

**Labor Day Weekend Conference
Denver, Colorado
September 3–5, 2005**

**GENERAL SUBJECT:
CRUCIAL FELLOWSHIP CONCERNING
THE PRACTICE OF THE GOD-ORDAINED WAY**

Message One

An Overall View of the God-ordained Way

Scripture Reading: Acts 5:42; 2:42; Matt. 28:19; 1 Thes. 2:7; Eph. 4:11–12;
1 Cor. 14:31

- I. The God-ordained way is the way to practice God’s New Testament economy—1 Tim. 1:4b; Col. 1:25; John 15:16:**
 - A. For us to practice the New Testament economy, we need to see the divine economy; this economy is clearly revealed in the holy Word—1 Tim. 1:4; Eph. 1:10; 3:9; Col. 1:25; 1 Cor. 9:17.
 - B. Our going out to visit people by knocking on their doors is for this economy and should be linked with the divine economy—John 15:5, 16; Luke 10:3–6.
 - C. God’s eternal economy involves and includes millions of sons of peace; these sons of peace need us to go to visit them in their homes—Eph. 3:6–11.
- II. The success of the new way depends upon bringing the church into our homes and bringing all the saints into the truth—Acts 5:42, 2:42:**
 - A. The early churches met in the homes of the saints; if we take this organic way, whatever we do will be organic and not organizational—Rom. 16:3, 5a.
 - B. To bring the meetings into the homes is the very heart of the God-ordained Way—Acts 5:42:
 1. Thus, we hope every family would take the initiative to participate in this move.
 2. This should include the homes of the new believers and even of the gospel friends.
 - C. To bring all the saints into the truth—once each new one is saved, he can pursue the truth; as a result, the Lord’s church will have a firm foundation and be built up in the truth—1 Tim 2:4.
- III. The four steps of the God-ordained way are begetting, nourishing, perfecting, and building up—Eph. 3:8–11; 1 Thes. 2:7; Eph. 4:12; 1 Cor. 14:26:**
 - A. To beget is to gain people by going to contact them:
 1. We need to beget others, to bear fruit, by preaching the gospel for the organic building up of the Body of Christ—Eph. 3:8–11.
 2. We must go and disciple all the nations—Matt. 28:19.
 - B. To nourish is to care for others in the home meetings:
 1. As mothers we must cherish the new believers—1 Thes. 2:7.
 2. Newborn babies need special care.

- C. To perfect is to instruct and equip in the small group meetings—Heb. 10:24–25:
 - 1. In the small group meetings, the believers have mutual fellowship, prayer, care, and shepherding; they teach and instruct one another, learn the truth together, and pursue the growth in the spiritual life to promote the various services in the church life, such as preaching the gospel, taking care of the new ones, and leading the small groups.
 - 2. The small group meeting is the major part of the church life and the church services—Acts 2:42.
- D. To build up is to prophesy in the church meetings—1 Cor. 14:31:
 - 1. Prophesying is to speak for God and to speak forth God, supplying Christ to others.
 - 2. To speak words for building up, encouragement, and consolation is for the building up of the church—1 Cor. 14:3–5.

IV. The living of the new way is—Lam. 3:22-23; 2 Cor. 4:16:

- A. To be revived every morning—Lam. 3:22-23:
 - 1. The first step in the exercise of the spirit is to call upon the name of the Lord.
 - 2. The second step in the exercise of the spirit is to pray-read the Lord's word.
- B. To be renewed every day—2 Cor. 4:16.

V. The life-pulse of the practice of new way is the homes—Acts 2:46:

- A. In the age of the apostles, the churches were built up in the saints' homes—Rom. 16:5 and note 1.
- B. The mouthpiece of the gospel is man, and the outlet of the gospel is the homes—Acts 2:46, 5:42.
- C. We not only need to preach the gospel but also need to open our homes to give a great reception for Jesus to preach the gospel—Acts 10:1-5; Luke 5:27-29.
- D. In this way blessing will come to us even unto generations after generations—Exo. 20:6.

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Message Two

The Vital Groups (1)—The Burden and the Vitality

Scripture Reading: John 15:5; Rom. 8:4; John 4:14; John 21:15; 2 Tim. 2:2;
Rev. 14:4b–5

I. The burden of the vital groups—John 15:5; Rom. 8:4; John 4:14:

- A. A vital group is a group of normal Christians who will bring the recovery into another age.
- B. The main extract of messages on vital groups from 1992 to 1993:
 - 1. Abiding in the Lord—John 15:5.
 - 2. Walking according to the spirit—Rom 8:4.
 - 3. Flowing rivers of living water—John 4:14.
- C. Rising up to pick up the way to be vital.

