

WCCC 2025  
Brother Godwin Sun

## The Measuring Line Stretched Out Over Jerusalem (3)

As we begin let us read the Word of God:

*"Therefore thus saith Jehovah: I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies: my house shall be built in it, saith Jehovah of hosts, and the line shall be stretched forth upon Jerusalem. Cry further, saying, Thus saith Jehovah of hosts: My cities shall yet overflow with prosperity, and Jehovah shall yet comfort Zion, and shall yet choose Jerusalem."*

Zechariah 1:16-17 DARBY

*"And I lifted up mine eyes, and saw, and behold a man with a measuring line in his hand. And I said, Whither goest thou? And he said unto me, To measure Jerusalem, to see what is the breadth thereof, and what is the length thereof."*

Zechariah 2:1-2 DARBY

*"And he answered and spoke unto me, saying, This is the word of Jehovah unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith Jehovah of hosts. Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel thou dost become a plain; and he shall bring forth the head-stone with shoutings: Grace, grace unto it! And the word of Jehovah came unto me, saying, The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; and his hands shall finish it: and thou shalt know that Jehovah of hosts hath sent me unto you. For who hath despised the day of small things? Yea, they shall rejoice even those seven — and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel: these are the eyes of Jehovah, which run to and fro in the whole earth."*

Zechariah 4:6-10 DARBY

*"In the twenty-fifth year of our captivity, in the beginning of the year, on the tenth of the month, in the fourteenth year after that the city was smitten, on that same day the hand of Jehovah was upon me, and he brought me thither. In the visions of God brought he me into the land of Israel, and set me upon a very high mountain; and upon it was as the building of a city, on the south. And he brought me thither, and behold, there was a man whose appearance was like the appearance of brass, with a flax-cord in his hand, and a measuring-reed; and he stood in the gate. And the man said unto me, Son of man, behold with thine eyes, and hear with thine ears, and set thy heart upon all that I shall shew thee; for in order that it might be shewn unto thee art thou brought hither. Declare to the house of Israel all that thou seest."*

Ezekiel 40:1-4 DARBY

*"See that there be no one who shall lead you away as a prey through philosophy and vain deceit, according to the teaching of men, according to the elements of the world, and not according to Christ."*

*Colossians 2:8 DARBY*

*"But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes forth from with the Father, he shall bear witness concerning me; and ye too bear witness, because ye are with me from the beginning."*

*John 15:26-27 DARBY*

*"But when he is come, the Spirit of truth, he shall guide you into all the truth: for he shall not speak from himself; but whatsoever he shall hear he shall speak; and he will announce to you what is coming. He shall glorify me, for he shall receive of mine and shall announce it to you."*

*John 16:13-14 DARBY*

My burden during this conference is this measuring line stretched over Jerusalem. We have mentioned how this matter is closely connected to the glory of God. Because our God has a glorious will to manifest His glory through His creation.

We know that after the fall of man, many things of man can no longer be used. Only the people of God, especially the ones saved by grace today, will receive His glory and it is through us He will manifest His glory. We have already mentioned that glory is God Himself. Although there is God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, the Father is glory, the Son is glory and the Spirit is glory.

My dear brothers and sisters, our hearts are filled with thanksgiving that God has elevated us so in creation, that we should manifest His glory. How great our God is, how glorious, holy and honorable! What kind of vessel is able to manifest Him? In our current condition we are unable to manifest His glory. We are but fallen sinners. We are filled with a corrupt nature. But God has a glorious heart to work in us, to conform, fashion and make us into vessels that are able to manifest His glory.

I feel that this thought is absent from Christians today. Many treat Christianity as a mere religion. This is a sad thing. The Bible tells us that we were created for His glory, and it is for His glory He has chosen us and redeemed us. His heart for us surpasses all we think and imagine. We thank the Lord that many brothers and sisters have been saved by grace, and after many years of studying and heeding the Word of God have come to understand some of the heart of God. Therefore some are able to match and be worthy of the heart of God.

But there are so many saints who are confused and do not know. Whether you are clear or confused, God has chosen you, and He must make you into His glorious vessel. Some understand the heart of God in this lifetime and are able to cooperate with Him, being pleasing unto Him. Perhaps many who are saved are not aware of the glorious work of God.

So this is my personal feeling: why is there the millennial kingdom when the Lord returns? Because if we bring our current state into heaven, there would only be chaos. So before we enter into eternity, God continues to work. There will be a small number who will be raptured while alive. Many will go through the millennial kingdom. So today, if you do not obey the Lord and are not willing for Him to work upon you, God will have His way. No matter how hard and stubborn you are, or how you think you know it all; or you live only for yourself, God's calling is irrevocable. This is God's great grace upon us. He will mold and fashion us across the millennium. So that there will be vessels that will manifest God's glory. The vessel must be worthy and matching of God's desire.

