers will not let me go. (Parts omitted.) I hope you will pray for me and instruct me. May you have peace! Greet Brother Chang Kuang Jung also!

Your little brother,

Philip Luan

January 31

Two

Greetings to my beloved brother in the Lord, Witness:

(Parts omitted.) The conference in Hangchow will be from the third to the ninth. Every evening there will be a message for outsiders. On the tenth I must go with Brother Kuang Jung to Hua She and Yi Lung to visit the brothers. For this reason I am afraid I will not be able to go to Shanghai to receive some teaching. I only ask you to pray for these matters. May you be blessed with peace!

Your brother,

Philip Luan

February 7

A LETTER FROM SOOCHOW, KIANGSU PROVINCE

To my brother in the Lord, Witness:

May you have peace!

Although the meeting in Soochow is often attacked from every side, thank God that He still preserves His work. On the surface it seems that the enemy is very strong. We are not clear why we suffer these things, but we believe that His actions are never wrong and that we will understand fully later. But, brother, our hearts are almost sinking. On the surface it appears that we are full of failures; we hope that you will help us in prayer. Brother, I really want to see you and gain some help. May you have peace!

Your weak brother in the Lord,

Stephen Kaung

February 15, 1935

**A LETTER FROM BROTHER CHEN CH'ING FA
IN P'ING YANG, CHEKIANG PROVINCE**

Greetings in love to my brother in the Lord, Mr. Witness:

I received your card on January 14. I learned something of your recent travels from it. May the Lord bless your work in Shanghai and all your family in Chefoo. After shaking hands and saying good-by to you in Shanghai, my life and work have been as usual. I travel around to the meeting places in the region of Chiang Nan visiting the brothers. Eight days after the Chinese New Year, there will be an edification meeting for the believers in Shui Shen Yang in Chiang Nan. Please pray for this, that the Lord's Word would run freely without frustration so that God's children may be established by the Lord's Word.

Why has the publication work stopped for so long? I have not seen The Present Testimony or The Christian for several months! I really miss them. If possible, please tell me why so that I will know how to pray. (Parts omitted.) May you have peace in the Lord.

Your brother,

Chen Ch'ing Fa

January 31

Note from Witness

With regard to the publication work, please read "News Briefs from Various Places."

A LETTER FROM BROTHER HSU CHUNG CHIEH

Brother Witness:

Since we parted I have been blessed by the Lord. I am thankful that you remember me from such a distance! When I went to Tsinan, I met Brother Liu T'ien Min there. Brother Liu had been to Kuang Jau and Ling Tzu to visit the brothers. He has now returned to Tsinan and will go back to Ts'ou County tomorrow. I was in Tsinan for about three weeks and had a total of sixteen meetings. I want to go back to Peking tomorrow or the day after. At first the brothers in Tsinan wanted me to live there, but Peking kept sending me letters telling me to hurry back. I must first return to Peking to see them and to consider the Lord's leading and arrangement. I hope you pray for me often! (Parts omitted.)

The brothers here have improved much recently and are very living. Among the local brothers, Brother Ts'ao is very solid.

Where is Brother Nee? When will he return to Shanghai? I hope you let me know! When will you leave Shanghai? I pray that you will tell me when The Christian and The Glad Tidings will be published. Greet Brother Ho Yueh Chiao and T'ang Shou Ling. May you have peace in the Lord! Greet all the brothers and sisters for me.

Your brother,
Chung Chieh

The seventeenth at 8:00 p.m.

NEWS BRIEFS FROM VARIOUS PLACES

(1) Brother Hu Ch'i P'u and Brother Hu Ch'i T'ang did some work in Hsiao Shan, Chekiang province. Brother Hu Ch'i T'ang preaches the truth concerning the church, and Brother Hu Ch'i P'u preaches the truth about God's will. The brothers there hope that the Lord's servants will go there often to work.

(2) A meeting has begun in Hu Shu of Hangchow. The Lord raised up a few faithful, obedient brothers who were willing to walk in the Lord's way: T'ao Chun Ai, Chen Fang, etc. The condition of the meeting is very good.

(3) Sisters Ku and Tso of the Gospel Hospital in Soochow have been forced to leave the hospital because their firm stand for the truth was unacceptable to the

administrators of the hospital. The two sisters now live at 2 Kao Shuai Alley, Soochow. They are very happy to be worthy to suffer for the Lord's name.

(4) Brother Wang Teng Ming had another attack of stomach illness and is in the hospital recuperating. The illness was so serious that he could not eat or drink. He was anemic in addition to having stomach problems. The doctors decided that they had to operate, but they could not because of the anemia. Thank the Lord, there were several brothers who gave blood to Brother Wang because of the Lord's love. Two sisters who were nurses were led of the Lord to go to the hospital to serve our brother. For these reasons he became stronger, and the doctors operated on the ninth of this month. He is better now and can eat and drink. He will soon be able to leave the hospital.

(5) Brother Watchman Nee developed heart disease after the Overcomer Conference in Hangchow. He is physically very weak. He seems to have recovered now and has left Shanghai temporarily to rest. We hope that the brothers and sisters in all the localities will pray for him.

(6) After the Overcomer Conference in Hangchow, Brother Faithful Luk and Brother Chiang Tze Hang stayed in Shanghai for a few days. Chang Kuang Jung and Hsu Chung Chieh went to work in Swatow. Brother Philip Luan also came to Shanghai for a few days. Brother Witness Lee went to Chefoo for a few days. Their present travels can be found in the preceding articles, so we will not repeat them.

(7) Brother Huang Tsai Ch'ing is working in Ningpo.

(8) Brother Chiang Chun T'ien went to Ch'ang-ch'un in Manchuria last month.

(9) Brother T'ang Yen Ming has left Kung Ho City, Tai Shan, Kwangtung province and has returned to his old family home in Lo Ting. His address now is c/o Yi Feng Company, Su Lung Shu, Lo Ting, Kwangtung province.

(10) Brother Hu Ch'i T'ang, a responsible brother in the assembly in Pao Shan, was transferred by his company to Chiang Wan in Shanghai. Brother Chi Yung Feng is now working in Pao Shan.

(11) After the Overcomer Conference in Hangchow, there was a sisters' conference led by Sister Peace Wang. Sister Wang is now working in Soochow.

(12) Sister Ruth Lee and Sister Chang Chi Nien went to Hankow to rest after the Overcomer Conference in Hangchow. At the same time they are doing some work in the regions of Hankow and Changsha. They have already left Hankow and are passing through to visit the sisters in Chiu Chiang, Nanking, and Chen

Chiang on their way back to Shanghai. They will probably arrive in Shanghai at the end of this month.

(14) Sister Miao Yun Chun worked in Shanghai after the Hangchow conference and is still here.

(15) Issue No. 37 of The Present Testimony has not been published, because Brother Nee was sick and is now traveling. The Christian was delayed by the registration process and by the preparation of the mailing list. Issue Nos. 2 and 3 will be published as one volume. Issue No. 3 of The Glad Tidings will be published soon, we hope. This all requires the prayers of the brothers.

(16) The Shanghai branch office of the Bethlehem Oil Company in Yi Lin Town, northern Kiangsu, has already moved back to northern Kiangsu. Please send any mail to: Mr. Wu Wei, Yi Lin Town, northern Kiangsu, Kiangsu province.

MATTERS TO PAY ATTENTION TO

(1) Whoever has any news of the work, the difficulties, things to pray for, or other news, please send them as often as possible.

(2) All news should in principle be detailed, true, clear, and edifying. It does not matter whether it is short, long, in common language, or in classical Chinese.

(3) If someone sends you a personal letter that mentions news of a local church, please send it to us so that the brothers in all the localities can know the condition of the Lord's work.

(4) If there is an announcement about meetings or the work, we are willing to print it.

(5) The responsible brothers in each locality should take care not to give this publication to those who do not meet with us. It is best that we do not give this publication to any brothers who do not walk together with us.

(6) Please send all news to: Editor, Collection of Newsletters, P.O. Box 323, Shanghai.

Shanghai

ISSUE NO. 12

July 1935

AN OPEN LETTER FROM THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS PUBLICATION

To the brothers who are of the same mind in all localities:

Our intention when first publishing Collection of News- letters was that through this little publication the brothers in all the localities might be able to share their

news with each other and that the assemblies in various places might be able to fellowship with one another. We had also hoped to obtain more news concerning the personal spiritual experiences of the brothers and sisters so that all the saints in different localities could be mutually edified in their spiritual life. Our work is spiritual, and our emphasis is life. This has already been pointed out in "The Origin" in the first issue and in "A Letter about This Publication and the Co-workers" in the ninth issue. It was also pointed out in "Some Words from the Responsible Brothers" in the tenth issue.

However, although this was our intention and hope, the letters which we received from the saints have for the most part not paid attention to this matter. And even we ourselves have not held firm to our purpose in the way we have edited the material. Articles in the past have mostly dealt with outward matters such as baptism, leaving the denominations, etc. Thus, it seems that this paper has become a special publication on leaving the denominations.

It is now clear to us that since this is the case, we have not only failed to achieve the objective of this publication, but have also fallen short of our testimony. Brothers, we have deviated from the Lord's heart in this matter. We can therefore only seek the grace of God and hope for a change.

We have pointed out before that "our work is spiritual and that our emphasis is life. We are clear that God wants us to manifest the life of Christ in the local churches. Hence, the reality of our work is the life of Christ, and the outward expression of our work is the local church. In this present time, when the outward church is desolate, we do not have the slightest intention to start a new 'movement,' 'group,' 'organization,' or 'denomination.' We dare not even call ourselves the churches in the various places. We stand only on the position of the local church.

"What is our center? Is our work to preach Christ as Lord or to preach leaving the denominations? I am really fearful that in every locality there are brothers who, being limited in understanding and spiritual experience before God, only have a little knowledge about outward matters such as baptism, head covering, and denominations, and exhaust their effort to publicize these matters. By doing so, they cause outsiders to misunderstand us, thinking that we only emphasize these outward things and that we do not exalt Jesus Christ as Lord. We know that if anyone follows the Lord, he will certainly take care of these outward matters. But it does not mean that anyone who practices these outward things is necessarily following the Lord completely. We must emphasize again and again for the sake

of the ignorant brothers among us that although we believe in these outward matters, yet our testimony, that which makes us different from others, is not in these outward things." (See Issue Nos. 9 and 10 of this publication.)

We have, therefore, decided that after this issue we shall no longer publish this paper. We hope our decision will seem good to the brothers. Hereafter may we pay more attention to the inward testimony than to the outward matters. This is not to say that we are neglecting the outward matters but that we should not overemphasize them. We admit they have their place, but they are neither our center nor our testimony. We can only ask God's forgiveness and the brothers' forbearance for the past failure. May the Lord cause us to pay attention to what is important to Him. The Lord bless you all. Peace be with you in the Lord.

Your brother,
Watchman Nee

A REPLY TO A MEETING IN LONDON

Preface

Several years ago seven believers from England and America visited Shanghai and requested fellowship with us at the Lord's table. We immediately received them because they were brothers in the Lord. We received them in the same manner we usually received brothers from different denominations. Because they were of the "Closed Brethren," we made it clear to them that we received only their person, not the organization they represented. Later, they urged us to take the same attitude and stand of which they were persuaded. We brought it carefully to prayer, asking God to give us light and utterance to make this matter clear. Our reply is made in the following pages. When the brothers in different localities read our answer, they will know the kind of fellowship in which we believe and why we cannot join the "Closed Brethren." We desire that the brothers in every locality not presume that we fellowship merely with those who have left the divisions. We must realize that what we emphasize is the fellowship in the Holy Spirit.

[Translator's note: The following letter is a translation from the Chinese. The original letter (in English) to the Closed Brethren in England is not available.]

The Letter

It has been some time since we received your letter touching the matter of fellowship. We should have replied earlier but have lacked clear light from God; thus, we delayed our definite answer until today. Your love and patience are

required to bear with our delay, for we did not want to be hasty in our reply, thereby neglecting God's will. We beg your pardon, regretting the inconvenience we have caused through our tarrying. In addition, our brother Mr. Nee has had a heart ailment since last February and is only now gradually recovering. This was another factor which contributed to the delay in answering you.

We believe that those who have been taught of God should not trust themselves. "The flesh profits nothing," including the matter of understanding God's Word. It is very easy for one to acknowledge a certain truth in his mind. But the same person can be completely ignorant of everything, as if he has never heard the truth. The only condition for the realization of spiritual matters is for us to be in the Holy Spirit and in the life. It is exceedingly easy for one to stand upon others' revelation and light, while at the same time he himself falls into law. The New Testament dispensation is a spiritual dispensation; therefore, man can (or should) be taught of God from within and have the inner knowledge (Heb. 8). Every matter coming from without (including everything from the avenue of the mind), which stops short of reaching the inner depth, has no spiritual value, and those who acquire it have never actually known anything. By saying this, we do not mean that we are unwilling to be taught by our brothers. However, we are assured that we can do nothing when the Holy Spirit within does not make the truth alive. The situation of death and weakness among the saints today is due to the fact that they merely receive and obey the truth in their minds. This is the law. Although their words are accurate, they are absolutely independent of the Holy Spirit.

For this reason, we could only wait before God, trusting His Holy Spirit rather than depending upon our own minds. We say with thankful hearts that by His grace He has given us light and utterance. We have the assurance that this light is from Him, we desire to share it with you. We earnestly beseech Him that this letter may be entirely of Him, without the slightest element of our human opinion.

(1) God's original desire toward the church is that she be the increase or fullness of Christ. The Lord Jesus and the church are Christ (1 Cor. 12:12). When the individual Christ is joined with His church, they together become the corporate Christ. The church in her life and testimony should manifest Christ and express His life, His victory, and His glory. God's original intention for this generation is that every child of His should be in the real church and become the testimony of His only begotten Son.

(2) Notwithstanding, how the flesh has missed God's goal! Even before the apostles passed away, the church outwardly became desolate. Although man has had his sins forgiven and has become a child of God, he cannot manifest Christ or testify of His life, victory, and glory; only a minority can still fulfill God's original desire. The majority may have had a good beginning, but by their controversy with God, their life and testimony have been choked. Even to the present day, the church is divided into two groups, the overcomers and the defeated ones (Rev. 2—3). It is not that the overcomers are those who are above the standard of ordinary Christians but that the defeated ones are below the standard. The overcomers are those who can fulfill God's original desire.

(3) The matter of fellowship was not a difficult problem for the early church at Pentecost—all believers at that time were saved sinners and saints with a testimony (we will not speak of the exceptions). Today's difficulty is that these two matters have been separated among the saints. Although today's saints are saved, they do not live in the Holy Spirit. Should we then open our fellowship absolutely to all of God's children regardless of their condition? Or should we limit our fellowship only to those who are overcomers? Should we start a Christian laity movement? Or should we answer the call for overcomers and go forward towards God's perfect goal?

According to the letters to the seven churches, the Lord's call now is evidently for overcomers. Although the Lord did not reject the (ordinary) Christians, His eyes were on the overcomers who would fulfill His original desire.

Since we are meeting on the ground of the church in each locality as a local assembly, we ought to make such an assembly a vessel for the "testimony of Jesus" as the answer to God's desire. To have a people's movement consisting of many saved people is not enough. The assembly must be a special vessel for the testimony of Christ.

