

Corporate Prayer to Command the Lord's Blessing

Seven

What is blessing? Blessing is God working without any cause. Logically speaking, one penny should buy one penny's worth of goods. But sometimes, without spending a cent, God gives us ten thousand pennies' worth of goods. This means that what we have received is beyond reckoning. God's blessing is any work He performs without cause. This work surpasses what we should receive. Five loaves fed five thousand people, and there were still twelve full baskets left over! This is blessing. Some people should not get a certain kind of result. They should only have a little, but surprisingly they have much. Our entire work is built upon God's blessing. The blessing is the result of receiving what we do not deserve, that is, the result of receiving beyond what our gift warrants us to receive. The result that we get which is beyond what our strength earns is the blessing. Putting it more strongly, we do not deserve any results because of our weaknesses and failures, but astoundingly we obtain something, and what we obtain is the blessing. If we look for God's blessing, He will give us unexpected results. In our service do we hope for God to give us great results? Many brothers and sisters only look for results that can be expected from themselves alone. Blessing means that the result is not in proportion to the cause.

If we only look for results based on what we are, if we only look for a little fruit, and if we do not hope for great results, we run the risk of losing God's blessing. Since we only pay attention to the fact that we are laboring night and day, God cannot do anything beyond our expectation. We must put ourselves in a position in which God can bless us. We must say to the Lord, "Based on what we are, we should not obtain any results, but, Lord, for the sake of Your name, Your church, and Your way, we hope You will give something to us." Having faith in the work is believing and expecting God's blessing. In God's work, having faith means having the conviction that the result will not be in proportion to us. When we practice this, I believe God will bless our way. I hope that as the brothers discuss the matter of the migrations, the Lord's blessing will exceed our expectation.

At times it seems that God not only grants no blessing, but even deliberately withholds it. For God to withhold His blessing is more serious than for Him to not grant blessing. With our strength and gifts, we should have better results, but we do not obtain them. We labor through the night and should obtain certain results, but if God withholds His blessing, we will obtain less than we should. We labor for a long time but obtain no fruit. We are diligent, yet there are no results. This is what happens when God withholds His blessing.

I wonder if we feel the seriousness of this. We absolutely must not argue about the right way to do things. Being right is of no use. We must pay attention to whether or not God blesses us. Often we are very right, yet God does not bless us. It is right to fish all night, yet God does not bless us. We do not live on earth by doing what is right; we live to experience God's blessing. David and Abraham both made mistakes, Isaac was not very useful, and Jacob was crafty, but God blessed them all. It is not a matter of being right or wrong, but of being blessed by God. Perhaps we who are here today are much better than Jacob, but if God does not bless us, nothing will avail. We must be those who can be blessed by God. We can argue and be right, but it is useless if God does not bless us.

The entire future of the work depends on God's blessing, not on being right. If God blesses, then many sinners will be saved. If God blesses, we will be able to send people out to the remote regions. If there is no blessing, people will not get saved. If there is no blessing, workers will not be produced. If there is no blessing, no one will offer anything. If there is no blessing, no one will migrate. When the blessing is here, even things that seem wrong are right. When God blesses, we cannot go wrong even if we try. One

time there was a meeting in which it seemed that we sang the wrong hymn, but we had a good result because we had God's blessing. Sometimes when we preach, it seems that we are speaking the wrong word to the wrong audience, but God still blesses some in the audience. When we speak again, we still may speak the wrong word, but God blesses another group of people. I am not saying that we can be loose intentionally. I am saying that we cannot go wrong when we have God's blessing. It seems that our mistakes should be a frustration, but He cannot be hindered. God said, "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated" (Rom. 9:13). God blesses whom He likes. This is a very serious matter. We should not think that the blessing is a small thing. The blessing is souls and consecrated people. Behind the word blessing perhaps there are fifty souls or one hundred consecrations. The words, attitudes, and opinions of certain people can stop the Lord's blessing. We must ask the Lord to prick us inwardly until we obtain His blessing. If we do not do this, our sin of losing the Lord's blessing will be greater than any other sin. The blessing could be hundreds or thousands of souls. We must look to God for the blessing and not let it escape. We must beg God to give us grace.

Eight

O brothers! We must learn to live in God's blessing. It is good to work and do things, but we must have our capacity increased. We must ask God to keep us in His blessing in our work and actions. If we do not resolve this problem, our work will be severely damaged. Brother Witness was in Shanghai in 1945. One day he said that the brothers' meeting experienced great blessing from God. I believe that Brother Witness has made some progress in this matter. We must come before God to see that we do not expect the results of our labor, but expect God's blessing. Sometimes there are some results from our work, but they are dry and poor. If we expect God's blessing, many things will happen that are beyond our expectation. If we wait upon God's blessing, things will happen beyond our capacity. We must continually look for miracles and unexpected occurrences in the work. We should not keep expecting that we will be able to bear any fruit. Our expectation of that small amount of fruit limits God. If we do not expect God's blessing, there is not much hope for our future. We will have financial difficulties, and it will be difficult for us to go on. Therefore, we should not look for results commensurate with our individual labor, but we should look for God's blessing. If we only look for commensurate results, I do not know how many years it will take for many people to believe in the Lord. We must always look for God to do things beyond our expectations. We must ask God to give us the vision to see the meaning of blessing.

Some are checking to see whether or not the young people are doing things right. Instead, we should be checking to see if a person is being blessed by God. If a person can be blessed by God, we do not know how much more fruit he will bear beyond just his gift and ability. If he does not have the blessing, his carefulness and labor will be in vain. Some people are blessed by God, and other people are not blessed by God. We may have a better temper and a larger gift than a certain brother, but he bears fruit in his work, while we cannot bear fruit in ours. We look down on many people because we are better, yet God blesses them. We cannot say that God is wrong. We must realize that before God, we are those whom He cannot bless.

We should not become angry or jealous about this matter. Instead, we should judge ourselves soberly. We have many excuses, and so do our brothers. We are right, and so are they. But what can we do if God does not bless? We are right, but we cannot win souls. They are right, but the church is not built up. We are right, but it is in vain. Therefore, we must eliminate all the things that stop and frustrate the blessing. From now on we should not be those who stubbornly argue over right and wrong; we must be those who receive great blessings from God.