II. The vital groups being the life-line of the God-ordained way—Acts 2:46–47:

- A. Our present situation being very desperate.
- B. The group meetings should constitute eighty percent of the church life.
- C. The spreading which the Lord wants being in the homes—Acts 2:46–47.

III. Our attitude for the vital groups—Acts 20:31–35:

- A. Only through labor will we know how to practice the vital groups—James 5:7.
- B. Our failure being that we did not labor:
 - 1. If we do not labor persistently, we will not have a proper result.
 - 2. The way of the labor being to labor by all means and at any cost—1 Cor. 15:10.
 - 3. Our labor should be a labor of love—1 Thes. 1:3.
 - 4. Our labor in the Lord will never be in vain—1 Cor. 15:58.
- C. We must be desperate—Acts 18:5; 2 Cor. 5:14:
 - 1. The furtherance of the vital groups unto the increase should be a matter of life or death with us.
 - 2. We should be desperate for the Lord's interest on the earth today; this is our destiny—Acts 20:20, 31.
- D. We should not have any excuse for ourselves, but we should have a positive, fearless, and laboring spirit to accomplish the Lord's commitment to us—Acts 20:24; Col. 1:28–29.

IV. The obligation of the vital groups—shepherding and teaching—Luke 15:4–7, 24:44–49:

- A. The Gospels unveil the shepherding and teaching of Christ in His ministry for the fulfillment of God's eternal economy:
 - 1. Shepherding outwardly—Luke 15:4–7; John 10:9, 11, 16.
 - 2. Comforting inwardly—John 14:16–17, 20.
 - 3. Teaching to strengthen the shepherding and to carry out its goal—Matt. 5:7, 13, 24–25; John 1–7, 14–17.
- B. The essential functions of the gifted persons in the Epistles being to shepherd and to teach—John 21:15–17; 1 Cor. 4:17b; Acts 20:28.

- C. The shepherding and teaching in the eldership:
 - 1. The obligations of the elders in the church are:
 - a. Shepherding as Christ did and as the gifted persons do—John 21:15–17; 1 Pet. 5:2–3.
 - b. Teaching to strengthen the shepherding and to carry out its goal according to what Christ taught in the four Gospels and what the gifted persons taught in the Epistles—1 Tim. 3:2b, 5:17b; Acts 20:27–28.
 - 2. The elders shepherding the churches by taking the lead should not lord it over them but should become patterns of God’s flock—1 Tim. 5:17; 1 Pet. 5:2–3.
- V. To be vitalized—Rev 2:4–5; 1 John 1:9; Rev. 1:2–3:**
- A. In order to be vital, we first must have a thorough fellowship with the Lord.
 - B. To be stirred up in the first love for the Lord through repenting prayers—Rev. 2:4, 5; 2 Cor. 5:14–15.
 - C. To make a thorough confession to the Lord—1 John 1:9, 3:2–3.
 - D. To have close, intimate, and thorough fellowship with the Lord and with the seeking saints—1 John 3:23–24.
 - E. To reconsecrate yourself to the Lord:
 - 1. In presenting your body as a living sacrifice—Rom. 12:1.
 - 2. In being transformed by the renewing of the mind from being fashioned according to this age—Rom.12:2.
 - 3. In not being slothful in zeal, but burning in spirit to serve the Lord—Rom. 12:11.
 - F. To be the overcomers in the church life:
 - 1. In the age of the overcomers according to the Lord’s calling—Rev. 1:2–3.
 - 2. As today’s Zion in today’s Jerusalem (the church life)—Rev. 14:1–5:
 - a. The high peak, the center, the uplifting, the strengthening, the enriching, and the reality of the church, the holy city.
 - b. To consummate the holy city (the church) and to bring in the consummated New Jerusalem in eternity.
- VI. The vital groups should be composed of people who are overcomers, those who are vital—living and active—Rev 3:1–2, 15–16; 14:4b, 5:**
- A. To be vital is to be living:
 - 1. This is versus the deadness of Sardis—Rev. 3:1–2.
 - 2. Only one thing today can make us living, and that is prayer; we must pray unceasingly.
 - B. To be vital is to be active—to have the dynamic activities:
 - 1. This is versus the lukewarmness of Laodicea—Rev. 3:15–16.
 - 2. We need to pray for our dynamic activities, for our function in the vital group.
 - 3. A vital group being living and full of activities.