The overcomers are those who rise to fulfill the responsibility which the church herself has failed to fulfill. The overcomers are in God's sight just as the church is in His sight (we can compare them with the remnant in the former dispensation). Therefore, the meetings which stand on the ground of the church should have the character of the overcomer.

(4) Does this mean then that we should segregate the children of God or decide which believer can have fellowship with us and which cannot? Who then could

judge which one is an overcomer? Can we reject, therefore, the fellowship of those whom we deem unspiritual and unworthy of our fellowship?

The Bible has revealed the basis upon which we "receive one another." We must receive one another as "Christ also received" us (Rom. 15:7). Therefore, we can say that we receive a person because "God has received him" (14:3). For this reason God commands, "Him who is weak in faith receive" (v. 1). This command is clear, unequivocal, and draws a very clear boundary. To reject one whom God has received is sin, even though such a one is in weakness and darkness.

This does not mean that those who are defeated can have fellowship with God's children. Not only will worldliness, flesh, and sin cause the church to be loose in its character and fellowship, but even a little departure from His will and from the leading of the Holy Spirit will cause man to lose touch with God. An overcomer must not only be correct in outward position but also live a life in the Holy Spirit.

Who then is worthy among God children to choose or decide who can come into fellowship? According to our knowledge of the Bible, our duty is to examine only those who have moral corruption (1 Cor. 5:10) or who hold heresy regarding the person of Christ (2 John). Any difference regarding the explanation of the truth should never be the cause for division. Apart from these two reasons, we must receive all whom God has received in Christ.

(5) We must differentiate between the "sin" which hinders fellowship with God (moral or doctrinal) and the "sin" which cannot hinder fellowship with God. Unquestionably, adultery as well as the denial of the Lord Jesus Christ as the One coming in the flesh are sins which hinder fellowship. However, the "sectarian companion" or a wrong interpretation of prophecy are sins which do not hinder fellowship with God. This is a fact which you cannot deny. It is quite evident that many who do not separate themselves from what you call "evil companions" and who have a different interpretation of prophecy definitely have a very close fellowship with the Lord—even closer than we do. This clearly proves that "evil companions" and "evil doctrines" are not "sins" which hinder fellowship. It also proves, on the other hand, that even if one stands in a correct position regarding the church or the truth, it does not necessarily mean that he has an intimate touch with the Lord. There is one thing that is more important than an outward position or truth that is received through the mind—that is, to live in the Holy Spirit and not to yield to the flesh.

The fellowship among God's children is the fellowship with the Son of God. It is also a fellowship of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, regardless who it may be, one

must live in the Holy Spirit in order to have fellowship. No place is ever found for the flesh in the Holy Spirit. It is excusable for beginners to be babes, but none should be babes for a long time. Actually, whether people are received or not can neither bring them into the fellowship of Christ nor drive them out of Christ. In fact, if one is in the reality of fellowship, he remains in fellowship; if one is not in fellowship, he simply is not in fellowship. The outward form does not count, only the reality. The Holy Spirit alone knows who is not rebelling against His authority, who is not grieving Him, and who is living by Him in Christ. Therefore, it is the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit alone, who can decide who is in fellowship and who is not. We are not qualified to do this.

We are assured of the Lord's mind in this: We should not receive anyone without judging his obvious sins or by neglecting his heretical doctrines. However, the decision as to who should be in the fellowship must be made by the Holy Spirit and not by us. Each individual must also bear the responsibility of examining himself before the Lord to discern whether he has a problem in the matter of his fellowship (see 1 Cor. 11:27-32).

On the basis of scriptural authority and the leading of the Holy Spirit, we have decided that if a man has not been received by us, he cannot have fellowship with us (Acts 9:26-28; Rom. 14:1-3; 15:7; 16:2; 2 Cor. 3:1; etc.). However, we are not saying that each one who has been received by us can have fellowship. Everyone must first examine himself before the Lord to determine if he is worthy to come and have fellowship. The only thing we can do is to separate God's children from the children of this world. The Lord has not ordained us to be the judge to separate God's children from each other.

(6) Therefore, in our practice, after a brother is received, we tell him that as far as we (those standing on the ground of the church) are concerned, we are satisfied, but as far as his status before God is concerned, we leave with him the responsibility to examine himself. Only those who have fellowship with the Lord are qualified to share the Lord's table. In every such meeting the brothers should make clear to all such responsibility and practice. Then no one would presume that since he is not excommunicated, he must be one who is in fellowship.

(7) Frankly, we have doubts about your present method of receiving others. Is the Holy Spirit the Head in every matter, or is man doing the receiving? Your practice of receiving others may have been living in the beginning, but through years of habit it may have become a set of rules. Hence, the root of our question

here is whether man is receiving others or the Holy Spirit is exercising His lordship.

(8) Some people may have doubt about our practice of receiving others, a practice which is based only upon whether they are Christians and which leaves the responsibility of attending the bread-breaking meeting to them. Some may fear this is not safe. However, we should realize that the fellowship among Christians is too spiritual a matter, with which no human hand should interfere nor defend. Furthermore, if we are spiritual rather than being in the mind, we will see the lordship of the Holy Spirit in His power and authority. However, if our acquaintance with the Holy Spirit is but a knowledge of the mind rather than of our experience, confusion is the sure consequence.

Have we not acted in the meeting according to the direction and guidance of the Holy Spirit? We have given Him the unlimited place of exercising His headship to choose and use His vessel rather than accommodating an arrangement of man. Therefore, why not trust the Holy Spirit to keep the purity of the fellowship in the bread-breaking meeting, and why not trust Him to urge the saints to come or to hinder the saints from coming to this meeting? If we really give ground to Him to exercise His lordship, there is no need to replace it with a closed form of receiving that is of human invention.

We also considered the question regarding the distribution of God's servants. Some, seeing the vast land of China, are tempted to attain the position of director over all of God's servants. How good this seems from a human point of view, because workers would then be distributed evenly, no one area having either too many or too few. We would say, however, that regardless of how man seeks after God's will, the Holy Spirit is always the unique Executor. He never needs man to be His manager.

We need to exercise such faith in the lordship of the Holy Spirit that we will never form an economic center for the work. Man delights to divide money equally with all of God's servants so that no one will gain too much or too little. However, if we do this, where is the lordship of the Holy Spirit? During the past ten years we have endeavored to the best of our ability to give the Holy Spirit the complete lordship in this matter, letting Him direct the saints themselves or the local meeting. The result has been: "He who gathered much had no excess, and he who gathered little had no lack." We must allow the Holy Spirit to exercise His lordship in everything.

No matter how we have sought after His mind, we are never His assistants. We must allow the Holy Spirit to do everything according to His will. We must also be clear whether the Holy Spirit is now exercising His authority or if we have set ourselves up as a guard over the fellowship.

(9) The reason for the lack of life in the present meetings is that man's hands have been substituted for the lordship of the Holy Spirit. In the beginning, during the past century, it was not so. According to what we have heard and read about the meetings a century ago, they were filled with life and power. At that time there was not the matter of receiving others for fellowship as we know it today; the Holy Spirit was the only leader in the work and in the fellowship. It was only after man's failure (the Bethesda incident), that man's hands began to take control of the matter of receiving.

Church history reveals to us that each denomination started in revival. At such times the Holy Spirit began His work through His own chosen vessels. During the first period of such a work, the Holy Spirit was honored and held all the authority. The blessing flowed out like rivers of living water. However, in order to keep the blessing and maintain the truth, men invented many rules, systems, and an organization rather than pursuing the ruling of the Holy Spirit in each believer. Consequently, after a certain period, the work of the Holy Spirit was stopped, but the system, the regulations, and the organizations remained, and these gravitated towards more strictness as time went by.

(10) Now we must make our position clear. We do not stand in such an open position that will tolerate any matter that would bring shame to our Lord. No, absolutely not! Neither do we stand in such a closed position that we close our fellowship according to the human will rather than the work of the Holy Spirit. What we stand upon is a spiritually closed fellowship, which means that all of our fellowship must be completely in the Holy Spirit without the slightest mixture of the flesh. In order to enjoy this kind of fellowship, the flesh must be thoroughly dealt with by the cross of Christ. The flesh has no share in this kind of fellowship. It is not enough to refuse the "evil companion"; the whole life of the flesh must be dealt with. The power of the cross must be experienced through the Holy Spirit in our daily life. The knowledge of this in our mind is of no use. This alone is our fellowship. Hence, we are as open as the first churches in receiving all Christians, and we are as closed as the Holy Spirit in rejecting everything that is of the flesh. There are many people whom you presume to be in your fellowship, but in reality they are really not. The numbers of these people may be far beyond

our expectation. How sad this is! Many believers who have been received under strict examination are not living in the Holy Spirit. They think they are in fellowship and are qualified to break bread because they do not have any obvious sin! Do we not agree that this standard of fellowship too low?

The danger of man's choice often is that those who should not be in fellowship have been received, while those who should be in fellowship have been rejected. Has not this situation arisen many times among us? But if we would leave the choosing entirely to the Holy Spirit and be willing to stand aside and fully trust in Him, this difficulty would not arise.

(11) This may conflict with your concept of what is right or wrong. Many of God's children whom you judge to be "wrong" in their conduct could never be accepted by you. However, we must honor the Holy Spirit in the meeting. If the Holy Spirit can supply, encourage, or even send them to a work, we too must act accordingly with the Holy Spirit. If the Holy Spirit can overlook a certain matter that is in them, then why not we? Regardless of what others look like, the fact is that many of God's children follow a different system than you do. In your sight they are not worthy of fellowship. Notwithstanding, they do walk with God and have a very close fellowship with the Lord. This clearly shows us that fellowship is based on one's spiritual condition and demands that we stop all of our actions in the flesh.

Some may reject this, thinking that such a way will certainly destroy the outward uniformity. We know that our flesh cannot suffer external differences, because the flesh delights to see all outward matters in uniformity. The flesh demands that everyone conform to a set of regulations. The New Testament has letters and laws in the same way that the Old Testament has them. Only as we live in the reality of the Spirit and apprehend all truth in life, and only as we are not in the mind, are we able to put the emphasis on the reality of the Spirit rather than on the uniformity of externalities.

(12) We can recall how the apostles gave freedom to man regarding food and the keeping of days (Rom. 14). If it were up to us, we would have thought that these external differences were of extreme significance and would not have allowed anyone the freedom of choice regarding them. Once we would discover that some in our midst eat herbs and keep the Sabbath, how uneasy and anxious our hearts would be! However, the oneness and fellowship among Christians are too deep for us to fathom and beyond the touch of these external things.

Furthermore, there is no record in the Bible that those who preach and teach out of envy and strife should be excommunicated (Phil. 1). If an assembly cannot do its duty to remove the evil one (1 Cor. 5:2), that assembly and that evil person are not formally dealt with! The apostle only exercised his spiritual authority (vv. 4-5). It is recorded in the Scriptures that even the antichrists went out from the church according to their own volition (1 John 2:19). In other words, they were not excommunicated. These examples tell us that an outward uniformity during an age of desolation is not in the Lord's heart. Recall the ark in the houses of Abinadab and Obed-edom. There God was only interested in the perfect testimony of Christ (i.e., the ark) and not the details of worship in the tabernacle. During the revival of Nehemiah and Ezra, quite a few things were different from before; nevertheless, God acknowledged them. During the time of Christ, we see a group of people who had outward correctness, but we also see how Christ intentionally put aside all of these external things in order to pay attention to the weightier matters. We believe that in today's apostasy the Lord will lead His people to see the value of spiritual matters and to be lenient on outward correctness. The Pharisees of the past were really good at keeping the law—"as to the law, a Pharisee."

Now I must inquire about your position concerning the meetings. Do our brothers surpass other Christians in spirituality, in zeal for Christ, and in the separation from the world? Or do they surpass others only in their position regarding the church? If the chief characteristic of our assemblies is not in the spiritual realm, but rather in the correctness of our meeting, then our best is but an equal to the activity of the Pharisees. How regrettable it is to have so much light but fail to serve the Lord with the singleness of those who do not have as much light!

(13) We are not here to forsake the least of God's commands; neither are we here to strain out the gnat but swallow the camel. We feel regretful about those who always overlook the small matters because of a dull conscience. The small matters are the same as the large matters when both are the commands of God. However, we are assured that the more important matters need to be taken care of first.

Have you seen the danger of possibly losing the living water of blessing which you once possessed in the beginning and of being left with a system of meeting, like one of the many movements? If you do not see that the fellowship should be in the Holy Spirit, and if you replace it with outward correctness, have you not then become one of the denominations?

Once several brothers came together to talk about "the fellowship of the apostles." They touched upon the matter of the orthodoxy of fellowship, and a brother said that orthodoxy is simply the Holy Spirit. Therefore, the orthodox fellowship has nothing to do with who is first and who is last; it is not a question of scriptural methods. It has to do with the Holy Spirit having the full lordship.

If you try to have outward uniformity in practice and in Bible interpretation, you will, on the contrary, cause divisions among God's children. Even the most spiritual ones will divide themselves into different organizations. We have no intention to ignore the external matters, because these outward matters are the testimony (not the forms) of the spiritual things. We can only cause others to accept the outward things through teaching and love; we cannot achieve our goal through excommunication. If we do this, we will become a sect and will find death rather than life in our meetings. Many divisions are the result of this.

(14) We must know the "oneness of the Holy Spirit" before we experience the fellowship in the Holy Spirit. Within each believer, there is the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit in one believer, plus the Holy Spirit in another believer, plus the Holy Spirit in all the saints becomes the oneness of the Holy Spirit. We all must do our best to keep this oneness. Notwithstanding, the flesh in us makes us different; it creates "strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, factions, divisions, sects." If we endeavor to keep the oneness of the Spirit, we must know in experience how to apply the cross to our flesh. When the Holy Spirit becomes the Lord in us and we follow His leading, then we will have the oneness among us. We cannot keep what we do not have. If the life of the flesh has not been dealt with, there will never be the unity of the Spirit in our practice. It is of no use to make the keeping of the "oneness of the Spirit" mere talk. Only when we live in the oneness of the Spirit do we fully enjoy the fellowship of the Holy Spirit. The deadly root in the saints today is that they do not know the crucifixion of their flesh; consequently, they do not know the Holy Spirit. We beseech God to grant this revelation to the saints so that they may lay aside and judge the life of the flesh. May the Lord do a deeper work in us until the flesh is fully exposed and judged.

(15) Dear brothers, the fellowship in the Holy Spirit is too spiritual a matter and is beyond our power to guard. All we can do is keep our fellowship from evil doers. The Holy Spirit alone can keep His own fellowship. Human hands are completely useless in guarding the fellowship of the Holy Spirit.

If the Holy Spirit is not Lord in our lives, we cannot enjoy the glory and the smile of His face, regardless of how careful we are with outward matters. We are

convinced that confusion sets in where the Holy Spirit is not the Lord and the human hand is taken away. Therefore, we must cause the fellowship in our meetings to become very spiritual so that all who are of the flesh dare not join. When the Holy Spirit has the authority, the fleshly ones will not dare to partake.

