

The Appearance and Work Christ of the Last Days

Preface

In 1991, Almighty God incarnate appeared and began to work in China. He has expressed several million words, and has been doing the last days' work of judgment beginning with the house of God. He has ended the Age of Grace, begun the Age of Kingdom, and brought the gospel of the arrival of the kingdom of heaven. Almighty God has expressed all truths to purify and save mankind, thoroughly opened up the sealed scroll mentioned in the Book of Revelation in the Bible, and completely revealed the mysteries of the six-thousand-year management plan of how God saves the human race, such as what the purpose of God's management of the human race is, why there are three stages in God's salvation of the human race, how God does the work of judgment in the last days, the mystery of the incarnation, the inside story of the Bible, God's unique authority, God's righteous disposition, the holiness of God, how Satan corrupts the human race, how God saves the human race, the mystery of being raptured before the disasters, how the overcomers are made, the final destination and end for all the different kinds of people, and how Christ's kingdom will be realized. He has truly opened up new horizons and provided a feast for the eyes! Almighty God says: **"I will tell it to you when I open My scroll in the last days. ('The scroll' refers to all of the words that I have spoken—My words in the last days; it contains all of them.)"** ("Chapter 110" of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh). **"The work in the last days lays bare the work of Jehovah and Jesus and all mysteries not understood by man, so as to reveal the destination and the end of mankind and end all the work of salvation among mankind. This stage of work in the last days brings everything to a close. All mysteries not understood by man need to be unraveled to allow man to plumb them to their depths and have a completely clear understanding in his heart. Only then can the human race be classed according to kind"** ("The Mystery of the

Incarnation (4)” in The Word Appears in the Flesh). The words expressed by Almighty God, Christ of the last days, are abundant, fruitful, and comprehensive, allowing people to see that Christ certainly is the way, the truth, and the life, and that He brings the human race the way of everlasting life, which is the way of eternal life.

The Lord Jesus said: **“My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me”** (Jhn 10:27). **“He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches”** (Rev 2:7). Almighty God says: **“My people will listen to My voice, and each and every one of those who truly love Me shall return before My throne”** (“Chapter 1” of God’s Words to the Entire Universe in The Word Appears in the Flesh). Ever since Almighty God’s work of the last days began in mainland China, people from various religions and denominations who truly believe in God, love the truth, and yearn for the appearance of God, have recognized the voice of God in the words spoken by Almighty God. They have seen that the words of Almighty God are the truth, and that they really are what the Holy Spirit says to the churches, and that Almighty God is the appearance of the Savior. These people have flocked in front of God’s throne. Nowadays, more and more people the world over are seeking to investigate the words and work of Almighty God. The human race has gradually been revived in the words of God, and has begun to accept the truth and to know it. The words of God will bring the human race into a new age—the Age of Kingdom. All will be achieved by the words of God, and all people who thirst for the truth and seek the appearance of God will return before the throne of God. This is the great trend; it is the reality that God will certainly bring to fulfillment.

At present many people in the whole religious world thirst for and seek the appearance of God, but because they do not pay attention to searching for what the Holy Spirit says to the churches, they do not hear the voice of God, and therefore cannot welcome the Lord’s return. To make it easier for people of various countries and regions—who are seeking the truth and longing for God’s appearance—to seek and investigate the last day’s work of Almighty God, hear God’s voice, and be brought before Him, we have taken the visionary truths Almighty God has expressed in His work of the last days and compiled and edited them into twenty truths of bearing witness to God’s appearance and work. Meanwhile, according to the problems people must resolve to enter the truth reality, we have given solutions by integrating the words of Almighty God so that they can understand the truth and recognize God’s voice from Almighty

God's words, accept His salvation in the last days, and be brought before His throne, thus following the footsteps of the Lamb to enter the new age!

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Part One: Twenty Truths of Bearing Witness to the Appearance and Work of God

I. Words on the Appearance and Work of God Incarnate

1. What the incarnation and its essence are

Bible Verses for Reference:

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God” (Jhn 1:1).

“And the Word was made flesh, and dwelled among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth” (Jhn 1:14).

“Jesus said to him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man comes to the Father, but by Me. If you had known Me, you should have known My Father also: and from now on you know Him, and have seen Him” (Jhn 14:6–7).

“Jesus said to him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet have you not known Me, Philip? he that has seen Me has seen the Father; and how say you then, Show us the Father? Believe you not that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? the words that I speak to you I speak not of Myself: but the Father that dwells in Me, He does the works. Believe Me that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me: or else believe Me for the very works’ sake” (Jhn 14:9–11).

“I and My Father are one” (Jhn 10:30).

Relevant Words of God:

The “incarnation” is God’s appearance in the flesh; God works among created mankind in the image of the flesh. So for God to be incarnated, He must first be flesh, flesh with normal humanity; this is the most basic prerequisite. In fact, the implication of God’s incarnation is

that God lives and works in the flesh, that God in His very essence becomes flesh, becomes a man.

Excerpted from “The Essence of the Flesh Inhabited by God” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

Incarnation means that God’s Spirit becomes a flesh, that is, God becomes flesh; the work that the flesh does is the work of the Spirit, which is realized in the flesh, expressed by the flesh. No one except God’s flesh can fulfill the ministry of the incarnate God; that is, only God’s incarnate flesh, this normal humanity—and no one else—can express the divine work. If, during His first coming, God had not possessed normal humanity before the age of twenty-nine—if as soon as He was born He could work miracles, if as soon as He learned to speak He could speak the language of heaven, if the moment He first set foot upon the earth He could apprehend all worldly matters, discern every person’s thoughts and intentions—such a person could not have been called a normal man, and such flesh could not have been called human flesh. If this were the case with Christ, then the meaning and the essence of God’s incarnation would be lost. That He possesses normal humanity proves that He is God incarnated in the flesh; the fact that He undergoes a normal human growth process further demonstrates that He is a normal flesh; moreover, His work is sufficient proof that He is God’s Word, God’s Spirit, become flesh.

Excerpted from “The Essence of the Flesh Inhabited by God” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

He who is God incarnate shall possess the essence of God, and He who is God incarnate shall possess the expression of God. Since God becomes flesh, He shall bring forth the work He intends to do, and since God becomes flesh, He shall express what He is, and shall be able to bring the truth to man, bestow life upon him, and point the way for him. Flesh that does not have the essence of God is decidedly not the incarnate God; of this there is no doubt. If man intends to inquire into whether it is God’s incarnate flesh, then he must corroborate this from the disposition He expresses and the words He speaks. Which is to say, to corroborate whether or not it is God’s incarnate flesh, and whether or not it is the true way, one must discriminate on the basis of His essence. And so, in determining whether it is the flesh of God incarnate, the key lies in His essence (His work, His utterances, His disposition, and many other aspects), rather than external appearance. If man scrutinizes only His external appearance, and as a result overlooks His essence, this shows that man is benighted and ignorant.

Excerpted from Preface to The Word Appears in the Flesh

God become flesh is called Christ, and so the Christ that can give people the truth is called God. There is nothing excessive about this, for He possesses the essence of God, and possesses God's disposition, and wisdom in His work, that are unattainable by man. Those who call themselves Christ, yet cannot do the work of God, are frauds. Christ is not merely the manifestation of God on earth, but also the particular flesh assumed by God as He carries out and completes His work among man. This flesh cannot be supplanted by just any man, but is a flesh that can adequately bear God's work on earth, and express the disposition of God, and well represent God, and provide man with life.

Excerpted from "Only Christ of the Last Days Can Give Man the Way of Eternal Life" in The Word Appears in the
Flesh

The implication of God's incarnation is that God lives and works in the flesh, that God in His very essence becomes flesh, becomes a man. His incarnate life and work can be divided into two stages. First is the life He lives before performing His ministry. He lives in an ordinary human family, in utterly normal humanity, obeying the normal morals and laws of human life, with normal human needs (food, clothing, sleep, shelter), normal human weaknesses, and normal human emotions. In other words, during this first stage He lives in non-divine, completely normal humanity, engaging in all the normal human activities. The second stage is the life He lives after beginning to perform His ministry. He still dwells in the ordinary humanity with a normal human shell, showing no outward sign of the supernatural. Yet He lives purely for the sake of His ministry, and during this time His normal humanity exists entirely in order to sustain the normal work of His divinity, for by then His normal humanity has matured to the point of being able to perform His ministry. So, the second stage of His life is to perform His ministry in His normal humanity, when it is a life both of normal humanity and complete divinity. The reason why, during the first stage of His life, He lives in completely ordinary humanity is that His humanity is not yet able to maintain the entirety of the divine work, is not yet mature; only after His humanity grows mature, becomes capable of shouldering His ministry, can He set about performing the ministry that He ought to perform. Since He, as flesh, needs to grow and mature, the first stage of His life is that of normal humanity—while in the

second stage, because His humanity is capable of undertaking His work and performing His ministry, the life the incarnate God lives during His ministry is one of both humanity and complete divinity. If, from the moment of His birth, the incarnate God began His ministry in earnest, performing supernatural signs and wonders, then He would have no corporeal essence. Therefore, His humanity exists for the sake of His corporeal essence; there can be no flesh without humanity, and a person without humanity is not a human being. In this way, the humanity of God's flesh is an intrinsic property of God's incarnate flesh. To say that "when God becomes flesh He is entirely divine, and not at all human," is blasphemy, for this statement simply does not exist, and violates the principle of incarnation. Even after He begins to perform His ministry, He still lives in His divinity with a human outer shell when He does His work; it is just that at the time, His humanity serves the sole purpose of allowing His divinity to perform the work in the normal flesh. So the agent of the work is the divinity inhabiting His humanity. His divinity, not His humanity, is at work, yet this divinity is hidden within His humanity; in essence, His work is done by His complete divinity, not by His humanity. But the performer of the work is His flesh. One could say that He is a man and also is God, for God becomes a God living in the flesh, with a human shell and a human essence but also the essence of God. Because He is a man with the essence of God, He is above all created humans, above any man who can perform God's work. And so, among all those with a human shell like His, among all those who possess humanity, only He is the incarnate God Himself—all others are created humans. Though they all have humanity, created humans have nothing but humanity, while God incarnate is different: In His flesh He not only has humanity but, more importantly, divinity. His humanity can be seen in the outer appearance of His flesh and in His everyday life, but His divinity is difficult to perceive. Because His divinity is expressed only when He has humanity, and is not as supernatural as people imagine it to be, it is extremely difficult for people to see. Even today, people have the utmost difficulty fathoming the true essence of the incarnate God. Even after I have spoken about it at such length, I expect it is still a mystery to most of you. In fact, this issue is very simple: Since God becomes flesh, His essence is a combination of humanity and divinity. This combination is called God Himself, God Himself on earth.

Excerpted from "The Essence of the Flesh Inhabited by God" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The humanity of God incarnate exists to maintain the normal divine work in the flesh; His normal human thinking sustains His normal humanity and all His normal corporeal activities. One could say that His normal human thinking exists in order to sustain all the work of God in the flesh. If this flesh did not possess a normal human mind, then God could not work in the flesh, and what He needs to do in the flesh could never be accomplished. Though the incarnate God possesses a normal human mind, His work is not adulterated by human thought; He undertakes the work in the humanity with a normal mind, under the precondition of possessing the humanity with a mind, not by the exercise of normal human thought. No matter how lofty the thoughts of His flesh are, His work is not tainted by logic or thinking. In other words, His work is not conceived by the mind of His flesh, but is a direct expression of the divine work in His humanity. All of His work is the ministry He must fulfill, and none of it is conceived by His brain. For example, healing the sick, casting out demons, and the crucifixion were not products of His human mind, and could not have been achieved by any man with a human mind. Likewise, today's work of conquest is a ministry that must be performed by the incarnate God, but it is not the work of a human will, it is the work His divinity should do, work of which no fleshly human is capable. So the incarnate God must possess a normal human mind, must possess normal humanity, because He must perform His work in the humanity with a normal mind. This is the essence of the work of the incarnate God, the very essence of the incarnate God.

Before Jesus performed the work, He merely lived in His normal humanity. No one could tell that He was God, no one found out that He was the incarnate God; people just knew Him as a completely ordinary man. His utterly ordinary, normal humanity was proof that God was incarnated in the flesh, and that the Age of Grace was the age of the work of the incarnate God, not the age of the Spirit's work. It was proof that the Spirit of God was realized completely in the flesh, that in the age of God's incarnation His flesh would perform all the work of the Spirit. The Christ with normal humanity is a flesh in which the Spirit is realized, and is possessed of normal humanity, normal sense, and human thought. "Being realized" means God becoming man, the Spirit becoming flesh; to put it more plainly, it is when God Himself inhabits a flesh with normal humanity, and through it expresses His divine work—this is what it means to be realized, or incarnated.

Excerpted from "The Essence of the Flesh Inhabited by God" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

In the period of time that the Lord Jesus was working, people could see that God had many human expressions. For example, He could dance, He could attend weddings, He could commune with people, speak with them, and discuss things with them. In addition to that, the Lord Jesus also completed a lot of work that represented His divinity, and of course all of this work was an expression and a revelation of God's disposition. During this time, when God's divinity was realized in ordinary flesh in a way that people could see and touch, they no longer felt that He was flickering in and out of perception or that they could not get close to Him. On the contrary, they could try to grasp the will of God or understand His divinity through every movement, through the words, and through the work of the Son of man. The incarnate Son of man expressed God's divinity through His humanity and conveyed the will of God to mankind. And through His expression of God's will and disposition, He also revealed to people the God that cannot be seen or touched who dwells in the spiritual realm. What people saw was God Himself in tangible form, made of flesh and blood. So the incarnate Son of man made things such as the identity of God Himself, God's status, image, disposition, and what He has and is, concrete and humanized. Even though the external appearance of the Son of man had some limitations regarding the image of God, His essence and what He has and is were entirely able to represent the identity and status of God Himself—there were merely some differences in the form of expression. We cannot deny that the Son of man represented the identity and status of God Himself, both in the form of His humanity and in His divinity. During this time, however, God worked through the flesh, spoke from the perspective of the flesh, and stood before mankind with the identity and status of the Son of man, and this gave people the opportunity to encounter and experience the true words and work of God among mankind. It also allowed people insight into His divinity and His greatness in the midst of humility, as well as to gain a preliminary understanding and definition of the authenticity and reality of God. Even though the work completed by the Lord Jesus, His ways of working, and the perspective from which He spoke differed from God's real person in the spiritual realm, everything about Him truly represented God Himself, whom mankind had never seen before—this cannot be denied! That is to say, no matter in what form God appears, no matter from which perspective He speaks, or in what image He faces mankind, God represents nothing but Himself. He can represent neither any one human, nor any of corrupted mankind. God is God Himself, and this cannot be denied.

Excerpted from "God's Work, God's Disposition, and God Himself III" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Although the outward appearance of God incarnate is exactly the same as a human, and although He learns human knowledge and speaks human language, and sometimes even expresses His ideas through mankind's own methods or ways of speaking, nevertheless, the way He sees humans and sees the essence of things is absolutely not the same as the way corrupt people see mankind and the essence of things. His perspective and the elevation at which He stands is something unattainable for a corrupt person. This is because God is truth, because the flesh that He wears also possesses the essence of God, and His thoughts and that which is expressed by His humanity are also the truth. For corrupt people, what He expresses in the flesh are provisions of the truth, and of life. These provisions are not just for one person, but for all of mankind. In any corrupt person's heart, there are only those few people who are associated with them. They care and are concerned only for this handful of people. When disaster is on the horizon, they first think of their own children, spouse, or parents. At most, a more compassionate person would spare some thought for some relative or good friend, but do the thoughts of even such a compassionate person extend further than that? No, never! Because humans are, after all, humans, and they can only look at everything from the elevation and perspective of a human being. However, God incarnate is entirely different from a corrupt human. No matter how ordinary, how normal, how lowly God's incarnate flesh is, or even with what contempt people look down on Him, His thoughts and His attitude toward mankind are things that no man could possess, that no man could imitate. He will always observe mankind from the perspective of divinity, from the elevation of His position as the Creator. He will always see mankind through the essence and the mindset of God. He absolutely cannot see mankind from the lowly elevation of an average person, or from the perspective of a corrupt person. When people look at mankind, they do so with human vision, and they use things such as human knowledge and human rules and theories as their measure. This is within the scope of what people can see with their eyes and the scope that is achievable by corrupt people. When God looks at mankind, He looks with divine vision, and He uses His essence and what He has and is as a measure. This scope includes things that people cannot see, and this is where God incarnate and corrupt humans are entirely different. This difference is determined by humans' and God's different essences—it is these different essences that determine their identities and positions as well as the perspective and elevation from which they see things.

Excerpted from “God’s Work, God’s Disposition, and God Himself III” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The incarnate God is called Christ, and Christ is the flesh donned by the Spirit of God. This flesh is unlike any man that is of the flesh. This difference is because Christ is not of flesh and blood; He is the incarnation of the Spirit. He has both a normal humanity and a complete divinity. His divinity is not possessed by any man. His normal humanity sustains all His normal activities in the flesh, while His divinity carries out the work of God Himself. Be it His humanity or divinity, both submit to the will of the heavenly Father. The essence of Christ is the Spirit, that is, the divinity. Therefore, His essence is that of God Himself; this essence will not interrupt His own work, and He could not possibly do anything that destroys His own work, nor would He ever utter any words that go against His own will. Therefore, the incarnate God would absolutely never do any work that interrupts His own management. This is what all people should understand. The essence of the work of the Holy Spirit is to save man, and is for the sake of God’s own management. Similarly, the work of Christ is also to save man, and is for the sake of God’s will. Given that God becomes flesh, He realizes His essence within His flesh, such that His flesh is sufficient to undertake His work. Therefore, all the work of God’s Spirit is replaced by the work of Christ during the time of incarnation, and at the core of all work throughout the time of incarnation is the work of Christ. It cannot be commingled with work from any other age. And since God becomes flesh, He works in the identity of His flesh; since He comes in the flesh, He then finishes in the flesh the work that He ought to do. Be it the Spirit of God or be it Christ, both are God Himself, and He does the work that He ought to do and performs the ministry that He ought to perform.

The very essence of God itself wields authority, but He is able to fully submit to the authority that comes from Him. Be it the work of the Spirit or the work of the flesh, neither conflicts with the other. The Spirit of God is the authority over all creation. The flesh with the essence of God is also possessed of authority, but God in the flesh can do all the work that obeys the will of the heavenly Father. This cannot be attained or conceived by any one person. God Himself is authority, but His flesh can submit to His authority. This is what is implied when it is said that “Christ obeys the will of God the Father.” God is a Spirit and can do the work of salvation, as can God become man. At any rate, God Himself does His own work; He neither interrupts nor interferes, much less does He carry out work that contradicts itself, for the

essence of the work done by the Spirit and the flesh is alike. Be it the Spirit or the flesh, both work to fulfill one will and to manage the same work. Though the Spirit and the flesh have two disparate qualities, their essences are the same; both have the essence of God Himself, and the identity of God Himself. God Himself possesses no elements of disobedience; His essence is good. He is the expression of all beauty and goodness, as well as all love. Even in the flesh, God does not do anything that disobeys God the Father. Even at the expense of sacrificing His life, He would be wholeheartedly willing to do so, and He would make no other choice. God possesses no elements of self-righteousness or self-importance, or those of conceit and arrogance; He possesses no elements of crookedness. Everything that disobeys God comes from Satan; Satan is the source of all ugliness and wickedness. The reason that man has qualities similar to those of Satan is because man has been corrupted and processed by Satan. Christ has not been corrupted by Satan, hence He possesses only the characteristics of God, and none of the characteristics of Satan. No matter how arduous the work or weak the flesh, God, while He lives in the flesh, will never do anything that interrupts the work of God Himself, much less forsake the will of God the Father in disobedience. He would rather suffer pains of the flesh than betray the will of God the Father; it is just as Jesus said in prayer, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me: nevertheless not as I will, but as You will." People make their own choices, but Christ does not. Though He has the identity of God Himself, He still seeks the will of God the Father, and fulfills what is entrusted to Him by God the Father, from the perspective of the flesh. This is something that man cannot attain to. That which comes from Satan cannot have the essence of God; it can only have one that disobeys and resists God. It cannot fully obey God, much less willingly obey the will of God. All men apart from Christ may do that which resists God, and not a single man can directly undertake the work entrusted by God; not one is able to regard the management of God as their own duty to perform. The essence of Christ is submission to the will of God the Father; disobedience against God is the characteristic of Satan. These two qualities are incompatible, and any who has the qualities of Satan cannot be called Christ. The reason that man cannot do the work of God in His stead is because man does not have any of the essence of God. Man works for God for the sake of man's personal interests and future prospects, but Christ works to do the will of God the Father.