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Message Three

The Vital Groups (2)—The Start and the Practice

Scripture Reading: S.S. 1:2-4; Rom. 15:16; John 15:16; Acts 2:47; 1 Cor. 12:24

I. The start of the vital groups—S.S. 1:2–4; John 15:2–5:

- A. The vital groups cannot be formed by organization.
- B. A vital group can come into being only by a saint who is desperate and absolute for the increase of the Lord's recovery.
- C. Such a desperate saint would spontaneously contact others by the Lord's leading and gain some companion or companions for him to have a vital group.
- D. They should definitely and absolutely fulfill the first four basic requirements:
 - 1. Intimate and thorough fellowship that they may be blended together.
 - 2. Thorough confession of sins, transgressions, defects, wrongdoings, etc.
 - 3. Thorough consecration of themselves and of all that they have and do to the Lord.
 - 4. Praying unceasingly that they may be brought into the infilling and the outpouring of the essential and economical Spirit.
- E. They should pick up the burden and take action to contact others, either sinners or Christians:
 - 1. Always taking care of two or three persons.
 - 2. Not expecting to have a quick result, but setting a definite goal with a strong determination to gain at least one remaining fruit yearly.
 - 3. With inexhaustible patience, unceasing intercession, and continuous labor.

II. The practice of the vital groups—Rom. 15:16; 1 Thes. 2:7; John 21:15–17:

- A. To be a laboring priest of the gospel of God—Rom.15:16:
 - 1. Before we go out to visit people with the gospel, we should have a time with the Lord.
 - 2. After such prayer, we should go and labor with our companions.
 - 3. We should give at least three hours a week to the Lord to announce Christ to people.
 - 4. We should feed them, nourish them, and cherish them constantly week after week.
 - 5. We have to do it constantly, patiently, and faithfully.
- B. Learning to cherish people in the humanity of Jesus—Luke 1:18–19; 1 Thes 2:7:
 - 1. The first matter for a vital group is to contact people.
 - 2. To cherish is to make people happy, comfortable, pleasant, and at ease in contacting you in everything and in every aspect; just as Jesus did—Eph. 5:29.

- C. Learning to nourish people in the divinity of Christ—v.29; John 21:15–17:
 - 1. To nourish is to supply the all-inclusive Christ in the three stages of His full ministry.
 - 2. Nourishing others not only by speaking to them but also by propagating the ministry books.

III. The increase of the vital groups—Acts 2:47:

- A. The purpose of a vital group is for the increase, perfecting, and building up of the church—John 15:16; Acts 2:46–47; Eph. 4:12.
- B. When the number of a vital group increases to ten or more, you should split into two groups; and teach every group to practice vitalization.
- C. The vital groups can live a normal church life, overcome the degradation of the church, constitute the Body of Christ, and consummate the New Jerusalem—Eph. 4:12–13, 16.

IV. The vital groups and the blending of the Body—1 Cor. 12:24:

- A. Clustering stirring up the neighboring churches in mutual love, mutual care mutual intercession, and mutual shepherding—Rom. 16; 1 Cor. 16:19–21; 2 Cor. 8:1–4; Rom. 15:25–27.
- B. To reach the highest peak of the reality of the Body of Christ through the blending—John 17:21–23; Eph. 1:22–23; Rev. 1:20.

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Message Four

The Life-Pulse of the Practice of the God-ordained Way—the Homes

Scripture Reading: Acts 2:46; Matt. 18:20; 1 Cor. 16:19; Acts 5:42; Heb. 10:24–25;
Matt. 18:19

I. Meeting in homes is fitting to God's New Testament economy in the New Testament—Acts 2:46; Matt. 18:20:

- A. “And day by day, continuing steadfastly with one accord in the temple and breaking bread from house to house, they partook of their food with exultation and simplicity of heart”—Acts 2:46 and note 3:
 - 1. From house to house or, at home; in contrast to in the temple—Acts 5:42.
 - 2. Meeting in homes as the Christian way of meeting together is fitting to God's New Testament economy.
 - 3. This way differs from the Judaic way of meeting in the synagogues (6:9).
 - 4. It became a continual and general practice in the churches (cf. Rom. 16:5; 1 Cor. 16:19; Col. 4:15; Philem. 2).
- B. “For where there are two or three gathered into My name, there am I in their midst”—Matt. 18:20 and note 2:
 - 1. Such a gathering of a few people, of two or three, implies one of the ways for the church to meet locally.
 - 2. Such meetings of a few people must have been held in the believers' homes, as mentioned in Acts 2:46 and 5:42, for the purpose of prayer (v. 19; Acts 12:5, 12), fellowship, the breaking of bread, teaching, or the preaching of the gospel (Acts 2:42; 5:42).
- C. The church in the homes:
 - 1. “The churches of Asia greet you. Aquila and Prisca greet you much in the Lord, with the church, which is in their house”—1 Cor. 16:19.
 - 2. “And greet. the church, which is in their house. Greet Epaenetus, my beloved, who is the firstfruits of Asia unto Christ”—Rom. 16:5.
 - 3. “Greet the brothers in Laodicea, as well as Nymphas and the church, which is in his house”—Col. 4:15.
 - 4. “And to Apphia the sister and to Archippus our fellow soldier and to the church, which is in your house”—Philem.2.

II. The unique way for the increase and the building up of the church—Acts 2:46-47; Rom. 16:5.

- A. In the early days of the church life, the apostles built up the church very quickly, and the way of building was the small groups and home meetings—Acts 9:31.
- B. The home meetings are the top way, the super way, and eventually the unique way to meet Rom 16:5 and note 1.
- C. At the very beginning the way created by the Holy Spirit and ordained by God was to meet in two ways, in the congregational way and in the home way.
- D. The home meetings are the unique way for the increase and building up of the church.

III. The importance of meeting in homes—Heb. 10:24–25.

- A. To build up the home meetings in every believer's home was a brand new thing, a creative act of God, and something that He ordained.
- B. Every home can be opened to become a place for meeting.
- C. Once the church is built up in the homes, the homes will be transformed.
- D. Once we build up the church in the believers' homes, we will be able to spread the gospel through the homes.
- E. Affording opportunities for each member to function in the meetings—Heb.10:24–25.
- F. Promoting and developing the organic gifts of each member of the Body of Christ—Rom 12.5–8, 1 Pet. 4:10.

IV. The function of the home meetings—Acts 2:46–47, 42.

- A. Prayer (Matt. 18:19; Acts 2:42; 12:5, 12), fellowship (2:42), breaking of bread for the remembrance of the Lord (2:46), teaching (the truth), or gospel preaching (2:42; 5:42; cf. 2:42 note 1).
- B. The six commissions of the home meetings:
 - 1. Changing our concept.
 - 2. Striving to recover those who have not been meeting for a long time.
 - 3. Preaching the gospel widely.
 - 4. Keeping people coming to the meetings.
 - 5. Strengthening the riches (content) of the home meetings.
 - 6. Reaching God's highest goal for the church—gain a living Body to express Him on earth.
- C. The home meetings being the touchstone of the building of the church.
- D. Opening the homes in four directions simultaneously.

V. The Christian way of meeting—Acts 20:20.

- A. We need the big meetings and the small meetings as well.
- B. Not despising the big meetings, but matching the big meetings with the small groups.
- C. We must labor to bring the new ones into the larger meetings of the church and help them to know the church as the Body of Christ.

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Message Five

The Need of Full-timers

Scripture Reading: Rom. 12:1; Matt. 24:14; 2 Cor. 5:14, 15; 2 Tim. 2:3–4; 3 John 5–8;
Phil. 1:5–6

- I. Needing full-timers for the spreading of the Lord's recovery—Rom. 12:1; Matt. 24:14:**
 - A. The Lord's recovery being in need of more full-time workers—Rom. 12:1.
 - B. The full-time trainees being trained to be such a strong army for the Lord—2 Tim. 2:3–4.
 - C. Endeavoring to have out of every twenty saints meeting in the Lord's recovery there should be one full-time serving one.
 - D. Training the young saints.
 - E. Working for the preaching of the gospel on the college campuses requiring full-time laborers.

- II. The real meaning of being full-timers—2 Cor. 5:14–15:**
 - A. Presenting our bodies a living sacrifice—Rom. 12:1.
 - B. The real meaning of full-timers being to live to the Lord—Rom. 14:7–9; Gal. 2:19b–20.
 - C. Being the faithful servants to spread the truths and to serve food to the Lord's people at the appointed time —Matt. 24:45:
 1. As job-dropping full-timers
 2. As money-making full-timers
 - D. Being a pattern and not replacing the saints—Eph. 4:12.

- III. The perfecting of full-timers—2 Tim. 3:14, 17; Phil. 4:8–9:**
 - A. Becoming very knowledgeable of the truths—1 Tim. 2:4; John 8:32; Eph. 6:14.
 - B. Growing absolutely in the divine life—Eph. 4:13; Col. 1:28.
 - C. Being built up in their character—2 Tim. 3:10.
 - D. Being trained in how to present the truths—2:15.

- IV. The supply of full-timers:**
 - A. What our God demands He will supply.
 - B. Following the Lord and trusting in Him for our living—Luke 8:2–3.

- V. The fellowship unto the furtherance of the gospel—Phil. 1:5-6; 3 John 5–8:**
 - A. The practical way to support the job-dropping full-timers—Phil. 4:15–16, 18:
 1. Besides the saints regular giving to the Lord through the church, they should practice the giving of an additional five percent of their income every month for “fellowship unto the gospel”—Phil. 1:5-6; 1 Tim. 6:17–19.
 2. Every church must participate in a “fellowship unto the gospel” account.
 - B. Supporting the full-time elders—5:17.

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A Special Word on Campus Work

Scripture Reading: John 15:16a, 2; Matt. 4:19; 1 Cor. 9:26-27; Eccl. 4:12; Luke 6:38

- I. The Lord's charge is to go and bear fruit—John 15:16a, 2:**
 - A. The Lord having chosen us to go forth and bear fruit—John 15:16a.
 - B. Realizing our solemn responsibility to go forth and bear fruit—John 15:2a, 6.
 - C. Being serious and desperate to go forth and bear fruit—Rom. 15:16; 1 Cor. 9:2, 27
 - D. The need of the God-ordained way for fruit bearing—Matt. 28:18–19; John 3:29–30; 12:24.
- II. The best “fishing ponds” for the Lord's recovery are the college campuses—Matt. 4:19; Acts 19:9–10:**
 - A. The Lord's recovery today needs to produce a large number of people—Gen. 1:28a; Matt. 28:19a; Acts 5:14; 6:7.
 - B. We must preach the gospel on the college campuses to gain the thoughtful people—Acts 22:3; Gal. 1:14; Phil. 3:5.
 - C. People need to hear the higher preaching of such a full gospel—Phil. 3:8; Eph. 2:8.
 - D. The first preference of the graduates of the full-time training in Anaheim should be the United States college campuses.
 - E. In spreading the Lord's recovery to other countries, we must go to the leading cities which have colleges and universities to contact the students.
- III. In our gospel work we must place special emphasis on the high school and college students—1 Tim 4:12:**
 - A. We must take specific practical steps for the spreading of the gospel:
 1. Open our homes for the preaching of the gospel.
 2. Preach the gospel on the campuses.
 3. Preach the gospel to the children.
 4. Preach the gospel to people of all levels of society.
 - B. We must see the preciousness of the young people and their importance in God's hands—Acts 7:58b; 9:20; 1 Tim. 4:12.
 - C. There are three reasons why we must go to the young people:
 1. They are unoccupied—Matt. 20:6-7.
 2. They are gathered in the schools—John 21:6.
 3. It is easy for them to have a change in their mind—Acts 9:1, 20.
 - D. As we gain the students we will also gain their families—Acts 16:31.
 - E. Some of the co-workers and elders should focus on the college campuses.
- IV. The way of laboring on the college campuses—1 Cor. 9:26–27; Eccl. 4:12; Luke 6:38:**
 - A. The need of our students.
 - B. The need of full-timers—Rom. 12:1; Acts 19:8–10.

- C. The need of the homes (families)—Acts 2:46; 5:42; 10:22–24:
 - 1. Our homes are very useful for the labor on the college campuses:
 - a. On the one hand, the freshmen in college are eager to leave home; on the other hand, as they live in the dormitories at school, they are often lonely and homesick.
 - b. The young people in the church can invite the other young students to the homes of the middle-aged ones and of the young couples.
 - 2. In preaching the gospel we do not need any gimmicks; we should simply pray, preach the word, and open our homes.
- D. The need of consistency in our labor—2 Tim. 2:6.
- E. The need of facilities (houses for the young students) for the work on the campuses.
- F. The need of financial support.

V. By laboring on the college campuses the future of the Lord's recovery is secured—Acts 19:9–10:

- A. The promise, hope, and future of the Lord's recovery are with the college students.
- B. The source of manpower for the Lord's move today is on the college campuses—Acts 19:9–10.

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