

Young Working Saints Outing, Post-Reading

Day 1

Matthew 9:37 Then He said to His disciples, The harvest is great, but the workers few;

THE RESULT OF THE WORK BEING BASED ON THE WORKER

The fellowship from these churches shows that there are a few important points that truly need our attention. First, in all of the brothers' fellowship we should all see the common principle that our work is always based on our person. What we are in our being determines the work that we can do. What we gain in the work does not depend on how much we hope and expect; it depends on what we are in our being.

Please do not be discouraged. We should never be discouraged in our work only because we have not done enough or not done things well. Many things cannot be carried out or done well simply by our endeavoring, nor can they be successfully accomplished by our striving. Rather, what we accomplish is based upon what we are. Hence, even if we have not done so well or done so much, we do not need to be discouraged, because discouragement serves no purpose.

On the other hand, we must devote a great deal of effort to work on ourselves, including the way we conduct ourselves and the way we do things. We need a deep knowledge of the Lord, we need the experiences of life, we need to be skillful in handling matters, and we need to know people in an adequate way. We must devote some effort to learn in all these aspects. For example, a brother, who was full of ambition after finishing the training last year, recently decided to go back to his locality and do better than others. This kind of ambition is not only useless but also should be rejected. Genuine work is not determined by our ambition but by our genuine condition before the Lord. The outcome of our work will be determined by the effort we put into the truth, into prayer, into the pursuit of spiritual life, and into our dealings with every matter. Hence, we must continually pursue to know the Lord, to know life, and to know people.

The young brothers and sisters tend to focus on pursuing the work. However, more than ninety percent of the work, when it is actually carried out, depends upon our diligence to be in the spirit, our conduct in the spirit, our skillfulness in doing things in the spirit, and our learning to know the Lord and know people. This kind of diligence may not seem like it is doing a work, but it truly enables us to do our work properly. If we disregard these things and do not devote any effort to them but, instead, only want to do a work, we will not accomplish anything, and our work will not yield any result. The result of our work is based absolutely on the weight of our work, and the weight of our work is based absolutely on what we are. In other words, God cares more for what we are than for what we do. What we are is more important than what we do.

(Knowing Life and the Church, Chapter 21, "The Result of the Work Being Based on the Worker, pp. 266-268"

Enlightenment and Inspiration:

Day 2

John 6:45 It is written in the prophets, "And they shall all be taught of God." Every one who has heard and learned from the Father comes to Me.

MAKING A REAL EFFORT BEFORE THE LORD— WORKING WITH ALL-OUT EFFORT

The young brothers and sisters must devote a great deal of effort before the Lord. In our living and in our conduct, we do not need to have lofty ambitions, expecting to do some great work. If this is what we care for, we should be prepared to wake up to an empty dream. We do not need to be ambitious in the work, nor do we need to determine anything. Instead, we simply should cultivate what we are in a diligent manner. We should not expect to do so much in Taiwan to accomplish something in the churches nor expect to reach a certain stage in the work among the churches to become the most accomplished and capable worker. All these expectations are futile and should be condemned because they all come from man's natural concept and vain imagination.

Each of us should pray earnestly to the Lord daily, asking Him to enable us to devote our effort to learn how to conduct ourselves, pursue the experience of life, and pursue the knowledge of the truth. We should also ask the Lord to make us skillful in doing things and insightful in knowing people. We must devote more of our effort in these points. As a result, we will produce a work even though we have not done very much. Conversely, if we ignore these points and concentrate all our efforts on working, our work will fail and amount to nothing.

Actually, we need to devote a great amount of effort just on learning how to conduct ourselves. As a fellow brother, I frequently go to the workers' homes. According to my observation, the way co-workers conduct themselves is lacking in many aspects. Forgive me for saying this: they not only lack proficiency in studying the Bible but also are short in the knowledge of the truth. Furthermore, they are poor in the way they conduct themselves. They are not well-trained in knowing and evaluating people and in conducting themselves and doing things. May the Lord be merciful to us so that we could receive this word humbly.