Excerpted from "The Essence of Christ Is Obedience to the Will of the Heavenly Father" in *The Word Appears in*

the Flesh

The flesh worn by the Spirit of God is God's own flesh. The Spirit of God is supreme; He is almighty, holy, and righteous. Likewise, His flesh is also supreme, almighty, holy, and righteous. Such a flesh can only do that which is righteous and beneficial to mankind, that which is holy, glorious, and mighty; He is incapable of doing anything that violates the truth, that violates morality and justice, and much less is He capable of anything that would betray God's Spirit. The Spirit of God is holy, and thus His flesh is incorruptible by Satan; His flesh is of a different essence than the flesh of man. For it is man, not God, who is corrupted by Satan; Satan could not possibly corrupt the flesh of God. Thus, despite the fact that man and Christ dwell within the same space, it is only man who is possessed, used, and entrapped by Satan. By contrast, Christ is eternally impervious to Satan's corruption, because Satan will never be capable of ascending to the highest place, and will never be able to draw near to God. Today, you should all understand that it is only mankind, corrupted as it is by Satan, that betrays Me. Betrayal will never be an issue that involves Christ in the least.

Excerpted from "A Very Serious Problem: Betrayal (2)" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

2. The differences between the work of God incarnate and the work of the Spirit

Bible Verses for Reference:

"And he said, I beseech You, show me Your glory. And He said, I will make all My goodness pass before you, and I will proclaim the name of Jehovah before you; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy. And He said, You can not see My face: for there shall no man see Me, and live" (Exo 33:18–20).

"And Jehovah came down on mount Sinai, on the top of the mount: and Jehovah called Moses up to the top of the mount; and Moses went up. And Jehovah said to Moses, Go down, charge the people, lest they break through to Jehovah to gaze, and many of them perish. And let the priests also, which come near to Jehovah, sanctify themselves, lest Jehovah break forth on them" (Exo 19:20–22).

"And all the people saw the thunder, and the lightning, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking: and when the people saw it, they removed, and stood afar off. And they

said to Moses, Speak you with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die” (Exo 20:18–19).

“Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again. The people therefore, that stood by, and heard it, said that it thundered: others said, An angel spoke to Him” (Jhn 12:28–29).

Relevant Words of God:

God’s saving of man is not done directly using the method of the Spirit and the identity of the Spirit, for His Spirit can neither be touched nor seen by man, neither can man draw near. If He tried to save man directly using the perspective of the Spirit, man would be unable to receive His salvation. If God did not put on the outward form of a created man, there would be no way for man to receive this salvation. For man has no way of approaching Him, much as no one was able to go near the cloud of Jehovah. Only by becoming a created human being, that is, only by putting His word into the body of flesh that He is about to become, can He personally work the word into all who follow Him. Only then can man personally see and hear His word, and moreover enter into possession of His word, and by this means come to be fully saved. If God did not become flesh, no one of flesh and blood would be able to receive such great salvation, nor would a single person be saved. If the Spirit of God worked directly in the midst of mankind, all humanity would be struck down, or else, with no way of coming into touch with God, they would be completely carried away captive by Satan. The first incarnation was to redeem man from sin, to redeem him by means of the fleshly body of Jesus, that is, He saved man from the cross, but the corrupt satanic disposition still remained within man. The second incarnation is no longer to serve as a sin offering but rather to save fully those who were redeemed from sin. This is done so that those who have been forgiven may be delivered from their sins and made fully clean, and by attaining a changed disposition, break free of Satan’s influence of darkness and return before the throne of God. Only in this way can man be fully sanctified. After the Age of Law had come to an end, and beginning with the Age of Grace, God began the work of salvation, which continues until the last days when, in judging and chastising the human race for their rebelliousness, He will completely purify mankind. Only then will God conclude His work of salvation and enter into rest. Therefore, in the three stages of work, only twice has God become flesh to carry out His work among man Himself. That is because only one in the three

stages of work is to guide men in leading their lives, while the other two consist of the work of salvation. Only by becoming flesh can God live alongside man, experience the suffering of the world, and live in a normal body of flesh. Only in this way can He supply men with the practical way that they need as created beings. It is through the incarnation of God that man receives full salvation from God, and not directly from heaven in answer to his prayers. For, man being of the flesh, he has no way of seeing the Spirit of God, much less of approaching His Spirit. All that man can come into contact with is God's incarnate flesh, and only by means of this is man able to grasp all the ways and all the truths and receive full salvation.

Excerpted from "The Mystery of the Incarnation (4)" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The only reason that the incarnate God has come into the flesh is because of the needs of corrupt man. It is because of the needs of man, not of God, and all His sacrifices and sufferings are for the sake of mankind, and not for the benefit of God Himself. There are no pros and cons or rewards for God; He shall not reap some future harvest, but that which was originally owed to Him. All that He does and sacrifices for mankind is not so that He might gain great rewards, but purely for the sake of mankind. Though God's work in the flesh involves many unimaginable difficulties, the effects that it ultimately achieves far exceed those of the work done directly by the Spirit. The work of the flesh entails much hardship, and the flesh cannot possess the same great identity as the Spirit, He cannot carry out the same supernatural deeds as the Spirit, much less can He possess the same authority as the Spirit. Yet the essence of the work done by this unremarkable flesh is far superior to that of the work done directly by the Spirit, and this flesh Himself is the answer to the needs of all mankind. For those to be saved, the use value of the Spirit is far inferior to that of the flesh: The work of the Spirit is able to cover the entire universe, across all mountains, rivers, lakes, and oceans, yet the work of the flesh more effectively relates to every person with whom He comes into contact. What is more, God's flesh with tangible form can better be understood and trusted by man, and can further deepen man's knowledge of God, and can leave upon man a more profound impression of the actual deeds of God. The work of the Spirit is shrouded in mystery; it is difficult for mortal beings to fathom, and even harder for them to see, and so they can only rely on hollow imaginings. The work of the flesh, however, is normal, and based on reality, and possessed of rich wisdom, and is a fact that can be beheld by the physical eye of man; man can personally experience the wisdom of the work of God, and has

no need to employ his bountiful imagination. This is the accuracy and real value of the work of God in the flesh. The Spirit can only do things that are invisible to man and difficult for him to imagine, for example the enlightenment of the Spirit, the moving of the Spirit, and the guidance of the Spirit, but for man who has a mind, these do not provide any clear meaning. They only provide a moving, or a broad meaning, and cannot give an instruction with words. The work of God in the flesh, however, is greatly different: It involves the accurate guidance of words, it has clear will, and has clear required goals. And so man does not need to grope around, or employ his imagination, much less make guesses. This is the clarity of the work in the flesh, and its great difference from the work of the Spirit. The work of the Spirit is only suitable for a limited scope and cannot replace the work of the flesh. The work of the flesh gives man far more exact and necessary goals and far more real, valuable knowledge than the work of the Spirit. The work that is of greatest value to corrupt man is that which provides accurate words, clear goals to pursue, and which can be seen and touched. Only realistic work and timely guidance are suited to man's tastes, and only real work can save man from his corrupt and depraved disposition. This can only be achieved by the incarnate God; only the incarnate God can save man from his formerly corrupt and depraved disposition. Although the Spirit is the inherent essence of God, work such as this can only be done by His flesh. If the Spirit worked single-handedly, then it would not be possible for His work to be effective—this is a plain truth.

Excerpted from "Corrupt Mankind Is More in Need of the Salvation of the Incarnate God" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Though the incarnate flesh of God is far from matching God's identity and position, and seems to man to be incompatible with His actual status, this flesh, who does not possess the true image of God, or the true identity of God, can do the work that God's Spirit is unable to do directly. Such is the true significance and value of God's incarnation, and it is this significance and value which man is unable to appreciate and acknowledge. Though all mankind look up to God's Spirit and look down on God's flesh, irrespective of how they view or think, the real significance and value of the flesh far exceed those of the Spirit. Of course, this is only with regard to corrupt mankind. For everyone who seeks the truth and longs for the appearance of God, the Spirit's work can only provide moving or inspiration, and a sense of wondrousness that it is inexplicable and unimaginable, and a sense that it is great, transcendent, and

admirable, yet also unattainable and unobtainable to all. Man and the Spirit of God can only look upon each other from afar, as if there were a great distance between them, and they can never be alike, as if man and God were separated by an invisible divide. In fact, this is an illusion given to man by the Spirit, which is because the Spirit and man are not of the same kind and shall never coexist in the same world, and because the Spirit possesses nothing of man. So man does not have need of the Spirit, for the Spirit cannot directly do the work most needed by man. The work of the flesh offers man real objectives to pursue, clear words, and a sense that He is real and normal, that He is humble and ordinary. Although man may fear Him, for most people He is easy to relate to: Man can behold His face, and hear His voice, and he does not need to look at Him from afar. This flesh feels approachable to man, not distant, or unfathomable, but visible and touchable, for this flesh is in the same world as man.

Excerpted from “Corrupt Mankind Is More in Need of the Salvation of the Incarnate God” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

When God had not yet become flesh, people did not understand much of what He said, because His words came out of complete divinity. The perspective and context of what He said was invisible and unreachable to mankind; it was expressed from a spiritual realm that people could not see. For people who lived in the flesh, they could not pass through the spiritual realm. But after God became flesh, He spoke to mankind from the perspective of humanity, and He came out of and surpassed the scope of the spiritual realm. He could express His divine disposition, will, and attitude through things humans could imagine, things they saw and encountered in their lives, and using methods that humans could accept, in a language they could understand, and with knowledge they could grasp, to allow mankind to understand and to know God, to comprehend His intention and His required standards within the scope of their capacity and to the degree that they were able. This was the method and principle of God’s work in humanity. Even though God’s ways and His principles of working in the flesh were mostly achieved by means of or through humanity, it truly did achieve results that could not be achieved by working directly in divinity.

Excerpted from “God’s Work, God’s Disposition, and God Himself III” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Now man sees that the work of God incarnate is indeed extraordinary, and there is much in it that cannot be attained by man, and that are mysteries and wonders. Therefore, many have submitted. Some have never submitted to any man since the day of their birth, yet when they see the words of God this day, they fully submit without noticing they have done so, and they do not venture to scrutinize or say anything else. Humanity has fallen under the word and lies prostrate under the judgment of the word. If the Spirit of God spoke directly to man, mankind would all submit to the voice, falling down without words of revelation, much in the way that Paul fell to the ground in the light on the road to Damascus. If God continued to work in this way, man would never be able to come to know his own corruption through the judgment of the word and thereby attain salvation. Only through becoming flesh can God personally deliver His words into the ears of each and every human being, so that all who have ears may hear His words and receive His work of judgment by the word. Only this is the result achieved by His word, rather than the Spirit becoming manifest to frighten man into submission. It is only through this practical and yet extraordinary work that the old disposition of man, hidden deep within for many years, can be fully exposed, so that man may recognize it and have it changed. These things are all the practical work of God incarnate, in which, speaking and executing judgment in a practical manner, He achieves the results of judgment upon man by the word. This is the authority of God incarnate and the significance of God's incarnation. It is done to make known the authority of God incarnate, to make known the results achieved by the work of the word, and to make known that the Spirit has come in the flesh and demonstrates His authority through judging man by the word. Although His flesh is the outward form of an ordinary and normal humanity, it is the results His words achieve that show to man He is full of authority, that He is God Himself, and that His words are the expression of God Himself. By this means all humanity is shown that He is God Himself, that He is God Himself who became flesh, that He is to be offended by none, and that no one can surpass His judgment by the word, and no force of darkness can prevail over His authority. Man submits to Him entirely because He is the Word become flesh, because of His authority, and because of His judgment by the word. The work brought by His incarnate flesh is the authority that He possesses. The reason why He becomes flesh is because the flesh can also possess authority, and He is capable of carrying out work in a practical manner among mankind, in such a way that it is visible and tangible to man. This work is much more realistic than the work done directly by the Spirit of

God, who possesses all authority, and its results are also apparent. This is because God's incarnate flesh can speak and work in a practical way. The outward form of His flesh holds no authority, and can be approached by man, whereas His essence does carry authority, but His authority is visible to none. When He speaks and works, man is unable to detect the existence of His authority; this facilitates Him in doing work of a practical nature. All this practical work can achieve results. Even though no man realizes that He holds authority, or sees that He is not to be offended, or sees His wrath, He achieves the intended results of His words through His veiled authority, His hidden wrath, and the words He openly speaks. In other words, through His tone of voice, the sternness of His speech, and all the wisdom of His words, man is utterly convinced. In this way, man submits to the word of God incarnate, who seemingly has no authority, thereby fulfilling God's aim of saving man. This is another aspect of the significance of His incarnation: to speak more realistically and allow the reality of His words to have an effect upon man, so that man may witness the power of the word of God. Therefore, were this work not done by means of the incarnation, it would not achieve the slightest results and would not be able to fully save sinners.

Excerpted from "The Mystery of the Incarnation (4)" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Because the one who is judged is man, man who is of the flesh and has been corrupted, and it is not the spirit of Satan that is judged directly, the work of judgment is therefore not carried out in the spiritual world, but among man. No one is more suitable, and qualified, than God in the flesh for the work of judging the corruption of man's flesh. If judgment were carried out directly by the Spirit of God, then it would not be all-embracing. Furthermore, such work would be difficult for man to accept, for the Spirit is unable to come face-to-face with man, and because of this, the effects would not be immediate, much less would man be able to behold the unoffendable disposition of God more clearly. Satan can only be fully defeated if God in the flesh judges the corruption of mankind. Being the same as man possessed of normal humanity, God in the flesh can directly judge the unrighteousness of man; this is the mark of His innate holiness, and of His extraordinariness. Only God is qualified to, and is in the position to, judge man, for He is possessed of the truth, and righteousness, and so He is able to judge man. Those who are without truth and righteousness are not fit to judge others. If this work were done by the Spirit of God, then it would not mean victory over Satan. The Spirit is inherently more

exalted than mortal beings, and the Spirit of God is inherently holy, and triumphant over the flesh. If the Spirit did this work directly, He would not be able to judge all of man's disobedience and could not reveal all of man's unrighteousness. For the work of judgment is also carried out through man's notions about God, and man has never had any notions about the Spirit, and so the Spirit is incapable of better revealing the unrighteousness of man, much less of completely disclosing such unrighteousness. The incarnate God is the enemy of all those who do not know Him. Through judging man's notions and opposition to Him, He discloses all the disobedience of mankind. The effects of His work in the flesh are more apparent than those of the work of the Spirit. And so, the judgment of all mankind is not carried out directly by the Spirit but is the work of the incarnate God. God in the flesh can be seen and touched by man, and God in the flesh can completely conquer man. In his relationship with God in the flesh, man progresses from opposition to obedience, from persecution to acceptance, from notions to knowledge, and from rejection to love—these are the effects of the work of the incarnate God. Man is only saved through the acceptance of His judgment, man only gradually comes to know Him through the words of His mouth, man is conquered by Him during his opposition to Him, and he receives the life supply from Him during the acceptance of His chastisement. All of this work is the work of God in the flesh, and not the work of God in His identity as the Spirit.

Excerpted from "Corrupt Mankind Is More in Need of the Salvation of the Incarnate God" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The best thing about His work in the flesh is that He can leave accurate words and exhortations, and His specific will for mankind to those who follow Him, so that afterward His followers can more accurately and more concretely pass on all of His work in the flesh, and His will for the whole of mankind, to those who accept this way. Only the work of God in the flesh among man truly accomplishes the fact of God's being together and living together with man. Only this work fulfills man's desire to behold the face of God, witness the work of God, and hear the personal word of God. The incarnate God brings to an end the age when only the back of Jehovah appeared to mankind, and He also concludes the age of mankind's belief in the vague God. In particular, the work of the last incarnate God brings all mankind into an age that is more realistic, more practical, and more beautiful. He not only concludes the age of law and doctrine but, more importantly, He reveals to mankind a God who is real and normal, who is

righteous and holy, who unlocks the work of the management plan and who demonstrates the mysteries and destination of mankind, who created mankind and brings to an end the management work, and who has remained hidden for thousands of years. He brings the age of vagueness to a complete end, He concludes the age in which the whole of mankind wished to seek God's face but was unable to, He ends the age in which the whole of mankind served Satan, and He leads the whole of mankind all the way into a completely new era. All this is the outcome of the work of God in the flesh in place of God's Spirit. When God works in His flesh, those who follow Him no longer seek and grope after those things which seem to both exist and not exist, and they cease to guess at the will of the vague God. When God spreads His work in the flesh, those who follow Him shall pass on the work that He has done in the flesh to all religions and denominations, and they shall communicate all of His words to the ears of the whole of mankind. All that is heard by those who receive His gospel shall be the facts of His work, shall be things personally seen and heard by man, and shall be facts and not hearsay. These facts are the evidence with which He spreads the work, and they are also the tools that He uses in spreading the work. Without the existence of facts, His gospel would not spread across all countries and to all places; without facts but only with man's imaginings, He would never be able to do the work of conquering the entire universe. The Spirit is impalpable to man, and invisible to man, and the work of the Spirit is incapable of leaving any further evidence or facts of God's work for man. Man shall never behold the real face of God, he shall always believe in a vague God that does not exist. Man shall never behold the face of God, nor will man ever hear words personally spoken by God. Man's imaginings are, after all, empty, and cannot replace the true face of God; the inherent disposition of God, and the work of God Himself, cannot be impersonated by man. The invisible God in heaven and His work can only be brought to earth by God incarnate who personally does His work among man. This is the most ideal way for God to appear to man, in which man sees God and comes to know the true face of God, and it cannot be achieved by a non-incarnate God.

Excerpted from "Corrupt Mankind Is More in Need of the Salvation of the Incarnate God" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The work of God in the flesh must be done in the flesh. If it were done directly by the Spirit of God, it would yield no effects. Even if it were done by the Spirit, the work would be of no great

significance, and would ultimately be unpersuasive. All creatures wish to know whether the work of the Creator has significance, and what it represents, and what it is done for the sake of, and whether the work of God is full of authority and wisdom, and whether it is of the utmost value and significance. The work He does is done for the salvation of the whole of mankind, for the sake of defeating Satan, and for bearing testimony to Himself among all things. As such, the work that He does must be of great significance. The flesh of man has been corrupted by Satan, and it has been most deeply blinded, and profoundly harmed. The most fundamental reason why God works personally in the flesh is because the object of His salvation is man, who is of the flesh, and because Satan also uses the flesh of man to disturb the work of God. The battle with Satan is actually the work of conquering man, and at the same time, man is also the object of God's salvation. In this way, the work of God incarnate is essential. Satan corrupted the flesh of man, and man became the embodiment of Satan, and became the object to be defeated by God. In this way, the work of doing battle with Satan and saving mankind occurs on earth, and God must become human in order to do battle with Satan. This is work of the utmost practicality. When God is working in the flesh, He is actually doing battle with Satan in the flesh. When He works in the flesh, He is doing His work in the spiritual realm, and He makes the whole of His work in the spiritual realm real on earth. The one who is conquered is man, man who is disobedient to Him, and the one who is defeated is the embodiment of Satan (of course, this is also man), who is in enmity to Him, and the one who is ultimately saved is also man. In this way, it is even more necessary for God to become a human who has the outer shell of a creation, so that He is able to do real battle with Satan, to conquer man, who is disobedient to Him and possessed of the same outer shell as Him, and to save man, who is of the same outer shell as Him and has been harmed by Satan. His enemy is man, the object of His conquest is man, and the object of His salvation is man, who was created by Him. So He must become human, and in this way, His work becomes much easier. He is able to defeat Satan and conquer mankind, and, moreover, is able to save mankind. ... This flesh is so important to mankind because He is man and, even more so, He is God, because He can do the work that no ordinary man of flesh can do, and because He can save corrupt man, who lives together with Him on earth. Though He is identical to man, the incarnate God is more important to mankind than any person of value, for He can do the work that cannot be done by the Spirit of God, is more able than the Spirit of God to bear testimony to God Himself, and is more able than the Spirit of God to fully gain mankind.