What a thought towards us! Today, we are as distant from God as heaven and earth. But there will be a day when you and I will be transformed. We must give thanks. Whenever I think of this, I prostrate and give all worship to the Lord. What am I, that I should receive such great grace! That I may be transformed from such a corrupt condition, into a vessel able to manifest His glory!

Therefore God has such a work upon us, but there is a standard to God's work. This is what we mean when we speak of God's measuring line. There is a standard to God's creation. It is God's desire to elevate us to the utmost, so He must work according to His own standard.

We must confess that even though I have served the Lord for so many years, when I consider my own condition before the Lord, I feel that I fall so woefully short. Even today, many brothers and sisters say that we bring them more hardship than anything else. We fall short. But God's love and calling never changes, so He bears and continues to work on us with unlimited patience. We know that He is the Almighty God, and nothing in the universe can hinder Him.

Brothers and sisters, bear in mind that we are the obstacles to God today. Our corrupt nature is a hindrance for Him. We fall short of Him. Even through this, He does not let us go. He works upon us, little by little. The eyes of the prophets were opened and they saw that Jerusalem had to be built according to the measuring line, and God had given the promise Jerusalem will come into prosperity, acceptable to God. This tells us that the end is the best. Even while we are living, may we be more mindful of what is in God's heart. We must be humble before God, and that we are nothing. But in His glorious plan, He has chosen and saved us, one by one.

Therefore in my first message I shared how God has to work according to His own standard. So few pay attention to this fact that when God works, there is His standard. In the second message, I shared how through visions, God is revealing how He works in us according to this measure.

Brothers and sisters, He must work and fashion us unto a point where we are pleasing unto Him, that His glory might be manifested unto us. Throughout the history of man, we see that because God has such a purpose, He works through generation after generation with infinite patience. Each generation has brought Him hardship, but He has never forsaken us. This is the same with us today. He continues His work little by little. May our eyes be opened to see the work of God and where His standard lies.

While it is not easy for us to obey God, we must have this attitude that we are willing to obey Him, that His heart may be satisfied. After our conference, may brothers and sisters be even more obedient unto Him, loving Him even more, not daring to sin against Him in His work. This will comfort the heart of our Lord.

Throughout the old covenant and the new covenant, we see how in the days of desolation, there remains a remnant blessed by the Lord. They have their eyes opened, and they hold on to the measuring line of the Lord, following Him. There are some who bring the glory of God down. We shared the example of Moses and how he worked according to the measure of God, and the tabernacle brought down the glory of God.

King David received the blueprint from God and his son Solomon built the temple, and once again the glory of God appeared. All of this shows us that throughout history there are individuals who understand the will of God and hold in their hand the measuring line to follow the Lord. If the Lord can gain such individuals who will follow His will in such a way, likewise we will bring down the glory of God. Of course we know that which satisfies the Father's heart the most is our Lord Jesus. He brought the glory of God down to earth.

When we read the Bible and see how these individuals glorify God and hold fast to the measuring line, we see in Zechariah 2 how his eyes were opened and he saw a man with a measuring line in his hand. When we read these words, we may think of many individuals in history. It seems that some of them did indeed hold the measuring line. But the person holding the measuring line is actually the Holy Spirit. First God can only give the measuring line to the Holy Spirit.

When we read Ephesians 1, we see clearly that in the Godhead there is the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. They work together. It is the Father who plans, the Son who fulfills the plan on the earth, and the Holy Spirit works according to the finished work of the Son. Strictly speaking, it is truly the Holy Spirit who holds the measuring line of the Lord. God cannot simply hand over the measuring line to man. Especially how our Lord who went through 33 years

on the earth and so much suffering, paying such a great and heavy price, shedding His blood and giving His life to complete the will of God. He has become the greatest standard of the finished work of God. God cannot casually hand over the measuring line to man. Because we are corrupt, if God gives us the measuring line, we will destroy the work of God. We are not trustworthy.

The measuring line is the hand of the Holy Spirit. My dear brothers and sisters, we must understand this. Thank the Lord that He is the greatest one who has in His hand that measuring line.

Today, we are only following the Holy Spirit. While on this earth, we are His witnesses. In the Old Testament, it speaks not only of the measuring line, in Ezekiel 40 it speaks of a man whose appearance is as brass. He has a line of flax in his hand and a measuring reed. It tells us here that the measuring line is a standard, and this line of flax is a measuring reed.

