

Please Pray

- ✳ **The Spiritual Significance of the New Year:** Every change in our spiritual experience involves light, whether it is a great change like a new year, a lesser change like a month, or a small change like a day. Whenever we encounter light, there is a change. When we met God, who is light (1 John 1:5), there was a change... When we approach a new calendar year, we should come to God and open ourselves to His light concerning not only the state of our earthly affairs but also the condition of our spiritual life... These encounters bring in changes that are like the changes associated with days, months, and years. If we want to have changes, from small changes to great changes, we must meet God... God's work in the universe is a work of renewing. He wants to end the old things and begin something new. When His work is accomplished, He will be able to declare that all things are truly new (2 Cor. 5:17). The proper celebration of a new year is to have a new beginning. We need to go before God and touch His presence. When we touch God and meet God, we will enter into a new year and have a new beginning. May we all have a new beginning with the Lord in the year 2023 by meeting with Him.
- ✳ **Shepherding of the Saints:** The Lord loved the church and gave Himself up for her (Eph. 5:25). After the Lord's resurrection, He asked Peter, "Do you love Me?" Peter responded by saying, "Lord, You know that I love You." The Lord's response to Peter's love was, "Feed My lambs." and "Shepherd My sheep." The Lord desires that we would love the church as He did. This is also our way of showing the Lord that we love Him. (1) May the Lord infuse us with His heart to love, care, shepherd, and feed the saints. (2) May we learn to come to the Lord to be loved, cared, shepherded, and fed by Him first, so that we will know how to shepherd and care for the saints. (3) May we learn how to love the saints regardless of their comeliness, condition, and situation. (4) May we have a heart to contact and care for the saints who are no longer in the church life. (5) May the Body build itself up in love.
- ✳ **Gospel of the Kingdom to the Nations:** The Lord's desire is to come back and bring His kingdom to the earth. However, He needs our cooperation to preach the gospel of the kingdom, shepherd and feed the new ones, and build up His Body. (1) May His heart be our heart to preach the gospel of the kingdom to the nations. (2) May we have love for men as God loved the world and gave His only begotten Son to save them. (3) May we also have a heart to shepherd the new ones that we encounter into the church life. (4) May many remaining fruits remain in the church life.
- ✳ **Pursuit of the Life-Study Messages:** (1) Pray that we would all enter into the reality of being the proper pillar and base of the truth, especially through the reading of the Life-Studies. (2) Pray that our appreciation and understanding of the Word would be opened by the Life-Studies. (3) Pray that we would all be open and give ourselves to enter and enjoy the Life-Studies.
- ✳ **Pray for various local needs in Montréal:** The saints, their contacts, and for the persons in need of care and shepherding.

Weekly Readings

- ✳ Holy Bible Recovery Version with footnotes: Jer 19:1 – 30:24.
- ✳ HWMR, Crystallization-Study of 1 and 2 Kings, Vol. 1, Week 4.

Announcements

- ✳ [LivingtoHim YouTube channel](#) is releasing a series of four talks by Brother Minoru Chen on the matter of getting into the Life-Studies. The subsequent talks will be released weekly on Mondays. You can [subscribe](#) to the [LivingtoHim YouTube channel](#) to receive updates. All four outlines of this series can be downloaded [here](#).
- ✳ Please consider your needs carefully before the Lord and email your prayer requests to Allan Yeow, allan.yeow81@gmail.com before Wednesday evening of every week. Please note that due to the limited space in the newsletter, we may not be able to publish all prayer burdens that are sent to us. May the Lord teach us how to pray for the advancement of His Economy.

Upcoming Events

- ✳ February 17-19, 2023, Anaheim, CA: **International Chinese-Speaking Blending Conference.**
- ✳ March 24-26, 2023, Anaheim, CA: **International Training for Elders and Responsible Ones.**

Please refer to the church's website where more events are listed.

This Week's Activities

Sun-Jan-08 LORD'S DAY	✳ 10am-12pm: Lord's Table and prophesying meetings.
Mon-Jan-09	✳
Tues-Jan-10	✳ 7:30pm-9pm: English, French and Chinese Districts prayer meetings by conference calls.
Wed-Jan-11	✳
Thurs-Jan-12	✳
Fri-Jan-13	✳ 6:30pm-9pm: English, French and Chinese Districts home meetings in person and on Zoom.
Sat-Jan-14	✳
Sun-Jan-15 LORD'S DAY	✳ 10am-12pm: Lord's Table and prophesying meetings.

OCCUPATION (cont'd)

Scripture Reading: 2 Thes. 3:10-12.

III. CHOOSING FROM THREE DIFFERENT KINDS OF OCCUPATIONS (cont'd)

Paul's tentmaking shows us another principle. He did not increase the amount of cotton, silk, or fabric. But because of his cutting, sewing, effort, and energy, he increased the value of the raw material. According to Bible scholars, tents at that time had to be dyed. Dean Alford told us that when Paul said, "These hands," in Acts 20:34, he was referring to the unavoidable stain of the dye of the tents on his hands. Paul's tentmaking was something that increased the value of goods.

It is good to increase the riches of the earth. It is also good to increase the value of goods. Suppose I make a chair from a piece of wood. This is good, because by doing so, I have increased the value of the wood. Although I have not increased the abundance in nature, the world has one more chair through me. The world had one more tent when Paul made a tent. This does not benefit oneself at the expense of others. One can make a tent; he can turn a cheap fabric into a valuable tent. Turning fabric into a tent increases the goods of this world. This is also an occupation that is acceptable to God.

A new believer must see that there are two criteria to a proper occupation. One must either increase the abundance of the earth or increase the value of goods. Actually, when one makes a tent, he is also increasing the abundance of the world. Because of the work of one's hands, the number of tents in this world has increased. Therefore, it is also right to say that this increases the abundance of the world. This is the basic principle of God's ordained occupations for men.

IV. AVOIDING PURE COMMERCE

I have studied economics a little. I know that there is the need for commerce. But I am a Christian; I am not an economist. While the Lord Jesus did say that we needed to do business until He comes (Luke 19:13), that verse means that we should give ourselves to our work like a businessman giving himself to his business. We know that a businessman has to devote himself to his business. He will get into any situation as long as there is money in it for him. The Lord meant that we should grasp every opportunity. We must give ourselves to our work in such a way.

Commerce began with Tyre, and it ends up in Babylon. We find this from Ezekiel 28 to Revelation 18. The one who invented commerce is the prince of Tyre. Ezekiel 28 shows us that the prince of Tyre represents Satan. "By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned" (v. 16). Bear in mind that commerce always makes money for oneself at the expense of others and at the expense of decreasing the riches of the world. This is not the kind of occupation that God wants. This is the occupation which belongs to Satan. The principle behind such an occupation is wrong.

The principle of commerce is to increase the money in one's pocket by decreasing the money in another's pocket. Once the idea of making money comes into a person's mind, the result is very simple—one will get more money while another will have less. Once someone's money increases, there must be others whose money decreases. Suppose there are only twenty-one billion dollars in the whole world. Whether you are rich or poor, the total amount of money remains the same. The total amount of money in the world is limited. For my money to increase, I have to take it from others. This is pure commerce. I am not saying that after catching some fish, one cannot sell it. Neither am I saying that after harvesting a crop, producing a lamb, or making a tent, one cannot sell it. I am saying that making tents, raising lambs, harvesting crops, and catching fish are not pure commerce. Those occupations exchange production for money. I derive my benefit from nature. The abundance I receive comes from nature. It is nature that gives me the abundance; I do not become richer by making others poorer.

Note: This content is extracted from CWWN, Vol. 49, Messages for Building Up New Believers (2), Chapter 29, *OCCUPATION*, by Watchman Nee, published by Living Stream Ministry, available at <http://www.ministrybooks.org>.