Before I was saved, when I was nine years old, the Lord put me in a situation in which I needed to work in order to sustain my livelihood. While working, I learned some skills concerning how to handle matters, and I also learned how to know people. The Lord can testify for me that a work was produced when I was saved because I had this kind of preparation in my character. In July 1932 I was called to do the Lord's work. At that time I had just turned twenty-seven. Before then, I never had the heart to do some kind of work; I never had such a heart inwardly. By the Lord's mercy, however, I have been fully occupied with the work from the day I was called by the Lord. I have been occupied with an all-out effort in pursuing the truth, in reading the Bible, in studying spiritual matters, and in finding the secret of contacting others. If we do this, we will be equipped practically to know the truth and be well-trained in conducting ourselves and in doing things.

(Knowing Life and the Church, Chapter 21, "The Result of the Work Being Based on the Worker, pp. 268-269 "

Enlightenment and Inspiration:

Day 3

Philippians 4:9 The things which you have also learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things; and the God of peace will be with you.

THE EFFECT OF THE WORK NOT DEPENDING ON HOW MUCH WE DO BUT ON HOW MUCH WE LEARN

We should never put the fruit, the result, of our work as the goal. Only the Lord knows how many people will be saved through us; we do not know. Only the Lord knows how many churches will be helped through us; we do not know. We do not know how many churches will be established through us and how many saints will be edified through us; this is up to the Lord. Moreover, only the Lord knows how much truth and how many messages will be released through us; we do not know. The only thing we know is that we should devote effort to these matters. Our effort should be used mainly for learning, not for working.

The work does not depend on how much effort we exert; rather, it depends on how much we learn. Learning is the real work; the real work of serving the Lord is ninety-five percent learning, and five percent doing. The more we learn, the more effective our work will be. However, we should not estimate the effect; we should let God do the estimating, and God's estimation will be determined at the judgment seat in the future. Our sight should never be set on results but on how we conduct ourselves, deal with God's life, and handle matters. Ultimately, we must pay attention to these points and devote more of our effort to learn them.

I hope that we can look at these two things together. We must be diligent to know the truth, and we must labor to learn to be skillful in the way we conduct ourselves and do things. Giving messages can stir up people's emotions to love the Lord but cannot enable those who have been stirred up to be perfected and useful. In order to perfect them and make them useful, we need to labor before the Lord. After our labor we should spend another year and a half to work; as we work, we should bring the saints with us in order to perfect them, like a bricklayer brings his apprentices along with him for training. We do not need to open a school to teach the saints or have any kind of special training; rather, we can simply be faithful to bring the saints with us. After a year or less of working with us, they will be perfected to become useful ones.

On the one hand, the saints cannot rise up to serve the Lord after only hearing a message and being touched; they still need to pass through the stage of edification. Indeed, we have been lacking in this aspect. On the other hand, we have not been doing a proper perfecting work on some of the saints who have a heart for the Lord. These two aspects reveal our lack, and the main reason for our lack is that we have not learned enough. If we were more positive in these two points, the majority of our problems would pass away.

(Knowing Life and the Church, Chapter 21, "The Result of the Work Being Based on the Worker, pp. 269-271 "

Enlightenment and Inspiration:

Day 4

Proverbs 10:4 A slack hand causes poverty, / But the hand of the diligent makes rich.

THE SECRET TO WORKING FOR THE LORD—BEING EARNEST AND NOT LOOSE

Recently, we planted two small trees at the workers' home. Because of the interior remodeling, we moved the plants again and again. Once the remodeling was completed, we thought of two brothers who majored in agriculture. One of them is the brother who said that he is loose. At that time I said to him, "Concerning the matter of transplanting trees, because you are the agricultural specialist, I will leave it to you." He said that he is loose and accommodating; it is really true. I was very bothered by his looseness and accommodation. I am absolutely a novice in gardening, but when I saw the way he moved the plants, I knew that it would not work. I did not know whether to cry or to laugh.