As a result, although this flesh is normal and ordinary, His contribution to mankind and His significance to the existence of mankind make Him highly precious, and the real value and significance of this flesh is immeasurable to any human. Although this flesh cannot directly destroy Satan, He can use His work to conquer mankind and defeat Satan, and make Satan fully submit to His dominion. It is because God is incarnated that He can defeat Satan and is able to save mankind. He does not directly destroy Satan, but instead becomes flesh to do the work to conquer mankind, who has been corrupted by Satan. In this way, He is better able to bear testimony to Himself among His creatures, and He is better able to save corrupted man. God incarnate's defeat of Satan bears greater testimony, and is more persuasive, than the direct destruction of Satan by the Spirit of God. God in the flesh is better able to help man know the Creator and is better able to bear testimony to Himself among His creatures.

Excerpted from "Corrupt Mankind Is More in Need of the Salvation of the Incarnate God" in The Word Appears in the Flesh

3. Why God does not use man to do His work of judgment in the last days, but becomes flesh and does it Himself

Relevant Words of God:

The work of judgment is God's own work, so it must naturally be carried out by God Himself; it cannot be done by man in His stead. Because judgment is the use of the truth to conquer humankind, there is no question that God would still appear in the incarnate image to perform this work among man. That is to say, in the last days, Christ shall use the truth to teach people across the world and make all truths known to them. This is God's work of judgment.

Excerpted from "Christ Does the Work of Judgment With the Truth" in The Word Appears in the Flesh

In the last days, Christ uses a variety of truths to teach man, to expose the substance of man, and to dissect the words and deeds of man. These words comprise various truths, such as man's duty, how man should obey God, how man should be loyal to God, how man ought to live out normal humanity, as well as the wisdom and the disposition of God, and so on. These words are all directed at the substance of man and his corrupt disposition. In particular, the words that expose how man spurns God are spoken in regard to how man is an embodiment of Satan,

and an enemy force against God. In undertaking His work of judgment, God does not simply make clear the nature of man with a few words; He exposes, deals with, and prunes over the long term. These methods of exposure, dealing, and pruning cannot be substituted with ordinary words, but with the truth of which man is utterly bereft. Only methods such as these can be called judgment; only through judgment of this kind can man be subdued and thoroughly convinced into submission to God, and moreover gain true knowledge of God. What the work of judgment brings about is man's understanding of the true face of God and the truth about his own rebelliousness. The work of judgment allows man to gain much understanding of the will of God, of the purpose of God's work, and of the mysteries that are incomprehensible to him. It also allows man to recognize and know his corrupt essence and the roots of his corruption, as well as to discover the ugliness of man. These effects are all brought about by the work of judgment, for the essence of this work is actually the work of opening up the truth, the way, and the life of God to all those who have faith in Him. This work is the work of judgment done by God.

Excerpted from "Christ Does the Work of Judgment With the Truth" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Today, it is because of your filth that I judge you, and it is because of your corruption and rebelliousness that I chastise you. I am not flaunting My power to you or deliberately oppressing you; I do these things because you, who have been born in this land of filth, have been so severely contaminated by filth. You have simply lost your integrity and humanity and you have become like pigs born in the dirtiest corners of the world, and so it is because of this that you are judged and that I unleash My wrath upon you. It is precisely because of this judgment that you have been able to see that God is the righteous God, and that God is the holy God; it is precisely because of His holiness and His righteousness that He judges you and unleashes His wrath upon you. Because He can reveal His righteous disposition when He sees the rebelliousness of man, and because He can reveal His holiness when He sees the filth of man, this is enough to show that He is God Himself, who is holy and pristine, and yet lives in the land of filth. If a person wallows in the mire with others, and there is nothing holy about him, and he has no righteous disposition, then he is not qualified to judge man's iniquity, nor is he fit to carry out the judgment of man. If a person were to judge another, would it not be as if they were slapping themselves in the face? How could people who are equally filthy as one another be

qualified to judge those who are alike to them? Only the holy God Himself is able to judge the whole of filthy mankind. How could man judge man's sins? How could man see the sins of man, and how could man be qualified to condemn these sins? If God were not qualified to judge the sins of man, then how could He be the righteous God Himself? When people's corrupt dispositions are revealed, God speaks in order to judge people, and only then do people see that He is holy.

Excerpted from "How the Effects of the Second Step of the Work of Conquest Are Achieved" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

For all of those who live in the flesh, changing their disposition requires goals to pursue, and knowing God requires witnessing the real deeds and the real face of God. Both can only be achieved by God's incarnate flesh, and both can only be accomplished by the normal and real flesh. This is why the incarnation is necessary, and why it is needed by all corrupt mankind. Since people are required to know God, the images of the vague and supernatural Gods must be dispelled from their hearts, and since they are required to cast off their corrupt disposition, they must first know their corrupt disposition. If only man does the work to dispel the images of the vague Gods from people's hearts, then he will fail to achieve the proper effect. The images of the vague Gods in people's hearts cannot be exposed, cast off, or completely expelled by words alone. In doing so, ultimately it would still not be possible to dispel these deep-rooted things from people. Only by replacing these vague and supernatural things with the practical God and the true image of God, and making people gradually know them, can the due effect be achieved. Man recognizes that the God whom he sought in times past is vague and supernatural. That which can achieve this effect is not the direct leadership of the Spirit, much less the teachings of a certain individual, but the incarnate God. The notions of man are laid bare when the incarnate God officially does His work, because the normality and reality of the incarnate God is the antithesis of the vague and supernatural God in man's imagination. The original notions of man can only be revealed when contrasted against the incarnate God. Without the comparison to the incarnate God, the notions of man could not be revealed; in other words, without reality as a foil, the vague things could not be revealed. No one is capable of using words to do this work, and no one is capable of articulating this work using words. Only God Himself can do His own work, and no one else can do this work on His behalf. No matter how rich the

language of man is, he is incapable of articulating the reality and normality of God. Man can only know God more practically, and can only see Him more clearly, if God personally works among man and completely shows forth His image and His being. This effect cannot be achieved by any human being of flesh.

Excerpted from “Corrupt Mankind Is More in Need of the Salvation of the Incarnate God” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

It is precisely because Satan has corrupted the flesh of man, and man is the one who God intends to save, that God must assume the flesh to do battle with Satan and to personally shepherd man. Only this is beneficial to His work. The two incarnate flesh of God have existed in order to defeat Satan, and also in order to better save man. That is because the one doing the battle with Satan can only be God, whether it be the Spirit of God or the incarnate flesh of God. In short, it cannot be the angels who are doing battle with Satan, much less can it be man, who has been corrupted by Satan. The angels are powerless to fight this battle, and man is even more impotent. As such, if God wishes to work the life of man, if He wishes to personally come to earth to save man, then He must personally become flesh—that is, He must personally assume the flesh, and with His inherent identity and the work that He must do, come among man and personally save man. If not, if it were the Spirit of God or man that did this work, then nothing would ever come of this battle, and it would never end. Only when God becomes flesh to personally go to war against Satan among man does man have a chance of salvation. Furthermore, only then is Satan shamed and left without any opportunities to exploit or any plans to execute. The work done by God incarnate is unachievable by the Spirit of God, and it would be even more impossible for any fleshly man to do it on God’s behalf, for the work that He does is for the sake of the life of man, and in order to change the corrupt disposition of man. Were man to participate in this battle, he would only flee in woeful disarray, and would simply be incapable of changing his corrupt disposition. He would be incapable of saving man from the cross, or of conquering all of rebellious mankind, but would only be able to do a little old work that does not go beyond principles, or else work that is unrelated to the defeat of Satan. So why bother? What is the significance of work that cannot gain mankind, much less defeat Satan? And so, the battle with Satan can only be carried out by God Himself, and it would simply be impossible for man to do it. Man’s duty is to obey and to follow, for man is unable to do work

akin to creating the heavens and earth, nor, moreover, can he carry out the work of battling Satan. Man can only satisfy the Creator under the leadership of God Himself, through which Satan is defeated; this is the only thing that man can do. And so, every time a new battle commences, which is to say, every time the work of the new age begins, this work is personally done by God Himself, through which He leads the entire age and opens up a new path for the whole of mankind.

Excerpted from “Restoring the Normal Life of Man and Taking Him to a Wonderful Destination” in *The Word*

Appears in the *Flesh*

The work of God’s entire management plan is personally done by God Himself. The first stage—the creation of the world—was personally done by God Himself, and if it had not been, then no one would have been capable of creating mankind; the second stage was the redemption of all mankind, and it was also personally done by God Himself; the third stage goes without saying: There is an even greater need for the end of all God’s work to be done by God Himself. The work of redeeming, conquering, gaining, and perfecting the whole of mankind is all personally carried out by God Himself. If He did not personally do this work, then His identity could not be represented by man, nor His work done by man. In order to defeat Satan, in order to gain mankind, and in order to give man a normal life on earth, He personally leads man and personally works among man; for the sake of His entire management plan, and for all of His work, He must personally do this work. If man only believes that God came so that man may see Him, for the sake of making man happy, then such beliefs hold no value, no significance. Man’s understanding is too superficial! Only by carrying this work out Himself can God do this work thoroughly and completely. Man is incapable of doing it on behalf of God. As he does not have God’s identity or His essence, he is incapable of doing God’s work, and even if man did this work, it would not have any effect. The first time God became flesh was for the sake of redemption, to redeem all mankind from sin, to make man capable of being cleansed and of being forgiven for his sins. The work of conquest is also personally done by God among man. If, during this stage, God were only to speak prophecy, then a prophet or someone gifted could be found to take His place; if it were only prophecy being spoken, then man could stand in for God. Yet if man tried to personally do the work of God Himself and tried to work the life of man, it would be impossible for him to do this work. It must be personally done by God Himself: God

must personally become flesh to do this work. In the Age of Word, if only prophecy were spoken, then Isaiah or Elijah the prophet could be found to do this work, and there would be no need for God Himself to do it personally. Because the work done in this stage is not merely the speaking of prophecy, and because it is of greater importance that the work of words is used to conquer man and defeat Satan, this work cannot be done by man, and must be personally done by God Himself. In the Age of Law Jehovah did part of His work, after which He spoke some words and did some work through the prophets. That is because man could replace Jehovah in His work, and the seers could foretell things and interpret some dreams on His behalf. The work done in the beginning was not the work of directly changing man's disposition, and was unrelated to the sin of man, and man was required only to abide by the law. So Jehovah did not become flesh and reveal Himself to man; instead He spoke directly to Moses and others, made them speak and work on His behalf, and caused them to work directly among mankind. The first stage of God's work was the leadership of man. It was the start of the battle against Satan, but this battle had yet to officially begin. The official war against Satan began with the first incarnation of God, and it has continued right up until today. The first battle of this war was when God incarnate was nailed to the cross. The crucifixion of God incarnate defeated Satan, and it was the first successful stage in the war. When God incarnate began to directly work the life of man, this was the official start of the work of regaining man, and because this was the work of changing man's old disposition, it was the work of doing battle with Satan. The stage of work done by Jehovah in the beginning was merely the leadership of man's life on earth. It was the beginning of God's work, and although it had yet to involve any battle, or any major work, it laid the foundation for the work of the battle to come. Later, the second stage of work during the Age of Grace involved changing man's old disposition, which means that God Himself wrought the life of man. This had to be personally done by God: It required that God personally become flesh. If He had not become flesh, no one else could have replaced Him in this stage of work, for it represented the work of fighting directly against Satan. If man had done this work on God's behalf, when man stood before Satan, Satan would not have submitted and it would have been impossible to defeat it. It had to be God incarnate who came to defeat it, for the essence of God incarnate is still God, He is still the life of man, and He is still the Creator; whatever happens, His identity and essence will not change. And so, He assumed the flesh and did the work to cause the complete submission of Satan. During the stage of work of the last

days, if man were to do this work and were made to speak the words directly, then he would be unable to speak them, and if prophecy were spoken, then this prophecy would be incapable of conquering man. By assuming the flesh, God comes to defeat Satan and cause its complete submission. When He utterly defeats Satan, fully conquers man, and completely gains man, this stage of work will be completed and success achieved. In God's management, man cannot stand in for God. In particular, the work of leading the age and launching new work is in even greater need of being personally done by God Himself. Giving man revelation and providing him with prophecy can be done by man, but if it is work that must be personally done by God, work of the battle between God Himself and Satan, then this work cannot be done by man. During the first stage of work, when there was no battle with Satan, Jehovah personally led the people of Israel using the prophecy spoken by the prophets. Afterward, the second stage of work was the battle with Satan, and God Himself personally became flesh and came into the flesh to do this work. Anything that involves the battle against Satan also involves the incarnation of God, which means that this battle cannot be waged by man. If man were to do battle, he would be incapable of defeating Satan. How could he have the strength to fight against it whilst still under its domain? Man is in the middle: If you lean toward Satan, then you belong to Satan, but if you satisfy God, then you belong to God. Were man to try and stand in for God in the work of this battle, would he be able to? If he did, would he not have perished long ago? Would he not have entered into the netherworld long ago? So, man is unable to replace God in His work, which is to say that man does not have the essence of God, and if you did battle with Satan you would be incapable of defeating it. Man can only do some work; he can win some people over, but he cannot stand in for God in the work of God Himself. How could man do battle with Satan? Satan would take you captive before you had even started. Only when God Himself does battle with Satan and man follows and obeys God upon this basis, can man be gained by God and escape from the bonds of Satan. The things that man can achieve with his own wisdom and abilities are too limited; he is incapable of making man complete, of leading him, and, moreover, of defeating Satan. Man's intelligence and wisdom are unable to thwart the schemes of Satan, so how could man do battle with it?

Excerpted from "Restoring the Normal Life of Man and Taking Him to a Wonderful Destination" in The Word

Appears in the Flesh

4. The essential differences between the incarnate God and those who are used by God

Relevant Words of God:

The incarnate God is called Christ, and Christ is the flesh donned by the Spirit of God. This flesh is unlike any man that is of the flesh. This difference is because Christ is not of flesh and blood; He is the incarnation of the Spirit. He has both a normal humanity and a complete divinity. His divinity is not possessed by any man. His normal humanity sustains all His normal activities in the flesh, while His divinity carries out the work of God Himself. Be it His humanity or divinity, both submit to the will of the heavenly Father. The essence of Christ is the Spirit, that is, the divinity. Therefore, His essence is that of God Himself; this essence will not interrupt His own work, and He could not possibly do anything that destroys His own work, nor would He ever utter any words that go against His own will. Therefore, the incarnate God would absolutely never do any work that interrupts His own management. This is what all people should understand.

Excerpted from “The Essence of Christ Is Obedience to the Will of the Heavenly Father” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Because He is a man with the essence of God, He is above all created humans, above any man who can perform God’s work. And so, among all those with a human shell like His, among all those who possess humanity, only He is the incarnate God Himself—all others are created humans. Though they all have humanity, created humans have nothing but humanity, while God incarnate is different: In His flesh He not only has humanity but, more importantly, divinity.

Excerpted from “The Essence of the Flesh Inhabited by God” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

If, when He came to the flesh, God only did the work of divinity, and there were no people after His heart to work in concert with Him, then man would be incapable of understanding God’s will or engaging with God. God must use normal people who are after His heart to complete this work, to watch over and shepherd the churches, so that the level that man’s cognitive processes, his brain, are capable of imagining can be achieved. In other words, God

uses a small number of people who are after His heart to “translate” the work that He does within His divinity, so that it can be opened up—to transform divine language into human language, so that people can comprehend and understand it. If God did not do so, no one would understand God’s divine language, because the people after God’s heart are, after all, a small minority, and man’s ability to comprehend is weak. That is why God chooses this method only when working in the incarnate flesh. If there were only divine work, there would be no way for man to know or engage with God, because man does not understand God’s language. Man is able to understand this language only through the agency of the people after God’s heart, who clarify His words. However, if there were only such people working within humanity, that could only maintain man’s normal life; it could not transform man’s disposition. God’s work could not have a new starting point; there would only be the same old songs, the same old platitudes. Only through the agency of the incarnate God, who says all that needs to be said and does all that needs to be done during the period of His incarnation, after which people work and experience according to His words, only thus will their life disposition be able to change, and only thus will they be able to flow with the times. He who works within divinity represents God, while those who work within humanity are people used by God. Which is to say, the incarnate God is essentially different from the people used by God. The incarnate God is able to do the work of divinity, whereas the people used by God are not. At the beginning of each age, God’s Spirit speaks personally and launches the new era to bring man into a new beginning. When He has finished speaking, this signifies that God’s work within His divinity is done. Thereafter, people all follow the lead of those used by God to enter into their life experience.

Excerpted from “The Essential Difference Between the Incarnate God and the People Used by God” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The word of God cannot be made out to be the word of man, and still less can one make the word of man to be the word of God. A man used by God is not the incarnate God, and the incarnate God is not a man used by God. In this, there is an essential difference. Perhaps, after reading these words, you do not acknowledge them to be the words of God, but only as the enlightenment that man has gained. In that case, you are blinded by ignorance. How can the words of God be the same as the enlightenment that man has gained? The words of God incarnate open up a new age, guide all of mankind, reveal mysteries, and show man the

direction he is to take in the new age. The enlightenment obtained by man is but simple instructions for practice or knowledge. It cannot guide all of mankind into a new age or reveal the mysteries of God Himself. When all is said and done, God is God, and man is man. God has the essence of God, and man has the essence of man. If man views the words spoken by God as simple enlightenment by the Holy Spirit, and takes the words of the apostles and prophets as words personally spoken by God, that would be man's mistake.

Excerpted from Preface to *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

When God comes to the earth, He does only His work within divinity, which is what the heavenly Spirit has entrusted to the incarnate God. When He comes, He but speaks across the land, to give voice to His utterances by different means and from different perspectives. He chiefly takes supplying man and teaching man as His goals and working principle, and does not concern Himself with such things as interpersonal relationships or the details of people's lives. His main ministry is to speak for the Spirit. That is, when God's Spirit appears tangibly in the flesh, He only provides for man's life and releases the truth. He does not involve Himself in man's work, which is to say, He does not partake in the work of humanity. Humans cannot do divine work, and God does not partake in human work. In all the years since God came to this earth to perform His work, He has always done it through people. These people, however, cannot be considered God incarnate—only those who are used by God. The God of today, meanwhile, can speak directly from the perspective of divinity, sending forth the Spirit's voice and working on behalf of the Spirit. All those whom God has used throughout the ages are, likewise, instances of God's Spirit working within a fleshly body—so why can't they be called God? But today's God is also God's Spirit working directly in the flesh, and Jesus too was God's Spirit working in the flesh; both of Them are called God. So what's the difference? The people that God has used throughout the ages have all been capable of normal thought and reason. They have all understood the principles of human conduct. They have had normal human ideas, and have been possessed of all the things that normal people should possess. Most of them have had exceptional talent and innate intelligence. In working upon these people, God's Spirit harnesses their talents, which are their God-given gifts. God's Spirit brings their talents into play, using their strengths in God's service. Yet the essence of God is without ideas or thought, unadulterated with human intentions, and even lacks what normal humans possess. Which is

to say, He is not even conversant with the principles of human conduct. This is how it is when today's God comes to the earth. His work and His words are unadulterated with human intentions or human thought, but they are a direct manifestation of the intentions of the Spirit, and He works directly on God's behalf. This means that the Spirit directly speaks, that is, the divinity directly does the work, without mixing in even one bit of man's intentions. In other words, the incarnate God embodies divinity directly, is without human thought or ideas, and has no understanding of the principles of human conduct. If only divinity were at work (meaning if only God Himself were at work), there would be no way for God's work to be carried out on earth. So when God comes to earth, He must have a small number of people He uses to work within humanity in conjunction with the work that God does in divinity. In other words, He uses human work to uphold His divine work. If not, there would be no way for man to directly engage with the divine work.

Excerpted from "The Essential Difference Between the Incarnate God and the People Used by God" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The work in the stream of the Holy Spirit, whether it is God's own work or the work of people being used, is the work of the Holy Spirit. The essence of God Himself is the Spirit, which can be called the Holy Spirit or the sevenfold intensified Spirit. All in all, They are the Spirit of God, though the Spirit of God has been called different names in different eras. Their essence is still one. Therefore, the work of God Himself is the work of the Holy Spirit, while the work of the incarnate God is nothing less than the Holy Spirit at work. The work of people who are used is also the work of the Holy Spirit. Yet the work of God is the complete expression of the Holy Spirit, which is absolutely true, whereas the work of people being used is mixed with many human things, and is not the direct expression of the Holy Spirit, let alone His complete expression. ... When the Holy Spirit works on people being used, those people's talents and inherent caliber are unleashed, not withheld. Their inherent caliber is exerted in service of the work. It may be said that He uses the parts of men that can be used in His work, in order to achieve results in that work. By contrast, work done in the incarnate flesh expresses the work of the Spirit directly and is unadulterated by the human mind and thoughts; neither man's gifts, nor man's experience, nor man's innate condition can reach it.

Excerpted from "God's Work and Man's Work" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

My speech represents My being, but what I say is beyond the reach of man. What I say is not that which man experiences, and it is not something that man can see; it is also not something that man can touch, but is what I am. Some people acknowledge only that what I fellowship is what I have experienced, but they do not recognize that it is the direct expression of the Spirit. Of course, what I say is what I have experienced. It is I who have done the management work for six thousand years. I have experienced everything from the beginning of the creation of mankind until now; how would I be unable to discuss that? When it comes to man's nature, I have seen clearly; I observed it long ago. How would I be unable to talk clearly about it? Since I have seen the substance of man clearly, I am qualified to chastise man and judge him, because all of man came from Me but has been corrupted by Satan. Of course, I am also qualified to assess the work I have done. Although this work is not done by My flesh, it is the direct expression of the Spirit, and this is what I have and what I am. Therefore, I am qualified to express it and to do the work I ought to do. What people say is what they have experienced. It is what they have seen, what their minds can reach, and what their senses can detect. That is what they can fellowship. The words spoken by God's incarnate flesh are the direct expression of the Spirit and they express the work that has been done by the Spirit, which the flesh has not experienced or seen, yet He still expresses His being, for the essence of the flesh is the Spirit, and He expresses the work of the Spirit. It is work already done by the Spirit, though it is beyond the reach of the flesh. After incarnation, through the expression of the flesh, He enables people to know God's being and allows people to see God's disposition and the work that He has done. The work of man gives people greater clarity about what they should enter into and what they should understand; it involves leading people toward understanding and experiencing the truth. Man's work is to sustain people; God's work is to open up new paths and new eras for mankind, and to reveal to people that which is not known by mortals, enabling them to know His disposition. God's work is to lead all of mankind.

Excerpted from "God's Work and Man's Work" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

5. Why it is said that corrupt mankind is more in need of the salvation of the incarnate God

Relevant Words of God:

God's saving of man is not done directly using the method of the Spirit and the identity of the Spirit, for His Spirit can neither be touched nor seen by man, neither can man draw near. If He tried to save man directly using the perspective of the Spirit, man would be unable to receive His salvation. If God did not put on the outward form of a created man, there would be no way for man to receive this salvation. For man has no way of approaching Him, much as no one was able to go near the cloud of Jehovah. Only by becoming a created human being, that is, only by putting His word into the body of flesh that He is about to become, can He personally work the word into all who follow Him. Only then can man personally see and hear His word, and moreover enter into possession of His word, and by this means come to be fully saved. If God did not become flesh, no one of flesh and blood would be able to receive such great salvation, nor would a single person be saved. If the Spirit of God worked directly in the midst of mankind, all humanity would be struck down, or else, with no way of coming into touch with God, they would be completely carried away captive by Satan. The first incarnation was to redeem man from sin, to redeem him by means of the fleshly body of Jesus, that is, He saved man from the cross, but the corrupt satanic disposition still remained within man. The second incarnation is no longer to serve as a sin offering but rather to save fully those who were redeemed from sin. This is done so that those who have been forgiven may be delivered from their sins and made fully clean, and by attaining a changed disposition, break free of Satan's influence of darkness and return before the throne of God. Only in this way can man be fully sanctified. After the Age of Law had come to an end, and beginning with the Age of Grace, God began the work of salvation, which continues until the last days when, in judging and chastising the human race for their rebelliousness, He will completely purify mankind. Only then will God conclude His work of salvation and enter into rest. Therefore, in the three stages of work, only twice has God become flesh to carry out His work among man Himself. That is because only one in the three stages of work is to guide men in leading their lives, while the other two consist of the work of salvation. Only by becoming flesh can God live alongside man, experience the suffering of the world, and live in a normal body of flesh. Only in this way can He supply men with the practical way that they need as created beings. It is through the incarnation of God that man receives full salvation from God, and not directly from heaven in answer to his prayers. For, man being of the flesh, he has no way of seeing the Spirit of God, much less of approaching His Spirit. All that

man can come into contact with is God's incarnate flesh, and only by means of this is man able to grasp all the ways and all the truths and receive full salvation.

Excerpted from "The Mystery of the Incarnation (4)" in The Word Appears in the Flesh

Corrupt Mankind Is More in Need of the Salvation of the Incarnate God

(A Selected Chapter of God's Word)

God became flesh because the object of His work is not the spirit of Satan, or any incorporeal thing, but man, who is of the flesh and has been corrupted by Satan. It is precisely because the flesh of man has been corrupted that God has made fleshly man the object of His work; moreover, because man is the object of corruption, God has made man the only object of His work throughout all the stages of His salvation work. Man is a mortal being, is of flesh and blood, and God is the only One who can save man. In this way, God must become a flesh that possesses the same attributes as man in order to do His work, so that His work might achieve better effects. God must become flesh to do His work precisely because man is of the flesh, and incapable of overcoming sin or divesting himself of the flesh. Though the essence and identity of God incarnate differ greatly from the essence and identity of man, yet His appearance is identical to that of man; He has the appearance of a normal person, and leads the life of a normal person, and those who see Him can discern no difference to a normal person. This normal appearance and normal humanity are sufficient for Him to do His divine work in normal humanity. His flesh allows Him to do His work in normal humanity, and helps Him do His work among man, and His normal humanity, moreover, helps Him carry out the work of salvation among man. Although His normal humanity has caused much tumult among man, such tumult has not impacted the normal effects of His work. In short, the work of His normal flesh is of supreme benefit to man. Though most people do not accept His normal humanity, His work can still achieve results, and these results are achieved thanks to His normal humanity. Of this there is no doubt. From His work in the flesh, man gains ten times or dozens of times more things than the notions that exist among man about His normal humanity, and such notions shall all ultimately be swallowed by His work. And the effect that His work has achieved, which is to say, the knowledge that man has toward Him, far outweighs man's notions about Him.

There is no way to imagine or measure the work He does in the flesh, for His flesh is unlike that of any fleshly human being; although the outer shell is identical, the essence is not the same. His flesh engenders many notions among man about God, yet His flesh can also allow man to acquire much knowledge, and can even conquer any person possessed of a similar outer shell. For He is not merely human, but is God with the outer shell of a human, and none can completely fathom or understand Him. An invisible and intangible God is loved and welcomed by all. If God is just a Spirit that is invisible to man, it is so easy for man to believe in God. People can give free rein to their imaginations, can choose whatever image they like as God's image to please themselves and make themselves feel happy. In this way, people may do whatever their own God most likes and wishes for them to do, without any scruples. What is more, people believe that no one is more loyal and devout than they toward God, and that all others are Gentile dogs, and disloyal to God. It can be said that this is what is sought by those whose belief in God is vague and based on doctrine; what they seek is all much the same, with little variation. It is merely that the images of God in their imaginations are different, yet their essence is actually the same.

Man is untroubled by his carefree belief in God and believes in God however he pleases. This is one of the "rights and freedoms of man," with which no one may interfere, for people believe in their own God and not the God of anyone else; it is their own private property, and almost everyone possesses this kind of private property. People regard this property as a precious treasure, but to God there is nothing more lowly or worthless, for there is no clearer indication of opposition to God than this private property of man. It is because of the work of God incarnate that God becomes a flesh with a tangible form, and who can be seen and touched by man. He is not a formless Spirit, but a flesh that man can see and come into contact with. However, most of the Gods people believe in are fleshless deities that are formless, which are also of a free form. In this way, the incarnate God has become the enemy of most of those who believe in God, and those who cannot accept the fact of God's incarnation have, similarly, become the adversaries of God. Man is possessed of notions not because of his way of thinking, or because of his rebelliousness, but because of this private property of man. It is because of this property that most people die, and it is this vague God that cannot be touched, cannot be seen, and does not exist in reality that ruins man's life. Man's life is forfeited not by the incarnate God, much less by the God of heaven, but by the God of man's own imagining. The only reason

that the incarnate God has come into the flesh is because of the needs of corrupt man. It is because of the needs of man, not of God, and all His sacrifices and sufferings are for the sake of mankind, and not for the benefit of God Himself. There are no pros and cons or rewards for God; He shall not reap some future harvest, but that which was originally owed to Him. All that He does and sacrifices for mankind is not so that He might gain great rewards, but purely for the sake of mankind. Though God's work in the flesh involves many unimaginable difficulties, the effects that it ultimately achieves far exceed those of the work done directly by the Spirit. The work of the flesh entails much hardship, and the flesh cannot possess the same great identity as the Spirit, He cannot carry out the same supernatural deeds as the Spirit, much less can He possess the same authority as the Spirit. Yet the essence of the work done by this unremarkable flesh is far superior to that of the work done directly by the Spirit, and this flesh Himself is the answer to the needs of all mankind. For those to be saved, the use value of the Spirit is far inferior to that of the flesh: The work of the Spirit is able to cover the entire universe, across all mountains, rivers, lakes, and oceans, yet the work of the flesh more effectively relates to every person with whom He comes into contact. What is more, God's flesh with tangible form can better be understood and trusted by man, and can further deepen man's knowledge of God, and can leave upon man a more profound impression of the actual deeds of God. The work of the Spirit is shrouded in mystery; it is difficult for mortal beings to fathom, and even harder for them to see, and so they can only rely on hollow imaginings. The work of the flesh, however, is normal, and based on reality, and possessed of rich wisdom, and is a fact that can be beheld by the physical eye of man; man can personally experience the wisdom of the work of God, and has no need to employ his bountiful imagination. This is the accuracy and real value of the work of God in the flesh. The Spirit can only do things that are invisible to man and difficult for him to imagine, for example the enlightenment of the Spirit, the moving of the Spirit, and the guidance of the Spirit, but for man who has a mind, these do not provide any clear meaning. They only provide a moving, or a broad meaning, and cannot give an instruction with words. The work of God in the flesh, however, is greatly different: It involves the accurate guidance of words, it has clear will, and has clear required goals. And so man does not need to grope around, or employ his imagination, much less make guesses. This is the clarity of the work in the flesh, and its great difference from the work of the Spirit. The work of the Spirit is only suitable for a limited scope and cannot replace the work of the flesh. The work of the flesh gives man far more exact

and necessary goals and far more real, valuable knowledge than the work of the Spirit. The work that is of greatest value to corrupt man is that which provides accurate words, clear goals to pursue, and which can be seen and touched. Only realistic work and timely guidance are suited to man's tastes, and only real work can save man from his corrupt and depraved disposition. This can only be achieved by the incarnate God; only the incarnate God can save man from his formerly corrupt and depraved disposition. Although the Spirit is the inherent essence of God, work such as this can only be done by His flesh. If the Spirit worked single-handedly, then it would not be possible for His work to be effective—this is a plain truth. Though most people have become the enemies of God because of this flesh, when He concludes His work, those who are against Him will not only cease to be His enemies, but on the contrary will become His witnesses. They will become the witnesses that have been conquered by Him, witnesses that are compatible with Him and inseparable from Him. He shall cause man to know the importance of His work in the flesh to man, and man shall know the importance of this flesh to the meaning of man's existence, shall know His real value to the growth of man's life, and, moreover, shall know that this flesh will become a living fountain of life from which man cannot bear to part. Though the incarnate flesh of God is far from matching God's identity and position, and seems to man to be incompatible with His actual status, this flesh, who does not possess the true image of God, or the true identity of God, can do the work that God's Spirit is unable to do directly. Such is the true significance and value of God's incarnation, and it is this significance and value which man is unable to appreciate and acknowledge. Though all mankind look up to God's Spirit and look down on God's flesh, irrespective of how they view or think, the real significance and value of the flesh far exceed those of the Spirit. Of course, this is only with regard to corrupt mankind. For everyone who seeks the truth and longs for the appearance of God, the Spirit's work can only provide moving or inspiration, and a sense of wondrousness that it is inexplicable and unimaginable, and a sense that it is great, transcendent, and admirable, yet also unattainable and unobtainable to all. Man and the Spirit of God can only look upon each other from afar, as if there were a great distance between them, and they can never be alike, as if man and God were separated by an invisible divide. In fact, this is an illusion given to man by the Spirit, which is because the Spirit and man are not of the same kind and shall never coexist in the same world, and because the Spirit possesses nothing of man. So man does not have need of the Spirit, for the Spirit cannot directly do the work most needed by man. The work of the

flesh offers man real objectives to pursue, clear words, and a sense that He is real and normal, that He is humble and ordinary. Although man may fear Him, for most people He is easy to relate to: Man can behold His face, and hear His voice, and he does not need to look at Him from afar. This flesh feels approachable to man, not distant, or unfathomable, but visible and touchable, for this flesh is in the same world as man.

For all of those who live in the flesh, changing their disposition requires goals to pursue, and knowing God requires witnessing the real deeds and the real face of God. Both can only be achieved by God's incarnate flesh, and both can only be accomplished by the normal and real flesh. This is why the incarnation is necessary, and why it is needed by all corrupt mankind. Since people are required to know God, the images of the vague and supernatural Gods must be dispelled from their hearts, and since they are required to cast off their corrupt disposition, they must first know their corrupt disposition. If only man does the work to dispel the images of the vague Gods from people's hearts, then he will fail to achieve the proper effect. The images of the vague Gods in people's hearts cannot be exposed, cast off, or completely expelled by words alone. In doing so, ultimately it would still not be possible to dispel these deep-rooted things from people. Only by replacing these vague and supernatural things with the practical God and the true image of God, and making people gradually know them, can the due effect be achieved. Man recognizes that the God whom he sought in times past is vague and supernatural. That which can achieve this effect is not the direct leadership of the Spirit, much less the teachings of a certain individual, but the incarnate God. The notions of man are laid bare when the incarnate God officially does His work, because the normality and reality of the incarnate God is the antithesis of the vague and supernatural God in man's imagination. The original notions of man can only be revealed when contrasted against the incarnate God. Without the comparison to the incarnate God, the notions of man could not be revealed; in other words, without reality as a foil, the vague things could not be revealed. No one is capable of using words to do this work, and no one is capable of articulating this work using words. Only God Himself can do His own work, and no one else can do this work on His behalf. No matter how rich the language of man is, he is incapable of articulating the reality and normality of God. Man can only know God more practically, and can only see Him more clearly, if God personally works among man and completely shows forth His image and His being. This effect cannot be achieved by any human being of flesh. Of course, God's Spirit is also incapable of achieving this effect.

God can save corrupt man from the influence of Satan, but this work cannot be directly accomplished by the Spirit of God; rather, it can only be done by the flesh God's Spirit wears, by God's incarnate flesh. This flesh is man and is also God, is a man possessed of normal humanity and also God possessed of full divinity. And so, even though this flesh is not the Spirit of God, and differs greatly from the Spirit, it is still the incarnate God Himself who saves man, who is the Spirit and also the flesh. No matter what He is called by, ultimately it is still God Himself who saves mankind. For the Spirit of God is indivisible from the flesh, and the work of the flesh is also the work of the Spirit of God; it is just that this work is not done using the identity of the Spirit, but is done using the identity of the flesh. Work that needs to be done directly by the Spirit does not require incarnation, and work that requires the flesh to do cannot be done directly by the Spirit, and can only be done by God incarnate. This is what is required for this work, and it is what is required by corrupt mankind. In the three stages of God's work, only one stage was carried out directly by the Spirit, and the remaining two stages are carried out by the incarnate God, and not directly by the Spirit. The work of the Age of Law done by the Spirit did not involve changing the corrupt disposition of man, and neither did it bear any relation to man's knowledge of God. The work of God's flesh in the Age of Grace and the Age of Kingdom, however, involves man's corrupt disposition and his knowledge of God, and is an important and crucial part of the work of salvation. Therefore, corrupt mankind is more in need of the salvation of the incarnate God, and is more in need of the direct work of the incarnate God. Mankind needs the incarnate God to shepherd him, support him, water him, feed him, judge and chastise him, and he needs more grace and greater redemption from the incarnate God. Only God in the flesh can be the confidant of man, the shepherd of man, the very present help of man, and all of this is the necessity of the incarnation both today and in times past.

Man has been corrupted by Satan and is the highest of all God's creatures, therefore man is in need of God's salvation. The object of God's salvation is man, not Satan, and that which shall be saved is the flesh of man, and the soul of man, and not the devil. Satan is the object of God's annihilation, man is the object of God's salvation, and the flesh of man has been corrupted by Satan, so the first to be saved must be the flesh of man. The flesh of man has been most profoundly corrupted, and it has become something which opposes God, so much so that it even openly opposes and denies the existence of God. This corrupt flesh is simply too intractable, and nothing is more difficult to deal with or change than the corrupt disposition of the flesh.

Satan comes into the flesh of man to stir up disturbances, and it uses the flesh of man to disturb the work of God and impair the plan of God, and thus man has become Satan, and become the enemy of God. For man to be saved, he must first be conquered. It is because of this that God rises to the challenge and comes into the flesh to do the work He intends to do, and to do battle with Satan. His aim is the salvation of man, who has been corrupted, and the defeat and annihilation of Satan, which rebels against Him. He defeats Satan through His work of conquering man, while at the same time He saves corrupt mankind. Thus, it is a work that achieves two aims at once. He works in the flesh, and speaks in the flesh, and undertakes all work in the flesh in order to better engage with man, and better conquer man. The last time that God becomes flesh, His work of the last days will be concluded in the flesh. He will class all men according to kind, conclude His entire management, and also conclude all His work in the flesh. After all His work on earth comes to an end, He will be completely victorious. Working in the flesh, God will have fully conquered mankind, and fully gained mankind. Does this not mean that His entire management will have come to an end? When God concludes His work in the flesh, as He has fully defeated Satan and has been victorious, Satan will have no further opportunity to corrupt man. The work of the first incarnation of God was the redemption and forgiveness of man's sins. Now it is the work of conquering and fully gaining mankind, so that Satan will no longer have any way to do its work, and will have completely lost, and God will have been completely victorious. This is the work of the flesh, and is the work done by God Himself. The initial work of the three stages of God's work was done directly by the Spirit, and not by the flesh. The final work of the three stages of God's work, however, is done by the incarnate God, and not directly by the Spirit. The work of redemption of the intermediary stage was also done by God in the flesh. Throughout the entire management work, the most important work is to save man from the influence of Satan. The key work is the complete conquest of corrupt man, thus restoring the original reverence of God in the heart of conquered man, and allowing him to achieve a normal life, which is to say, the normal life of a creature of God. This work is crucial, and it is the core of the management work. In the three stages of the work of salvation, the first stage of the work of the Age of Law was far from the core of the management work; it only had the slight appearance of the work of salvation, and was not the beginning of God's work of saving man from the domain of Satan. The first stage of work was done directly by the Spirit because, under the law, man only knew to abide by the law, and man did not have

more truth, and because the work in the Age of Law hardly involved changes in the disposition of man, much less was it concerned with the work of how to save man from the domain of Satan. Thus the Spirit of God completed this supremely simple stage of work that did not concern the corrupt disposition of man. This stage of work bore little relation to the core of the management, and it had no great correlation to the official work of the salvation of man, and so it did not require God to become flesh to personally do His work. The work done by the Spirit is implicit and unfathomable, and it is deeply frightening and unapproachable to man; the Spirit is not suited to directly doing the work of salvation, and is not suited to directly providing life to man. Most suitable for man is to transform the work of the Spirit into an approach that is close to man, which is to say, what is most suitable for man is for God to become an ordinary, normal person to do His work. This requires God to be incarnated to take the place of the Spirit in His work, and for man, there is no more suitable way for God to work. Among these three stages of work, two stages are carried out by the flesh, and these two stages are the key phases of the management work. The two incarnations are mutually complementary and they complement each other perfectly. The first stage of God's incarnation laid the foundation for the second stage, and it can be said that the two incarnations of God form one whole and are not incompatible with each other. These two stages of God's work are carried out by God in His incarnate identity because they are so important to the entire management work. It could almost be said that, without the work of the two incarnations of God, the entire management work would have ground to a halt, and the work of saving mankind would be nothing but empty talk. Whether or not this work is important is based on the needs of mankind, on the reality of mankind's depravity, and on the severity of Satan's disobedience and its disturbance of the work. The right one who is up to the task is predicated upon the nature of the work performed by the worker, and the importance of the work. When it comes to the importance of this work, in terms of what method of work to adopt—work done directly by God's Spirit, or work done by God incarnate, or work done through man—the first to be eliminated is work done through man, and, based on the nature of the work, and the nature of the Spirit's work versus that of the flesh, it is ultimately decided that work done by the flesh is more beneficial for man than work done directly by the Spirit, and that it offers more advantages. This is God's thought at the time when He decided whether the work was to be done by the Spirit or by the flesh. There is a significance and a basis to each stage of work. They are not groundless imaginings, nor are they carried out arbitrarily;

there is a certain wisdom to them. Such is the truth behind all of God's work. In particular, there is even more of God's plan in such a great work as God incarnate personally working among man. Therefore, God's wisdom and the entirety of His being are reflected in every action, thought, and idea in His work; this is the more concrete and systematic being of God. These subtle thoughts and ideas are difficult for man to imagine, and difficult for man to believe, and, moreover, difficult for man to know. Work done by man is done according to general principle, which, for man, is highly satisfactory. Yet compared to the work of God, there is simply too great a disparity; although the deeds of God are great and the work of God is of a magnificent scale, behind them are many minute and precise plans and arrangements that are unimaginable to man. Each stage of His work is not only performed according to principle, but each stage also contains many things that cannot be articulated by human language, and these are the things that are invisible to man. Regardless of whether it is the work of the Spirit or the work of God incarnate, each contains the plans of His work. He does not work groundlessly, and He does not do insignificant work. When the Spirit works directly, it is with His goals, and when He becomes man (which is to say, when He transforms His outer shell) to work, it is even more with His purpose. Why else would He readily change His identity? Why else would He readily become a person who is regarded as lowly and is persecuted?

His work in the flesh is of the utmost significance, which is spoken with regard to the work, and the One who ultimately concludes the work is the incarnate God, and not the Spirit. Some believe that God may at some unknown time come to earth and appear to man, whereupon He shall personally judge the whole of mankind, testing them one by one without anyone being left out. Those who think in this way do not know this stage of work of the incarnation. God does not judge man one by one, and He does not test man one by one; to do thus would not be the work of judgment. Is not the corruption of all mankind the same? Is not the essence of all mankind the same? What is judged is mankind's corrupt essence, man's essence corrupted by Satan, and all the sins of man. God does not judge the trifling and insignificant faults of man. The work of judgment is representative, and it is not carried out especially for a certain person. Rather, it is work in which a group of people are judged in order to represent the judgment of all of mankind. By personally carrying out His work on a group of people, God in the flesh uses His work to represent the work of the whole of mankind, after which it is gradually spread. This is also how the work of judgment is. God does not judge a certain kind of person or a certain

group of people, but instead judges the unrighteousness of the whole of mankind—man’s opposition to God, for example, or man’s irreverence toward Him, or man’s disturbance of the work of God, and so on. What is judged is mankind’s essence of opposition to God, and this work is the work of conquest of the last days. The work and word of the incarnate God witnessed by man are the work of judgment before the great white throne during the last days, which was conceived by man during times past. The work that is currently being done by the incarnate God is exactly the judgment before the great white throne. The incarnate God of today is the God who judges the whole of mankind during the last days. This flesh and His work, His word, and His entire disposition are the entirety of Him. Although the scope of His work is limited, and does not directly involve the entire universe, the essence of the work of judgment is the direct judgment of all mankind—not only for the sake of the chosen people of China, nor for the sake of a small number of people. During the work of God in the flesh, although the scope of this work does not involve the entire universe, it represents the work of the entire universe, and after He concludes the work within the work scope of His flesh, He will immediately expand this work to the entire universe, in the same way that the gospel of Jesus spread throughout the universe following His resurrection and ascension. Regardless of whether it is the work of the Spirit or the work of the flesh, it is work that is carried out within a limited scope, but which represents the work of the entire universe. During the last days, God performs His work by appearing in His incarnate identity, and God in the flesh is the God who judges man before the great white throne. Regardless of whether He is the Spirit or the flesh, He who does the work of judgment is the God who judges mankind during the last days. This is defined based on His work, and it is not defined according to His external appearance or several other factors. Although man harbors notions about these words, no one can deny the fact of the incarnate God’s judgment and conquest of all mankind. Regardless of what man thinks of it, facts are, after all, facts. No one can say that “The work is done by God, but the flesh is not God.” This is nonsense, for this work can be done by no one except God in the flesh. Since this work has already been completed, following this work the work of God’s judgment of man shall not appear for a second time; God in His second incarnation has already concluded all of the work of the entire management, and there shall not be a fourth stage of God’s work. Because the one who is judged is man, man who is of the flesh and has been corrupted, and it is not the spirit of Satan that is judged directly, the work of judgment is therefore not carried out in the spiritual

world, but among man. No one is more suitable, and qualified, than God in the flesh for the work of judging the corruption of man's flesh. If judgment were carried out directly by the Spirit of God, then it would not be all-embracing. Furthermore, such work would be difficult for man to accept, for the Spirit is unable to come face-to-face with man, and because of this, the effects would not be immediate, much less would man be able to behold the unoffendable disposition of God more clearly. Satan can only be fully defeated if God in the flesh judges the corruption of mankind. Being the same as man possessed of normal humanity, God in the flesh can directly judge the unrighteousness of man; this is the mark of His innate holiness, and of His extraordinariness. Only God is qualified to, and is in the position to, judge man, for He is possessed of the truth, and righteousness, and so He is able to judge man. Those who are without truth and righteousness are not fit to judge others. If this work were done by the Spirit of God, then it would not mean victory over Satan. The Spirit is inherently more exalted than mortal beings, and the Spirit of God is inherently holy, and triumphant over the flesh. If the Spirit did this work directly, He would not be able to judge all of man's disobedience and could not reveal all of man's unrighteousness. For the work of judgment is also carried out through man's notions about God, and man has never had any notions about the Spirit, and so the Spirit is incapable of better revealing the unrighteousness of man, much less of completely disclosing such unrighteousness. The incarnate God is the enemy of all those who do not know Him. Through judging man's notions and opposition to Him, He discloses all the disobedience of mankind. The effects of His work in the flesh are more apparent than those of the work of the Spirit. And so, the judgment of all mankind is not carried out directly by the Spirit but is the work of the incarnate God. God in the flesh can be seen and touched by man, and God in the flesh can completely conquer man. In his relationship with God in the flesh, man progresses from opposition to obedience, from persecution to acceptance, from notions to knowledge, and from rejection to love—these are the effects of the work of the incarnate God. Man is only saved through the acceptance of His judgment, man only gradually comes to know Him through the words of His mouth, man is conquered by Him during his opposition to Him, and he receives the life supply from Him during the acceptance of His chastisement. All of this work is the work of God in the flesh, and not the work of God in His identity as the Spirit. The work done by God incarnate is the greatest work, and the most profound work, and the crucial part of the three stages of God's work are the two stages of the work of incarnation. The profound corruption of

man is a great obstacle to the work of God incarnate. In particular, the work carried out on the people of the last days is tremendously difficult, and the environment is hostile, and the caliber of every kind of person is quite poor. Yet at the end of this work, it will still achieve the proper effect, without any flaws; this is the effect of the work of the flesh, and this effect is more persuasive than that of the work of the Spirit. The three stages of God's work shall be concluded in the flesh, and they must be concluded by the incarnate God. The most important and most crucial work is done in the flesh, and the salvation of man must be personally carried out by God in the flesh. Even though all mankind feels that God in the flesh seems unrelated to man, in fact this flesh concerns the fate and existence of the whole of mankind.

Every stage of God's work is implemented for the sake of all mankind and is directed at the whole of mankind. Even though it is His work in the flesh, it is still directed at all mankind; He is the God of all mankind, and He is the God of all created and non-created beings. Although His work in the flesh is within a limited scope, and the object of this work is also limited, each time He becomes flesh to do His work He chooses an object of His work that is supremely representative; He does not select a group of simple and unremarkable people on which to work, but instead picks as the object of His work a group of people capable of being the representatives for His work in the flesh. This group of people is chosen because the scope of His work in the flesh is limited, and is prepared especially for His incarnate flesh, and is chosen especially for His work in the flesh. God's selection of the objects of His work is not baseless, but is done according to principle: The object of the work must be of benefit to the work of God in the flesh, and must be able to represent the whole of mankind. For example, the Jews were able to represent the whole of mankind in accepting the personal redemption of Jesus, and the Chinese are able to represent the whole of mankind in accepting the personal conquest of the incarnate God. There is a basis to the Jews' representation of the whole of mankind, and there is also a basis to Chinese people's representation of the whole of mankind in accepting the personal conquest of God. Nothing reveals the significance of redemption more than the work of redemption done among the Jews, and nothing reveals the thoroughness and success of the work of conquest more than the work of conquest being done among Chinese people. The work and word of God incarnate appear to only be aimed at a small group of people, but in fact, His work among this small group is the work of the entire universe, and His word is directed at the whole of mankind. After His work in the flesh comes to an end, those who follow Him shall

begin to spread the work He has done among them. The best thing about His work in the flesh is that He can leave accurate words and exhortations, and His specific will for mankind to those who follow Him, so that afterward His followers can more accurately and more concretely pass on all of His work in the flesh, and His will for the whole of mankind, to those who accept this way. Only the work of God in the flesh among man truly accomplishes the fact of God's being together and living together with man. Only this work fulfills man's desire to behold the face of God, witness the work of God, and hear the personal word of God. The incarnate God brings to an end the age when only the back of Jehovah appeared to mankind, and He also concludes the age of mankind's belief in the vague God. In particular, the work of the last incarnate God brings all mankind into an age that is more realistic, more practical, and more beautiful. He not only concludes the age of law and doctrine but, more importantly, He reveals to mankind a God who is real and normal, who is righteous and holy, who unlocks the work of the management plan and who demonstrates the mysteries and destination of mankind, who created mankind and brings to an end the management work, and who has remained hidden for thousands of years. He brings the age of vagueness to a complete end, He concludes the age in which the whole of mankind wished to seek God's face but was unable to, He ends the age in which the whole of mankind served Satan, and He leads the whole of mankind all the way into a completely new era. All this is the outcome of the work of God in the flesh in place of God's Spirit. When God works in His flesh, those who follow Him no longer seek and grope after those things which seem to both exist and not exist, and they cease to guess at the will of the vague God. When God spreads His work in the flesh, those who follow Him shall pass on the work that He has done in the flesh to all religions and denominations, and they shall communicate all of His words to the ears of the whole of mankind. All that is heard by those who receive His gospel shall be the facts of His work, shall be things personally seen and heard by man, and shall be facts and not hearsay. These facts are the evidence with which He spreads the work, and they are also the tools that He uses in spreading the work. Without the existence of facts, His gospel would not spread across all countries and to all places; without facts but only with man's imaginings, He would never be able to do the work of conquering the entire universe. The Spirit is impalpable to man, and invisible to man, and the work of the Spirit is incapable of leaving any further evidence or facts of God's work for man. Man shall never behold the real face of God, he shall always believe in a vague God that does not exist. Man shall never behold the face of God, nor

will man ever hear words personally spoken by God. Man's imaginings are, after all, empty, and cannot replace the true face of God; the inherent disposition of God, and the work of God Himself, cannot be impersonated by man. The invisible God in heaven and His work can only be brought to earth by God incarnate who personally does His work among man. This is the most ideal way for God to appear to man, in which man sees God and comes to know the true face of God, and it cannot be achieved by a non-incarnate God. Having carried out His work to this stage, God's work has already achieved the optimal effect, and has been a complete success. The personal work of God in the flesh has already completed ninety percent of the work of His entire management. This flesh has provided a better beginning to all of His work, and a summary for all of His work, and has promulgated all of His work, and made the last thorough replenishment to all of this work. Henceforth, there will not be another incarnate God to do the fourth stage of God's work, and never will there be any wondrous work of a third incarnation of God.

Each stage of work of God in the flesh represents His work of the entire age, and it does not represent a certain period, as does the work of man. And so the end of the work of His last incarnation does not mean that His work has come to a complete end, for His work in the flesh represents the entire age, and does not only represent the period in which He does His work in the flesh. It is just that He finishes His work of the entire age during the time that He is in the flesh, after which it spreads to all places. After the incarnate God fulfills His ministry, He will entrust His future work to those who follow Him. In this way, His work of the entire age will be carried on unbroken. The work of the entire age of incarnation shall only be considered complete once it has spread throughout the entire universe. The work of God incarnate begins a new era, and those who continue His work are those who are used by Him. The work done by man is all within the ministry of God in the flesh, and it is incapable of going beyond this scope. If God incarnate had not come to do His work, man would not be able to bring the old age to an end and would not be able to usher in a new era. The work done by man is merely within the range of his duty that is humanly possible to do, and it does not represent the work of God. Only the incarnate God can come and complete the work that He should do and, besides Him, no one can do this work on His behalf. Of course, what I speak of is in regard to the work of incarnation. This incarnate God first carries out a step of work that does not conform to the notions of man, after which He does more work that does not conform to the notions of man. The aim of the

work is the conquest of man. In one regard, God's incarnation does not conform to the notions of man, in addition to which He does more work that does not conform to the notions of man, and so man develops even more critical views about Him. He just does the work of conquest among people who have myriad notions about Him. Regardless of how they treat Him, once He has fulfilled His ministry, all people will have become subject to His dominion. The fact of this work is not only reflected among Chinese people, but it also represents how the whole of mankind shall be conquered. The effects that are achieved on these people are a precursor to the effects that shall be achieved on the whole of mankind, and the effects of the work that He does in the future shall increasingly exceed even the effects on these people. The work of God in the flesh does not involve great fanfare, nor is it wreathed in obscurity. It is real and actual, and it is work in which one and one equals two. It is not hidden from anyone, nor does it deceive anyone. What people see are real and genuine things, and what man gains is real truth and knowledge. When the work ends, man shall have a new knowledge of Him, and those who truly pursue shall no longer have any notions about Him. This is not just the effect of His work on Chinese people, but it also represents the effect of His work in conquering the whole of mankind, for nothing is more beneficial to the work of conquering the whole of mankind than this flesh, and the work of this flesh, and everything of this flesh. They are beneficial to His work today, and beneficial to His work in the future. This flesh shall conquer the whole of mankind and shall gain the whole of mankind. There is no better work through which the whole of mankind shall behold God, and obey God, and know God. The work done by man only represents a limited scope, and when God does His work He does not speak to a certain person, but speaks to the whole of mankind, and all those who accept His words. The end that He proclaims is the end of all mankind, not just the end of a certain person. He does not give anyone special treatment, nor does He victimize anyone, and He works for, and speaks to, the whole of mankind. This incarnate God has therefore already classed the whole of mankind according to kind, has already judged the whole of mankind, and has arranged a suitable destination for the whole of mankind. Although God only does His work in China, in fact He has already resolved the work of the entire universe. He cannot wait until His work has spread among the whole of mankind before making His utterances and arrangements step by step. Would that not be too late? Now He is fully able to complete the future work in advance. Because the One who is working is God in the flesh, He is doing limitless work within a limited scope, and afterward He shall make man

perform the duty that man should perform; this is the principle of His work. He can only live with man for a time and cannot accompany man until the work of the whole era is concluded. It is because He is God that He foretells His future work in advance. Afterward, He shall class the whole of mankind according to kind by His words, and mankind shall enter into His step-by-step work according to His words. None shall escape, and all must practice according to this. So, in the future the age shall be guided by His words, and not guided by the Spirit.

The work of God in the flesh must be done in the flesh. If it were done directly by the Spirit of God, it would yield no effects. Even if it were done by the Spirit, the work would be of no great significance, and would ultimately be unpersuasive. All creatures wish to know whether the work of the Creator has significance, and what it represents, and what it is done for the sake of, and whether the work of God is full of authority and wisdom, and whether it is of the utmost value and significance. The work He does is done for the salvation of the whole of mankind, for the sake of defeating Satan, and for bearing testimony to Himself among all things. As such, the work that He does must be of great significance. The flesh of man has been corrupted by Satan, and it has been most deeply blinded, and profoundly harmed. The most fundamental reason why God works personally in the flesh is because the object of His salvation is man, who is of the flesh, and because Satan also uses the flesh of man to disturb the work of God. The battle with Satan is actually the work of conquering man, and at the same time, man is also the object of God's salvation. In this way, the work of God incarnate is essential. Satan corrupted the flesh of man, and man became the embodiment of Satan, and became the object to be defeated by God. In this way, the work of doing battle with Satan and saving mankind occurs on earth, and God must become human in order to do battle with Satan. This is work of the utmost practicality. When God is working in the flesh, He is actually doing battle with Satan in the flesh. When He works in the flesh, He is doing His work in the spiritual realm, and He makes the whole of His work in the spiritual realm real on earth. The one who is conquered is man, man who is disobedient to Him, and the one who is defeated is the embodiment of Satan (of course, this is also man), who is in enmity to Him, and the one who is ultimately saved is also man. In this way, it is even more necessary for God to become a human who has the outer shell of a creation, so that He is able to do real battle with Satan, to conquer man, who is disobedient to Him and possessed of the same outer shell as Him, and to save man, who is of the same outer shell as Him and has been harmed by Satan. His enemy is man, the object of His conquest is man, and

the object of His salvation is man, who was created by Him. So He must become human, and in this way, His work becomes much easier. He is able to defeat Satan and conquer mankind, and, moreover, is able to save mankind. Although this flesh is normal and real, He is no common flesh: He is not flesh that is only human, but flesh that is both human and divine. This is the difference between Him and man, and it is the mark of the identity of God. Only flesh such as this can do the work that He intends to do, and fulfill the ministry of God in the flesh, and fully complete His work among man. If it were not thus, His work among man would always be empty and flawed. Even though God can do battle with the spirit of Satan and emerge victorious, the old nature of corrupted man can never be resolved, and those who are disobedient to God and oppose Him can never truly become subject to His dominion, which is to say, He can never conquer mankind, and can never gain the whole of mankind. If His work on earth cannot be resolved, then His management shall never be brought to an end, and the whole of mankind will not be able to enter rest. If God cannot enter rest with all of His creatures, then there shall never be an outcome to such management work, and the glory of God shall consequently disappear. Although His flesh has no authority, the work He does will have achieved its effect. This is the inevitable direction of His work. Regardless of whether or not His flesh is possessed of authority, as long as He is capable of doing the work of God Himself, then He is God Himself. Regardless of how normal and ordinary this flesh is, He can do the work He should do, for this flesh is God and is not just a human. The reason this flesh can do the work that man cannot is because His inner essence is unlike that of any human, and the reason He can save man is because His identity is different from that of any human. This flesh is so important to mankind because He is man and, even more so, He is God, because He can do the work that no ordinary man of flesh can do, and because He can save corrupt man, who lives together with Him on earth. Though He is identical to man, the incarnate God is more important to mankind than any person of value, for He can do the work that cannot be done by the Spirit of God, is more able than the Spirit of God to bear testimony to God Himself, and is more able than the Spirit of God to fully gain mankind. As a result, although this flesh is normal and ordinary, His contribution to mankind and His significance to the existence of mankind make Him highly precious, and the real value and significance of this flesh is immeasurable to any human. Although this flesh cannot directly destroy Satan, He can use His work to conquer mankind and defeat Satan, and make Satan fully submit to His dominion. It is because God is incarnated that

He can defeat Satan and is able to save mankind. He does not directly destroy Satan, but instead becomes flesh to do the work to conquer mankind, who has been corrupted by Satan. In this way, He is better able to bear testimony to Himself among His creatures, and He is better able to save corrupted man. God incarnate's defeat of Satan bears greater testimony, and is more persuasive, than the direct destruction of Satan by the Spirit of God. God in the flesh is better able to help man know the Creator and is better able to bear testimony to Himself among His creatures.

from The Word Appears in the Flesh

6. Why it is said that God's two incarnations complete the significance of the incarnation

Bible Verses for Reference:

“So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and to them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin to salvation” (Heb 9:28).

Relevant Words of God:

The first incarnation was to redeem man from sin, to redeem him by means of the fleshly body of Jesus, that is, He saved man from the cross, but the corrupt satanic disposition still remained within man. The second incarnation is no longer to serve as a sin offering but rather to save fully those who were redeemed from sin. This is done so that those who have been forgiven may be delivered from their sins and made fully clean, and by attaining a changed disposition, break free of Satan's influence of darkness and return before the throne of God. Only in this way can man be fully sanctified. After the Age of Law had come to an end, and beginning with the Age of Grace, God began the work of salvation, which continues until the last days when, in judging and chastising the human race for their rebelliousness, He will completely purify mankind. Only then will God conclude His work of salvation and enter into rest. Therefore, in the three stages of work, only twice has God become flesh to carry out His work among man Himself. That is because only one in the three stages of work is to guide men in leading their lives, while the other two consist of the work of salvation. Only by becoming flesh can God live alongside man, experience the suffering of the world, and live in a normal

body of flesh. Only in this way can He supply men with the practical way that they need as created beings. It is through the incarnation of God that man receives full salvation from God, and not directly from heaven in answer to his prayers. For, man being of the flesh, he has no way of seeing the Spirit of God, much less of approaching His Spirit. All that man can come into contact with is God's incarnate flesh, and only by means of this is man able to grasp all the ways and all the truths and receive full salvation. The second incarnation will be sufficient to purge away the sins of man and to fully purify him. Hence, with the second incarnation, the entirety of God's work in the flesh will be brought to a close and the significance of God's incarnation be made complete. Thenceforth, the work of God in the flesh will have entirely come to an end. After the second incarnation, He will not become flesh a third time for His work. For His entire management will have come to an end. The incarnation of the last days will have fully gained His chosen people, and humanity in the last days will all have been classed according to kind. He will no longer do the work of salvation, nor will He return to the flesh to carry out any work.

Excerpted from "The Mystery of the Incarnation (4)" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

At the time that Jesus was doing His work, man's knowledge of Him was still vague and unclear. Man always believed Him to be the son of David, and proclaimed Him to be a great prophet, the benevolent Lord who redeemed man's sins. Some, on the strength of their faith, were healed just from touching the edge of His garment; the blind could see and even the dead could be restored to life. However, man was unable to discover the corrupt satanic disposition deeply rooted within himself, neither did he know how to cast it away. Man received much grace, such as the peace and happiness of the flesh, the faith of one member bringing blessing on an entire family, the healing of sickness, and so on. The rest were the good deeds of man and his godly appearance; if someone could live on the basis of these, they were considered an acceptable believer. Only believers of this kind could enter heaven after death, which meant that they were saved. But, in their lifetime, these people did not understand at all the way of life. All they did was to commit sins and then confess their sins in a constant cycle without any path to change their disposition: Such was the condition of man in the Age of Grace. Has man received complete salvation? No! Therefore, after that stage of work was finished, there still remained the work of judgment and chastisement. This stage is to make man pure by means of the word, and thereby give him a path to follow. This stage would not be fruitful or meaningful

if it continued with the casting out of demons, for it would fail to extirpate man's sinful nature, and man would come to a standstill at the forgiveness of his sins. Through the sin offering, man has been forgiven his sins, for the work of the crucifixion has already come to an end and God has prevailed over Satan. But the corrupt disposition of man still remaining within him, man can still sin and resist God, and God has not gained mankind. That is why in this stage of work God uses the word to expose the corrupt disposition of man, causing him to practice in accordance with the right path. This stage is more meaningful than the previous one, as well as more fruitful, for now it is the word that directly supplies man's life and enables the disposition of man to be completely renewed; it is a much more thorough stage of work. Therefore, the incarnation in the last days has completed the significance of God's incarnation and completely finished God's management plan for man's salvation.

Excerpted from "The Mystery of the Incarnation (4)" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

God in His first incarnation did not complete the work of incarnation; He only completed the first step of the work that it was necessary for God to do in the flesh. So, in order to finish the work of incarnation, God has returned to the flesh once again, living out all the normality and reality of the flesh, that is, making God's Word manifest in an entirely normal and ordinary flesh, thereby concluding the work that He left undone in the flesh. In essence, the second incarnate flesh is like the first, but it is even more real, even more normal than the first. As a consequence, the suffering the second incarnate flesh endures is greater than that of the first, but this suffering is a result of His ministry in the flesh, which is unlike the suffering of corrupted man. It also stems from the normality and reality of His flesh. Because He performs His ministry in utterly normal and real flesh, the flesh must endure a great deal of hardship. The more normal and real this flesh is, the more He will suffer in the performance of His ministry. God's work is expressed in a very common flesh, one that is not supernatural at all. Because His flesh is normal and must also shoulder the work of saving man, He suffers in even greater measure than a supernatural flesh would—and all this suffering stems from the reality and normality of His flesh. From the suffering that the two incarnate fleshs have undergone while performing Their ministries, one can see the essence of the incarnate flesh. The more normal the flesh, the greater hardship He must endure while undertaking the work; the more real the flesh that undertakes the work, the harsher people's notions, and the more dangers are

likely to befall Him. And yet, the more real the flesh is, and the more the flesh possesses the needs and complete sense of a normal human being, the more capable He is of taking on God's work in the flesh. It was Jesus' flesh that was nailed to the cross, His flesh that He gave up as a sin offering; it was by means of a flesh with normal humanity that He defeated Satan and completely saved man from the cross. And it is as a complete flesh that God in His second incarnation performs the work of conquest and defeats Satan. Only a flesh that is completely normal and real can perform the work of conquest in its entirety and bear powerful testimony. That is to say, the conquest of man is made effective through the reality and normality of God in the flesh, not through supernatural miracles and revelations. The ministry of this incarnate God is to speak, and thereby to conquer and perfect man; in other words, the work of the Spirit realized in the flesh, the flesh's duty, is to speak and thereby conquer, reveal, perfect, and eliminate man completely. And so, it is in the work of conquest that God's work in the flesh will be accomplished in full. The initial work of redemption was only the beginning of the work of incarnation; the flesh that performs the work of conquest will complete the entire work of incarnation. In gender, one is male and the other female, so completing the significance of God's incarnation, and dispelling man's notions of God: God can become both male and female, and in essence, the incarnate God is genderless. He made both man and woman, and to Him, there is no division of gender. In this stage of the work, God does not perform signs and wonders, so that the work will achieve its results by means of words. The reason for this, moreover, is because the work of God incarnate this time is not to heal the sick and cast out demons, but to conquer man by speaking, which is to say that the native ability possessed by this incarnate flesh of God is to speak words and to conquer man, not to heal the sick and cast out demons. His work in normal humanity is not to perform miracles, not to heal the sick and cast out demons, but to speak, and so the second incarnate flesh seems to people much more normal than the first. People see that God's incarnation is no lie; but this incarnate God is different from Jesus incarnate, and though They are both God incarnate, They are not completely the same. Jesus possessed normal humanity, ordinary humanity, but He was accompanied by many signs and wonders. In this incarnate God, human eyes will see no signs or wonders, neither healing the sick nor driving out demons, nor walking on the sea, nor fasting for forty days.... He does not do the same work that Jesus did, not because, in essence, His flesh is any different from Jesus', but because it is not His ministry to heal the sick and cast out demons. He does not

tear down His own work, does not disturb His own work. Since He conquers man through His real words, there is no need to subdue him with miracles, and so this stage is to complete the work of incarnation.

Excerpted from “The Essence of the Flesh Inhabited by God” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Why do I say that the meaning of incarnation was not completed in Jesus’ work? Because the Word did not entirely become flesh. What Jesus did was only one part of God’s work in the flesh; He only did the work of redemption, and did not do the work of completely gaining man. For this reason, God has become flesh once again in the last days. This stage of the work is also done in an ordinary flesh; it is performed by an utterly normal human being, one whose humanity is not in the least bit transcendent. In other words, God has become a complete human being; He is a person whose identity is that of God, a complete human being, a complete flesh, who is performing the work. Human eyes see a fleshly body that is not transcendent at all, a very ordinary person who can speak the language of heaven, who shows no miraculous signs, works no miracles, much less exposes the inside truth about religion in great assembly halls. To people, the work of the second incarnate flesh seems utterly unlike that of the first, so much so that the two seem to have nothing in common, and nothing of the first’s work can be seen this time. Though the work of the second incarnate flesh is different from the first, that does not prove that Their source is not one and the same. Whether Their source is the same depends on the nature of the work done by the flesh, and not on Their outer shells. During the three stages of His work, God has been incarnated twice, and both times the work of God incarnate inaugurates a new age, ushers in a new work; the incarnations complement each other. It is impossible for human eyes to tell that the two flesh, actually come from the same source. It goes without saying that this is beyond the capacity of the human eye or the human mind. But in Their essence, They are the same, for Their work originates from the same Spirit. Whether the two incarnate flesh arise from the same source cannot be judged by the era and the place in which They were born, or other such factors, but by the divine work expressed by Them. The second incarnate flesh does not perform any of the work that Jesus did, for God’s work does not adhere to convention, but opens up a new path each time. The second incarnate flesh does not aim to deepen or solidify the impression of the first flesh in people’s minds, but to complement and perfect it, to deepen man’s knowledge of God, to break all the rules that exist in people’s

hearts, and to wipe out the fallacious images of God in their hearts. It can be said that no individual stage of God's own work can give man a complete knowledge of Him; each gives only a part, not the whole. Though God has expressed His disposition in full, because of man's limited faculties of understanding, his knowledge of God still remains incomplete. It is impossible, using human language, to convey the entirety of God's disposition; moreover, how can a single stage of His work fully express God? He works in the flesh under the cover of His normal humanity, and one can only know Him by the expressions of His divinity, not by His bodily shell. God comes into the flesh to allow man to know Him by means of His various work, and no two stages of His work are alike. Only in this way can man have a full knowledge of God's work in the flesh, not confined to one single facet.

Excerpted from "The Essence of the Flesh Inhabited by God" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The stage of work which Jesus performed only fulfilled the essence of "the Word was with God": The truth of God was with God, and the Spirit of God was with the flesh and was inseparable from that flesh. That is, the flesh of God incarnate was with the Spirit of God, which is greater proof that Jesus incarnate was the first incarnation of God. This stage of work precisely fulfills the inner meaning of "the Word becomes flesh," lent deeper meaning to "the Word was with God, and the Word was God," and allows you to firmly believe the words "In the beginning was the Word." Which is to say, at the time of creation God was possessed of words, His words were with Him and inseparable from Him, and in the final age, He makes even clearer the power and authority of His words, and allows man to see all of His ways—to hear all of His words. Such is the work of the final age. You must come to understand these things through and through. It is not a question of knowing the flesh, but of how you understand the flesh and the Word. This is the testimony that you must bear, that which everyone must know. Because this is the work of the second incarnation—and the last time that God becomes flesh—it fully completes the significance of the incarnation, thoroughly carries out and issues forth all of God's work in the flesh, and brings to an end the era of God's being in the flesh.

Excerpted from "Practice (4)" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

During the Age of Kingdom, God incarnate speaks words to conquer all those who believe in Him. This is "the Word appearing in the flesh"; God has come during the last days to do this

work, which is to say, He has come to accomplish the actual significance of the Word appearing in the flesh. He only speaks words, and rarely is there the advent of facts. This is the very essence of the Word appearing in the flesh, and when God incarnate speaks His words, this is the appearance of the Word in the flesh, and is the Word coming into the flesh. “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God, and the Word became flesh.” This (the work of the appearance of the Word in the flesh) is the work that God will accomplish in the last days, and is the final chapter of His entire management plan, and so God has to come to earth and manifest His words in the flesh. That which is done today, that which will be done in the future, that which will be accomplished by God, man’s final destination, those who will be saved, those who will be destroyed, and so on—all of this work that should be achieved in the end has all been clearly stated, and is all in order to accomplish the actual significance of the Word appearing in the flesh. The administrative decrees and constitution that were previously issued forth, those who will be destroyed, those who will enter into rest—these words must all be fulfilled. This is the work principally accomplished by God incarnate during the last days. He makes people understand where those predestined by God belong and where those not predestined by God belong, how His people and sons will be classified, what will happen to Israel, what will happen to Egypt—in the future, every one of these words will be accomplished. The pace of God’s work is accelerating. God uses the word as the means to reveal to man what is to be done in every age, what is to be done by God incarnate during the last days, and His ministry that is to be performed, and these words are all in order to accomplish the actual significance of the Word appearing in the flesh.

Excerpted from “All Is Achieved by the Word of God” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The Two Incarnations Complete the Significance of the Incarnation

(A Selected Chapter of God’s Word)

Each stage of work done by God has its own practical significance. Back then, when Jesus came, He was male, and when God comes this time, He is female. From this, you can see that God created both male and female for the sake of His work, and with Him there is no distinction of gender. When His Spirit comes, He can take on any flesh He pleases, and that flesh can

represent Him; whether male or female, it can represent God as long as it is His incarnate flesh. If Jesus had appeared as a female when He came, in other words, if an infant girl, and not a boy, had been conceived by the Holy Spirit, that stage of work would have been completed all the same. If that had been the case, then the present stage of work would have to be completed by a male instead, but the work would be completed all the same. The work done in either stage is equally significant; neither stage of work is repeated, nor does it conflict with the other. At the time, Jesus, in doing His work, was called the only Son, and “Son” implies the male gender. Why is the only Son not mentioned in this current stage? Because the requirements of the work have necessitated a change in gender from that of Jesus. With God there is no distinction of gender. He does His work as He wishes, and in doing His work He is not subject to any restrictions, but is especially free. Yet every stage of work has its own practical significance. God became flesh twice, and it is self-evident that His incarnation during the last days is the final time. He has come to make known all His deeds. If in this stage He did not become flesh in order personally to do work for man to witness, man would forever cling to the notion that God is only male, not female. Before this, all humanity believed that God could only be male and that a female could not be called God, for all humanity regarded men as having authority over women. They believed that no woman could take on authority, only men. What is more, they even said that man was the head of woman and that woman must obey man and could not surpass him. In times past, when it was said that man was woman’s head, this was directed at Adam and Eve, who had been beguiled by the serpent—not at man and woman as they had been created by Jehovah in the beginning. Of course, a woman must obey and love her husband, and a husband must learn to feed and support his family. These are the laws and decrees set forth by Jehovah that humankind must abide by in their lives on earth. Jehovah said to woman, “Your desire shall be to your husband, and he shall rule over you.” He spoke thus only so that humankind (that is, both man and woman) might live normal lives under the dominion of Jehovah, and so that the lives of humankind might have a structure, and not fall out of their proper order. Therefore, Jehovah made appropriate rules for how man and woman should act, though this was only in regard to all the created beings living on the earth, and bore no relation to God’s incarnate flesh. How could God be the same as His created beings? His words were directed only toward the humankind of His creation; it was in order for humankind to live normal lives that He established rules for man and woman. In the beginning, when Jehovah

created humankind, He made two kinds of human being, both male and female; and so there is the division of male and female in His incarnate flesh. He did not decide His work based on the words He spoke to Adam and Eve. The two times He has become flesh have been determined entirely according to His thinking at the time He first created humankind; that is, He has completed the work of His two incarnations based on the male and the female before they were corrupted. If humanity took the words spoken by Jehovah to Adam and Eve, who had been beguiled by the serpent, and applied them to the work of God's incarnation, would not Jesus also have to love His wife as He ought? This way, would God still be God? And this being so, would He still be able to complete His work? If it be wrong for God's incarnate flesh to be female, then would it not also have been an error of the greatest magnitude for God to have created woman? If people still believe that it would be wrong for God to be incarnated as female, then would not Jesus, who did not get married and was therefore unable to love His wife, be as much in error as the present incarnation? Since you use the words spoken to Eve by Jehovah to measure the truth of God's incarnation in the present day, then you must use Jehovah's words to Adam to judge the Lord Jesus who became flesh in the Age of Grace. Are these not one and the same? Since you take the measure of the Lord Jesus according to the male who had not been beguiled by the serpent, then you may not judge the truth of today's incarnation according to the female who had been beguiled by the serpent. This would be unfair! Measuring God in this way proves that you lack rationality. When Jehovah twice became flesh, the gender of His flesh was related to the male and the female who had not been beguiled by the serpent; it was in accordance with the male and the female who had not been beguiled by the serpent that He twice became flesh. Do not think that the maleness of Jesus was the same as that of Adam, who was beguiled by the serpent. The two are completely unrelated, they are males of two different natures. Surely it cannot be that the maleness of Jesus proves He is the head of all women but not of all men? Is He not the King of all the Jews (including both men and women)? He is God Himself, not just the head of woman but the head of man as well. He is the Lord of all creatures and the head of all creatures. How could you determine the maleness of Jesus to be the symbol of the head of woman? Would this not be blasphemy? Jesus is a male who has not been corrupted. He is God; He is Christ; He is the Lord. How could He be a male like Adam who was corrupted? Jesus is the flesh worn by the most holy Spirit of God. How could you say He is a God who possesses the maleness of Adam? In that case, would not all of God's work have been

wrong? Would Jehovah have been able to incorporate within Jesus the maleness of Adam who was beguiled by the serpent? Is not the incarnation of the present time another instance of the work of God incarnate, who is different in gender from Jesus but like Him in nature? Do you still dare say that God incarnate could not be female, because woman was the first to be beguiled by the serpent? Do you still dare say that, as woman is the most unclean and the source of the corruption of humankind, God could not possibly become flesh as a female? Do you dare to persist in saying that “woman shall always obey man and may never manifest or directly represent God”? You did not understand in the past, but can you now go on blaspheming the work of God, especially the incarnate flesh of God? If this is not clear to you, best mind your tongue, lest your foolishness and ignorance be revealed and your ugliness exposed. Do not think that you understand everything. I tell you that all you have seen and experienced is insufficient for you to understand even a thousandth of My management plan. So why then do you act so haughty? That little bit of talent and tiny bit of knowledge you have are insufficient for Jesus to use in even a single second of His work! How much experience do you actually possess? What you have seen and all that you have heard in your lifetime and what you have imagined are less than the work I do in a single moment! You had best not nitpick and find fault. You can be as arrogant as you want, but you are nothing more than a creature not even the equal of an ant! All that you hold within your belly is less than what is in an ant’s belly! Do not think, just because you have gained some experience and seniority, that this entitles you to gesticulate wildly and talk big. Are not your experience and your seniority the product of the words I have uttered? Do you believe that they were in exchange for your own labor and toil? Today, you see that I have become flesh, and on this account alone there is in you a glut of concepts, and no end of notions therefrom. If not for My incarnation, even if you were possessed of extraordinary talents, you would not have so many concepts; and is it not from these that your notions arise? If Jesus had not become flesh that first time, would you even know of the incarnation? Is it not because the first incarnation gave you knowledge that you have the impudence to try to judge the second incarnation? Why, instead of being an obedient follower, are you subjecting it to study? When you have entered into this stream and come before the incarnate God, would He allow you to research Him? You can research your own family history, but if you try to research the “family history” of God, would the God of today allow you to conduct such a study? Are you not blind? Do you not bring contempt upon yourself?

If only the work of Jesus was done, and was not complemented by work in this stage of the last days, man would forever cling to the notion that Jesus alone is the only Son of God, that is, that God has only one son, and that anyone who comes thereafter by another name would not be the only Son of God, much less God Himself. Man has the notion that anyone who serves as a sin offering or who assumes power on God's behalf and redeems all humankind, is the only Son of God. There are some who believe that as long as the One who comes is a male, He may be deemed the only Son of God and God's representative. There are even those who say that Jesus is the Son of Jehovah, His only Son. Are such notions not overblown? If this stage of work were not done in the final age, then toward God the whole of humankind would be veiled under a dark shadow. If this were the case, man would think himself higher than woman, and women would never be able to hold their heads up, and then not even a single woman could be saved. People always believe that God is male, and moreover that He has always despised woman and would not grant her salvation. If this were the case, would it not be true that all women, who were created by Jehovah and who have also been corrupted, would never have the opportunity to be saved? Then would it not have been pointless for Jehovah to have created woman, that is, to have created Eve? And would not woman perish for eternity? For this reason, the stage of work in the last days is to be undertaken in order to save the whole of humankind, not just woman. If anyone should think that were God to be incarnated as female, it would solely be for the sake of saving woman, then that person would indeed be a fool!

The work of today has pushed forward the work of the Age of Grace; that is, the work under the entire six-thousand-year management plan has moved forward. Though the Age of Grace has ended, there has been progress in God's work. Why do I say time and again that this stage of work builds upon the Age of Grace and the Age of Law? Because the work of this day is a continuation of the work done in the Age of Grace, and an advance over that done in the Age of Law. The three stages are tightly interconnected, with each link in the chain closely tied to the next. Why do I also say that this stage of work builds on that done by Jesus? Supposing that this stage did not build on the work done by Jesus, another crucifixion would have to take place in this stage, and the redemptive work of the previous stage would have to be done all over again. This would be meaningless. And so it is not that the work is completely finished, but that the age has moved forward and the level of the work has been raised higher than before. It can be said that this stage of work is built on the foundation of the Age of Law and upon the rock of

Jesus' work. God's work is built stage by stage, and this stage is not a new beginning. Only the combination of the three stages of work may be deemed the six-thousand-year management plan. The work of this stage is done on the foundation of the work of the Age of Grace. If these two stages of work were unrelated, then why is the crucifixion not repeated in this stage? Why do I not bear the sins of man, but instead come to judge and chastise man directly? If My work to judge and chastise man and My coming now not by the conception of the Holy Spirit did not follow the crucifixion, then I would not be qualified to judge and chastise man. It is precisely because I am one with Jesus that I come directly to chastise and judge man. The work at this stage is built entirely on the work in the preceding stage. That is why only work of this kind can bring man, step by step, into salvation. Jesus and I come from one Spirit. Even though We are unrelated in Our flesh, Our Spirits are one; even though the content of what We do and the work that We take on are not the same, We are alike in essence; Our flesh take different forms, but this is due to the change in era and the differing requirements of Our work; Our ministries are not alike, so the work We bring forth and the dispositions We reveal to man are also different. That is why what man sees and understands this day is unlike in the past, which is because of the change in era. For all that They are different in the gender and the form of Their flesh, and that They were not born of the same family, still less in the same time period, Their Spirits are nonetheless one. For all that Their flesh share neither blood nor physical kinship of any kind, it cannot be denied that They are the incarnate flesh of God in two different time periods. That They are the incarnate flesh of God is an irrefutable truth, even though They are not of the same bloodline and do not share a common human language (one was a male who spoke the language of the Jews and the other a female who only speaks Chinese). It is for these reasons that They have lived in different countries to do the work that it behooves each one to do, and in different time periods too. Despite the fact that They are the same Spirit, possessed of the same essence, there are no absolute similarities between the outward shells of Their flesh. All They share is the same humanity, but as far as external appearance of Their flesh and the circumstances of Their birth are concerned, They are not alike. These things have no impact on Their respective work or on the knowledge that man has of Them, for, in the final analysis, They are the same Spirit and none can separate Them. Even though They are not related by blood, Their entire beings are in the charge of Their Spirits, which allocate to Them different work in different time periods, and Their flesh to different bloodlines. The Spirit of Jehovah is not the

father of the Spirit of Jesus, and the Spirit of Jesus is not the son of the Spirit of Jehovah: They are one and the same Spirit. Similarly, the incarnate God of today and Jesus are not related by blood, but They are one, this is because Their Spirits are one. God can do the work of mercy and lovingkindness, as well as that of the righteous judgment and of chastisement of man, and that of calling down curses on man; and in the end, He can do the work of destroying the world and punishing the wicked. Does He not do all of this Himself? Is this not the omnipotence of God? He was able both to promulgate laws for man and to issue him commandments, and He was also able to lead the early Israelites in living their lives on earth, and to guide them in building the temple and altars, holding all the Israelites under His dominion. Because of His authority, He lived on earth with the people of Israel for two thousand years. The Israelites dared not rebel against Him; all revered Jehovah and observed His commandments. Such was the work that was done by virtue of His authority and His omnipotence. Then, during the Age of Grace, Jesus came to redeem the whole of fallen humankind (not only the Israelites). He showed mercy and lovingkindness to man. The Jesus that man saw in the Age of Grace was filled with lovingkindness and was always loving toward man, for He had come to save humanity from sin. He was able to forgive men their sins until His crucifixion completely redeemed humankind from sin. During this period, God appeared before man with mercy and lovingkindness; that is, He became a sin offering for man and was crucified for the sins of man, so that they might forever be forgiven. He was merciful, compassionate, patient, and loving. And all those who followed Jesus in the Age of Grace likewise sought to be patient and loving in all things. They were long-suffering, and never fought back even when beaten, cursed, or stoned. But during the final stage it can no longer be so. The work of Jesus and Jehovah was not entirely the same even though They were of one Spirit. The work of Jehovah did not bring the age to an end, but guided the age, ushering in the life of humankind on earth, and the work of today is to conquer those in the Gentile nations who have been deeply corrupted, and to lead not only God's chosen people in China, but the entire universe and all humankind. It may appear to you that this work is being done only in China, but in fact it has already begun to spread abroad. Why is it that people outside China seek the true way, time and time again? It is because the Spirit has already set to work, and the words spoken today are directed toward people throughout the universe. With this, half of the work is already under way. From the creation of the world to the present, the Spirit of God has set this great work in motion, and has moreover done different work in

different ages and among different nations. The people of each age see a different disposition of His, which is naturally revealed through the different work that He does. He is God, filled with mercy and lovingkindness; He is the sin offering for man and man's shepherd; but He is also man's judgment, chastisement, and curse. He could lead man to live on earth for two thousand years, and He could also redeem corrupted humankind from sin. Today, He is also able to conquer humankind, who does not know Him, and to prostrate them under His dominion, so that all submit to Him fully. In the end, He will burn away all that is unclean and unrighteous within people throughout the universe, to show them that He is not only a merciful and loving God, not only a God of wisdom and wonders, not only a holy God, but furthermore, a God who judges man. To the evil ones among humankind, He is burning, judgment, and punishment; to those who are to be perfected, He is tribulation, refinement, and trials, as well as comfort, sustenance, the provision of words, dealing, and pruning. And to those who are eliminated, He is punishment and retribution. Tell Me, is God not almighty? He is capable of any and all work, not just the crucifixion, as you imagine. You think too little of God! Do you believe that all He can do is redeem the whole of humankind through His crucifixion, and that's it? And after that, you will follow Him up to heaven to eat of the fruit from the tree of life and drink from the river of life? ... Could it be that simple? Tell Me, what have you accomplished? Do you have the life of Jesus? You were indeed redeemed by Him, but the crucifixion was the work of Jesus Himself. What duty have you fulfilled as a human being? You have only outward piety, but you do not understand His way. Is that how you manifest Him? If you have not attained the life of God or seen the entirety of His righteous disposition, then you cannot claim to be one that has life, and you are not worthy to pass through the gate of the kingdom of heaven.

Not only is God a Spirit, He can also become flesh. He is, moreover, a body of glory. Jesus, though you have not seen Him, was witnessed by the Israelites—the Jews of that time. He was at first a fleshly body, but after He was crucified, He became the body of glory. He is the all-encompassing Spirit and can do work in every place. He can be Jehovah, or Jesus, or Messiah; in the end, He can also become Almighty God. He is righteousness, judgment, and chastisement; He is curse and wrath; but He is also mercy and lovingkindness. All the work He has done is capable of representing Him. What manner of God do you say He is? You cannot explain. If you truly cannot explain, you should not come to conclusions about God. Do not draw the conclusion that God is forever a God of mercy and lovingkindness just because He did the work

of redemption in one stage. Can you be certain that He is only a merciful and loving God? If He is merely a merciful and loving God, why will He bring the age to an end in the last days? Why will He send down so many disasters? According to people's notions and thoughts, God should be merciful and loving to the very end, so that every last member of humankind can be saved. But why, in the last days, does He send down such great disasters as earthquake, pestilence, and famine to destroy this evil humankind, which regards God as an enemy? Why does He allow man to suffer these disasters? As for what manner of God He is, no one among you dares to say, and none is able to explain. Can you be certain that He is the Spirit? Do you dare say that He is none other than the flesh of Jesus? And do you dare say that He is a God who will forever be crucified for man's sake?

from *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

7. How one knows that Christ is the truth, the way, and the life

Bible Verses for Reference:

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God” (Jhn 1:1–2).

“And the Word was made flesh, and dwelled among us ... full of grace and truth” (Jhn 1:14).

“Jesus said to him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man comes to the Father, but by Me” (Jhn 14:6).

“The words that I speak to you, they are spirit, and they are life” (Jhn 6:63).

Relevant Words of God:

The truth comes from the world of man, yet the truth among man is passed on by Christ. It originates from Christ, that is, from God Himself, and this is not something man is capable of.

Excerpted from “Success or Failure Depends on the Path That Man Walks” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

God Himself is life, and the truth, and His life and truth coexist. Those who are incapable of gaining the truth shall never gain life. Without the guidance, support, and provision of the truth, you shall only gain letters, doctrines, and, above all, death. God's life is ever-present, and

His truth and life coexist. If you cannot find the source of truth, then you will not gain the nourishment of life; if you cannot gain the provision of life, then you will surely have no truth, and so apart from imaginations and notions, the entirety of your body shall be nothing but your flesh—your stench-ridden flesh. Know that the words of books do not count as life, the records of history cannot be feted as the truth, and the regulations of the past cannot serve as an account of words presently spoken by God. Only that which is expressed by God when He comes to earth and lives among man is the truth, life, God’s will, and His current way of working.

Excerpted from “Only Christ of the Last Days Can Give Man the Way of Eternal Life” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

In the Age of Kingdom, God uses words to usher in the new age, to change the means by which He works, and to do the work of the entire age. This is the principle by which God works in the Age of Word. He became flesh to speak from different perspectives, so that man could truly see God, who is the Word appearing in the flesh, and could behold His wisdom and wondrousness. Such work is done in order better to achieve the goals of conquering man, perfecting man, and eliminating man, which is the true meaning of the use of words to work in the Age of Word. Through these words, people come to know the work of God, the disposition of God, the substance of man, and what man ought to enter into. Through words, the work God wishes to do in the Age of Word is brought to fruition in its entirety. Through these words, people are exposed, eliminated, and tried. People have seen God’s words, heard these words, and recognized the existence of these words. As a result, they have come to believe in the existence of God, in the omnipotence and wisdom of God, as well as in God’s love for man and His desire to save man. The word “words” may be simple and ordinary, but the words spoken from the mouth of the incarnate God shake the universe, they transform people’s hearts, transform their notions and old dispositions, and transform the way the whole world used to appear. Through the ages, only the God of today has worked in this way, and only He speaks thus and comes to save man thus. From this time forward, man lives under the guidance of God’s words, shepherded and supplied by His words. People live in the world of God’s words, amid the curses and the blessings of God’s words, and there are even more people who have come to live under the judgment and chastisement of His words. These words and this work are all for the sake of man’s salvation, for the sake of fulfilling God’s will, and for the sake of

changing the original appearance of the world of old creation. God created the world using words, He leads people throughout the universe using words, and He conquers and saves them using words. Ultimately, He shall use words to bring the entire world of old to an end, thus completing the entirety of His management plan.

Excerpted from “The Age of Kingdom Is the Age of Word” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The Word has become flesh and the Spirit of truth has been realized in the flesh—all the truth, the way, and the life has come in the flesh, God’s Spirit has really arrived on earth and the Spirit has come in the flesh. Although, superficially, this appears different from the conception by the Holy Spirit, in this work you are able to see more clearly that the Spirit has already been realized in the flesh, and, moreover, that the Word has become flesh and the Word has appeared in the flesh. You are able to understand the true meaning of the words: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” Moreover, you must understand that the Word of today is God, and behold the Word becomes flesh. This is the best testimony you can bear. This proves that you possess true knowledge of God become flesh—you are not only able to know Him, but are also aware that the way you walk today is the way of life, and the way of truth. The stage of work which Jesus performed only fulfilled the essence of “the Word was with God”: The truth of God was with God, and the Spirit of God was with the flesh and was inseparable from that flesh. That is, the flesh of God incarnate was with the Spirit of God, which is greater proof that Jesus incarnate was the first incarnation of God. This stage of work precisely fulfills the inner meaning of “the Word becomes flesh,” lent deeper meaning to “the Word was with God, and the Word was God,” and allows you to firmly believe the words “In the beginning was the Word.” Which is to say, at the time of creation God was possessed of words, His words were with Him and inseparable from Him, and in the final age, He makes even clearer the power and authority of His words, and allows man to see all of His ways—to hear all of His words. Such is the work of the final age. You must come to understand these things through and through. It is not a question of knowing the flesh, but of how you understand the flesh and the Word. This is the testimony that you must bear, that which everyone must know.

Excerpted from “Practice (4)” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

This time around, God comes to do work not in a spiritual body, but in a very ordinary one. Moreover, not only is it the body of God's second incarnation, it is also the body through which God returns to the flesh. It is a very ordinary flesh. You cannot see anything that makes Him stand out from others, but you can gain from Him previously unheard-of truths. This insignificant flesh is what embodies all the words of truth from God, undertakes God's work in the last days, and expresses the whole of God's disposition for man to understand. Do you not desire greatly to see the God in heaven? Do you not desire greatly to understand the God in heaven? Do you not desire greatly to see the destination of mankind? He will tell you all these secrets—secrets that no man has been able to tell you, and He will also tell you of the truths that you do not understand. He is your gate into the kingdom, and your guide into the new age. Such an ordinary flesh holds many unfathomable mysteries. His deeds may be inscrutable to you, but the entire goal of the work He does is sufficient enough to allow you to see that He is not, as people believe, a simple flesh. For He represents the will of God and the care shown by God toward mankind in the last days. Though you cannot hear His words that seem to shake the heavens and earth or see His eyes like blazing flames, and though you cannot feel the discipline of His iron rod, nevertheless you can hear from His words that God is wrathful and know that God is showing compassion for mankind; you can see the righteous disposition of God and His wisdom, and, moreover, realize God's solicitude for all mankind. The work of God in the last days is to allow man to see the God in heaven living among men on earth, and to enable man to know, obey, revere, and love God. This is why He has returned to the flesh for a second time. ...

... The fact that you have arrived at today is thanks to this flesh. It is because God lives in the flesh that you have the chance to survive. All this good fortune has been gained on account of this ordinary man. Not only this, but in the end, every nation shall worship this ordinary man, as well as give thanks to and obey this insignificant man, because it is the truth, the life, and the way He brought that has saved all mankind, eased the conflict between man and God, shortened the distance between them, and opened up a connection between the thoughts of God and man. It is also He who has obtained even greater glory for God. Is an ordinary man such as this unworthy of your trust and adoration? Is such an ordinary flesh unfit to be called Christ? Can such an ordinary man not become the expression of God among men? Does such a man, who has spared mankind from disaster, not deserve your love and your desire to hold on to Him? If

you reject the truths expressed from His mouth and detest His existence among you, then what will become of you in the end?

Excerpted from "Did You Know? God Has Done a Great Thing Among Men" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Unbeknownst to us, this insignificant man has led us into one step after another of God's work. We undergo countless trials, bear innumerable chastenings, and are tested by death. We learn of God's righteous and majestic disposition, enjoy, too, His love and mercy, come to appreciate God's great power and wisdom, witness the loveliness of God, and behold God's eager desire to save man. In the words of this ordinary person, we come to know the disposition and essence of God, to understand God's will, to know the nature essence of man, and see the way to salvation and perfection. His words cause us to "die," and they cause us to be "reborn"; His words bring us comfort, yet also leave us wracked with guilt and a sense of indebtedness; His words bring us joy and peace, but also infinite pain. Sometimes we are as lambs to the slaughter in His hands; sometimes we are like the apple of His eye, and enjoy His tender love; sometimes we are like His enemy, and under His gaze are turned to ashes by His wrath. We are the human race saved by Him, we are the maggots in His eyes, and we are the lost lambs that, day and night, He is bent on finding. He is merciful toward us, He despises us, He raises us up, He comforts and exhorts us, He guides us, He enlightens us, He chastens and disciplines us, and He even curses us. Night and day, He never ceases to worry about us, and protects and cares for us, night and day, never leaving our side, but spills His heart's blood for our sake and pays any price for us. Within the utterances of this small and ordinary body of flesh, we have enjoyed the entirety of God and beheld the destination that God has bestowed upon us. Notwithstanding this, vanity still stirs up trouble within our hearts, and we are still unwilling actively to accept a person like this as our God. Though He has given us so much manna, so much to enjoy, none of this can take the Lord's place in our hearts. We honor this person's special identity and status only with great reluctance. As long as He does not open His mouth to ask us to acknowledge that He is God, we will never take it upon ourselves to acknowledge Him as the God that is soon to arrive and yet has long been working in our midst.

