

**BUILDING UP THE CHURCH LIFE IN THE HOMES
TRAINING AND EXERCISE (1)**

From Gospel Contacts to Vital Companions

Guidelines for Helpers

Name: _____

Church: _____

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Message One

Building Up the Vital Relationship

Scripture Reading: Eph. 4:15-16; Col. 2:19; 1 Thes. 2:7-8, 11; John 21:15-17;
Matt. 25:1-13, 14-30

- I. We need to perfect the new ones and multiply through the home meetings; home meetings are the best way to multiply—Acts 2:46-47; 5:42:**
- A. To meet according to the new way is to have everyone participate in the meetings; this will change the entire church thoroughly and spontaneously:
 - 1. In the home meetings, even the unsaved ones can speak, sing, and function; the benefit of the home meetings is that everyone can function—1 Cor. 14:26; Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16.
 - 2. If the new ones are born and raised in this way, they would never go back to the old way of one man speaking and the rest listening.
 - B. After meeting like this for half a year, a new seeking one will grow to become useful and be able to lead other new ones; as a result, many will be baptized and start to meet and be perfected in the homes—1 Thes. 1:7.
 - C. In this way, new ones will grow and learn to function without the leading of pastors or elders, and every home will experience household salvation through such meetings and become a “family” living in a spiritual atmosphere—Acts 2:46-47, 5:42.
 - D. Then in their daily life, they will spontaneously preach the gospel to people; this way of multiplication, like that of virus, will be very prevailing—1 Thes. 1:8; Acts 1:8; 8:1, 4-8.
- II. The service of “the helpers”, as joints of the rich supply, is to cause every member of the Body to grow up into the Head directly; this is a very important service—Eph. 4:15-16; Col. 2:19:**
- A. To be a good “helper”, we must truly be joined to the Lord and remain in the organic union with Him as our Head for our life supply; we must be renewed day by day and take the lead to enter into the enjoyment of the truth—John 15:4.
 - B. Then when we remind others to pursue the truth, the riches we have enjoyed will spontaneously flow out; this flowing out is the rich supply of the joint—Eph. 4:16; Col. 2:19; 1 Tim. 4:16.
 - C. If we don’t build up a one-on-one relationship with the new ones, there will be little result even if they are baptized; the key is to bring them into a vital relationship—1 Thes. 1:7-8, 11.
 - D. Our focus in contacting and reminding others is to care for the spiritual health of the flock; this is our focus in calling people to contact, remind, and fellowship with them—John 21:15-17.
- III. The service of “the helpers” is mainly to contact, supply, remind, and encourage people—Eph. 4:16; 5:29:**

- A. Contacting—Eph. 4:16; 5:29:
 1. When calling people, we must first greet them and care for the various things of their daily lives, not first to share the high-peak truths; this is human cherishing, which is part of shepherding.
 2. Contacting also includes matching and coordinating people together, that is, finding companions for people so they may be built into the church; they cannot be built into the church until we find companions for them.
- B. Supplying—Eph. 4:16; Col. 2:19; Eph. 3:8; 1 Pet. 4:10:
 1. Supplying is to share with people what we have enjoyed and experienced, whether it is something spiritual or practical; as we share our experience with each other, we are joined together—Phil. 2:1-2.
 2. Supplying also includes supporting; we often end up talking about problem after problem as we chat about our life, but this is actually a good opportunity for us to support one another and experience a spiritual turning point—1:19.
- C. Reminding—Rom. 15:15; 1 Cor. 4:17; 2 Pet. 1:12-13; 3:1; Jude 5:
 1. We need to be deeply impressed with Paul’s charge to Timothy: “If you lay these things before the brothers”; today, we should follow the pattern of Timothy to be nourished with the fellowship of the Lord through the ministry and lay these things before the brothers—1 Tim. 4:6; 2 Tim. 1:6; 2:14.
 2. The fellowship of the reminding service increases the “blood circulation” in the Body and causes the Body to be healthy; the health of the saints depends on the contacting, opening, reviving, and encouraging, which unfortunately are mostly neglected—Acts 2:42; John 13:34-35.
- D. Encouraging—Acts 23:11; Rom. 1:12; 1 Cor. 14:3; Phil. 2:1, 19; Heb. 10:24-25:
 1. We need to keep encouraging people, as this is a great element in perfecting others and a positive strengthening to them; sometimes one encouraging and strengthening word can change a person’s whole life of service.
 2. A striking point in 1 and 2 Thessalonians is commendation—to acknowledge and approve others’ progress and achievement; to perfect people, we must approve them within the proper measure at the proper time—1 Thes. 1:2-4, 7-9; 3:1-13; 2 Thes. 1:3-12; 2:13-3:5.

IV. The service of “the helpers” also includes supplying testimonies to others; testimonies are a very good way of inciting people to take action—1 Thes. 1:5; 1 Tim. 3:7; Heb. 11:2-12:1:

- A. If we want people to do the same thing we do, giving them testimonies is more effective than giving them messages; messages move the heart, but testimonies move the feet—Acts 20:17-38.
- B. Experience tells us that testimonies are more effective than messages; testifying is truly a wonderful way of reproduction and duplication—1 Thes. 1:5-9; 2 Tim. 3:10-14.

V. On the one hand we need to help the new ones to grow in life, and on the other hand we need to help them to function from the day they got saved; we must have such a vision and be assured of this vision—Matt. 25:1-13; 14-30; 1 Cor. 15:58.

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Message Two

Producing Spiritual Heirs

Scripture Reading: Gen. 1:28; 17:2-9; Gal. 3:29; Matt. 7:17-21; John 15:2, 5, 16;
1 Cor. 4:15-17; Col. 1:28-29

I. Every one of us needs to produce spiritual heirs; having no spiritual heirs is a serious matter—Gen. 1:28; 17:2-9; Gal. 3:7, 29; Matt. 7:17-21; John 15:2, 5, 16:

- A. The earth and the heirs are two most important things in the Bible; heirs can also be rendered as “seed”—Gen. 1:28; 17:2-9; Gal. 3:7, 29:
 - 1. Genesis 1 records specifically that “God said, Let the earth sprout...herbs yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit...with their seed in them upon the earth”—Gen. 1:11-12.
 - 2. In other words, God created the herbs to yield seed and the fruit trees to bear fruit with seed in them; this reveals that if a church produces no seed, no heir, it has no future—Matt. 7:17-21; John 15:2, 5, 16.
- B. “My Spirit which is upon you and My words which I have put in your mouth shall not depart from your mouth, nor from the mouth of your seed, nor from the mouth of your seed’s seed, says Jehovah, from now and forever”—Isa. 59:21.
 - 1. According to this thought, Paul charged Timothy: “And the things which you have heard from me through many witnesses, these commit to faithful men, who will be competent to teach others also”—2 Tim. 2:2.
 - 2. Thus, we must not only be able to do things by ourselves, but also perfect others to do the same; we must not only perfect others to do the same, but also perfect them to perfect others as well—1 Cor. 4:15-17; 1 Thes. 1:6-9.

II. For this, we must first gain a group of people and produce some participants out of them; then, out of these participants, we must produce some to be entrusted with our work—Matt. 10:1; 2 Tim. 2:2:

- A. This kind of perfecting can only be done with one person at a time, so there is no need to work on many persons at once; if in half a year you can turn a person from a spectator into a participant, and from a participant to a trustee, then you have succeeded—Matt. 28:20; Acts 20:20, 31.
- B. Life grows naturally through nurturing, watering, and feeding, but function is developed through exercising and training; without training, people’s function cannot be manifested easily—1 Tim. 4:7-10, 15; Heb. 5:14:
 - 1. Spiritual matters are not theories and must be subjectively experienced, like teaching people to swim. Merely teaching the theories of swimming is useless; the most important thing is to jump into the water and swim—2 Cor. 3:6.

2. Whether we are caring for a campus work, the full-time training, or a church service, we all must help people experience what we have experienced and practice what we do; as they practice, they will be perfected—2 Tim. 3:10-11, 14.

III. Real perfecting is carried out by our being a pattern—1 Cor. 4:16; Phil. 3:17; 2 Tim. 10-11:

- A. In the matter of practice, we need coaches much more than teachers; it is sufficient for a teacher to teach in the classroom, but a coach must also go to the field to help people practice step by step—2 Tim. 3:10-11.
- B. The Lord Jesus' disciples followed Him for three and a half years and were perfected through His pattern, so the Bible mentions the matter of imitating many times—1 Cor. 11:1; 1 Thes. 1:6-7.
- C. Today in practicing the God-ordained way, we must be patterns in order to lead others into the same thing and perfect them practically—1 Cor. 4:16; Phil. 3:17; 2 Tim. 3:10-11, 14; 2 Thes. 3:9.

IV. As helpers, we need to fill out the exercise record to bring in the proper fellowship within the group—1 Tim. 4:7-10, 15; 2 Tim. 2:5; Acts 2:46; Rom. 16:

- A. We need to have face-to-face contact with the new ones several times a week to build up a one-on-one relationship with them and help them enter into the exercise—Acts 20:17-38.
- B. Filling out the exercise record is an important part of the training as well as an exercise of the spiritual life; without filling out the record, there would be no way to account for actual exercise, and the training would also lose its meaning and effect—1 Tim. 4:7-10, 15; 2 Tim. 2:5.
- C. Filling out the exercise record is not just for numbers but also for building up the proper fellowship within the group—Acts 2:46; Rom. 16:
 1. Many think that to be a good reminder is just to collect all the statistics; actually, the corporate God-man living does not depend on statistics, but on the proper fellowship and relationship within the group—Rom. 16.
 2. Human relationships grow out of a normal environment, like a flower which can only blossom in a proper environment with sunshine, air, and soil—1 Tim. 2:2; Acts 9:31.
 3. The purpose of filling out the exercise record is thus to create a proper environment in which the relationship between us and the new ones can be nurtured—1 Thes. 2:17.

V. The spreading of life needs a certain amount of time and labor; if you do not till the ground, sow the seed, water, and add fertilizer, the seeds may not grow well; thus, there is the need of proper, adequate labor with a sufficient amount of patience—1 Cor. 3:6, 9; 2 Tim. 2:6; Rom. 15:16; Col. 1:28-29; Rev. 1:9:

- A. Perfecting people needs time, so we should not expect to do a quick work with instant results—1 Thes. 1:3; 2 Cor. 6:4.
- B. The way to perfect people is not through methods but patterns. We must first gain a group to be perfected, and once they become patterns, they may influence others; only then can there be spreading and multiplication—2 Tim. 2:1-2.
- C. Paul, in Colossians 1:29, uses the word “struggling” to describe our labor in the gospel; we in the Lord's recovery should be laborers and struggling ones—Col. 1:28-29; Rev. 1:9.