We must know the work we do today, all of our assembling, will be measured by God. Do not think we can do these things in any manner we choose. If it is not according to what God requires, He will put it aside. This is a solemn matter.

We know the church in Jerusalem in the early days. They were in a wonderful condition but later departed. Legalism crept in. So the Holy Spirit's work moved to Antioch. As far as Jerusalem is concerned, God has put them aside. We know that God will never seek to please man, regardless of who they are. If you rebel against His standard, He will put you aside. We have seen this many times in church history.

This measuring line is in the hand of the Holy Spirit. We know that the Spirit has come to glorify and bear witness to the Lord Himself. In the gospel according to John, we see from chapter 14-16 how John describes the Comforter, the Spirit of truth. John records for us the uniqueness of the Comforter's work. When John wrote the gospel, it was the end of the first century, many decades far removed from Pentecost; perhaps 60-70 years. On the day of Pentecost, the apostles experienced the work and filling of the Holy Spirit. They spoke in tongues and performed miracles and signs. Here, many years later, why did John write concerning the Holy Spirit? Because we know that error regarding the Holy Spirit has crept in.

Like today, many chase after the experience of the Holy Spirit, focusing only on the speaking in tongues, the casting out of demons and the healing of the sick. These are indeed recorded in the Bible, but the greatest works of the Holy Spirit are not these. Therefore the Apostle John wrote once again regarding the work of the Holy Spirit.

We know that John has the ministry of recovery, to restore man to the right way. Today, if we want to pursue the experience of the Holy Spirit, the best way is to

do so according to John 14-16. I know some among us are excited upon encountering the Holy Spirit. Others are afraid. I remember one time in the conference, when I mentioned the work of the Comforter, I could see the faces of the brothers growing long. They have been deeply influenced by the erroneous teaching of the Holy Spirit and shy away from mentioning Him. But we know the work of the Holy Spirit is very important. The whole of Acts is under the guidance and government of the Holy Spirit. The work and service of the apostles is the wielding of the measuring line by the Holy Spirit, that they are able to glorify God.

Dear brothers and sisters, we need not fear, nor be overly excited. We must see the work of the Holy Spirit clearly. The Lord has handed over the measuring line to the Holy Spirit. Each generation passes, and only the Holy Spirit is able to stretch out the measuring line.

If you would allow me to take from John 14-16 to remind us simply of the work of the Holy Spirit, because many times we neglect this. When we read John 14, we see how the Lord says that He will ask the Father to send another, the Comforter. The word "Comforter" is used here. It is a word also used on the Lord Jesus, with Him as our advocate. He is our lawyer. When Jesus was in the flesh He was our advocate. But He was limited by the flesh. He could not be everywhere at the same time. So the Lord knew that there would be a time when He would go to the cross and complete the will of God. He would go back to His heavenly home and God would send another advocate. So this Comforter would continue the work of the Comforter before Him. So our Lord strictly and solemnly introduces this new advocate. Today, for us to know this Comforter, we must understand that without Him we cannot enter into spiritual reality.

In John 14, the Lord asks God the Father to send another Comforter who will abide with us always. In the ministry of John, we know that he uses the word "abiding" the most. This is a mysterious word, because the Holy Spirit abides in us. Do you know how precious we are in the sight of God, that the Holy Spirit would abide in us? We are not mere students who go to school and then come home. Today, this Teacher whom God has sent abides in you and me. This is wonderful. He sees everything each day as we live. He knows each and every thought. We are vessels meant to manifest the glory of God. So God must work very carefully on us. The Holy Spirit lives in us and goes with us wherever we go. He grabs every opportunity to work in us. The work of God is not outward, but inward.

We know that man's work is outward and moving inward, but God's work starts inwardly and then moves outwardly. From today, when we live spiritually, we must be extra careful not to forget that we have Someone who abides in us. Others may not know our thoughts, but He knows. This may cause some of us to be alarmed, but we must understand how special this grace is in the heart of

God. The Lord says that the Holy Spirit will abide in us. He brings the presence of the Father and the Son in us.

I remember when Brother Watchman Nee was in England. He was speaking to the English brothers and sisters, telling them solemnly that God is in them. Today let us hear carefully and receive these words: God is in us. Many Christians today speak of how we will see the Lord in the future, and live their lives on earth. When I was younger, I don't know why, but I attended a Catholic school. The nun was teaching us to sing a song that we would sing every time we leave the school. "Goodbye, goodbye Lord Jesus". It meant we would be going home and will come back next week to see the Lord Jesus. Is this so? No! Today the Lord abides in you and the Holy Spirit abides in you. Even when you go home, He continues to be with you.