About this time last year we asked the brothers to move the trees. However, some trees died after being moved; even now the trees are in a state of desolation. Consequently, I thought that it might not be a good time to move the trees this year. Then a brother brought someone from a nearby city who assured me that if I let him move the trees, they would live. Thus, the transplanting began. As I observed him, I learned the secret. The brothers who moved the trees last year uprooted the trees without leaving very much soil attached to the roots. In the end, the transplanting was not very successful, because few trees survived. The person who moved the trees this year not only kept the trees alive but even kept their leaves from falling. The wax apple tree, for example, not only is living, but its leaves are still green. The two loquat trees are not only alive but also exceptionally fruitful.

From this I learned that it is actually not a matter of who is an "expert" but of the transplanting method. The trees transplanted by the "expert" brother withered; however, the trees transplanted by the other man not only are alive but also are bearing significant amounts of fruit. Of course, the discipline of the Holy Spirit also may have played a part in the results.

Whether we succeed in a certain matter does not depend on whether we know how to do it. Rather, it depends on our ability to grasp the secret of doing everything in a practical and thorough way without being loose. I was troubled and bothered inwardly when I saw the looseness and carelessness of the "expert" brother, because he was supposed to be an expert. He should have known the secret of transplanting trees, but because he was not earnest and thorough and did things in an accommodating way, there was no result. The success of every matter does not depend on whether a person knows how to do it; this is secondary. The primary point is that he must be earnest and not loose. This is especially true when we go out to work; we must not be loose. If we are loose, we will not be able to accomplish anything.

(Knowing Life and the Church, Chapter 22, "Needing to be Earnest and Not Loose in Working for the Lord, pp. 280-281"

Enlightenment and Inspiration:

Day 5

Revelation 3:19 As many as I love I reprove and discipline; be zealous therefore and repent.

THE SECRET TO WORKING FOR THE LORD— BEING EARNEST AND NOT LOOSE

The fellowship of the responsible brothers in various places concerning their actual situation shows that their looseness, sloppiness, and accommodation has ruined the Lord's work even though they make an effort and pay a price. I hope that all the young brothers and sisters will learn a serious lesson in this matter.

For example, I once asked a brother to sweep the room. He was very obedient, and he took the broom and began sweeping. If this brother was earnest in doing things, regardless of his skills, he should have started sweeping from the corners. However, he took the broom and swept only the middle part of the room. When I pointed to a corner, he swept the corner; when I pointed to another corner, he swept that corner. How can a person do a good work with this kind of attitude? From just this matter of sweeping, we can see whether or not he knows how to work. In the end, I had to show him how to thoroughly sweep the floor myself. This kind of person cannot work, and even if he does work, it will be useless because he does not know how to start and where to focus his effort. Cleaning the floor is a simple matter. When we clean the floor, for example, we need to consider whether we should use a broom or a mop. If we do not even know how to do a simple task, how can we handle the practical matters of the church and the work when they are placed in our hands?

The fellowship and reports of the various churches show that the problems they have are not the real problem. The greatest problem is that the serving ones do not know how to work. If we know how to work, our financial difficulties will not keep us from being able to “dig” out money when it is needed. Money does not fall down from heaven; it must be “dug” out by the workers. When some brothers go to a certain place to labor, there is no material supply; however, when others go to the same place to labor, there is an abundant supply. This shows that some do not know how to work. We should never believe that the place where we are laboring is short of financial capacity. There is much gold buried in the ground. If we know how to work, we will be able to “dig” out the gold. When we dig away all the problems, gold will appear spontaneously. We must see that our person is the problem. All the problems are related to our being.

(Knowing Life and the Church, Chapter 22, “Needing to be Earnest and Not Loose in Working for the Lord, pp. 282-283”

Enlightenment and Inspiration:
