

WCCC 2024

Brother Godwin Sun

Those who run the heavenly race (1)

Good evening brothers and sisters. We thank the Lord that before He returns, we have this opportunity to gather together to encourage each other with His Word. Let us first begin by reading the Word of God.

"Let us also therefore, having so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, laying aside every weight, and sin which so easily entangles us, run with endurance the race that lies before us, looking stedfastly on Jesus the leader and completer of faith."

Hebrews 12:1-2a DARBY

"Now faith is the substantiating of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. For in the power of this the elders have obtained testimony. By faith we apprehend that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that that which is seen should not take its origin from things which appear."

Hebrews 11:1-3 DARBY

"But without faith it is impossible to please him. For he that draws near to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them who seek him out."

Hebrews 11:6 DARBY

"while we look not at the things that are seen, but at the things that are not seen; for the things that are seen are for a time, but those that are not seen eternal."

2 Corinthians 4:18 DARBY

"Not that I have already obtained the prize, or am already perfected; but I pursue, if also I may get possession of it, seeing that also I have been taken possession of by Christ Jesus. Brethren, I do not count to have got possession myself; but one thing — forgetting the things behind, and stretching out to the things before, I pursue, looking towards the goal, for the prize of the calling on high of God in Christ Jesus."

Philippians 3:12-14 DARBY

Our conference theme is from Hebrews 12:1. To run the race which lies before us. The brothers have entrusted me to share on this point, "Be the ones who run this heavenly way." I believe that these words from the book of Hebrews are an important reminder from the Word of God. Here it encourages us to run. And our brothers have already given us some sharing from these words. Now concerning this word "run" I still have some thoughts on my heart to impress upon brothers and sisters.

Now we know this word "to run" is different from jogging or taking a stroll. If we are walking or jogging, we can look around us. We can converse along the way, or even be nosy. But when one

is running, they are all focused throughout. As you are running you cannot be distracted by the things around you.

Brothers and sisters, this running gives all effort, disregarding everything else. This running is running with urgency. So we can see the Apostle Paul, when he was running, he was one who ran the heavenly way. In Philippians 3, Paul tells us that he is running towards the goal. He tells us that within him is that urgent, fervent thought.

We are living in the last days. We know it is near to the Lord's return. Those who are sensitive and alert in spirit feel the anxiety throughout this age. Very quickly the Lord will complete His work. So the opportunities we are afforded are few. Therefore this word "run" is a great reminder for every one of us. May this not only be our attitude, ambition and determination, but may it be a true desire deep within our spirit. We must rise up before our Lord and run this heavenly way.

In Philippians 3:14, Paul tells us that he runs towards the goal. He has forgotten the things behind and presses on towards the goal to pursue after the Lord. The word in v12, and v14, "running towards" is the same word. In Greek it is this word "*dioko*". The word "*dio*" is the root, which means "to run". It is meaningful that Paul uses such a word.

When one is being pursued by his enemy, he runs for his life. As he is running he is not mindful of anything else but running for his life. This eagerness to run is the same sentiment Paul is using here. That we may run in that way.

In the Old Testament, there is an illustration we can use. I hope to impress this word and this thought of running on each of our hearts. There are many passages in the Old Testament that speak about this. In Habakkuk 3:20,

"Jehovah, the Lord, is my strength, And he maketh my feet like hinds' feet, And he will make me to walk upon my high places. To the chief Musician. On my stringed instruments."

Habakkuk 3:19 DARBY

Why does Habakkuk use such an illustration? Because this doe is pregnant, and as the hunter or predator pursues her, she has to flee eagerly. Not only must she run swiftly, she needs to run with very great stability, so that the foal in her womb will not be harmed. This doe runs with great urgency. She runs for her life, unconcerned with everything else, she runs with all her strength.

"As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God"

Psalms 42:1 DARBY

Many brothers and sisters are familiar with this verse. There is also a backdrop to this. We may think of how the deer is thirsty and panting for water. But there is an additional meaning behind this. The deer is being hunted, perhaps by hounds. She runs swiftly, and in her heart longs after a brook. If she sees the brook, she knows that salvation is at hand. We know that the hounds have a keen sense of smell. The harder the deer runs, the stronger the scent. But once there is a

brook, the deer can pass through it, and the hounds will lose the scent trail, and the deer is safe. So this is the backdrop of how this deer pants after the water. It is a running and fleeing.

In Proverbs it writes about how the deer runs from the hunter. So this root word *dioko* is about running. Paul has used this word also in 2 Timothy, to “flee youthful lusts”. As Christians there are things we ought to flee from. In 1 Timothy, Paul writes to flee from the lust of riches.

When we read the history behind 1 and 2 Timothy, we know that Timothy was already serving as an elder in the church of Ephesus. He was not a young man. According to scholars, Timothy was perhaps in his 40s. Why would Paul tell him to “flee youthful lusts”? This is very meaningful. It tells us that though we are old, our hearts are still filled with youthful lusts.

In Chinese there is a saying that we are old, but our hearts are still young. It is not always a positive saying. In this world, there are many temptations and trials from the enemy. We must flee earnestly from them, so that the temptations will not overtake us. This is an important thing for Christians.

The word *Dioko* is to flee. It emphasizes how earnestly and eagerly we need to flee. I often feel that the actions in heaven are very swift, but our response on earth is so slow. So when the Lord uses this word to remind all of us, we must all rise to run.

Of course this running is not an outward, physical running. This is an attitude, a determination, a deep desire from within. We pray that the Lord, in this generation, will raise for Himself more people like Paul. That we will eagerly run straight and follow earnestly and closely. That we may run in spirit with all our strength. We need an urgent and eager thought within. We do not need to be anxious, but should have an urgency within.

We must run forward on this heavenly way.

As we run, we must run right and run well. If we run wrongly, we would run in vain. This is very important. Hence, in the 11th chapter in Hebrews, the apostle has used many examples in the Old Testament to illustrate to us. All these people, throughout the generations, are people who have run the heavenly way. They have run the right path. Hence, the writer of Hebrews uses all of them to encourage us.

Are we running the right way today? We need only look at the examples before us. These are historical figures. Their lives have ended. They have received the approval and praise of God. They have run correctly and well. Today, brothers and sisters, we are surrounded with such a great cloud of witnesses to encourage us to rise up and run forward. We have so many examples. We thank the Lord.

Paul, in the first century, was a wonderful testimony and example of one who ran the heavenly way. In the book of Philippians, Paul uses the example of his own life to encourage us. In Philippians 3:12,

"Not that I have already obtained the prize, or am already perfected; but I pursue, if also I may get possession of it, seeing that also I have been taken possession of by Christ Jesus."

Philippians 3:12 DARBY

We know that there are two sides to this. In the Chinese translation there is a parenthesis: "that I may gain possession of that which Christ Jesus wants me to possess"; and then "that Christ Jesus may possess that which I have possessed."

So there are two sides. One, that we are encouraged to run for ourselves. The second aspect is that we run for the will of God. The goal and purpose is the same.

As I have 3 messages, I would like to spend the first 2 speaking on

1. That we may receive that which the Lord wants us to possess;
2. That we may be taken possession of by the Lord

Of course the Lord possesses me for His purpose. Lord willing, for the 3rd message, I would like to cover

3. We must be companions to run this heavenly way together

This third message is in 2 Corinthians 12.

May the Lord use our time together to call us in our hearts, so that we may rise up and run well in these urgent times.

Tonight we will look at how we may run this heavenly way for our own life. We thank the Lord that in the book of Hebrews it speaks of those who have run the heavenly way. They are witnesses, using their whole life to show that the way they have run has value. They have used their earthly lives to obtain that which the Lord wants them to obtain.

So brothers and sisters, as we run this heavenly way, the first reminder the Lord gives us is that we ought to run for ourselves. We thank the Lord that He encourages us through these great witnesses. Let us look at the principles and examples of these witnesses.

If you read Hebrews 11, it begins with Abel and continues all the way down the Israelites. Many words are used to describe these individuals. Many who have read the Word in history consider Hebrews 11 as the chapter depicting the heroes of faith. But when we read carefully, we find that these people are very ordinary people. Although they exhibited something different in their life, they are normal people. We know that there are no great men in the eyes of God. We see how great God is - He is the Creator of heaven and earth. In modern science, we see that our earth is but a speck of sand. And that we humans on this earth seem even more insignificant. So before God there are no renowned men. We thank the Lord, that these individuals, by the grace of God, have obtained the purpose of their lives. They have seen great transformations in their lives. The Lord uses such common men to speak to us. Even though their experiences are extraordinary, they are ordinary individuals.

So in Hebrews 13 it tells us that these saints who have come before us ought to be considered, and we ought to imitate their faith, and more importantly, we take note of their end. We should use this attitude to see brothers and sisters who have helped us and gone before us. They are ordinary people. So this is a great encouragement to us.

Brothers and sisters, I dare not comment about you, but I am a common person. I cannot be more ordinary. Some years ago I was invited to share at a congregation. A brother there called me.

"Brother Sun, how shall we introduce you?"

"Just tell them that I am a brother from Seattle."

"This is not very attractive," the brother replied. "Have you gone to any renowned university? Do you know any great men?"

This brother found himself in a difficult position.

Brothers and sisters, we want to be ordinary. We thank the Lord that all these historical figures are all ordinary people. The Bible records their experiences very clearly. Their birth and background show that there is nothing extraordinary about them.

I like these words from the book of James. "Elijah is the same nature as us." We thank the Lord, and will fellowship later how these people have become extraordinary before God. This is because of the grace of God that has transformed them.

We thank the Lord that they are all common people. God does not despise any.

When our Lord came to this world, all who welcomed him were common people. Zechariah, Elizabeth, Simeon, the shepherds. These were the ones who first welcomed the Lord. There were no great men.

Today, the Lord returns, and He will not expect any great reception. But let us common people prepare our hearts to welcome Him. The Bible encourages us throughout. If we saw the brothers who went before us as having great gifts and talents, we would be discouraged and give up.

One time in New York I was in brother Stephen's home. He came out of his room and said, "for us, we could strive our whole lives and still not compare to Paul." If we look at the function and gifts of others, of course we would not compare to them. We know that Paul, before he was saved, was a proud man. He was arrogant. In his epistles he tells us of this. He was a Pharisee of pharisees. He was more accomplished than his peers. In today's terms, he would come in first in every academic exam.

Brothers and sisters, on that day the Lord struck him down with a bright light. So in Ephesians 3 he says, "I am the least among all the saints." Paul never thought of himself as anyone great. He does not consider himself of great ability or talent. He considers it all by the grace of God. He boasts of nothing of himself, but he boasts of only one, the one within him. It is the one established by the grace of God. I hope that we are so encouraged as we read the Word of God.

Brothers and sisters, may the Lord speak to us plainly. That these common men had obtained the purpose of God by the grace of God. I say to you, anyone chosen by God can attain this very

purpose. So let us not focus on this or that individual who has great gifts of talents. Hebrews is a book that encourages us all.

In the book of Hebrews, it is clear that these individuals, who have become who they are, have something in common: faith. It is because of this reason that Abel became Abel, Enoch became Enoch, Noah became Noah, Abraham became Abraham, and Moses became Moses. There is only one reason. By faith.

This faith is worked out differently in each one of us. In Hebrews 11:1 there is the wonderful definition of faith.

"Now faith is the substantiating of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen."
Hebrews 11:1 DARBY

This faith can realize and make into reality the truth of God. Faith is a spiritual seeing. This is very important. Today we all understand that faith is not self-confident or self-delusional. It is not something that is abstract. Faith leads into reality. Faith is spiritual seeing.

Today, amongst us brothers and sisters, many do not like to share upon spiritual seeing. Many are frustrated at this term. We may feel that only apostles like Paul and great saints among us have spiritual vision. "How can we have spiritual seeing?" But brothers and sisters, let me ask you, have you believed in the Lord Jesus? Do you have this faith? If you have this faith, you have this function to be able to see. But because many of us have not pursued it well, our spiritual vision is very shallow and our eyes are dim.

Brothers and sisters, in Mark 8, there is a very good example. Our Lord Jesus was in Bethesda and He encountered one who was blind. The Lord healed him. It was interesting that the Lord spat and applied it to the man's eyes. The man began to see. He first saw men like trees walking. That too is a type of seeing. The Lord put His hand upon the man's eyes, and then the man could see clearly.

Today we may have this first seeing. It is dim and not very clear. A brother put it very well, that you have sight, but maybe not. But neither are you correct if you say that you don't see at all. If we do not pursue it well, spiritual things are dim and not clear to us. We need the Lord to touch us a second time. May the Lord use our time together to touch our eyes, that His Word is like eye salve that causes us to see.

I have sighed many times before the Lord. We have had this West Coast Christian Conference for 38 years. In the past, many elderly saints have given us many words of enlightenment. Each time we gather, they sharpen our vision. We thank the Lord that throughout these 38 years, many brothers and sisters have had their eyes made clear, and are able to understand the will of God. I am sure we can all say that the will of God is Christ. This is a great improvement from the past.

But there is also some regret that some have been washed for 38 years and still do not see. May the mercy of the Lord come upon us this time. May the faith that the Lord gives us bear fruit, that our eyes will be completely opened and we can completely see. Let us pray well, brothers and sisters. Let us not take lightly this opportunity.

Lord, we plead that you may give us this eye salve, so that you may open our eyes before we leave this conference and we will be blessed.

All those whose lives are changed were changed by faith, through spiritual seeing. In 2 Corinthians, Paul tells us that this spiritual seeing sees that which is unseen. These individuals, at some point in their lives, had their eyes opened by the Lord, and they were then able to see what physical eyes could not see. Brothers and sisters, this is of utmost importance. Our physical eyes see that which is physical, but our spiritual eyes show us that which is unseen and invisible.

Hebrews 11:3 is very clear.

"By faith we apprehend that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that that which is seen should not take its origin from things which appear."
Hebrews 11:3 DARBY

When these words were shared 2,000 years ago, with the exception of those who were spiritual sensitive, no one could understand this. Even modern day scientists can prove these words. We know that all things are made by atoms are physical and temporal. From this physical world, we can glimpse into eternity. The spiritual eyes the Lord gives us enables us to look into eternity. So brothers and sisters, we need the Lord to open our eyes, that we may see that which is invisible.

Truth be told, we are saved by grace, so the Lord has already given us a taste of this seeing. We know that we are different from those in the world. We are different from who we were before we believed in the Lord. But if we merely have the sight we received when we first believed in Him, it is not enough. We need a clear vision of that which is eternal. We see these individuals in Hebrews 11. Eternity is not something abstract to them. The Lord not only showed them - Faith gave them a conviction that what they saw spiritual is the true reality. Today all that they saw physically would pass away.

Brothers and sisters, when our eyes are not clear, we pursue after the visible world we can see. But it was different for these individuals. They lived in a visible world, but were directed by the invisible world. Brothers and sisters, who directs us today? Are we directed by the things around us, or by the things that are unseen? Therefore they ran a path that is different from this world. Those of this world only run on this earthly way. This earthly way includes riches and fame. We know the pull this material world has upon us. This includes knowledge and understanding of religious things.

How did these individuals run a different way? Because their minds were opened, and they were able to see the things others could not see. Their lives were transformed. Like Cain and Abel, for example. How did Abel come to understand the importance of shepherding and offering of sheep in sacrifice? We know from reading our Bibles that there is no commercial value of raising sheep. No one ate meat at that time. Why would he be shepherding sheep? People would consider that a waste of time. Abel tended to sheep in order to sacrifice sheep.

Cain tended to the ground. He was diligent at it, and bore great fruit. He brought forth great produce. This was meaningful to the world at that time. What is the difference? It is by faith

Abel's eyes were opened. Today we realize how important it is to follow the Lamb. We know our Lord is the Lamb that was slain.

So these individuals lived in a visible world, yet were directed by an invisible world. Today we need only look at the lives of Christians and our service. Who directs our lives and service? Is it the outward things or something unseen and behind that urges us on?

This is important, brothers and sisters, as we read the stories of these individuals, we realize how there are conflicts and challenges in their lives. These are conflicts between heaven and earth. In fact, if we are sensitive enough, we will realize that we go through the same conflict. They have conflicts within, and live a life that others cannot understand. Sometimes even within the church there are brethren who run the heavenly way and are misunderstood by brothers and sisters. This is because they have seen and hold fast to the leading of the Lord. They are unwavering and run straight to the end. They are willing to follow the Lord at great cost. Outwardly, the cost they pay is great, even unto martyrdom. Yet they are wholeheartedly willing, because they are after that which is unseen.

Today the church on earth is largely directed by the things which are seen. Not many Christians are being directed by the invisible. We know the things that are visible are temporal and will pass away. No matter the great work you accomplish on this earth.

Many brothers and sisters protect their own congregation. They protect their sheep. If a sheep goes to another congregation, they consider it as someone else stealing their sheep and they get upset. Brothers and sisters, think about this: which sheep belong to us? We see the great work we do throughout our lives, and one day we pass on. We are also the sheep that belong to the Lord, so there is nothing we can boast of in this world. Of course we give thanks to the Lord that He measures gifts to each one, and that we are able to fulfill our function. If the Lord did not give us that measure of grace, we need not be sorrowful. By faith before the Lord, He opens our eyes and we live according to His guidance. This is enough.

Brothers and sisters, in my many years serving the Lord, I can testify that I have received great comfort and joy in my spirit. We sometimes compare ourselves with others, even in service to the Lord. And when we find ourselves better than others we become proud. When others do better than us, we feel ashamed. When we serve the Lord this way, we lack spiritual seeing. As Christians we have already been bestowed with great grace. We need neither feel great pride or self-pity. Let us look at how we follow the Lord in our lives. May we imitate these individuals in how they followed the Lord's guidance and held fast to what the Lord has entrusted unto them.

We know that if the Lord did not come in the flesh into this world, it would have been meaningless for those in the old covenant. But because the Lord came in the flesh, He made all their experiences meaningful. So all our meaning and value is upon our Lord Himself. When we have the Lord, the Old Testament has its meaning. And after the Old Testament, there is value for all of those who are in Christ. When our Lord became flesh and brought heaven to earth, He opened this new heavenly way to us. Our hearts are filled with thanksgiving to our Lord, that in the days He was in the flesh, He was the pioneer who opened this heavenly way. So the author of Hebrews calls us to look unto Jesus. All the lives of the saints in the Old Testament looked unto Jesus.

This afternoon our brother shared about Abraham. In his days on earth, Abraham was looking unto Jesus. So he has so many experiences in his life. Thank the Lord that the author of Hebrews wrote that Jesus is the author, leader, completer and perfecter of our faith. He is the One who initiated it, and therefore He can give us this faith. He can open our eyes. He is not only the initiator, He is the completer who is able to preserve and keep our faith to the end.

So brothers and sisters, we need to look unto Jesus. This is an important reminder that the Lord gives us. We thank the Lord that He has already given us faith, and placed it in us from the time we are saved. It is then the heavenly way has begun. If the Lord did not come in the flesh, we would not know about anything of heaven. Because He came to this world, He brought heaven on earth and opened up this heavenly way.

We thank the Lord that throughout 2,000 years of church history, this way has attracted multitudes of saints, many of whom have followed the Lord at the cost of their own lives. So when we think of the brethren before us, and how they have gone through many difficulties and trials, yet continued to run diligently on this heavenly way. They have gained that which they have been made worthy of.

Today, let us run for our own sake. The Lord has created us and given us life. He has chosen and redeemed us. We cannot allow the grace of the Lord to be wasted on us. At the very least we ought to have this sentiment that our lives ought to stand up to our own self-examination. We should not run aimlessly. We must run correctly. We must run under His light so that there is value and meaning in this life.

We see the saints before us and how they forsook all and followed the Lord. Their eyes were opened and they saw the glory of another world. They despised the gains and losses of this world. As Hebrews tells us, they have put aside the sin that easily entangles us, and run the race set before them.

We are in the last days. Many years ago, I had this feeling deep within that this generation is already at the gate of heaven. It is only a few more steps and we are in. May the Lord open our eyes. If we are still blind and do not see, we will lose much blessing. May the Lord lead and guide us, that He may not allow our lives and service to go astray, that we may not lose our reward.

This is an urgent time. Even though we are weak, may our ambition and determination be perfect before our Lord. Just like Simeon, who has desired all his life to see the consolation of Israel. When the Lord's earthly parents brought the little child into the temple, we saw what joy Simeon had as he held the baby Jesus. He proclaimed, "Lord, now you can take your servant peacefully."

I am so moved every time I read that scene. Simeon could have done many other things with his life, but he had only this one longing. Just as Paul said, "there is only one thing". There are so many things Paul had to do, so many churches and matters to tend to. So many companions and matters of finance, even matters of marriage. There is so much on Paul's plate, but all things he did, he did for this one thing.

May the Lord open our eyes so that we will hold fast to the opportunity that is at hand. May we strive diligently and pursue forward, lest on that day we are left behind as others enter in. What great agony! There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

There is this opportunity before us. May we not forsake it. We must pray that the Lord touch our eyes once again with His hand, that we may truly see. That our lives may be transformed, and we press on towards the goal. We are not willing to lose the blessing on that day.

Brothers and sisters, we see all the commotion in the world today. Everyone is arguing, even in the church. What is the point of arguing over who is right and who is wrong? If in the end, one enters the kingdom of heaven and one doesn't, there is only shame for the one left behind. Let us be determined only to run forward and onward.

We know on the day we are saved He placed this life within us. There is an inerrant nature in this life. The nature of this life is heavenward. We know that this life within us creates a dissatisfaction with this earthly life. Some live in this heavenly life and do not pursue and bow to the things of this earth. They reject the trials and temptations of the enemy.

Today we must live under this heavenly life, that we look heavenward. In our lives there is a purpose and goal that seeks after the goal of God. This is the life of the Lord that directs us towards the right direction. When we live and abide in this life, we are naturally inclined towards this way. We must allow for this life to reach full maturity. The more mature we are, the more consecrated and separated we are from this world. We no longer have an interest in this world.

Today in Christendom today, in this religious world, it is filled with earthly things. There are so many things that tempt us. When we live in the life that God places within us, it is naturally a consecrated life. We must live and abide in this life. Today when you are saved, this life abides in each one of us. This is the grace bestowed upon us, and the foundation that enables us to run this heavenly way.

Brothers and sisters, when we run this heavenly way today, we must have the true meaning of our life. We have to be accountable for our future and our end. Paul tells us that we must obtain that which the Lord has obtained us for. This grace belongs to each one of us.

I remember when I was saved by grace and came to serve the Lord. I put aside my earthly vocation and my earthly future. I laid down my earthly career and ambition and came to serve the Lord. I had this feeling for myself and told the Lord, "Lord, let me obtain that which you mean for me to obtain. In the days ahead while I serve you, if I do not obtain that which you desire for me to obtain, I would have spent my life in vain."

Today I see many Christians who are being irresponsible with their own lives. We pursue our own self lusts and chase after things that satisfy the flesh. We are not mindful of the Spirit at all. If so, we would have wasted our lives. But we thank the Lord, that even if we have wasted much of our lives, the Lord gives us an opportunity today. He loves us and still speaks to our hearts.

May today be the day of our deliverance. Once again, may He provoke us and make straight and smooth our paths ahead. May we run well after Him. That we may be responsible for our own

lives and our future and our end. Lest on that day we lose the grace that we ought to have received. This is our responsibility. We cannot blame anyone else. The Lord has given us opportunity, but we did not grasp it.

Paul, from the time he was saved, knew the importance of this. You see the difficulties he went through. Sometimes I read and feel that his life was so filled with suffering. But he followed the Lord at all costs, even to martyrdom. He had such a longing and desire for the Lord, because he wanted to live a life worthy of what he had been given, the grace which was bestowed upon him and the calling to which he was called.

Brothers and sisters, again I remind you, you must be responsible for your own life. Before the Lord returns, we have a little while. This is the opportunity for each one of us. Do not lightly give this up. Let us look to His mercy. In these short days ahead, let us make up for all that we have lacked. In Proverbs it tells us that the end is more important than the beginning. So while the Lord gives us this opportunity to make right our end, I feel that we need even more to be alert. Through our lives and service there are so many things that tempt us. We are not able to do all things, but we need to faithfully do that which the Lord desires us to do.

The Lord is not mistreating us. He knows our weaknesses and how insignificant we are. He is not asking too much. Brothers and sisters, we must fulfill our ministry in His presence. We must be responsible. Do not let the grace of the Lord fall empty.

We know that throughout the history of the spiritual church, and at the end we see the coming down of the New Jerusalem. What is the New Jerusalem? That city is the culmination of all the lives of the saints throughout all generations. These saints have obtained a good report from the Lord. As we read their stories, we admire how wonderful they are. But let us not merely read their history. Let us take note of now.

I don't know how to put this. May the Spirit of the Lord work upon us. While we have this time on the earth, we must take possession of that which the Lord desires to give us. This short life, these few decades will quickly pass.

I am now old. When I recall the past, it feels like it passed so quickly, like I have woken up and now I am old. I do not know how many days I have left, so I must treasure it. I am normally not one who is uptight, so I look to the Lord's mercy. I want to especially follow and walk according to the Lord's anointing. This year I long to follow the anointing of the Lord. That which the Lord does not mean for me to do, I shall not do it. If it is difficult but the Lord desires for me to do, I seek to do it at all costs.

Brothers and sisters, in these last days, this is the final sprint of our race. There is no generation before us as close to the Lord's coming as before us. When our brother Kaung was with us, and he lived to be more than 100 years old, I always felt that he was still sprinting. Many times brothers had to carry him to the stage at conferences. Many felt that he should be resting comfortably at home. He had given much in his life for the Lord, and ought to enjoy his last days. But no, our brother was still sprinting even in his last days. This has left a deep impression on me. Many in history have been like Paul. For your own sake, rise up and run.

May we learn to be like those before us and look unto Jesus. To look up unto Jesus and forsake everything outside of the Lord. Disregard how others see us and what they are doing, may we run diligently forward. For your own sake, you must obtain that which the Lord means for you to obtain.

I say again, we are living in urgent times. We thank the Lord that He is the leader and completer of our faith. If we trust in Him, He is able to open this way. Not only will He initiate, He will lead us all the way. This is all those before us. They have held steadfastly and followed the Lord. The Lord opened their eyes. The Lord, likewise, can open our eyes. The Lord enlightened their eyes till the end, and He can do the same for us.

The Apostle Paul, in Philippians, as he was running the way of the Lord, tells us that we must take possession of that which the Lord desires to give us. So that we may be apprehended by Him who has apprehended us. So the first aspect is that He wants us to be responsible for our own sake, and we run for our own sake.

Tomorrow, Lord willing, we will share how he has run for the will of God. In fact, these two things have the same purpose. Let us bow our heads in a word of prayer.

Lord our hearts are filled with thanksgiving unto Thee. In these urgent times, you have given us this opportunity to gather in your presence. You have given us your word to encourage each other. Today you have not yet returned, you are not tarrying, but you are long-suffering, giving us opportunity. May it be that your gracious hand takes hold of our hand. Open our eyes to see in this conference, that we may have the faith as these witnesses before us. We commit our remaining days unto you. Do not allow us to waste them, but to take possession of that which you desire to give us. Bless each one of your children. On that glorious day when you come, may we all welcome you with joy before your throne. Lead us into the reality of your Word through your Spirit. Listen to our prayer, in the precious name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.