What a wonderful grace! This tells us how precious we are in the sight of God! Even when we were just saved and confused, the Comforter is our wet nurse. How precious this is! I often tell brothers and sisters who are parents, how their children are precious to them. When they go to work, they place their children with the nanny. They take great pains to choose a suitable nanny.

My brother found a Japanese nanny for his son. One day when he came home, he found his son speaking Japanese. So he changed the nanny to a Vietnamese woman. And during a meal, the son spoke Vietnamese. So you see how important this nanny is.

We are the children of God! Who is qualified to be our caretaker, our nanny? God has placed us in the hand of the Holy Spirit. This Comforter abides in us and works carefully within us. The Bible has these words, that we do not grieve the Holy Spirit. I often think that it is more difficult for the Holy Spirit to dwell in us than perhaps our Lord born in the manger. It is more filthy and frightening within us than in the manger. But the Holy Spirit has infinite patience to abide in us. The apostles knew, and Paul tells us to be mindful of the Holy Spirit and to obey Him.

Brothers and sisters, we often grieve the Holy Spirit in our daily living. He abides in us. In John 14:26, it says that the Holy Spirit has come to teach us in all things. We often look for teachers to teach us. Many times they are not clear. I am often in fear and trembling in church, for I face the children of the Heavenly Father when I teach. I cannot speak casually. I would sin greatly against God the Father. So the teaching of the Holy Spirit within is best. The Lord said that He would teach us in all things. When John wrote 1 John, he told us to obey the Lord's anointing, and only the anointing would teach us in all things. There is a line that says we need no man to teach us. I used to think this was a dangerous line. Surely we need the experienced saints to teach us, yet John says that we need no man to teach us.

One year I encountered an older brother whom I respected. There were some things I did not know, and I told him that he did not teach me these things when I was young. He replied, “thank the Lord I did not teach you these things, for if I did you would be finished. Follow the Holy Spirit!”. If we know to follow the Comforter, He would teach us in all things.

In verse 26, it says that “the Comforter would bring into remembrance all the things which I have said to you.” This is the miracle of the writing of the scripture in the first century. All these apostles were not highly educated. What did these fishermen know? The Lord did not look for the scribes or pharisees, but sought out this ragtag party. Jesus asked them if they understood, and they answered, “yes we understand.” I often laugh at their answer. But the Lord was not anxious, because He knew that there would be a time to come when the Comforter would come, and cause them to remember all the things He had said. So these apostles, when they wrote about the things the Lord Jesus said, they wrote with great clarity. They did not write, “I think this is what He said”. I, for one, am not able to remember every word our brother Dana shared in this conference.

The Holy Spirit does an amazing work here, causing us to remember all the things Jesus has said. Many elder brothers and sisters say that they are old and cannot remember the Bible, so they put aside the reading of the Bible. No, you must read, even if you don’t remember. There is someone who will remember it for you and remind you in the time of need. Such wonderful grace! We are getting older and our memory may fail, but do not worry. We take many supplements today to help our memory, but there is One within us who will cause us to remember the Word of God. How precious this is! Read much of His Word, even if you forget, for even if you forget, He will remember it for you!

In John 15, it says that the Spirit of truth will come to be Jesus’ witness, and you will be my witness. A true testimony of the Lord will be first done by the Holy Spirit, and then externally we are His witnesses. It is the Holy Spirit who stretches out the line and sets the standard. So it is important for us to follow the Holy Spirit.

I remember the words of our Sister Penn-Lewis. She said that when we follow the Holy Spirit, we have to follow cold-bloodedly. What this means is that we follow even the smallest, most minute leading of the Holy Spirit.

In John 16:8,

*“And having come, he will bring demonstration to the world, of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:”*

*John 16:8 DARBY*

His light causes us to rebuke ourselves. Were it not for the light of God, we would not be able to admonish ourselves. We only know how to praise ourselves. Not

many would rebuke themselves on the pulpit. The Lord comes to enlighten us so we can see our own nature.

When I served the Lord in my 20s, the light of the Spirit came within and exposed me completely from within. I was so filled with sorrow, and felt filthy as if the contents of the sewers were all brought forth. You would not be able to tell from my external appearance, but I was in such sorrow. From that day on, I dared not judge others. Whenever I criticized others, I was remembered of my own corrupt nature within.

When the Holy Spirit enlightens us within and we see our nature as we are, we will repent and convict ourselves. This is an important experience.

In John 16:13

*"But when he is come, the Spirit of truth, he shall guide you into all the truth: for he shall not speak from himself; but whatsoever he shall hear he shall speak; and he will announce to you what is coming."*

*John 16:13 DARBY*

"All the truth" is all the reality. When we read the Word of God, it is the Spirit who leads us into the reality of it. We cannot exert our own effort to enter in. Only the Holy Spirit is able to do so. When we learn the lesson of the cross and face hardships, we know that as Christians we are to die to ourselves. We know this in our mind, so we repeat this to ourselves. But the more I say it, the more alive my self is. I am in such agony, and when I prayed the Holy Spirit led me and immediately all the clouds vanished. All the unhappiness left me and I was in complete rest. We must have the Spirit lead us into all truth.

We may hear a message and thank the Lord for the provision of God's Word to us. But hang on a minute. We have not entered into it yet. Just because we heard it doesn't mean that we have obtained it. Let us go home and pray well, that the Spirit may lead us into truth. The Holy Spirit will tell us all that He heard, and tell us what is coming. This is the Spirit of truth that is within us. How precious is His work!

In John 16:14

*"He shall glorify me, for he shall receive of mine and shall announce it to you."*

*John 16:14 DARBY*

This is the most important work of the Holy Spirit, that He will glorify Christ in us.

I know of this pentecostal pastor. I paid attention to the movement of the pentecostal movement if I could receive any light. But I was often disappointed that the messages were often very simple and had no depth. But this particular

pastor spoke some very meaningful words. He said that the Holy Spirit came, not that we would pay attention to Him, but that He would bring attention to Christ. I felt that this pastor understood the Holy Spirit.

Today, many who pursue after the Spirit are focused on the Holy Spirit. They pray unto the Holy Spirit, but the Spirit bids us to pay attention to the Holy Spirit. For the Spirit comes to glorify the Lord Jesus.

This pastor said one more thing. That the work of the Holy Spirit on the earth is to establish the Church of Christ. I felt that his works grasped the true meaning of the work of the Holy Spirit. Brothers and sisters, today, God brings the glory of Christ through the Holy Spirit, that it might be manifest through us.

Dear brothers and sisters, in the last days of John, he has recorded important principles of the work of the Holy Spirit. 60-70 years after Pentecost, he has once again corrected the understanding of the people regarding the Holy Spirit. We truly thank and praise the Lord, for today God has placed the measuring line in the hand of the Holy Spirit.

In our Christian life, following the Holy Spirit is an important experience for us. He holds the standard for our life, and He also measures us according to this standard. We thank the Lord that even though we do not know how to live a Christian life, if we follow the Spirit, we will know how to live this spiritual life and do this spiritual work. The best teacher for the children of God is the Holy Spirit. This is something we must clearly understand today.

The Holy Spirit has in His hand the measuring line. And in history many who follow the Spirit can hold on to that line. This is the condition in all of the book of Acts, and even in the Old Testament. In the Old Testament, Zechariah the prophet saw the measuring line not only in chapter 1, but in chapter 4 he spoke of how Zerubbabel holds the plumbline. We know that this plumbline is also a standard. It is the short standard. The Holy Spirit stretches out the measuring line which is long.

In our lives there is a plumbline. When I was young and saw people constructing a wall, they used a small rock tied to the end of a string as a plumbline, and built the wall according to that. They had a standard. Today, we see throughout history that there are many who serve the Lord according to the standard of God. God showed Zechariah how Zerubbabel held in his hand this plumbline.

We know how Zerubbabel is a common man, a small leader in the nation of Israel. It might be that he did not have any great gifts, but he loved God and wanted to obey Him. When King Cyrus gave the command, he was willing to forsake everything to return to Jerusalem. We know in the first return of the exiles, Zerubbabel and Joshua were the leaders. He was not a particularly outstanding leader.

I know some leaders in assemblies are very outstanding, and the brothers and sisters are very enthusiastic that they are following an outstanding leader. But here was Zerubbabel, a common leader. It might not inspire confidence. But he loved the Lord. We know the return from captivity was not easy for the children of Israel. Zerubbabel might have been born in Babylon, the land of captivity. Israel has lost all worship and was in a spiritually weak condition. In that condition, Zerubbabel too was weak, but thank the Lord that he had a heart to love and submit to the Lord. It is not easy to follow the Lord for 70 years.

I have been in the States for 50 years. My children have been born here. They know nothing of the Church in Asia, but I pray continually for them even as they grew up in a different environment from my youth, that they might know the Lord. They are yellow-skinned, but white inside.

For the Jewish people who had been in captivity for 70 years, this was a large trial. That is why when God called them to return, only a small remnant came forth. Thank the Lord that Zerubbabel was their leader in the first return.

In the vision the prophet Zechariah saw that it is not by might or by power, but by God's Spirit that Zerubbabel was able to do this. Zerubbabel has no might or power. He is not like Ezra who knew the king of his generation or like Nehemiah who was so favored by the king. Zerubbabel had no might or power, but he knew how to follow the Spirit of God. Because Zerubbabel followed the Spirit of God, God showed Zechariah how the great mountains would become a plain before Zerubbabel.

This is the story of the church. God has used many people without might or power. But the mountains were removed before them. Zerubbabel is a great encouragement to me. When you serve the Lord, you have less anxiety if you have someone supporting you. When I came to Seattle I had nothing except my suitcase, my wife and two young children. We didn't have a lot of money, nor did we know many people there. We started a small gathering there.

Dear brothers and sisters, thank the Lord that we can do without power or might, but we must depend on the Holy Spirit. When we trust in the Holy Spirit, even the great mountains are nothing. The Lord has placed the capstone on top. What is this capstone? When the capstone is placed, it means the house is perfect.

We thank the Lord that even in such a weak condition, the temple can be built when they trust in the Spirit of the Lord. The foundation was laid and the temple was built.

Brothers and sisters, when we read Zechariah 4, we see this weak vessel do such a glorious work under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. So today, regardless of how weak you feel you are, do not envy others' gifts or eloquence. Follow the Holy

Spirit well and God will use you, and you will become a useful vessel in the hands of God.

My dear brothers and sisters, our hearts are filled with thanksgiving. The Holy Spirit says, “who can despise the day of small things?” Zerubbabel is not gifted and can only do small things, but who dares despise it? If one is used by God, no one can despise.

I remember when I first arrived in Seattle, I wanted to work for the Lord. I wanted to start an assembly. The Lord gave me a reminder, “I only need you to be faithful in the small things.” What a great encouragement it was for me!

Today many of us want to do great works. If we are to work, we want everyone to know. This does not need to be so. Brothers and sisters, it is very laborious to do great work. When I served in the church, I saw those who were gifted and talented, and they lived a life without rest. Some worked throughout the whole world, but were always worried about being betrayed by others. Thank the Lord that the one who does small things rests well. I fall on my pillow and fall asleep. Is this not a blessing? Why should we seek great work? God Himself will do the great work. Let us be faithful in small things.

What a great blessing! From the first day to this day, the fellowship has grown, but I still do small things. I have never felt the need to do great things. Brothers and sisters, Zerubbabel has shown us an example from the Lord, an encouragement to us common, ordinary people. I don't know if you feel that you are extraordinary, but I thank the Lord for allowing me to be very ordinary. I am restful when I serve the Lord.

My dear brothers and sisters, we thank the Lord that the Zerubbabel only did this one thing, and it brought great pleasure to the heart of God. When he had the plumbline in his hand, the Bible tells us that God's heart was pleased.

It is most important for us to seek God's pleasure. When Paul was on the earth, he told us to be determined to please God. He made it his aim. God's pleasure is precious to us.

In the Brethren movement, there was brother Berler(?) who shared an interesting story of a mother with a 10-year old daughter. They had a wonderful relationship. One day the daughter did something that caused the mother great unhappiness. That day the child came and hugged the child. Normally the mother would embrace her daughter, but today, the mother turned her head away. The child asked her mother, “Mother, do you still love me?” The mother turned her head and said, “I love you, but I am not pleased with you.”

This story shows us while God's love for us never changes, He may not be pleased with us. How precious it is for God to be pleased with us. What does it mean for

God to be pleased? It means His heart is satisfied. When God's heart is fully satisfied, there is His glory. If you want God's glory to appear today, we must seek God's pleasure.

This is the story of Enoch who walked with God for 300 years. The book of Hebrews tells us that God was pleased with him. When we read such words, we read in admiration. We know our Lord is coming. Do you know if the Lord is pleased with you? Will our Lord be satisfied? While we are here, we must seek His pleasure.

Paul, in his epistles, speaks of God's pleasure. In Romans 12, Paul calls us to offer up our bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable and pleasing unto God. If children of God offer up themselves to God, it brings Him great delight. God's kingdom is not in food and drink, but in peace, joy and the power of the Holy Spirit. If we pursue these things, we seek God's pleasure. Brothers and sisters, Paul sought God's pleasure in all that he did. If God is not pleased, do not do it. We are not mindful of these things today, so the glory of God does not come.

In the hand of Zerubbabel was the plumbline, and he held it at a time when no one paid attention to the standard of God. We want to be those who work according to God's standard. These things bring pleasure to the heart of God. May God imprint this picture in our heart.

Brothers and sisters, it is precious for us to serve the Lord, but if it is not according to God's standard, it is all in vain if it does not seek God's pleasure. Zerubbabel had nothing and did not accomplish any great work, but in the building of the temple, he did so according to the standard of God.

So today, when we come together, whether great or small in number, let us gather according to God's standard. Today, man wants greater numbers of people and larger church buildings, but God does not look upon these things. He is looking for whether His standard is here.

We share these things again and again. The measuring line is of utmost importance in this generation. Brothers and sisters, may the Lord be gracious to us. May we seek His pleasure.

Let me speak a bit of John in the time we have left. I did not have time to speak of him yesterday.

Those who study the Bible know the apostle John as one who has the ministry of restoration. Thank the Lord that our brother Dana shared a lot on the gospel according to John. I would say that he has helped me greatly, so that I do not have to speak more of John. I will just share simply on some of the principles.

In the first century, John was the last remaining one. His contemporaries have all been martyred, even Paul. Only John remained. It is very lonely. When he saw the condition of the church declining, he was exiled to the Isle of Patmos. In the vision, God showed him the 7 churches of Asia minor. It would be a representation of all the churches throughout history. Perhaps these 7 churches were considered somewhat good in those days.

But when we read the first 3 chapters of Revelation, there is no church condition perfect before God. Even the church in Philadelphia was recorded as having little strength, and facing hardship. Smyrna was also in a time of affliction. The other 5 churches were in terrible decline. It would seem to be a scene of great desolation. It is at this time that God brought John up. Thank the Lord. At the end of the first century, he was the last apostle holding the plumbline. How precious this is! At his great age, John wrote the gospel according to John, the letters of 1, 2 and 3 John, and also Revelation. All this scripture has brought such important revelation to the Church through the ages. All this truth would bring great revival to the Church.

My dear brothers and sisters, in John's last days he turns our focus to Christ, that we may know Him and to experience Him. In that difficult time, John, in his advanced age, was still doing the work of God, stretching out this measuring line. We know how unique John is. His words are simple but profound. We may read the words and understand, but there is a deep fullness in its meaning.

Our brother Dana has already shared on the 8 signs this morning. Thank the Lord. But we know that John 1:4 has an important word - the Life is in Him.

"In him was life, and the life was the light of men."  
John 1:4 DARBY

My personal understanding is that this is the key to the gospel according to John. This is the key to the 8 signs. Because in Him is the life, and wherever He is, there life is. All the hardships go away.

In Him was life. This word has a very important and precious meaning. We know firstly that when God wanted to give His life to man, He could not directly give such a holy life into such corrupt vessels as us. The life would be defiled. So this life was placed in His Son. The life was in Him. This life was the glory of God. When Jesus came to the earth, He brought this life with Him.

When we preach the gospel we say that he who has the Son has life. If you do not believe in the Son, you do not have life. When you believe in Him, you receive life. This is simple doctrine. But in your life experience, you need to hold on to this - that the life is in Him. In other words, apart from Christ, there is no life.

When we serve the Lord today, people can only receive life when Christ is brought in. We cannot say “this brother is great, he brings the life”. Only when we provide Christ. We need to pay attention to this in our church life and service.

Many years ago I shared this example. Allow me to repeat it for the sake of those who have not heard it. I like to ask this question: We need to read the Bible. Is there life in the Bible? Is there life in the Word? Many are nodding, but you are wrong. If you read John 5, you see that Jesus told the Jews, “you search the scriptures thinking you can find life, yet you will not come to me to have life.” This is the secret to reading the Bible. We are not reading just to memorize the stories and the doctrine. We must see Christ in the Bible, and only then can you have life. Because the Bible tells us clearly that in Him is life. It is not in the letter of the Word. When the Spirit opens up the Word to us, we can gain and enjoy the fullness of Christ, for in Him is the life. When we touch the life, the Bible is opened up to us.

Christians have many things going on in our life. Let me ask this, “is there life in prayer?” You may think these are trick questions, but they are important. Some pray with life, and some pray lifeless prayers. Why is there life? Because they have touched Christ. Their prayers come into the presence of Christ. It is not about beautiful, eloquent words. Pay attention, more mature Christians. We may think we know how to pray. We pray so freely. But let us remember to come to Christ. Our prayers come to life only when we touch Christ.

In John’s old age, he corrects our spiritual life. Let me ask you another question, “is there life in hymns?” Now you can bravely answer. Life does not exist within hymns, so why do we sing? We sing because we want to touch Christ in the hymns. It is not the hymns. When we sing even the oldest hymns, our hearts turn towards the Lord and we touch the Lord, and we touch Christ in the hymn, and we touch life.

Is there life in our gathering together? These are important questions. Life is not found in our assembling together. It is only found when we touch Christ corporately. In the 1970s, we were taught that no matter where we are, we ought to keep the presence of Christ when we speak one to another.

Forgive me for saying this. Our messages on the pulpit aren’t very exciting. Oftentimes people fall asleep listening to the messages. Brothers and sisters, if we know how to keep the presence of the Lord, when the message is preached, you can touch Christ. Even if the message doesn’t get there, you still have life because you have the presence of the Lord.

Do we think of these things when we gather? Dear brothers and sisters, when the presence of the Lord is with us, we see that our gathering is full of life. May we remember that life is in Christ. Life is in Him. He is the source of life. John shares this with us, so we need to understand it.

John's word is also direct. He recorded Jesus' interactions with Nicodemus, the Samaritan woman, the blind man, the beggar lying by the pool at Bethesda. John records these to remind us that we must pay attention to our personal relationship with the Lord. Anyone of us can have a personal relationship with Him. There has been great error in the history of Christendom. In the Catholic Church, we are told to pray to God the Father, who will then speak to Mary, and Mary will speak to the Son, and the Son will bring our petitions back to the Father. This is wrong. Anyone of us can come before the Lord Jesus. God is focused on our direct personal relationship with Him. We must establish this personal relationship with Him.

When John wrote 1 John, he tells us that in this personal relationship we can see Him, hear Him, touch and handle Him. This speaks of how intimate our relationship with Him is! Many brothers and sisters may have not heard the Lord's Word for a long time. I am not saying that you have not heard preaching, but your eyes may not be open to see Him and you have not touched Him because there is too great a distance between you and the Lord. John emphasized this in his last days. We must have a personal direct, intimate relationship with our Lord.

John uses the word "truth" a lot in his writing. This is reality and is practical. John focuses on how we touch reality when we touch Christ. The reality of Christ is not about coming together in church to discuss how we can make friends, or how parents can teach their children. This is trendy in churches today. But forgive me when I say that this is not at all practical. Married couples head to resorts, sitting at a table, lighting a candle. I am saddened sometimes when preachers do this, thinking that it brings the couple together. Is this real? It is laughable.

Dear brothers and sisters, John tells us that the Holy Spirit will lead us into this reality. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we touch Christ, and all hardships will pass. The 8 signs represent different difficulties. They are great hardships. Do we see that Lazarus, though dead, could rise? Jesus Christ in us is able to solve all our hardships. We must touch Christ.

John not only speaks of the preciousness of the Lord in his gospel. In his epistles, he tells us that we can experience Christ in our life. John 1 tells us that the beginning was the Word, and the Word was life. He does not merely give us doctrine, but wants us to enter into this experience. In Revelation, he writes about the Revelation of Jesus Christ. He is the reality of the priest. We see Him as the Lamb who reigns. Today, we know, as Peter tells us, that we are a royal priesthood. John tells us what the reality of this royal priesthood is.

We do not have the time to go into detail. The work of the Lord Jesus is complete, and the measuring line is set and in the hand of the Holy Spirit. Are we following

the guidance of the Holy Spirit? While we are on this earth, we also hold on to this line in our living, in our service. The day of our Lord's return draws nigh. May He correct our living, that He may be pleased, and we may all rejoice.

In our living, we must respect the sovereignty of the Holy Spirit. In this little time we have, may we hold the plumline under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Regardless of how times change or how man views us, remember that we are not here to please man. Hold on to the plumline. Seek God's pleasure and follow Christ. May the Lord bring us joyfully into His heavenly kingdom on that day. May the Spirit of truth lead us into that reality.

Brothers and sisters, pray well, for we do not have much opportunity.

Lord, our hearts are filled with thanksgiving unto You. You have chosen us, even though we are wretched and corrupt. You have redeemed us. We confess our unworthiness, there is no good within us. We thank You that You are the Almighty God. You know us well. You want to turn us dishonorable vessels into honorable vessels. May Your Holy Spirit work in us. Help us learn to follow the guidance of the Spirit and to obey the anointing, that our life and service may be according to Your measure. Only when we follow the Spirit can we walk in Your pleasure. Time is short, may Your mercy come upon us. We long to receive You joyfully on that day. The conference comes to an end, but may Your Word never pass away. May these words help us and provide for us until the road's end. We thank You for Your grace. Hear our prayer. In the precious name of our Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.