Dear brothers, will you bring this matter which we have presented into much prayer and consideration? We believe that this is of God. Would you be willing to lay aside your former prejudice, which you have put in writing, and consider the matter in a fresh way as if you have never known it before? At the same time would you ask the Lord to reveal whether or not our word is right and whether it is written according to His will? This is a very serious matter, since the Lord is coming back soon. Now is the time for us to make matters clear before the Lord, for eternity is nigh.

We want to thank you for what you have done in the past. May the Lord bless you for the patience you have had in this matter, for which we thank you. Again, may we request your forgiveness for making you wait so long due to our delay in answering.

Your brothers in the Lord,

Tu Chung Ch'en, Lin Kuang Piao, Wu Hsi Ku, Chang Kuang Jung, Witness Lee, and Watchman Nee representing the brothers who meet at N. Sze Chuan Road and Hardoon Road, Shanghai

AN ANNOUNCEMENT FROM WATCHMAN NEE

Because I was suffering from heart disease in February of last year, I do not have much strength even when I am feeling somewhat better. For this reason, I have not been able to answer many letters in a timely fashion; some have not been answered at all. I really apologize to you brothers. I hope that you do not blame me. Please relay this message to others.

There is not much strength left in me, so I dare not expend it all. Furthermore, our ministry is prayer and preaching the word. Although other matters benefit the brothers and sisters, we cannot take care of them all.

From,

Watchman Nee

July 15, 1935

**AN ANNOUNCEMENT FROM
THE RESPONSIBLE BROTHERS IN SHANGHAI**

We no longer run the brothers' apartment which we had here. If brothers and sisters from other localities have business in Shanghai and need hospitality from the church in Shanghai, please send a letter beforehand to the responsible brothers here. We will do our best to give you hospitality. If you try to make arrangements on the spur of the moment, it will be hard to avoid oversights, and we will all be inconvenienced. We will notify you when our brothers' apartment is resumed.

The responsible brothers in Shanghai,
Wu Hsi Ku, Tu Chung Ch'en, Lin Kuang Piao
July 15, 1935

A LETTER TO THE CO-WORKERS CONCERNING THE CANCELLATION OF COLLECTION OF NEWSLETTERS

In the Shanghai Overcomer Conference last year we saw what God's center is and how Christ should be the Head over all things. Unfortunately, in the past two years we have not seen more loyalty, faith, or love toward Christ. In other words, our spiritual edification and growth have not been what they should be. On the contrary, leaving the denominations, forms of meeting, baptism, and head covering have become the center of our truth. Who is responsible for this change?

We have heard the terms obedience, consecration, and walking in the way. But what is obedience? Are you obedient just because you have left the denominations?! Are you consecrated because you have not cared for anything and left man's organization?! Are you walking in the way because you have left the denominations?! It seems that apart from these outward matters, nothing else requires obedience and consecration. It is almost as if not being obedient only refers to not leaving the denominations or not being baptized. Are these outward matters our only testimony?

In another aspect, we have seen the lack of growth among the churches in various places; there is laziness in the work, coldness for the gospel, almost no prayer life, a shortage of the power of the Holy Spirit, a lack of faith, and not enough love. All this should cause us to repent before God in sackcloth and ashes with fasting. We must beg God to revive us. The spirit of Laodicea is among us. First, our works are not blameless. Second, we do not have eyes to see ourselves. Third, we do not have the faith to receive; rather, we proudly think that we lack nothing and are better than others. We should ask ourselves what makes us different from others. Are we willing to accept God's call for

overcomers and strive onward to accomplish God's complete plan? Are we merely a group of people who are better than the denominations and different from others? Are we the same as the so-called Brethren? We should spend some time before God to answer these questions well.

Therefore, brothers, we should know that our testimony is Christ as God's centrality and that our position is one of hoping to become overcomers of God. Denominations and other outward matters are side issues. If we pay attention to them, we do not know God's centrality and the position of the overcomers.

Furthermore, there is a great problem with the method. When we studied the question of the church, we already mentioned that this study is not our testimony. It was prepared merely because those who had already consecrated themselves to God did not know how to deal with this question. We have asked the co-workers many times to realize that a person can be taught the truth concerning the church only after he has completely consecrated himself to God, submitted to the Holy Spirit's authority in life, and refused the activities of the flesh. If he has done all these and has been enlightened by God to seek for understanding concerning the ground of the church, then we should tell him about the truth concerning the church. After the meeting some brothers wanted the messages to be printed, but I refused because I was afraid that some ignorant ones would use them as messages to outsiders. After the 1931 Overcomer Conference, I openly wrote in *The Present Testimony*, Issue No. 22:

In our conferences our intention is only to speak forth the message of the victory of Christ, not to speak of other matters. The preaching of this message is our particular responsibility. If there had not been some outside brothers raising some questions, perhaps we would have seen more spiritual accomplishments in this conference. In reality, unless a person knows God in the aspects of trusting and obeying Him, it is of little use to speak to him concerning other matters. We can mention many other matters to those who are faithful, but if we share them with those who are yet unwilling to serve God faithfully, it will only give rise to disputes. It is our desire that anyone's commitment concerning issues of the church or issues of prophecy would result from a spiritual background acquired in the presence of God. We do not want any person to have an outward commitment in his stand concerning the church just because he has listened to our exhortation. Our Bible study meetings, on the other hand, are of a different nature: they are conducted for those who are willing to serve God faithfully and are seeking to have a clearer understanding of Bible truths. For this reason, we

are free in these meetings to bring up those things which we would be reluctant to bring up in conferences. We hope that in our future conferences, neither the speaker nor the listeners will bring up, either publicly or privately, any matters outside the victory of Christ, in order that we might have God's full blessing. In other words, the content of our preaching in the October conference was the same as what we have preached all these years in The Present Testimony. I deeply believe that those who have been taught in the presence of God know that The Present Testimony preaches a special message. Just as we have not mentioned other matters in The Present Testimony, we have tried to avoid these same matters in our past as well as future conferences. This does not mean that other matters are not important; but it does mean that when men sincerely desire to receive the victory of Christ and to believe and obey the Lord, He will spontaneously direct their attention to these other external matters, and they will automatically obey. There will not be the need for much exhortation from others, and there will not be many disputes. At this stage, if certain things are not clear to some, we would be most willing to help them in the Bible study meetings. We deeply sense that what the church of God urgently needs and what she absolutely must experience today is the victory of Christ—the facts and principles which He declared through His death and resurrection. In this matter we need to be faithful and steadfast, and we need to preach it wholeheartedly.

In the past two or three years, however, our brothers have not endeavored to preach the Lord Jesus as (1) the Savior, (2) the overcoming life, (3) the Holy Spirit who fills man, (4) the Bearer of the cross, or (5) the Captain of God. We have not seen brothers leading people to experience these aspects, but we have seen brothers exhorting those who have different opinions concerning the ground of the church to leave the denominations, get baptized, and cover their heads! This kind of work is very effective. Many people have been touched to obey the Lord and walk in the way because they know the error of the denominations; they have left the denominations to break bread with us! We are full of those who have left the denominations but who do not know how Christ is the overcoming life, nor do they know the filling of the Holy Spirit! They do not know how to bear the cross and know even less about spiritual warfare. As a result, outsiders think that our testimony concerns nothing but leaving the denominations. Even we ourselves have forgotten our own commission and think that our testimony is indeed leaving the denominations. Dear brothers, we cannot allow this kind of situation to continue. Otherwise, we will only become another "Brethren Church,"

and we will never be witnesses to accomplish God's will. Therefore, the time has come and we must change.

If we do not have faith and obedience, and do not know in our experience what overcoming, filling, self-denial, and warfare are, how can we testify concerning these matters for Christ? In that case, we will choose the easy matters, such as leaving the denominations, as our testimony!

Therefore, we must pursue the deep experiences of Christ. It is not enough just to know Him as our Savior. We must gain the Lord personally as our overcoming life. We must have the specific experience of being filled with the Holy Spirit. We must continually know the way of the cross. At the same time, we must help the church and the kingdom through spiritual warfare. If we do not have these things, what do we have that is different from others apart from leaving the denominations? We should each be an overcomer before God so that we can be worthy to testify for Him.

Brothers, perhaps my word is a little harsh, but what I say to you, I also say to myself. I confess that many experiences are gained after a loss. Therefore, in these past few months, I have asked God to open the way for me so that I might be quiet and that I be recovered. I also ask for God's grace again and hope that in the near future I can give a good testimony for God. However, in this time of transition, I hope that the co-workers know that when they testify for God, they cannot leave out the five points mentioned above. I also want the brothers and sisters who have fellowship with us to know that every one of us must have these five points or we cannot stand in the position of the church. Our fellowship today should be a fellowship of the overcomers.

Dear brothers, if our testimony was only the gospel, we could just be revivalists. If our position was only leaving the denominations, we could just join the "Brethren." But if our testimony is the "testimony of Jesus" (Rev. 19:10), we should have the experience. Only then can we hope to accomplish God's plan. From now on we must have a change in our work, our meetings, our testimony, and ourselves.

To my knowledge, I am the first one who needs to be dealt with anew by God. If God is gracious to me, I hope that in the near future I can secure a place just for cultivating and training believers. This will serve as a new beginning in the work. Although we have decided on many things, we need to wait on God to accomplish them, so I do not want to say anything more here.

One thing is certain: If we continue on in this way, we will not be very useful in God's hand. Just comparing oneself to man is not spirituality. Even though our brothers and our meetings may be one step above those of others, we must remember that our current condition is still very far from God's plan!

It is not that I despise our brothers and sisters, nor do I depreciate many of the truths that we have preached, but we are far from God's goal. If we do not want to be sifted out, we must pursue again. Dear brothers, only you could allow me to write this kind of letter to you. I could never discuss these problems with others. Thank you!

Therefore, please allow me to ask that from now on we forbid our mouths from debating with others over outward matters. If we persuade someone concerning an outward matter, what has the Lord really gained and what have we really gained? We must learn to discern between the camels and the gnats. Please do not imitate the Pharisees in swallowing the camels and straining out the gnats. Other things are more important, and we should pay attention to them first; we should pay attention to outward things last. Therefore, I ask, brothers, let us please resolve to refuse to discuss questions about the denominations, etc., with anyone who has not completely consecrated himself to God and is not ready to walk in the way of the cross. We can only speak of these outward matters with those who live in God's will. We must absolutely not make The Assembly Life a propaganda matter to outsiders. We should not forget that our goal is not to build up our assemblies but to allow God to gain something. Is man's need life or fellowship (with respect to the ground of the church)? Brothers, we must wake up.

We should not despise the brothers who are already among us, nor should we deal with them strictly. We must remember that our own spiritual condition is not very good. How can we place heavy requirements on them? We can only strive to pursue deeper experiences and serve them in love. Their future spiritual edification will depend on our pursuit of the Lord today.

Your brother,
Watchman Nee
July 15

AN ANNOUNCEMENT FROM THE GOSPEL BOOK ROOM

We forgot who borrowed the entire manuscript of "God's Centrality" from Mr. Nee's Overcomer Conference in January of last year. After reading this message,

would the borrower please send it back to us in a double registered package?
We desperately need to use this manuscript now.

July 16, 1935

Shanghai

WATCHMAN NEE'S TESTIMONY

PREFACE TO THE NEW EDITION

The following is a new edition of the original book Watchman Nee's Testimony. The old edition that was first printed in 1974 was somewhat different from the original manuscript. We have secured the original unedited Chinese copy of the manuscript of the compiler, Brother K.H. Weigh, and have retranslated it into English. The result is the following revised edition of the book.

INTRODUCTION

These three testimonies were given by Brother Watchman Nee in a co-workers' meeting held at Kulangsu, an island off the southeastern coast of Fukien province, China, in October 1936. As far as I know, this was the only occasion in his life on which he spoke about his personal affairs in detail. Very seldom had he publicly related his own spiritual experience, probably "lest anyone account of me something above what he sees me to be or hears from me" (2 Cor. 12:6). The testimony which Paul gave in chapter twelve of 2 Corinthians was not publicly divulged until fourteen years later. I have often in the past been thinking of publishing these three testimonies, but in order to share his outlook, I have postponed until now—after the lapse of thirty-seven years. When he died in mainland China on May 30, 1972, I decided to make these testimonies public. I believe this is the right time. I hope that the readers will not pay attention to the person himself, but will pay attention to the work of the Lord in him, and to his willingness in allowing the Lord to perform His work. In this way, the glory of the Lord will be expressed through him. As Paul said, "So that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in Him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thes. 1:12).

The first testimony: Salvation and calling.

The second testimony: (1) Learning the lesson of the cross, (2) Leading in the work, (3) God as my healer, and (4) Four aspects of work entrusted by God.

The third testimony: (1) How to live a life of faith, (2) Attitude towards money, and (3) Looking to God for fulfilling the need of literary work.

These three testimonies by no means comprise the whole of his spiritual life and work before 1936. When we read *The Present Testimony*, *The Christian* magazine, and open letters published by him before 1936, we can see that there were still a lot of testimonies and work done which were worth mentioning. In that co-workers' meeting, he could not speak more because of the limit of time.

For several years Watchman Nee and I were classmates at Trinity College, a school founded by the Church of England in the city of Foochow. We were good friends and frequently studied and played together. During our junior and senior high school years, we were both nominal Christians. We both had some knowledge of the Bible, and we outwardly kept the Christian forms of baptism, holy communion, church attendance, Bible study, and prayer. But we had never accepted in our hearts the Christ who was crucified for our sins and who resurrected on the third day, and we did not know Him as our personal Savior. We both loved the world and pursued the vanities of the world.

Watchman Nee was pursuing scholastic attainment in the field of Chinese literature. He would frequently write articles for publication in the newspapers. The money he earned was spent on lottery tickets. He was also fond of the movies. I preferred sports and yearned for the fame and praise of men.

In our first college year, his life suddenly changed. He became a fervent Christian and ceased pursuing the world. He frequently testified to his classmates, exhorting them to believe in the Lord Jesus. Many schoolmates did believe in the Lord and began voluntarily to pray in the college chapel, even during weekdays. He would frequently study the Bible in class; however, this did not seem to affect his grades. He usually came out with the highest examination scores in every subject. The lives of many of the students were changed by accepting the Lord, and the dormitory director admitted that some mischievous students, who had previously violated school regulations, had accepted the Lord and experienced a great change in their lives. As a result, he found himself with fewer cases of violation of school rules by students.

Watchman Nee invited me to attend some gospel meetings, but I refused. My heart was set on becoming famous in the sports world. One day, however, he came to my room and preached the gospel to me alone, urging me to accept the Lord Jesus as my Savior. Though I attempted to argue with him concerning some religious problems, he would not argue; instead, he asked me several questions:

"Have you sinned? Do you know if your sins are forgiven? Do you know if you are saved?" At the time I didn't understand why, but in my heart I felt sorrowful. Later I realized that this was the convicting work of the Holy Spirit. He preached the gospel to me, explaining that God loved me and gave His only begotten Son for me, and that if I would truly believe in Him, I would not perish but would have eternal life. When asked if I would believe in Christ, I said I would. We knelt together and prayed, with him praying first. Then I prayed, asking the Lord to forgive my sins and thanking Him for loving and saving me. When I rose up, my heart was filled with joy and peace. I experienced a great change in my life and brought forth the fruit of repentance. My name had been one of the names on his prayer list, and the Lord answered his prayer. Praise the Lord!

In 1924 I transferred to Nanking University and came under the influence of modernism. My faith was shaken. At that time Watchman Nee was staying in a brother's home in Nanking, recuperating from an illness. I frequently visited him for fellowship, and he helped me escape the influence of modernism. After his health improved, I was able to make arrangements for him to preach the gospel at Nanking University. As a result of his preaching, two of my classmates were saved.

In 1928, when I was about to leave the university, I considered serving the Lord full-time. I did not want to be a preacher on salary, but I did not know how to live by faith, so I went to Watchman Nee for fellowship. At that time he was quite lonely and greatly in need of co-workers who would be of the same mind. When I raised this matter, he did not encourage me in a careless manner to serve the Lord. He was neither influenced by his need for co-workers nor by the personal relationship between us. He simply told me not to wait until the Jordan waters opened, but to step into the water by faith—then the way would open before me. He knew that I lacked this kind of faith. I was waiting for the outward circumstances to change before beginning to serve the Lord. (Fifty years ago in China it was difficult to find anyone serving the Lord by faith like Watchman Nee.) Hence, I laid aside the thought of serving the Lord full-time and taught college for eight years.

In the spring of 1934, Watchman Nee held his third overcomer conference in Shanghai. In the morning he spoke on the centrality and universality of Christ. In the afternoon he spoke on God's overcomers. Through his messages in this conference, the Lord gave me revelation which brought about a great turn in my

spiritual life. As a result, I stood up in the conference and for the first time consecrated my entire life to the Lord. At that time I was still teaching school.

In 1935 in Chefoo, Brother Nee experienced anew the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. After this, he held a conference in Chuanchow, Fukien, and asked me to attend. There many were helped to experience the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, with the result that they had power and boldness to witness for the Lord. He also preached on the secret of the overcoming life, which is to let Christ live in our stead, according to Paul's testimony in Galatians 2:20. This conference brought in a great revival.

In October 1936, Watchman Nee conducted a co-workers' conference in Kulangsu, Fukien. He cabled me and invited me to attend. By that time I had become clear concerning the Lord's call and was prepared to resign my teaching job to live by faith and serve the Lord. While I was seeking the Lord for His guidance, I received Brother Nee's invitation. I immediately realized that it was the Lord's will for me to attend the conference. I thank the Lord that at this conference I was given the rare opportunity of listening to Watchman Nee's testimony, which I was later able to publish as three articles. At the end of the conference, Brother Nee and the other co-workers assigned me to begin the work in Canton and later in Hong Kong. In 1937 Watchman Nee began the Lord's work in the southwest part of China in the city of Kunming in Yunnan province. After establishing the church there, he invited me to come and work in that locality. I picked up the burden and moved my family there. I worked there for three years, until my return to Hong Kong in 1940.

Following World War II, whenever Watchman Nee visited Canton or Hong Kong, I took the opportunity to seek his fellowship. I usually planned to ask him a number of questions, but after having some fellowship with him, it was unnecessary to ask the questions. In our fellowship I always received an abundant supply of life.

In 1948 I again had opportunity to attend a conference in the church in Shanghai. Brother Nee ministered on the matter of handing over ourselves with all we possess to the Lord. His words were full of impact and the power of the Holy Spirit, and the meetings were full of the Lord's presence. Many were revived and handed over themselves and their possessions, to be built together in serving the Lord. In the last meeting of the conference, because I was leaving for Foochow,

Brother Nee, in the presence of all the assembled brothers and sisters, addressed me in the following words of farewell:

There is only one Christ, but due to different viewpoints and emphases of the workers, it seems that Christ has been divided into many Christs. If a worker cannot express to others the one Christ whom God desires to present, his work is a failure. Many today have had very intimate contact with the Lord, while others are merely pressing against Him (Mark 5:24). Perhaps some have indeed touched His back, held His hand, or torn His garments; yet they have no relationship whatever with Him in life. Among the many who thronged Jesus, the woman with an issue of blood was not the only one who was ill, but she was the only one healed in life (Matt. 9:20-22).

Some today indeed know the Christ of Bethsaida (Mark 8:22-26) or the Christ of Gadara (Mark 5:1-20) or the Christ of Emmaus (Luke 24:13-35). In their experience they have really seen the miracles and the wonders. They may even be able to perform the miracles themselves. Yet if there is no true inward revelation, none of these works will amount to anything. Some may be able to tell others with moving power of a Christ of Emmaus. They may be able to expound the Scriptures and may cause others to become truly fervent in their hearts; yet it is all to no avail. The real work is to impart a Christ of revelation to others. I speak these words not only to Brother Weigh, but to all the co-workers and to all the brothers and sisters alike. If you and I cannot impart a Christ of revelation to others, our work is a failure.

Here we see that there are two basically different stands that a worker of the Lord can take: one emphasizes work, the expounding of the Scriptures, miracles, works of wonders, and answers to prayers, etc. The other presents before men a Christ of revelation.

In the same year, 1948, from the beginning of June to the end of September, Watchman Nee held a period of training on Mount Kuling, Fukien, for the purpose of training co-workers from all over China. I attended that training. Every day we spent approximately seven hours listening to Brother Nee and receiving his ministry. I was greatly helped in my spiritual understanding and also in the principles of working for the Lord. What he spoke at the training sessions may be summarized as follows:

- (1) How to exercise our spirit.
- (2) How to be a minister of the Word.
- (3) How to read the Bible.

- (4) How to preach the gospel.
- (5) How to guide new believers.
- (6) How to manage church affairs.

There were also meetings for testimonies, in which the participants gave brief testimonies. Then Brother Nee made a spiritual diagnosis of each person's testimony, pointing out each one's spiritual difficulties and the way to be delivered from them. With a keen feeling, he diagnosed accurately so that what he pointed out exactly met the needs of each person. When the co-workers went back to their respective local churches after coming down from the mountain, the Lord abundantly blessed the churches, bringing about enormous revival so that the churches were built up and there was progress in the work, with the result that the gospel was being preached with power, enabling many people to be saved.

In the early part of 1950, Watchman Nee came to Hong Kong. Soon Witness Lee also joined him. In the past it had been a rare occurrence for these two brothers to visit the same church at the same time. Their ministry issued in a great revival in the church in Hong Kong. Previously there had been about three hundred in the meetings. As a result of the revival the number increased to between two and three thousand. There was a special blessing upon the church in Hong Kong.

Soon Brother Nee contemplated going back to Shanghai. The political situation there being then extremely tense, the brothers tried to persuade him not to return to mainland China, but he insisted on doing so, as he was concerned about the churches and co-workers there. He was like the apostle Paul who, on the eve of going to Jerusalem, knew that imprisonment and hardships awaited him there and was ready even to die for the name of the Lord Jesus. On account of his love for the Lord, for the church, and for the brothers and sisters, he was in the same frame of mind as Paul. During the first year or two after returning to Shanghai, he availed himself of every opportunity to put his heart and soul into the work diligently. There were then over six hundred local churches throughout the country with over ninety thousand saints, most of whom had received assistance from him in some way. In 1952, on account of his loyalty to the Lord and for the sake of the truth, Brother Nee was unexpectedly arrested and put in jail, being sentenced to twenty years' imprisonment. In those twenty years it was impossible to get direct news about him. As far as I know, the government made use of him by making him translate scientific books from English into Chinese. His wife, who died before him in November 1971, used to visit him once every two or three weeks and bring him some daily necessities. Brother Nee's heart was only half

as big as a normal person's, and he had been suffering from heart disease for many years, causing him acute pain during fits of illness. However, the Lord preserved his life until May 30, 1972, when he was taken up by the Lord into His bosom for rest. Brother Nee thus rested from his labors, and his works do follow him (Rev. 14:13). Although his physical body was confined in prison, the messages which the Lord had imparted to him are being widely spread without any restriction throughout the whole world. By virtue of the ministry of his words, many saints have had spiritual insight through revelation, the churches have been built up, and many items of truths hitherto hidden in the Bible have been uncovered. Such books as Brother Nee's Normal Christian Life and Normal Christian Church Life are in great demand in America and Europe and have enabled many people to be enlightened and greatly changed in their spiritual life, thus returning to the ground of unity in local churches and bearing good testimonies. The messages spoken and the work done by God through him in the past half century have been extremely numerous and abundant. These three testimonies are but a small part of the happenings before 1936. What I have narrated in respect to things which happened between 1928 and 1952 is also very brief. From his many books we may notice how clear was our brother's understanding of God and how he dedicated himself; in loyalty and obedience he was willing even to accept death. He was indeed a vessel much used by God, and, "having served his own generation by the counsel of God, did indeed fall asleep" (Acts 13:36). He has, indeed, also left "you a model so that you may follow in His steps" (1 Pet. 2:21). May the Lord bless these three testimonies so that each reader will "remember the ones leading you, who have spoken to you the word of God; and considering the issue of their manner of life, imitate their faith" (Heb. 13:7). To our God and the Lord Jesus be glory for evermore! Amen.

Kwang-hsi Weigh

the compiler

CHAPTER ONE

THE FIRST TESTIMONY—

SALVATION AND CALLING

(Given on October 18, 1936)

Scripture Reading: Acts 26:29; Gal. 1:15

FAMILY BACKGROUND

I was born into a Christian family. I was the third child preceded by two sisters. Because I had an aunt who had borne six daughters in succession, my paternal aunt was displeased when my mother bore two girls. According to Chinese custom, males are preferred over females. When my mother gave birth to two girls, people said she would probably be like my aunt, bearing half a dozen girls before bringing forth a boy. Though at that time my mother was not clearly saved, she knew how to pray. So she spoke to the Lord, saying, "If I have a boy, I will present him to You." The Lord heard her prayer and I was born. My father told me, "Before you were born, your mother promised to present you to the Lord."

SAVED AND CALLED AT THE SAME TIME

I was saved in 1920 at the age of seventeen. Before being saved I experienced some mental conflict concerning whether or not to accept the Lord Jesus as my Savior and whether or not to become the Lord's servant. For most people, the problem at the time of salvation is how to be delivered from sin. But for me, being saved from sin and my life career were linked together. If I were to accept the Lord Jesus as my Savior, I would simultaneously accept Him as my Lord. He would deliver me not only from sin but also from the world. At that time I was afraid of being saved, for I knew that once I was saved I must serve the Lord. Of necessity, therefore, my salvation would be a dual salvation. It was impossible for me to set aside the Lord's calling and to desire only salvation. I had to choose either to believe in the Lord and have a dual salvation or forfeit both. For me to accept the Lord would mean that both events would take place simultaneously.

FINAL DECISION

On the evening of April 29, 1920, I was alone in my room. I had no peace of mind. Whether I sat or reclined, I could find no rest, for within was this problem of whether or not I should believe in the Lord. My first inclination was not to believe in the Lord Jesus and not to be a Christian. However, that made me inwardly uneasy. There was a real struggle within me. Then I knelt down to pray. At first I had no words with which to pray. But eventually many sins came before me, and I realized that I was a sinner. I had never had such an experience in my life before that time. I saw myself as a sinner and I also saw the Savior. I saw the filthiness of sin and I also saw the efficacy of the Lord's precious blood cleansing me and making me white as snow. I saw the Lord's hands nailed to the cross, and at the same time I saw Him stretching forth His arms to welcome me, saying, "I am here waiting to receive you." Overwhelmed by such love, I could not possibly reject it, and I decided to accept Him as my Savior. Previously, I had

laughed at those who believed in the Lord, but that evening I could not laugh. Instead, I wept and confessed my sins, seeking the Lord's forgiveness. After making my confession, the burden of sins was discharged, and I felt buoyant and full of inward joy and peace. This was the first time in my life that I knew I was a sinner. I prayed for the first time and had my first experience of joy and peace. There might have been some joy and peace before, but the experience after my salvation was very real. Alone in my room that evening, I saw the light and lost all consciousness of my surroundings. I said to the Lord, "Lord, You have really been gracious to me."

GIVING UP MY FUTURE

In this audience there are at least three schoolmates of mine. Among them is Brother Weigh Kwang-hsi, who can testify concerning what an ill-behaved student I was, as well as what a wonderful student I was in school. On the evil side, I often violated the school rules. On the good side, I was always first in every examination, because God had bestowed intelligence on me. My essays were frequently posted on the bulletin board for exhibition. At that time I was a youth with many grand dreams and many plans for the future. I considered my judgments sound. I can humbly say that had I worked hard in the world, it would have been quite possible for me to have had great success. My schoolmates can also testify to this. But following my salvation many new things happened to me. All my previous planning became void and was brought to nothing. My future career was entirely abandoned. For some this step might be easy, but for me, with many ideals, dreams, and plans, it was exceedingly difficult. From the evening I was saved, I began to live a new life, for the life of the eternal God had entered into me.

My salvation and calling to serve the Lord took place simultaneously. Since that evening, I have never once had any doubts about being called. During that hour I decided on my future career once and for all. I realized that, on the one hand, the Lord had saved me for my sake, and at the same time, He did so for His own sake. He wanted me to obtain His eternal life, and He also wanted me to serve Him and be His co-worker. As a boy I did not understand the nature of preaching. When I was older, I considered it the most trifling and base of occupations. In those days most preachers were employed by European or American missionaries. They were servile subordinates to the missionaries and earned merely eight or nine dollars per month. I had no intention of becoming a preacher nor even a Christian. I could never have imagined that I would choose the

profession of a preacher, a profession which I despised and considered trifling and base.

LEARNING TO SERVE THE LORD

After being saved, I continued on in school, though I had little interest in books. Others read novels in class, but I diligently studied the Bible. [Editor's note: Although Brother Nee studied the Bible in class, he still came first in the end-of-term examinations.] Later, desiring to pursue spiritual things further, I left school and entered Dora Yu's Bible Institute in Shanghai [Editor's note: a famous lady evangelist]. However, before long she politely dismissed me, and I returned home. The reason she gave for her action was that it was inconvenient for me to stay there any longer. I realized that my flesh had not been dealt with. I was still fond of good food and fine clothing, and I enjoyed sleeping until eight o'clock in the morning. Dora Yu felt I was good material for the Lord's interest and had good prospects, but when she discovered my laziness, she sent me home.

At that time I was thoroughly disappointed and felt my future was doomed. At that time I even questioned my salvation. But surely I was saved! I even considered that I was quite good and that I had been transformed in many ways, not realizing that there was much yet to be learned and much to be dealt with. Confident that the Lord had saved me and called me, I could not be disappointed. I admitted that I was not yet good enough, but I felt that with the passing of more time I would improve.

Since the time was not ripe for me to continue my spiritual pursuits, I decided to return to school. When my schoolmates saw me, they recognized that I had changed, but I had not changed thoroughly, for I still occasionally lost my temper and did some things wrong. There were times when I seemed very much like a saved person, but at other times I seemed very much like an unsaved person. Therefore, my testimony in the school was not very powerful, and when I witnessed to Brother Weigh, he paid no heed. [Editor's note: Brother Nee's prayers and guidance finally brought Brother Weigh to the Lord.]

After I was saved, I spontaneously loved the souls of sinners and hoped that they would be saved. To this end, I began to preach the gospel and to bear testimony among my schoolmates. After nearly a year's work, however, no one was saved. I thought the more words I could speak and the more reasons I could present, the more effective I would be in saving people. But though I had much to speak concerning the Lord, my words lacked power to move the listeners.

Prayer for Others' Salvation

About this time I met a Western missionary, Miss Groves (Margaret Barber's co-worker), who asked me how many persons I had brought to the Lord in the year following my salvation. I bowed my head, hoping to forestall further questioning, and shamefully admitted in a low voice that, although I had preached the gospel to my schoolmates, they did not like to listen, and when they did listen, they would not believe. My attitude was that, since they would not heed the gospel, they would have to bear the consequences. She spoke to me frankly, "You are unable to lead people to the Lord because there is something between God and you. It may be some hidden sins not yet completely dealt with, or something for which you are indebted to someone." I admitted that such things existed, and she asked if I were willing to settle them immediately. I answered that I was willing.

She also asked how I went about bearing testimony. I replied that I pulled people in at random and began to speak, regardless of whether they were listening or not. She said, "This is not right. You must speak to God first, before you speak to people. You should pray to God, make a list of your schoolmates' names, and ask God which of them you should pray for. Pray for them daily, mentioning them by name. Then when God affords the opportunity, you should bear testimony to them."

After that conversation, I immediately began to deal with my sins by making restitution, paying debts, being reconciled with my schoolmates, and confessing offenses to others. I also entered in my notebook the names of about seventy schoolmates and began praying for them daily, mentioning their names individually before God. Sometimes I prayed for them once every hour, praying silently, even in class. When opportunity arose, I would bear testimony to them and try to persuade them to believe in the Lord Jesus. My schoolmates often said jokingly, "Mr. Preacher is coming. Let us listen to his preaching." The fact was that they had no intention to listen.

I called on Miss Groves again and said to her, "I have fully carried out your instructions. Why is it not effective?" She replied, "Do not be disappointed. Keep praying until some are saved." By the Lord's grace, I continued to pray daily. When opportunity arose, I bore testimony and preached the gospel. Thank the Lord, after several months, all but one of the seventy persons whose names were in my notebook were saved.

To Be Filled with the Holy Spirit

Though some had been saved, I was still not satisfied, because many in the school and in the town were still not saved. I felt the need to be filled with the Holy Spirit and to receive power from above that I might be able to bring more people to the Lord. Then I called on Miss Margaret Barber. Being immature in spiritual matters, I asked her if it was necessary to be filled with the Holy Spirit in order to obtain power to bring many to salvation. She answered, "Yes." I asked her concerning the means to be filled with the Holy Spirit. She said, "You must present yourself to God that He may fill you with Himself." I replied that I had already presented myself. But when I considered, I knew that I was still my old self. I knew that God had saved me, chosen me, and called me. Though I had not yet attained absolute victory, I had been freed from sins and evil habits, and many matters hitherto entangling me had been abandoned. However, I still felt the lack of spiritual power to cope with spiritual work. Then she told me the following story:

Brother Prigin was an American who had been to China. He had obtained a master's degree and was studying for a Ph.D. Feeling the condition of his spiritual life unsatisfactory, he sought the Lord and prayed. He said to God, "I have very strong unbelief; some sins I cannot overcome, and I have no power to work." For two weeks he asked God specifically to fill him with the Holy Spirit that he might lead a victorious life with power. God said, "Do you really want this? If so, do not take the Ph.D. examination two months from now, for I have no need of a doctor of philosophy." He felt he was in a dilemma. The Ph.D. degree seemed a sure thing; it would be a pity not to sit for the examination. He knelt down to pray and ask why God would not allow him to get the degree and be a minister as well. But here is a strange thing: Once God has made a demand, He sticks to it and never compromises with anyone.

The following two months were most painful. On the last Saturday of that period he experienced real conflict within. Did he want the degree or did he want to be filled with the Holy Spirit? Which was better: a doctor's degree or a victorious life? Others could be doctors and yet be used by God as well—why couldn't he? He was struggling and reasoning with God and was at his wits' end. The Ph.D. was dear to him and so was the filling of the Holy Spirit. But God would not give way. To choose a doctor's degree would make it impossible to live the spiritual life. To live the spiritual life would require forfeiting a doctor's degree. At length, with tears in his eyes, he said, "I submit. Despite my two years' study toward a Ph.D. degree, a goal which I have cherished for thirty years, ever since childhood, I

have no alternative but to relinquish sitting for the examination for the sake of submission to God." Following this decision he wrote to notify the university authorities that he would not sit for the examination on Monday, thus abandoning hope for a Ph.D. degree once and for all. He was so exhausted that night that he could find no message to deliver the following day. So he simply told the congregation the story of his surrender to the Lord. On that day the congregation was revived. Three-quarters of them were in tears. He himself also gained strength. He said, "If I had known before that the result would be like this, I would have submitted earlier." His subsequent work was greatly blessed by the Lord, and he was one who had the deepest knowledge of God.

When I visited England, I intended to go on to the United States to meet him, but the Lord took him before I had the opportunity. But when I heard this testimony, I said to the Lord, "I am willing to remove anything standing between God and me in order to be filled with the Holy Spirit." Between 1920 and 1922 I went to at least two or three hundred people to confess offenses. After a further strict scrutiny of past events, I felt there was still something between God and me; otherwise, I would have had spiritual vitality. But despite further dealings in many ways, I still could not gain strength.

DEALT WITH BY GOD

One day while seeking a theme from the Bible before delivering a message, I randomly opened the Bible and Psalm 73:25 appeared before my eyes: "Whom do I have in heaven but You?/And besides You there is nothing I desire on earth." After reading these words I said to myself, "The writer of this psalm can say that, but I cannot." I discovered then that there was something between me and God.

Since my wife is not present today, I will relate the story to you. About ten years before our marriage, I was in love with her. She was not then saved, and when I spoke with her about the Lord Jesus and tried to persuade her to believe, she laughed at me. I must admit that I did love her, but at the same time I suffered her laughter at the Lord I believed in. I also questioned at that time whether she or the Lord would have first place in my heart. I must say that once young people have fallen in love, they find it very difficult to give up their beloved. I told God of my willingness to give her up, but deep in my heart I was not willing. After reading Psalm 73 again, I said to God, "I cannot say that there is nothing on earth that I desire besides You, because there is one on earth whom I love." At

that instant, the Holy Spirit indicated clearly that there was something between God and me.

On that day I delivered a message, but I did not know what I was talking about. I was actually speaking to God, asking Him to be patient and impart strength to me until I could give her up. I asked God to postpone dealing with this matter. But God never reasons with people. I considered going to the frontier of desolate Tibet to evangelize and suggested many other enterprises to God, hoping that He might be moved not to raise again the question of my giving up the one I loved. But once God's finger has pointed to something, He will not withdraw it. No matter how hard I prayed, I could not get through. I had no enthusiasm for my studies in school, and at the same time I failed to acquire the power of the Holy Spirit, which I was earnestly seeking. I was in great distress. I prayed constantly, hoping that my earnest supplication might change God's mind. Thank the Lord that all along He wanted me to learn to deny myself, to lay aside human love, and love Him with a single heart. Otherwise, I would be a useless Christian in His hand. He cut down my natural life with a sharp knife so that I might learn a lesson which I had never learned before.

On one occasion I delivered a message and returned to my room with a heavy heart. I told God that I would return to school the following Monday and seek for the filling of the Holy Spirit and the love of Christ. During the following two weeks, I found that I still could not say with conviction the words of Psalm 73:25. But thank the Lord, soon afterwards I was filled with His love, and I was willing to lay my loved one down and loudly declare, "I will lay her aside! Never will she be mine!" After this declaration I was at long last able to utter the words of Psalm 73:25. On that day I was in the second heaven, if not the third. The world appeared smaller to me, and it was as if I were mounting the clouds and riding the mists. On the evening of my salvation, the burden of my sins rolled away, but on that day, February 13, 1922, when I laid aside my beloved, my heart was emptied of everything that previously occupied me.

In the following week, people began to be saved. Brother Weigh, who was my classmate, can testify to the fact that up to this time I had been very particular about my dress. I used to wear a long silk gown with red dots. But on that day, I removed my refined clothing and shoes. I went to the kitchen, made some paste, and with a bundle of gospel posters in my arms, went to the street to post them on the walls and to distribute gospel tracts. In those days in Foochow, Fukien, this was a pioneer act.

From my second school term in 1922, I began the gospel work, and many of my schoolmates were saved. I prayed daily for those whose names were in my notebook. From 1923, we began to borrow or rent places for meetings to expand the work of evangelization. Several hundred people were saved at the same time. All but one of those whose names were in my notebook were saved. This is evident proof that God listens to such prayers. It is His way that we must first pray for sinners before they can be saved. In those few years there were many instances to confirm this fact.

LEARNING THE LESSON OF SUBMISSION

In 1923 seven of us worked together as co-workers. Two of us took the lead, a co-worker who was five years my senior and myself. We had a co-workers' meeting every Friday in which the other five were often forced to listen to the arguing between the leading two. We were all young then, and each had his own way of thinking. I often charged the elder co-worker with being wrong, and vice versa. Since my temperament had not been dealt with, I frequently lost my temper. Today in 1936 I do sometimes laugh, but I seldom laughed at that time. In our controversies I admit that many times I was wrong, but he was also at times in the wrong. It was easy for me to forgive my own faults, but not easy to forgive others. After having a dispute on Friday, I would go to Sister Barber on Saturday and accuse the other co-worker. I would say, "I told that co-worker that he should act in a certain way, but he would not listen. You should speak to him." Sister Barber replied, "He is five years older than you; you should listen to him and obey him." I answered, "Am I to listen to him whether he is reasonable or not?" She said, "Yes! The Scriptures say that the younger should obey the elder." I replied, "I cannot possibly do this. A Christian should act according to reason." She answered, "Whether there is reason or not, you need not care. The Scriptures say that the younger should obey the elder." I was angry at heart that the Bible would say such a thing. I wanted to give vent to my indignation, but I could not.

Each time following the controversy on Friday, I would go to her to state my grievances, but she would again quote the Scriptures, demanding that I obey the elder. Sometimes I wept Friday evening after the dispute on Friday afternoon. Then I would go to Sister Barber the next day to state my grievances, hoping that she would vindicate me. But I would weep again after coming home Saturday evening. I wished I had been born a few years earlier. In one controversy I had

very good arguments. I felt that when I pointed them out, she would see how my co-worker was wrong and would support me. But she said, "Whether that co-worker is wrong or not is another matter. While you are accusing your brother before me, are you like one who is bearing the cross? Are you like a lamb?" When she questioned me in this way, I felt very ashamed and I could never forget it. My speech and my attitude that day revealed that I was indeed not like one bearing the cross, nor like a lamb.

In such circumstances I learned to obey an elder co-worker. In that year and a half, I learned the most precious lesson in my life. My head was filled with ideas, but God wanted to see me enter into spiritual reality. In that year and a half, I came to realize what it is to bear the cross. Today in 1936 we have some fifty co-workers. Had it not been for the lesson of obedience which I learned in that year and a half, I fear that I could not work together with anyone. God put me in those circumstances that I might learn to be under the restraint of the Holy Spirit. In those eighteen months I had no opportunity to put forward my proposals. I could only weep and painfully suffer. But had it not been for this, I would never have realized how difficult it was for me to be dealt with. God wanted to polish me and to remove all my sharp, projecting edges. This has been a difficult thing to accomplish. How I thank and praise God, whose grace has brought me through! Now I must speak a word to the young co-workers. If you cannot stand the trials of the cross, you cannot become a useful instrument. It is only the spirit of a lamb that God takes delight in: the gentleness, the humility, and the peace. Your ambition, lofty purpose, and ability are all useless in the sight of God. I have been down this path and must often confess my shortcomings. All that pertains to me is in the hand of God. It is not a question of right or wrong; it is a question of whether or not one is like the bearer of the cross. In the church, right and wrong have no place; all that counts is bearing the cross and accepting its breaking. This produces the overflowing of God's life and accomplishes His will.

CHAPTER TWO

THE SECOND TESTIMONY

(Given on October 20, 1936)

Today I want to testify concerning four things: (1) learning the lesson of the cross, (2) leading in the work, (3) receiving healing to my sickness and experiencing God as my Healer, and (4) four aspects of work entrusted by the Lord.

LEARNING THE LESSON OF THE CROSS

A believer may read, study, or expound a teaching concerning the cross, while at the same time not necessarily receive the lesson of the cross or know the way of the cross. When I was being tempered together in the service with my co-workers, the Lord ordered many crosses for me. Many times I felt embarrassed. I would not accept the dealing of the cross and found it difficult to submit. Inwardly, however, I knew that if the cross were ordered by the Lord, it would be the right thing, though it would still be difficult to obey and accept it. While the Lord was on the earth, He learned obedience by the cross which He suffered (Heb. 5:8; Phil. 2:8). How could I be an exception? In the first eight or nine months, when the lesson of the cross began to come, I would not obey. I knew that I should yield without resistance to the cross ordered by the Lord. When I would make up my mind to obey, my determination would last only a short time. When some event would arise where I should obey, I found it difficult to obey and was full of rebellious thoughts. This made me very uneasy.

Once I recognized the cross which the Lord had ordered for me, I found it very beneficial. Among my co-workers, five had been my schoolmates since childhood. Another one came from a different city and was five years older than I. The five always sided with him and opposed me. No matter what I did, they would invariably condemn me. They received the credit for many things I did. Sometimes when they rejected my views, I went to a lonely hill to cry before God. At these times I wrote some hymns on bearing the cross. For the first time I experienced the significance of "the fellowship of His sufferings" (Phil. 3:10). When I could not have fellowship with the world, I could enjoy heavenly fellowship. The first two years after my salvation, I did not know what the cross was. But at this time I was beginning to learn its lesson.

I was always ranked first in my class as well as in my school. I also wanted to be first in serving the Lord. For this reason, when I was made second, I disobeyed. I told God repeatedly that it was too much for me to bear; I was receiving too little honor and authority, and everyone sided with my elder co-worker. But today I worship God and thank Him from the depths of my heart that this all happened to me. It has been the best training. God wished me to learn obedience, so He arranged for me to encounter many difficulties. Eventually, I told Him I was willing to be placed second. When I became willing to yield, the joy I experienced differed from the joy I experienced at the time of my salvation; it was not a broad joy but a deep one. After another eight or nine months, on many occasions I was

willing to be broken and did not do what I wished. On my spiritual path I was filled with joy and peace. The Lord submitted to the hand of God, and I was willing to do the same. The Lord, existing in the form of God, did not consider being equal with God a treasure to be grasped, but emptied Himself (Phil. 2:6-7). How dare I rank myself above the Lord? When I first began to learn obedience it was difficult, but as time went on I found it easier and easier. Eventually, I told God that I would choose the cross, accept its breaking, and put aside my own ideas.

LEADING IN THE WORK

When God's work started in several places in China in 1921, some truths were not clearly distinguished. For instance, grace and law were not clearly defined; nor were the kingdom of heaven and eternal life, grace and reward, or salvation and victory clearly differentiated. The understanding of truths in the Lord was neither deep nor rich enough. However, the understanding of the gospel of grace was comparatively clear, and it was being quite clearly preached at that time when Mr. Wang Ming Tao was in Tehchow, Sister Pearl Wang and Ruth Lee were in Nanking, and some other workers and I were in Foochow.

Publishing The Present Testimony

By the end of 1922 I had a burden to publish a magazine, because a number had been saved in Foochow, and the number was increasing. At that time, Brother Leland Wang was away in the Yangtze region doing evangelistic work. Only his wife and children were at home. He asked me to move into his house to help take care of the family. Daily, Sister Wang and I prayed for the magazine. I was at that time extremely pressed financially. After praying for more than a month, there was not a single dollar on hand. One morning I arose and said, "There is no need to pray further—that would be a lack of faith. What I must do is start writing. God need not put the money into our hands before we begin to write! Henceforth, I will no longer pray for this matter, but will proceed with the preparation of drafts."

When everything was ready and the last word had been written, I said, "Now the money will come." Eventually, I knelt down to pray again, saying, "O God, the draft is ready for printing, but there is still no money." After praying thus, I felt wonderfully confident that God would certainly give the money. We began to praise God.

The amazing thing was that we had no more risen to our feet than there was a knock at the door. I thought someone was coming with the money. That house being Sister Wang's, I let her answer the door. To my surprise, the one who

came was a wealthy yet stingy sister. "Oh, since it is she," I thought, "there could be no money." But she said to me, "I have something extremely important to see you about." "Please tell me," I replied. Then she asked, "How should a Christian donate?" I replied that we should not adopt the Old Testament way of paying tithes, but follow the word in 2 Corinthians 9:7, which says that each person should give according to the order of God. He may donate a half, a third, a tenth, or a twentieth of his income. She then asked, "Where should the donation be made?" I answered, "Do not give it to a church which opposes the Lord, nor to those who do not believe the Bible or the redemption of the Lord's shed blood. If no one contributes to them, they will not be able to carry on their preaching. Pray before each donation; then give it either to the poor or to some work, but never to an improper organization." She said, "The Lord has been speaking to me for many days concerning my excessive devotion to money. At first I could not reconcile myself to this, but now I can do so. When I was praying this morning, the Lord said to me, 'There is no need for you to pray anymore. Just start giving away your money.' I was rather disconcerted, but now I am here with thirty dollars for you to use for the Lord's work." This money was just sufficient for the printing of fourteen hundred copies of The Present Testimony. Later, another person gave an additional thirty dollars, which was sufficient for the postage and incidental expenses. This is how the first issue of The Present Testimony was published.

The Beginning of Revival

At the beginning of 1923, we started to hold meetings in Foochow in a pavilion of a brother's house. Stools were collected from various places when needed, and we went about the neighborhood inviting people to come and listen. Because the Lord had started something, it was easy for many people to be saved. Our method of inviting people was rather effective: each brother wore a white vest bearing words like "You shall die" in the front and "Believe in Jesus to be saved" at the back. There were other similar slogans. With banners in our hands, we paraded everywhere, singing as we marched along the way. Those who saw us marveled, and in this way, many people were brought to the meeting. We marched this way every day, and every day people came to listen to the gospel. They filled the sitting room, the kitchen, and outside the pavilion.

We had rented some stools for the meeting, but the rental period expired after two weeks. When the time was up, we had no money. The stools had to be

returned to the owner. Must the meeting be suspended? I announced that anybody who wished to attend the meeting in the future would have to bring his own stool. That afternoon, the whole hill, Tsang Chien Hill, was the scene of people, old and young, boys and girls, carrying stools. Even the policemen were amazed at the sight.

Thank the Lord, through His special blessing, a few hundred people were saved. On that occasion the foundation of salvation was laid down clearly. Until that time, many believers in China had not been clear about salvation. It was through those meetings and the preaching of our brothers in various places that many have since come to understand it.

Renting Premises for the Meeting

After we had been holding meetings for about a month, some young brothers among us felt that we should have a proper place to meet in the future. But since we were short of money, it was beyond our means to do so. I went to school to talk the matter over with several brothers, that is, with brothers Faithful Luke, Simon Meek, and Wang Tze, and we agreed that we should continue our work among the students. Then for the first time I rented some premises, a place owned by a family named Ho, all the members of which had been saved. They agreed to rent the place to me for a monthly amount of only nine dollars. I then prayed with several brothers, asking God to supply the three months' rent which was needed in advance before we could move in.

Every Saturday I went to Ma-kiang, Fukien, to listen to Miss Margaret Barber's preaching. This time when I saw her, she said, "Here is twenty-seven dollars, which a friend asked me to give you for your work." This sum was exactly sufficient for three months' rent at nine dollars per month—not too much and not too little. On my return, without hesitation, I paid the three months' rent in advance. Later, we prayed again, and the Lord provided again. This was the beginning of the work in Foochow.

The Revival of Many Believers

I have never seen a revival greater than this one. At that time, there were people being saved every day. It looked as if anyone who contacted us would immediately be saved. Every morning at five o'clock, when I arrived at school, I saw people everywhere reading the Bible—more than one hundred of them. Reading novels had been very fashionable, but now those who wanted to could only do so secretly. Instead, Bible reading now became an honorable thing to do. There were eight classes in our school, each with a prefect and a deputy prefect.

It was amazing to see that the prefect of practically every class had been saved. Even all the famous athletes had been saved, among whom was Brother Weigh Kwang-hsi, the tennis champion of Fukien province for many years. Our headmaster admired us for everything we did. The only thing he lamented was our attitude towards the Anglican church. The headmaster was a member of the Anglican church, but we refused to belong to that denomination.

More than sixty people daily marched in procession carrying banners, and a few dozen also went around daily distributing tracts. The whole town of Foochow—about a hundred thousand people—was shaken.

Many brothers who were saved were immediately baptized. At this time, we began to meet according to the Scripture. This was the way the meeting in Foochow started. Later the number of believers increased, and the work in the villages also began.

A New Beginning in the Work

During the period between 1921 and 1923, revival meetings were held to lead people to the Lord. At that time preaching the gospel was believed to be the unique work for God. But God opened my eyes to see that His purpose requires that those who have been saved by grace stand upon the ground of oneness in local churches to represent and maintain God's testimony on earth. Some of my co-workers had different views of the truth concerning the church. But when I carefully studied the book of Acts, I realized that God's wish is to establish local churches in every city. At that time the light shone upon me so clearly that I recognized that this is His purpose.

At the same time I received this light, a problem arose with some co-workers who held different views regarding important points of our work. This resulted in friction among us. They felt that we should be zealous in revival and gospel preaching work and that the fruit of such work could be easily seen. My view, however, was to establish local churches with less stress on the revival and preaching side. When an older co-worker went out to hold gospel meetings, as he frequently did, I was at times tempted to secretly hold revival gospel meetings of my own. However, instead of doing this, when he was away, I immediately acted according to the vision I had received. Upon his return, he would undo what I had done and work according to his concept. But when he was again absent, I would go back to my previous way. Consequently, we oscillated back and forth on this matter all the time. Since the light each of us had received in

respect to the work was different, our ways of working were also different. One way was that of revival and evangelism, while the other way was that of establishing local churches. What the Lord revealed to me was extremely clear: Before long He would raise up local churches in various parts of China. Whenever I closed my eyes, the vision of the birth of local churches appeared. [Editor's note: By 1949, there were about four to five hundred local churches being raised up all over China.]

In 1924, some workers were not satisfied with me, and God suffered the church in Foochow to be suddenly brought to a test. In order to avert a split, I then left Foochow. Later there was a call to visit Southeast Asia; so I went there, and meetings were also started there. In May 1925 I returned and rented premises in Pagoda, Foochow, a small village near the sea, with the aim of settling down. At this time I felt that we should publish a magazine laying stress on the truths concerning salvation and the church and also touching upon prophecy and types. My original intention for this magazine, known as *The Christian*, was that it should be of only a temporary nature. In 1925 two issues were published, in 1926, ten, and because of continuous demand, twelve in 1927.

In the first half of 1926, I visited Amoy, Kulangsu, Changchow, and Tungan to bear testimony, and many people were saved. In the second half of the year, I went back to those places. This time I was very tired as I had to conduct meetings, write articles, and attend to correspondence as well. I was then already slightly indisposed. I was originally scheduled to have ten days of meetings, but on the ninth day I fell ill. Another worker came and resumed the work for a few more days. It was in the second half of 1926 that the work in the south of Fukien started, with meetings in Amoy, Tungan, and the neighboring districts.

Some doctors said that the disease I had contracted while in Amoy was probably fatal and that I could expect to live only a few months! I was not afraid of death but I could not help thinking of what I had learned from the Lord during the many years before and the lessons I had experienced, none of which had yet been put into writing. Surely all this ought not to go with me to the grave! I prepared to write *The Spiritual Man*.

When I arrived in Nanking, I learned that a number of brothers and sisters who were standing on the ground of unity in the local church broke bread together, so naturally I went to them and joined them in remembrance of the Lord. Brother Weigh Kwang-hsi, a schoolmate of mine, was then studying at the University of

Nanking. Through his introduction I went to the university to deliver several sermons, at the same time regaining two brothers, whom we accepted at the Lord's table. This was the beginning of our work in Nanking.

In order to be able to devote myself to the writing of *The Spiritual Man*, I soon left Nanking and went to the country in Wusih, where I wrote the first four sections. There was military action in Nanking in March 1927, and as it was impossible to communicate with brothers and sisters at some places, I left the countryside for Shanghai. On arriving I learned that many brothers and sisters had been arriving one after another from different places. Prior to my arrival in Shanghai, there had been bread-breaking meetings in Sister Pearl Wang's house at Hsin's Garden. After we had all arrived, our meeting place was moved to Keng Ching Lane, and the Gospel Bookroom was started in Shanghai.

Toward the end of 1927, we had a prayer meeting every day. The believers in and around Pingyang, north of the Yangtze River, who had been helped by our written testimonies, began to correspond with us. Realizing that they were ready for instruction and that the believers in China had a need for it, we considered holding a special meeting for them. In January 1928 we rented some premises at Wen-teh Lane on Hardoon Road in Shanghai, and on February 1 we started the special meeting. The central theme of the messages was solely that of God's eternal purpose and the victory of Christ. We did not refer to other problems such as the truth as it concerned the church. There were twenty or thirty brothers and sisters who came from other places, but God illumined them and enabled them to see how they should walk along the path of life. They solved for themselves such problems as baptism, forsaking denominations, and other similar things. In the four years up until 1936, seven or eight hundred brothers and sisters were saved or revived in about ten meeting places north of the Yangtze River. In about the same number of meeting places in and around Pingyang and Taishun, some four thousand were saved or revived. All this work was done by the Lord Himself, and He had been working for many years to bring it to pass.

After we moved to Wen-teh Lane in 1928, it was decided to continue publishing *The Present Testimony* since *The Christian* had ceased publication. In 1930 *Notes on Scriptural Messages* was published.

During those few years in Shanghai, our aim was to make people follow the Lord Himself, the teaching of the Scriptures, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit. We did not nor should we have expected anyone to give himself to us. This was not the so-called policy of exclusion, nor should it be taken to mean that we

considered ourselves alone to be right; our only wish was to be loyal to the end. I wrote *The Spiritual Man* while I was ill; when it was completed, I became worse and was confined to bed practically all the time. Since the earthly house of my tabernacle was likely to collapse at any time, nothing worth mentioning was done during my first few years in Shanghai. It was in the following two years that things were actually started. In 1931 there was again a special meeting, of which the main message related to two enormous themes: the New Testament and the wisdom of God. At this meeting there were more brothers and sisters from other places.

GOD AS MY HEALER

When I first became aware of my illness in 1924, I was feeling feeble, there was pain in my chest, and I had a slight fever. I did not know what was wrong. Dr. H. S. Wong said to me, "I know you have faith and that God can cure you, but allow me to examine you and diagnose your disease." After the examination he spoke to Brother Wong Teng Ming for some time in a very low voice. At first, even though I asked, they would not tell me the result of the examination. But when I informed them that I was not afraid, Dr. Wong told me that I was afflicted with tuberculosis and that my condition was so serious that prolonged rest would be necessary.

I could not sleep that night; I did not want to meet the Lord without having completed my work. I was very depressed. I decided to go to the countryside for a rest and have more fellowship with the Lord. I asked the Lord, "What is Your will for me? If You wish me to lay down my life, I am not afraid to die." For half a year I could not grasp the Lord's will, but there was joy in my heart, and I believed the Lord could never be wrong. The many letters I received during this time did not convey encouragement or consolation; rather, they rebuked me for overworking and for not taking adequate care of my life. One brother reproached me by quoting Ephesians 5:29, "For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, even as Christ also the church." Brother Cheng Chikwei of Nanking invited me to his home where I could rest and at the same time help him translate Dr. C.I. Scofield's Bible correspondence course. At this time some thirty brothers and sisters came to me for fellowship. I spoke with them regarding the question of the church. I came to realize that God's hand was on me for the express purpose of turning me back to my first vision; otherwise, I would have ended up walking in the path of a revival preacher.

Day after day passed without my tuberculosis being cured. Though I exerted myself to write and to study the Bible, I found it exceedingly strenuous. I had a slight fever each afternoon, I could not sleep at night, and I frequently experienced night sweats. Upon being advised to take more rest, I replied, "I am afraid that I might rest to such a degree that I become rusty." I felt that even though I might not live long, I should believe that God would increase my strength and that I must work for Him. I asked the Lord concerning any unfinished work He had for me to do. Whatever He wanted me to do, I would ask Him to spare my life to do it; otherwise, I felt there was nothing upon earth worth living for. For awhile I was able to arise from bed, but eventually I could not even do that. On one occasion I was asked to conduct a gospel meeting. I exerted myself to arise and asked the Lord to strengthen me. While walking to the meeting, I was forced to lean against a lamp post every now and then for rest. Each time this happened I would say to the Lord, "It is worthwhile to die for You." Some brothers who knew that I had done this rebuked me for not sparing my health. To this I replied that I loved my Lord and would give up my life for Him.

After praying for over a month, I felt that I should write a book concerning what I had learned before God. My concept had been that one should not write books until he was old, but when I considered that I might be leaving this earth, I felt I should begin writing. I rented a small room in Wusih, Kiangsu province, where I shut myself up and spent my days writing. At that time my disease became so aggravated that I could not even lie down. While writing I sat on a chair with a high back and pressed my chest against the desk to alleviate the pain. Satan said to me, "Since you will soon be dying, why not die in comparative comfort rather than in pain?" I retorted, "The Lord wants me just like this; get out of here!" It took four months to complete the three volumes of *The Spiritual Man*. The writing of this book was a real labor of blood, sweat, and tears. I despaired of life, yet God's grace brought me through. After completing each time of writing, I would say to myself, "This is my last testimony to the church." Though the writing was done in the midst of all sorts of difficulties and hardships, I felt that God was unusually near to me. Some felt God was ill-treating me. Brother Cheng wrote saying, "You are exerting yourself to the uttermost; some day you will regret it." I replied, "I love my Lord and I would live for Him."

I wrote *The Spiritual Man* during my long illness. When it was ready for publication, about four thousand dollars were needed. Since there were no means on hand, I asked God to fill the need. Only four co-workers knew of this

need. No one else knew. Before long the Lord provided four hundred dollars, and we entered into a contract with a printer to commence printing the book. It was agreed that should we fail to pay the subsequent installments, we would not only forfeit the cash down payment of four hundred dollars, but we would also pay for the default. We therefore prayed concerning this matter with one accord. At that time I was still confined to bed. Whenever the printer came for his payment, the Lord had always provided us with the means. Seeing that we were able to maintain good faith, the printer said, "No one but you church people make payments so punctually."

Following the publication of the book, I prayed, "Now let Your servant depart in peace." At the same time my disease worsened. I could not sleep peacefully at night, and when I awoke I turned incessantly from side to side. Physically, I was a bag of bones. I had night sweats, and my voice became hoarse. People had trouble hearing me speak, even when they placed their ear to my mouth. Several sisters took turns waiting upon me, one of whom was a veteran nurse. Whenever she saw me, she would weep. She testified, "I have seen many patients, but I have never seen one whose condition was as pitiful as his. I am afraid that he can live only three or four more days." When someone told me of this, I said, "Let this be my end. I realize I am going to die soon." One brother telegraphed the churches in various places, telling them there was no more hope for me and that they need pray for me no more.

One day I asked God, "Why are You calling me away so soon?" I confessed my trespasses before God, fearing that I might have been unfaithful concerning some matter. At the same time I told God that I had no faith. On that same day I devoted myself to fasting and praying and presented myself to Him once more. I told Him that I would do nothing but what He assigned me. From morning until three o'clock in the afternoon I fasted. At the same time the co-workers earnestly prayed together for me in Sister Ruth Lee's home. As I prayed to God to grant me faith, He spoke His words to me, words which I could never forget. The first sentence was, "The just shall live by faith" (Rom. 1:17). The second sentence was, "By faith you stand" (2 Cor. 1:24). The third sentence was, "We walk by faith" (2 Cor. 5:7). These words filled me with great joy, for the Bible says, "All things are possible to him who believes" (Mark 9:23). I immediately thanked and praised God because He had given me His words. I believed that God had cured me.

The test came immediately. The Bible says, "By faith you stand," but I was still lying in bed. A conflict arose in my mind: Should I get up and stand or remain lying down? We all know that human beings love themselves and consider it more comfortable to die in bed than to die standing. Then the word of God manifested its power, and ignoring all else, I put on my clothing, clothing which I had not worn for a hundred and seventy-six days. As I left the bed to stand, I perspired so profusely that it was as though I had been soaked through with rain. Satan said to me, "Are you trying to stand when you can't even sit up?" I retorted, "God told me to stand," and I rose to my feet. Being again in a cold sweat, I nearly fell down. I kept repeating, "Stand by faith, stand by faith!" I then walked a few steps to get my trousers and socks. After putting on my trousers, I sat down. No sooner was I seated than the word of God came to me that I should not only stand by faith but also walk by faith. I felt that the ability to rise and walk a few steps to get my trousers and socks was already something marvelous. How could I expect to walk further? "Where do You want me to go?" I asked God. He answered, "Go downstairs to Sister Lee's home at number 215." A number of brothers and sisters had been fasting and praying for me there for two or three days.

Walking within the room might be all right, I thought, but how could I walk downstairs? I prayed to God, "Oh God, I can stand by faith, and by faith I am also able to walk downstairs!" Immediately, I went to the door leading to the staircase and opened it. I tell you honestly that when I stood at the top of the staircase it seemed to me to be the tallest staircase I had ever seen in my life. I said to God, "If You tell me to walk I will do so, even if I die as a result of the effort." But I continued, "Lord, I cannot walk. I pray that You will support me with Your hand while I am walking." With one hand holding onto the rail, I descended step by step. Again I was in a cold sweat. As I walked down the stairs, I continued to cry out, "Walk by faith, walk by faith!" With each step down, I prayed, "O Lord, it is You who enable me to walk." While descending those twenty-five steps, it seemed I was walking hand in hand with the Lord in faith.

Upon reaching the bottom of the stairway, I felt very strong and went quickly to the rear door. I opened the door and headed straight for Sister Lee's home. I said to the Lord, "From now on, I will live by faith and will no longer be an invalid." I knocked at the door just as Peter did in Acts 12:12-17, but without Rhoda to open the door. When the door was opened and I entered the house, seven or eight brothers and sisters gazed at me. They were speechless and motionless. For

about an hour everyone sat quietly as if God had appeared among men. I also sat there full of thanksgiving and praise. Then I related all that had happened in the course of my being graciously healed. Exhilarated and jubilant in spirit, we all praised God aloud for His wonderful work. That same day we hired a car to go to Kiangwan in the suburbs to visit Dora Yu, the famous woman evangelist. She was greatly shocked to see me, for she had received recent news of my imminent death. When I appeared, I was looked upon as one who had been raised from the dead. That was another occasion of joyful thanksgiving and praise before the Lord. On the following Sunday, I spoke on the platform for three hours.

About four years ago, I went to an auction at the house of a German doctor. Upon inquiring I found that this doctor was the one who had taken x-rays of my chest many years ago. He had taken three pictures and told me that there was no hope. When I asked him to take another picture, he said that there was no further need. He then showed me another person's chest x-ray and said, "This person's condition was better than yours, yet he died at his home two weeks after this picture was taken. Don't come to see me anymore; I don't want to make money out of you." When I heard this, I went home extremely disappointed. Then, four years ago, I read an advertisement in the newspaper concerning the auction of a building and furniture of a certain famous German doctor who had died. When I discovered that this doctor was the one who had taken x-rays of my chest many years ago, I lifted up my hands to praise the Lord. I said, "This doctor has died. He said that I would die soon, but now he is dead. The Lord has shown me His grace." Under the Lord's blood, I said, "This doctor, who was stronger than I, has died, but I have been healed by the Lord and am still alive." On that day I bought many things from his house for memorial.

GUIDANCE FOR WORK

From the time I was bedridden by illness until the time I was healed by God, I was being shown more clearly the kind of work God wanted me to do. This consists of the following four aspects:

Literary Work

Before I became ill, I not only visited various places to conduct special meetings, but I also had a great ambition to compose a good comprehensive commentary. I intended to devote much energy, time, and money in writing a large commentary consisting of about a hundred volumes. After completing *The Spiritual Man*,

which I began in Nanking when I became ill, I realized that the task of expounding the Scriptures was not for me. However, since that time I have frequently met with temptation in this respect. After my illness, God revealed to me that the central point of the messages He gave me was not for expounding the Scriptures, preaching the ordinary gospel, paying attention to prophecies, or anything outward, but for laying stress on the living word of life. For this reason I felt I should resume publishing The Present Testimony to assist God's children in spiritual life and warfare. Each age has a unique truth especially needed in that time. For us, living in the last days, there must also be some truth which we especially need. By means of The Present Testimony the testimony for the truth of the present age was borne. I am profoundly convinced that the present is the preparatory period. Children of God will be reaped, but they have to become ripe first (Mark 4:29). The time for us to be caught up is full; whether or not the church is ready is the most vital problem. God's aim today is to expedite building up the Body of His Son, which is the church. As it is said in the Scripture: "That He might sanctify her, cleansing her by the washing of the water in the word, that He might present the church to Himself glorious" (Eph. 5:26-27), so that the enemy might be quickly destroyed to usher in the kingdom. I humbly hope that I may, in the hand of the Lord, have a little share in this glorious work. All that I have written has but one aim, which is that the reader will, in the new creation, give himself wholly to God and become a useful person in His hands. Now I wholeheartedly commit my writings, my readers, and myself to God, who preserves men forever, and hope that His Spirit will guide me into all His truths.

Conducting Overcomer Meetings

God has shown me that in every local church a group of overcomers should be raised up (as those mentioned in Revelation 2 and 3) to be the Lord's witnesses. For this reason, every year an overcomer conference has been held to faithfully deliver the messages that God has given me.

Building Up Local Churches

When the Lord called me to serve Him, the prime object was not for me to hold revival meetings so that people might hear more scriptural doctrines, nor for me to become a great evangelist. The Lord revealed to me that He wanted to build up local churches in other localities to manifest Himself, to bear testimony of unity on the ground of locality so that each saint might perform his duty in the church and live the church life. God wants not merely individual pursuit of victory or spirituality, but a corporate, glorious church presented to Himself.

Training Young People

If the return of the Lord should be delayed, it will be necessary to raise up a number of young people to continue the testimony and the work for the following generations. Many co-workers have already prayed concerning this matter with the hope of providing a suitable place for the purpose of training young people. My thought is not to establish a seminary or a Bible institute, but to have young people staying together to live the Body life and practice the spiritual life. In such a place they would receive training for the purpose of edification, by learning to read the Scripture, to pray, and to build up a good character. On the negative side, there would be training for the purpose of learning how to deal with sin, the world, the flesh, and the natural life. At a suitable time, the young people would return to their respective churches in various places to be tempered together with other saints to serve the Lord in the church. I have purchased over ten acres of land at Chenru, in the suburbs of Shanghai. Planning for building on that site is in progress, and before long, young people will be able to go there for training.

In the future my personal burden and work will generally comprise these four aspects. May all the glory be to the Lord. We have nothing at all in ourselves, and though we have done something, we admit to being useless and unprofitable servants.

CHAPTER THREE

THE THIRD TESTIMONY

(Given on October 20, 1936)

Scripture Reading: Acts 26:29

LIVING A LIFE OF FAITH

Having given two testimonies, I had no intention of giving any more. However, while I was praying, it seemed that the Lord wanted me to testify once again. Those who know me are aware that I seldom testify regarding my own affairs. It has been my observation that people often abuse others' testimonies, treating them as news for circulation. It is also true that some testimonies are not sufficiently founded. The third-heaven experience of the apostle Paul was not disclosed to others until after fourteen years. Regarding many spiritual testimonies, an appropriate length of time should be allowed to elapse before they are divulged. Many, however, would speak them forth not in fourteen years, but in fourteen days.

Matters concerning Money

The matter of money can be either a small or a big problem. When I began to serve the Lord, I was somewhat anxious about the question of my livelihood. Had I been a preacher in a denomination, I would have been on a large monthly salary. But since I was to walk in the Lord's way, I would only rely upon Him to support me; I could not depend upon a monthly salary. In the years 1921 and 1922, very few preachers in China lived in sole reliance on the Lord. It was difficult to find even two or three; the great majority lived on salary. At that time many preachers were not bold enough to devote their entire time to serving the Lord; they felt that if they were not receiving a regular salary, they would not know how to face a situation in which they had nothing to live on. I also had such thoughts. In China today [1936] there are approximately fifty brothers and sisters in fellowship with us who live by relying solely on the Lord. Such a situation is more common now than it was in 1922. Brothers and sisters in various places today also care for the workers more than before. I think that after ten years or so, brothers and sisters will show even greater concern for the need of the servants of the Lord. But it was not very common ten years ago.

Declaring to My Parents

My Desire to Live by Faith

I have pointed out in a previous testimony that after I was saved I continued to study in school and at the same time work for the Lord. One evening I spoke with my father concerning the matter of receiving financial assistance. I said, "After praying for several days, I feel that I must tell you that I will no longer spend your money. I appreciate that you have spent so much on me in accord with your sense of fatherly responsibility. But you will expect me to earn money in the future and support you in return, and I must tell you beforehand that since I am going to be a preacher, I will not be able to repay you in the future nor pay you interest. Even though I have not completed my studies, I wish to learn to depend solely upon God." When I said this, my father thought I was joking. However, from then on, when my mother would occasionally give me five or ten dollars, she would write on the envelope: "To Brother Nee To-sheng." She was not giving me money as a mother.

After I had expressed myself thus to my father, the devil came to tempt me by saying, "Such an act is very dangerous. Suppose one day you are unable to maintain your living and you again approach your father for money. Won't that be disgraceful? You have spoken to your father too soon; you should have waited until there was more progress in your work, until many people had been saved

and you had many friends, before you began to live a life of faith." But thank the Lord, ever since I expressed my decision to discontinue receiving my father's support, I have never asked him for money.

LOOKING TO GOD FOR SUSTENANCE WHILE WORKING

To the best of my knowledge, Sister Dora Yu was the only preacher at that time who did not receive a salary and who depended wholly upon God for her living. She was my spiritual elder sister, and we knew each other very well. She had many friends, Chinese and foreign, and the field of her work was very wide since she preached everywhere. But my condition was just the opposite; few cared for me, so I found it rather difficult. Yet when I looked to the Lord, He said to me, "If you cannot live by faith, you cannot work for Me." I knew that I needed living work and living faith to serve a living God. When once I found that there was only about ten dollars in my wallet, which before long would be fully spent, I suddenly recalled the widow of Zarephath, who had only a handful of meal in the barrel and a little oil in the cruse (1 Kings 17:12). There were not two handfuls of meal. I did not know by what means God sustained her, but I knew He had the means. In 1921 two co-workers and I went to a place in Fukien province to preach, intending to go from there to another place. In my pocket were only four dollars, an insufficient amount for three bus tickets. But, thank the Lord, a brother gave us three tickets.

Again, at Kulangsu, in the south of Fukien province, my money was stolen from my pocket, so that I had no traveling expenses to return home. We were then staying in someone's house and preached once a day in a small chapel. We finished and were ready to leave. My two co-workers had money to return home, but mine had been stolen. (At that time each of us was spending his own money.) They made the decision to leave on the following day. When I heard this I was embarrassed, but I was not willing to borrow money from them. That evening I prayed to God, beseeching Him to provide the needed money for traveling expenses. Nobody knew this. That afternoon some people had come to speak with me about the Word, but I was in no mood to do so. At that time the devil came to tempt me and shake my faith, but I was firm in believing that God would not let me down. I was then merely a youth, just embarking on serving the Lord by faith; I had not yet learned the lesson of living by faith. I continued praying to God that evening, thinking that perhaps I had done something wrong.

The devil said, "You could ask the co-workers to buy your ticket, then repay them when you reach the provincial capital." I did not accept this suggestion and continued looking to God. When the time came for us to leave, there was still no money in hand. I packed my luggage as usual and hired a rickshaw. At that moment, I recalled the story of a brother who had no train ticket when the train was about to leave, but at that very instant, God ordered someone to give him a ticket. We were all ready and boarded the rickshaws, of which there were three. I took the last one. When the rickshaw had been pulled about forty yards, an old man in a long gown came from behind shouting, "Mr. Nee, please stop!" I ordered the rickshaw boy to halt. After handing me a parcel of food as well as an envelope, the old man departed. I was then so grateful for God's arrangement that my eyes were filled with tears. When I opened the envelope, I found four dollars inside, just sufficient for a bus ticket. The devil kept speaking to me, "Don't you see how dangerous it is?" I replied, "I was indeed a little anxious about it, but it is by no means dangerous, for God has supplied my need in time." After arriving in Amoy, another brother gave me a return ticket.

In 1923 Brother Weigh Kwang-hsi invited me to preach in Kien-ou in the north of Fukien province. I had only about fifteen dollars in my pocket, one-third of the traveling expenses. I decided to leave on Friday evening and continued my prayer on Wednesday and Thursday. The money, however, did not come in. I prayed again Friday morning. Not only was no money forthcoming, but also I had a feeling within that I should give five dollars to a certain co-worker. I recalled the Lord's words: "Give, and it will be given to you." I had not been a money lover, but on that day I really loved money and found it extremely difficult to give. I prayed to the Lord again, "O Lord, if You really want me to give away five dollars, I will," but I was still rather unwilling inwardly. I was deceived by Satan into thinking that after praying I would not have to give away the five dollars. That was the only time in my life that I shed tears over money. Eventually, I obeyed the Lord and gave the five dollars to that co-worker. After the money was given, I was filled with heavenly joy. When the co-worker asked why I gave him the money, I said, "You need not ask; you will know later."

Friday evening I prepared to begin my journey. I said to God, "Fifteen dollars was already insufficient, and You wanted me to give away five dollars. Won't the sum be even more inadequate? Now I don't know how to pray." I made up my mind to go first to Shui-kow by steamer and then to Kien-ou by a small wooden boat. I spent only a little for the journey to Shui-kow. As the steamer was about to arrive,

I felt that if I would not pray according to my own concept, the result would be much better. So I said to the Lord, "I do not know how to pray; please do it for me." I added, "If You will not give me the money, please provide a boat for me with a little fare." When I arrived in Shui-kow, many boatmen came to solicit business. One asked only seven dollars for my passage. This price was beyond expectation; the usual fare was several times more. I asked the boatman why his price was so low, and he replied, "This boat is hired by the magistrate, but I am allowed to take one passenger only for the space at the stern, so I do not care how much the fare is. But you have to provide your own food." Originally, I had fifteen dollars in my pocket. After giving five dollars to a co-worker and spending a few dimes for the journey by steamer, seven dollars for the small wooden boat, and a dollar or so for food, there was still a dollar thirty left when I reached Kien-ou. Thank the Lord! Praise Him that His ordering is always good.

After I completed my work at Kien-ou and was ready to return to Foochow, the problem arose again: I did not have sufficient funds for traveling expenses to return. I had decided to leave on the following Monday, so I continued praying until Saturday. This time I had a feeling of certainty in my heart, recalling that before I left Foochow, God had asked me to give five dollars to a co-worker, which I then begrudged giving. At that time I read Luke 6:38: "Give, and it will be given to you," and I laid hold of this sentence. I said to God, "Since You have said this, I beseech You to provide me with the necessary money for traveling expenses according to Your promise."

On Sunday evening a British pastor, Mr. Philips, a true brother, assuredly saved and loving the Lord, asked Brother Weigh and me to dinner. At dinner Mr. Philips told me that he and his church had received great help through my messages, and they offered to be responsible for my traveling expenses both ways. I replied that there was already someone who had accepted this responsibility, meaning God. Then he said, "When you get back to Foochow, I will give you *The Dynamics of Service* written by Mr. Padgett Wilkes, a gospel messenger greatly used by the Lord in Japan." I soon felt that I had missed a great opportunity; what I needed then was money for traveling expenses, not a book. I somewhat regretted that I had not accepted his offer. After dinner Brother Weigh and I returned home together. I had refused Mr. Philips's offer for my traveling expenses so that I might look solely to God for help; nevertheless, there was joy and peace in my heart. Brother Weigh was unaware of my financial situation. I had a slight thought of borrowing money from him for my expenses and then

reimbursing him when I returned to Foochow, but God would not allow me to divulge this matter to him. I was under full conviction that God in heaven is forever dependable, and I wished to see how He was going to provide for me.

When I left the following day, I had only a few dollars in my pocket. Many brothers and sisters came to see me off, and some carried my luggage. While walking I prayed, "Lord, surely You wouldn't bring me here without taking me back." Halfway to the wharf, Mr. Philips sent someone with a letter. The letter read, "Though someone else has assumed the responsibility for your traveling expenses, I feel that I should have a share in your work here. Would it be possible for me, an aged brother, to have such a share? Please be good enough to accept this small sum for this purpose." After reading the letter, I felt I should accept the money, and I did. It was not only sufficient for my return expenses to Foochow, but also for printing one issue of The Present Testimony.

Upon my return to Foochow, the wife of the co-worker who received the five dollars said to me, "I have the feeling that when you left you did not have enough money yourself. Why did you suddenly give five dollars to my husband?" I then asked her what had occurred in connection with the five dollars, and she replied, "We had only one dollar left in the house on Wednesday, and that had been spent by Friday. On Friday we prayed all day. Afterwards my husband felt that he should go for a walk, and then he met you, and you gave him five dollars. The five dollars lasted us through five days; then God provided for us from another source." At this point she continued with tears, "If you had not given us the five dollars on that day, we would have suffered hunger. It does not matter that we suffer hunger, but what about God's promise?" Her testimony filled me with joy. The Lord had worked through me to supply their need with the five dollars. The Word of the Lord is indeed faithful: "Give, and it will be given to you."

This is the lesson I have learned in my life. I have now experienced that the less money I have in my hand, the more God will give. This is a difficult path to follow. Many people may feel that they are able to live the life of faith; but when the trial comes, they are in fear. Unless you can believe in the real and living God, I do not advise you to take this path. I can bear testimony today that God is the One who gives. To be sustained by means of ravens as Elijah was at his time is still possible today. I am going to mention something to you which you may find difficult to believe. It has been my experience that God's supply arrives when I have spent my last dollar. I have had fourteen years of experience. In each experience God wanted to get the glory for Himself. God has supplied all my

needs and has not failed me once. Those who used to give do not do so now. There is a constant change of offerers; one lot of people replaces another. All this does not matter, for God in the highest is a living God. He never changes! I say this today for your benefit. I must say this that you may go straight forward in the path of living a life of faith. There are ten to twenty more cases like these that I have already related to you.

Concerning the matter of offering the Lord money, one ought to set aside a definite amount—a tithe of your income or half of your income—and put it in the hand of God. From her natural being, the widow who gave two half-farthings might have grugged doing so, but she was praised by the Lord. We have to be an example for others; we need not fear, for God will not fail. We should learn to love God, to believe Him, and to serve Him as is His due. We ought to thank Him and praise Him because of His unspeakable grace! Amen.

Looking to God for Sustenance for the Publication Work

Some people would never enter a meeting place to listen to the gospel. For this reason, in 1922 I began printing gospel tracts. The gospel must be delivered to them. After writing the tracts, I began praying and asking for provision for the printing and distribution expenses. God said to me, "If you wish Me to answer your prayer, you must first rid yourself of all hindrances." On the following Sunday, I preached on the theme, "Removal of All Hindrances." At that very time many people were criticizing the wife of one of my co-workers, who was a sister among us. After the meeting she stood at the door. When I entered the meeting to deliver the message, I looked at her and inwardly criticized her, considering others' criticism of her to be true. When I left the meeting hall after delivering the message, I greeted her. Later, when I again supplicated God for printing expenses, saying that I had removed all hindrances, God said to me, "What is the message which you have delivered? You have criticized that sister; that is a hindrance to prayer, a hindrance which you ought to deal with. You must go to her and confess your guilt." I replied, "It is not necessary to confess to others sins that are in the mind." God answered, "Yes, that is right, but your condition is different." Afterward, when I considered confessing to her and came face to face with the issue, I hesitated five times. Even though I wished to do it, I was concerned that she, who had always greatly admired me, would then despise me. I said to God, "If You order me to do anything else, I will do it, but I am

unwilling to confess to her." I continued to ask God for the printing expenses, but He would not listen to my reasoning. Rather, He insisted on my confessing. The sixth time, through the Lord's grace, I confessed to her. With tears we both confessed our faults and then forgave each other. We were filled with joy and thereafter loved each other all the more in the Lord.

Shortly after this, the postman delivered a letter containing fifteen U.S. dollars. The letter read, "I like to distribute gospel tracts and feel constrained to assist you in the matter of printing gospel tracts. Please accept my gift." As soon as all hindrances were removed, God answered my prayer. Thank the Lord! This was my first experience of God's answering my prayer in the matter of printing. We were then handing out more than a thousand tracts daily. Two or three million copies were printed and distributed annually to supply the churches in various places. In the few years after the publication work was begun, God always answered my prayers and supplied all our needs.

The Lord also wanted me to publish the magazine *The Present Testimony* and to give it out free of charge. At that time all spiritual periodicals throughout China were for sale; only what I published was free. The editing room where I wrote the manuscripts was a small cubicle. When the manuscripts were completed, they were sent to the press. When there were no funds available, I would pray to God for His provision for printing. When I considered what I was doing, I laughed because the manuscripts were being sent to the press without the necessary funds. As long as I live, I will never forget the time when I had no sooner finished laughing than there was a knock at the door. Upon opening the door, I saw a middle-aged woman who constantly came to the meetings but to whom my heart was unusually cool. She was wealthy, but she loved money and treated a dime as a dollar. I wondered how she could possibly be the one who would give money for printing the magazine. Then I asked her why she had come. She replied, "About an hour ago I began feeling inwardly uneasy. When I prayed to God, He told me that I am not like a Christian, for I have never done well in the matter of offering, and that I love money too much. I asked Him what He wanted me to do, and He said, 'You should offer some money for the use of My work.'" Then she took out thirty silver dollars and placed them on the table, saying, "Spend it on whatever you feel the need is." Then as I looked at the table, I saw two things, the manuscripts and the money. I thanked the Lord without thanking her. She left, and I went immediately to the printers to negotiate the printing. The money she had given was sufficient to print fourteen hundred copies of the

magazine. Others gave money for the packing expenses and postage. Now about seven thousand copies of each issue are being printed. All the finances required are provided by God at the right time and in the way I have been relating. I have never solicited contributions from anyone. At times people have even begged me to accept money. In all of these matters I have been looking solely to Him.

ACCEPTING MONEY ON CHRIST'S BEHALF

If one fails in dealing properly with monetary matters, he will also certainly fail in many other things. We must single-mindedly look to God and never do anything which will bring disgrace to the Lord. When people give us money, we accept it on behalf of Christ, and we must never ask people for any favors. Thanks be to God that after I told my parents I was not going to spend their money any longer, I was still able to study at school for two more years. Though I did not know where the sustenance came from, whenever there was a need, God certainly provided. Sometimes the situation looked really difficult, yet God never let me down. We often place our hope in other people, but God does not want us to look to others. We should learn a lesson: spend as we receive, and never be like the Dead Sea, with inlets but without a single outlet. We ought to be like the river Jordan, with inlets on the one side and outlets on the other. The Levites in the Old Testament were those who devoted themselves to serving God, and they too had to offer their tithes.

APPENDIX

A LETTER FROM WATCHMAN NEE TO THE COMPILER

(March 10, 1950)

Dear Brother Weigh,

I have long been thinking of writing to you, but I have put it off lest my thoughts were not sufficiently mature to do so. However, I think it is now the opportune time. I hope you will humbly place this before God.

I am afraid the difficulties of the churches in Hong Kong and Canton will be rather enormous, namely (a) among co-workers and (b) in the church. I hope what I am going to say below will, through the grace of the Lord, help towards changing the situation there.

(1) Those who are leaders ought to learn to love others, to think on their behalf, to take care of them, to deny oneself for their sake, and to give them all one has.

If one cannot deny himself on account of others, it would be impossible to guide people along the spiritual path. Learn to give others what you have even if you feel as if you have nothing. Then the Lord will start pouring down His blessing.

(2) The inner strength of a worker should measure up to the outward work. There should not be any overstrain, overreaching, uneasiness, scantiness, tension, lack of overflowing, human plans, or going ahead of the Lord. All these are undesirable conditions. If one is inwardly abundant, whatever is emanating from him is like the flowing of a stream, and there is no overstrain on his part. You must really be a spiritual man; you should not merely act like one.

(3) Learn to listen to others in connection with your work. The teaching in Acts 15 is to listen, that is, to listen to the views of all brothers because the Holy Spirit may speak through them. Be very careful lest in refusing to listen to the voice of the brothers you may not hear the voice of the Holy Spirit. All the co-workers and elders ought to sit down to listen to them. Give them unrestricted chances to speak. Be gentle, be broken, and be prepared to listen.

(4) The difficulty with many people is their being unbroken. They may have heard about being "broken," but its significance eludes them. If one is broken, he will not attempt to arrive at his own decision regarding business matters or teaching, will not claim to understand people or to be capable of doing things, will not venture to assume authority or to impose his own authority upon others, and will not take the liberty to criticize brothers or to deal with them presumptuously. A brother who is broken will not try to defend himself, and there is nothing he needs to look back to.

(5) There should be no tension in meetings or in the church. Regarding church business, learn not to do too much yourself. Distribute the business among others and make them learn to use their own discretion in making decisions. You should first brief them on the fundamental principles to follow and ascertain afterwards whether they have acted accordingly. It is wrong to do too much personally. Avoid showing yourself in excess in meetings, otherwise the brothers may feel that you are monopolizing. Learn to place trust in the brothers and divide it among them.

(6) The Spirit of God cannot be coerced in the church. You have to be submissive to Him; otherwise, once He stops anointing, the church will feel tired or possibly even bored. If your spirit is strong, it will sweep over and overwhelm the audience within ten minutes; if it is weak, even shouting some threatening words and spending a longer time will not help and may even be harmful.

(7) In delivering a message, do not make it too long or too elaborate; otherwise, the spirit of the saints may tend to feel bored. Do not include superficial thoughts or base statements in the contents of your message; avoid childish examples as well as those reasons which are so common that people will consider them childish. Learn to finish delivering the essence within half an hour. Do not think that, when you yourself enjoy your message, the words are necessarily those of God.

(8) The temptation often encountered at a prayer meeting is to deliver a message or to speak at length. A prayer meeting should be devoted to praying; too much talking will make the conscience feel heavy with the result that the meeting becomes a failure.

(9) The work at Kuling, Fukien, in 1948 was an exceptional case. Workers should learn a lot before getting into a position where they deal with problems or persons. With inadequate learning, insufficient knowledge, incomplete brokenness, and unreliable judgment, one will be incompetent to deal with others. Do not jump to conclusions; even when one is about to do something, he should do it in fear and trembling. Do not treat spiritual matters lightly. Learn in the heart.

(10) Learn not to trust your own judgments only. What is considered right may not be so; what is regarded wrong may not be wrong. If one is determined to learn humbly, it will take at least a few years to complete. Therefore, for the present, you ought not to have too much confidence in yourself or be too definite about your way of thinking.

(11) It would be a dangerous thing for people in the church to follow your decisions before you reach the state of maturity. The Lord will work on you to deal with your thoughts and to break you before you can understand the will of God and thus be His authority. Authority is based on the knowledge of the Lord's will. Where the Lord's will and purpose are not manifest, there is no authority.

(12) The capacity of a servant of God should be constantly expanded by Him. I think He is now doing it; you need not look inward, since this will make you disheartened. God may wish you to assume the responsibility of leadership. As to the work in Hong Kong, it is possible that some brothers will feel led to join it. I think we ought to have rest in the matter.

Yours in the Lord,

Nee To-sheng (Watchman Nee)