God continues His utterances, employing various methods and perspectives to admonish us about what we should do while, at the same time, giving voice to His heart. His words carry life power, show us the way we should walk, and enable us to understand what the truth is. We

begin to be drawn by His words, we begin to focus on the tone and manner of His speaking, and subconsciously we begin to take an interest in the innermost feelings of this unremarkable person. He spits up His heart's blood in working on our behalf, loses sleep and appetite on our account, weeps for us, sighs for us, groans in sickness for us, suffers humiliation for the sake of our destination and salvation, and our numbness and rebelliousness draw tears and blood from His heart. This way of being and of having belongs to no ordinary person, nor can it be possessed or attained by any corrupted human being. He shows tolerance and patience possessed by no ordinary person, and His love is not something with which any created being is endowed. No one apart from Him can know all of our thoughts, or have such a clear and complete grasp of our nature and essence, or judge the rebelliousness and corruption of mankind, or speak to us and work among us like this on behalf of God in heaven. No one apart from Him is endowed with the authority, wisdom, and dignity of God; the disposition of God and what God has and is are brought forth, in their entirety, in Him. No one apart from Him can show us the way and bring us light. No one apart from Him can reveal the mysteries that God has not disclosed since creation until today. No one apart from Him can save us from Satan's bondage and our own corrupt disposition. He represents God. He expresses the inmost heart of God, the exhortations of God, and God's words of judgment toward all mankind. He has begun a new age, a new era, and ushered in a new heaven and earth and new work, and He has brought us hope, ending the life we led in vagueness and enabling our whole being to behold, in total clarity, the path to salvation. He has conquered our whole being and gained our hearts. From that moment onward, our minds have become conscious, and our spirits seem to be revived: This ordinary, insignificant person, who lives among us and has long been rejected by us—is this not the Lord Jesus, who is ever in our thoughts, waking or dreaming, and for whom we long night and day? It is He! It really is He! He is our God! He is the truth, the way, and the life! He has enabled us to live again and to see the light and has stopped our hearts from wandering. We have returned to the home of God, we have returned before His throne, we are face-to-face with Him, we have witnessed His countenance, and we have seen the road that lies ahead.

Excerpted from "Beholding the Appearance of God in His Judgment and Chastisement" in *The Word Appears in*

the Flesh

My words are the forever unchanging truth. I am the supply of life for man and the only guide for mankind. The worth and meaning of My words are not determined by whether they are recognized or accepted by mankind, but by the essence of the words themselves. Even if not a single person on this earth can receive My words, the value of My words and their help to mankind are inestimable to any man. Therefore, when faced with the many people who rebel against, refute, or are utterly contemptuous of My words, My stance is only this: Let time and facts be My witness and show that My words are the truth, the way, and the life. Let them show that all I have said is right, that it is that which man should be furnished with and, moreover, that which man should accept. I will let all who follow Me know this fact: Those who cannot fully accept My words, those who cannot practice My words, those who cannot find a purpose in My words, and those who cannot receive salvation because of My words, are those who have been condemned by My words and, moreover, have lost My salvation, and My rod shall never stray from them.

Excerpted from “You Ought to Consider Your Deeds” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Christ of the last days brings life, and brings the enduring and everlasting way of truth. This truth is the path by which man gains life, and it is the only path by which man shall know God and be approved by God. If you do not seek the way of life provided by Christ of the last days, then you shall never gain the approval of Jesus, and shall never be qualified to enter the gate of the kingdom of heaven, for you are both a puppet and prisoner of history. Those who are controlled by regulations, by letters, and shackled by history will never be able to gain life nor gain the perpetual way of life. This is because all they have is turbid water which has been clung to for thousands of years instead of the water of life that flows from the throne. Those who are not supplied with the water of life will forever remain corpses, playthings of Satan, and sons of hell. How, then, can they behold God? If you only try to hold on to the past, only try to keep things as they are by standing still, and do not try to change the status quo and discard history, then will you not always be against God? The steps of God’s work are vast and mighty, like surging waves and rolling thunders—yet you sit passively awaiting destruction, clinging to your folly and doing nothing. In this way, how can you be considered someone who follows the footsteps of the Lamb? How can you justify the God that you hold on to as a God who is always new and never old? And how can the words of your yellowed books carry you across into a new

age? How can they lead you to seek the steps of God's work? And how can they take you up to heaven? What you hold in your hands are letters that can provide but temporary solace, not truths that are capable of giving life. The scriptures you read can only enrich your tongue and are not words of wisdom that can help you know human life, much less the paths that can lead you to perfection. Does this discrepancy not give you cause for reflection? Does it not make you realize the mysteries contained within? Are you capable of delivering yourself to heaven to meet God on your own? Without the coming of God, can you take yourself into heaven to enjoy family happiness with God? Are you still dreaming now? I suggest, then, that you stop dreaming and look at who is working now—look to see who is now carrying out the work of saving man during the last days. If you do not, you shall never gain the truth, and shall never gain life.

Excerpted from "Only Christ of the Last Days Can Give Man the Way of Eternal Life" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Those who wish to gain life without relying on the truth spoken by Christ are the most ridiculous people on earth, and those who do not accept the way of life brought by Christ are lost in fantasy. And so I say that those who do not accept Christ of the last days shall forever be despised by God. Christ is man's gateway to the kingdom during the last days, and there are none who can go around Him. None may be perfected by God except through Christ. You believe in God, and so you must accept His words and obey His way. You cannot only think of gaining blessings while being incapable of receiving the truth and incapable of accepting the provision of life. Christ comes during the last days so that all those who truly believe in Him may be provided with life. His work is for the sake of concluding the old age and entering the new one, and His work is the path that must be taken by all those who would enter the new age. If you are incapable of acknowledging Him, and instead condemn, blaspheme, or even persecute Him, then you are bound to burn for eternity and shall never enter the kingdom of God. For this Christ is Himself the expression of the Holy Spirit, the expression of God, the One whom God has entrusted to do His work on earth. And so I say that if you cannot accept all that is done by Christ of the last days, then you blaspheme the Holy Spirit. The retribution to be had by those who blaspheme the Holy Spirit is self-evident to all. I also tell you that if you resist Christ of the last days, if you spurn Christ of the last days, there will be no one else to bear the consequences on your behalf. Furthermore, from this day onward you will not have another chance to gain

the approval of God; even if you try to redeem yourself, you will never again behold the face of God. For what you resist is not a man, what you spurn is not some puny being, but Christ. Do you know what the consequences of this will be? You will not have made a small mistake, but committed a heinous crime. And so I advise everyone not to bare your fangs before the truth, or make careless criticisms, for only the truth can bring you life, and nothing except the truth can allow you to be reborn and behold the face of God again.

Excerpted from “Only Christ of the Last Days Can Give Man the Way of Eternal Life” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

8. How God brings an end to the dark age of Satan’s domain in the last days

Relevant Words of God:

When the people have all been made complete and all the nations of the earth become Christ’s kingdom, then it will be the time when the seven thunders peal. The current day is a stride toward that stage; the charge has been unleashed toward that day. This is God’s plan, and in the near future it will be realized. However, God has already accomplished everything that He has uttered. Thus, it is clear that the nations of earth are but castles in the sand, trembling as high tide nears: The last day is imminent, and the great red dragon will topple beneath God’s word. To ensure that His plan is carried out successfully, the angels of heaven have descended upon earth, doing their utmost to satisfy God. The incarnate God Himself has deployed to the field of battle to wage war against the enemy. Wherever the incarnation appears is a place from which the enemy is exterminated. China will be the first to be annihilated; it will be laid to waste by the hand of God. God will give absolutely no quarter there. Proof of the great red dragon’s progressive collapse can be seen in the continued maturation of the people; this is obvious and visible to anyone. The maturation of the people is a sign of the enemy’s demise. This is a bit of an explanation of what is meant by “compete.”

Excerpted from “Chapter 10” of *Interpretations of the Mysteries of God’s Words to the Entire Universe in The Word Appears in the Flesh*

All will be accomplished by My words; no man may partake, and no man can do the work that I will carry out. I will wipe clean the air of all lands and eradicate all trace of the demons

on earth. I have already begun, and I will commence the first step of My work of chastisement in the dwelling place of the great red dragon. Thus it can be seen that My chastisement has befallen the entire universe, and that the great red dragon and all kinds of unclean spirits will be powerless to escape My chastisement, for I look upon all lands. When My work on earth is completed, that is, when the era of judgment comes to an end, I will formally chastise the great red dragon. My people will surely see My righteous chastisement of the great red dragon, will surely pour forth praise because of My righteousness, and will surely forever extol My holy name because of My righteousness. Hence you will formally perform your duty, and will formally praise Me throughout the lands, forever and ever!

When the era of judgment reaches its peak, I will not hasten to conclude My work, but will integrate into it the evidence of the era of chastisement and allow this evidence to be seen by all My people; in this will be borne greater fruit. This evidence is the means by which I chastise the great red dragon, and I will cause My people to behold it with their own eyes so that they will know more of My disposition. The time when My people enjoy Me is when the great red dragon is chastised. Causing the people of the great red dragon to rise up and revolt against it is My plan, and this is the method by which I make perfect My people, and it is a great opportunity for all My people to grow in life. ... Today, I advance together with man into the era of chastisement, going forth with him side by side. I am doing My work, which is to say, I strike down My rod among man and it falls upon that which is rebellious in man. In the eyes of man, My rod seems to have special powers: It comes upon all those who are My enemies and does not easily spare them; among all who oppose Me, the rod performs its inherent function; all those who are in My hands perform their duty according to My intention, and never have they defied My wishes or changed their substance. As a result, the waters will roar, the mountains will topple, the great rivers will disintegrate, man will be ever given to change, the sun will grow dim, the moon will darken, man will have no more days of living in peace, there will be no more times of tranquility upon the land, the heavens will never again remain calm and quiet, and will endure no longer. All things will be renewed and will recover their original appearance. All households upon earth will be torn apart, and all nations on earth will be rent asunder; gone will be the days of reunions between husband and wife, no more will mother and son meet again, never again will there be the coming together of father and daughter. All that used to be on earth will be smashed by Me.

Excerpted from “Chapter 28” of God’s Words to the Entire Universe in The Word Appears in the Flesh

In His final work of concluding the age, God’s disposition is one of chastisement and judgment, in which He reveals all that is unrighteous, in order to publicly judge all peoples, and to perfect those who love Him with a sincere heart. Only a disposition such as this can bring the age to an end. The last days have already arrived. All things in creation will be separated according to their kind, and divided into different categories based on their nature. This is the moment when God reveals humanity’s outcome and their destination. If people do not undergo chastisement and judgment, then there will be no way of exposing their disobedience and unrighteousness. Only through chastisement and judgment can the outcome of all creation be revealed. Man only shows his true colors when he is chastised and judged. Evil shall be put with evil, good with good, and all humanity shall be separated according to their kind. Through chastisement and judgment, the outcome of all creation will be revealed, so that the evil may be punished and the good rewarded, and all people become subject to the dominion of God. All this work must be achieved through righteous chastisement and judgment. Because man’s corruption has reached its peak and his disobedience become exceedingly severe, only God’s righteous disposition, one that is principally compounded of chastisement and judgment and is revealed during the last days, can fully transform and complete man. Only this disposition can expose evil and thus severely punish all the unrighteous. Therefore, a disposition such as this is imbued with the significance of the age, and the revelation and exhibition of His disposition is made manifest for the sake of the work of each new age. It is not that God reveals His disposition arbitrarily and without significance. Supposing that, in revealing the outcome of man during the last days, God were still to bestow upon man infinite compassion and love and continue to be loving toward him, not subjecting man to righteous judgment but rather showing him tolerance, patience, and forgiveness, and pardoning man no matter how grave his sins, without any jot of righteous judgment: when then would all of God’s management ever be brought to a close? When would a disposition such as this be able to lead people into mankind’s appropriate destination? Take, for example, a judge who is always loving, a judge with a kindly face and a gentle heart. He loves people irrespective of the crimes they may have committed, and he is loving to and forbearing with them whoever they may be. In that case, when will he ever be able to reach a just verdict? During the last days, only righteous judgment can separate man

according to their kind and bring man into a new realm. In this way, the entire age is brought to an end through God's righteous disposition of judgment and chastisement.

Excerpted from "The Vision of God's Work (3)" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

God created humans and placed them upon earth, and He has led them ever since. He then saved them and served as a sin offering for humanity. At the end, He still must conquer humanity, save humans entirely, and restore them to their original likeness. This is the work that He has been engaged in ever since the beginning—restoring humanity to their original image and likeness. God will establish His kingdom and restore the original likeness of human beings, which means that God will restore His authority upon earth and among all creation. Humanity lost their God-fearing heart as well as the function incumbent upon God's creatures after being corrupted by Satan, thereby becoming an enemy disobedient to God. Humanity then lived under Satan's domain and followed Satan's orders; thus, God had no way to work among His creatures, and became all the more unable to win their fearful reverence. Humans were created by God, and ought to worship God, but they actually turned their backs on Him and worshiped Satan instead. Satan became the idol in their hearts. Thus, God lost His standing in their hearts, which is to say that He lost the meaning behind His creation of humanity. Therefore, to restore the meaning behind His creation of humanity, He must restore their original likeness and rid humanity of their corrupt dispositions. To reclaim humans from Satan, He must save them from sin. Only in this way can God gradually restore their original likeness and function, and finally, restore His kingdom. The ultimate destruction of those sons of disobedience will also be carried out in order to allow humans to better worship God and better live upon the earth. Because God created humans, He will make them worship Him; because He wishes to restore humanity's original function, He will restore it completely and without any adulteration. Restoring His authority means making humans worship Him and submit to Him; it means that God will make humans live because of Him and cause His enemies to perish as a result of His authority. It means that God will cause everything about Him to persist among humans without resistance from anybody. The kingdom God wishes to establish is His own kingdom. The humanity He desires is one that will worship Him, one that will submit to Him completely and manifest His glory. If God does not save corrupt humanity, then the meaning behind His creation of humanity will be lost; He will have no more authority among humans,

and His kingdom will no longer be able to exist upon the earth. If God does not destroy those enemies who are disobedient to Him, He will be unable to obtain His complete glory, nor will He be able to establish His kingdom upon the earth. These will be marks of the completion of His work and of His great accomplishment: to utterly destroy those among humanity who are disobedient to Him, and to bring into rest those who have been made complete. When humans have been restored to their original likeness, and when they can fulfill their respective duties, keep to their own proper places and submit to all of God's arrangements, God will have obtained a group of people upon the earth who worship Him, and He will also have established a kingdom upon the earth that worships Him. He will have eternal victory upon the earth, and all those who are opposed to Him will perish for all eternity. This will restore His original intention in creating humanity; it will restore His intention in creating all things, and it will also restore His authority upon earth, among all things, and among His enemies. These will be the symbols of His total victory. Thenceforth, humanity will enter into rest and begin a life that is on the right track. God will also enter into eternal rest with humanity, and commence an eternal life shared by both Himself and humans. The filth and disobedience upon the earth will have disappeared, and all the wailing will have dissipated, and everything in this world that opposes God will have ceased to exist. Only God and those people to whom He has brought salvation will remain; only His creation will remain.

Excerpted from "God and Man Will Enter Into Rest Together" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

All manner of disasters will befall, one after another; all nations and places will experience calamities: Plague, famine, flood, drought, and earthquakes are everywhere. These disasters are not just happening in one or two places, nor will they be over within a day or two; rather, instead they will expand across a greater and greater area, and become more and more severe. During this time, all manner of insect plagues will arise one after another, and the phenomenon of cannibalism will occur everywhere. This is My judgment upon all nations and peoples.

Excerpted from "Chapter 65" of *Utterances of Christ in the Beginning* in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

It can be said that all of today's utterances prophesy future matters; these utterances are how God makes arrangements for the next step of His work. God has almost finished His work in the people of the church, and afterward He shall appear before all people with rage. As God

says, “I shall make the people on earth acknowledge My doings, and My deeds shall be proven before the ‘judgment seat,’ so that they may be acknowledged among people across the earth, who all shall yield.” Did you see anything in these words? In this is the summary of the next part of God’s work. First, God shall make all the guard dogs who wield political power sincerely convinced and He shall make them step back from the stage of history of their own accord, never again to fight for status, and never again to engage in schemes and intrigue. This work must be carried out through God, by raising up various disasters on earth. But it is not at all the case that God will appear. At this time, the nation of the great red dragon shall still be a land of filth, and therefore God will not appear, but will merely emerge through chastisement. Such is the righteous disposition of God, from which none can escape. During this time, all who inhabit the nation of the great red dragon will suffer calamity, which naturally also includes the kingdom on earth (the church). This is the very time when the facts come forth, and so it is experienced by all people, and none can escape. This has been predestined by God. It is precisely because of this step of work that God says, “Now is the time to carry out grand plans.” Because, in the future, there will be no church on earth, and due to the advent of catastrophe, people will only be capable of thinking about what is in front of them, and will neglect everything else, and it will be difficult for them to enjoy God amidst catastrophe. Thus, people are asked to love God with all their heart during this wonderful time, so that they do not miss the chance. When this fact passes, God will have utterly defeated the great red dragon, and thus the work of testimony of the people of God will have come to an end; afterward, God will commence the next step of work, laying waste to the country of the great red dragon, and ultimately nailing people throughout the universe upside down on the cross, after which He shall annihilate all mankind—these are the future steps of God’s work.

Excerpted from “Chapter 42” of Interpretations of the Mysteries of God’s Words to the Entire Universe in The
Word Appears in the Flesh

When God lets loose His great wrath, the whole world will experience all sorts of disasters as a result, like a volcano exploding. Standing on high in the sky, it can be seen that on the earth, every manner of calamity approaches all of mankind, closer by the day. Looking down from on high, the earth presents a variety of scenes like those that precede an earthquake. Liquid fire rushes unchecked, lava flows freely, mountains shift, and a cold light glitters over all. The entire

world has sunk into fire. This is the scene of God unleashing His wrath, and it is the time of His judgment. All those who are of flesh and blood will be unable to escape. Thus, wars between countries and conflicts between people will not be needed to destroy the entire world; instead, the world will “consciously enjoy itself” within the cradle of God’s chastisement. No one will be able to escape; each and every person must pass through this ordeal, one by one. After that, the entire universe will once again sparkle with holy radiance and all of mankind will once again begin a new life. And God will be at rest above the universe and will bless all of mankind each day.

Excerpted from “Chapter 18” of Interpretations of the Mysteries of God’s Words to the Entire Universe in The
Word Appears in the Flesh

All humanity longs to see My face, but when I descend in person upon the earth, they are all averse to My arrival, and they banish the light’s arrival, as if I were man’s enemy in heaven. Man greets Me with a defensive light in his eyes, and remains constantly alert, deeply afraid that I might have other plans for him. Because human beings regard Me as an unfamiliar friend, they feel as if I harbor the intent of killing them indiscriminately. In man’s eyes, I am a deadly antagonist. Having tasted My warmth in the midst of calamity, man nevertheless remains unaware of My love, and is still bent on fending Me off and defying Me. Far from taking advantage of his condition to take action against him, I enfold man in the warmth of embrace, fill his mouth with sweetness, and put needful food into his stomach. But, when My wrathful ire shakes the mountains and rivers, I will no longer, on account of man’s cowardice, bestow on him these different forms of succor. At this moment, I will wax furious, refusing all living things a chance to repent and, abandoning all My hopes for man, I will mete out the retribution he so richly deserves. At this time, thunder and lightning flash and roar, like the ocean’s waves raging in anger, like tens of thousands of mountains crashing down. For his rebelliousness, man is felled by the thunder and lightning, and other creatures are wiped out in the blasts of thunder and lightning, and the whole universe descends abruptly into chaos, and creation is unable to recover the primal breath of life. The myriad hosts of humanity cannot escape the thunder’s roar; in the midst of flashes of lightning, human beings, horde upon horde, topple over into the swift flow, to be swept away by torrents that cascade down from the mountains. All of a sudden, the world of “men” converges in the place of man’s “destination.” Corpses drift about on the

ocean's surface. All of humanity goes far away from Me on account of My wrath, for man has sinned against the essence of My Spirit, and his rebellion has offended Me. But, in the places empty of water, other men still enjoy, amid laughter and song, the promises that I have vouchsafed unto them.

Excerpted from "Chapter 17" of God's Words to the Entire Universe in The Word Appears in the Flesh

When the nations and the peoples of the world all return before My throne, I will then take all the bounty of heaven and confer it upon the human world, so that, thanks to Me, that world will brim with matchless bounty. But so long as the old world continues to exist, I will hurl forth My rage upon its nations, openly promulgate My administrative decrees throughout the universe, and visit chastisement upon whosoever violates them:

As I turn My face to the universe to speak, all mankind hears My voice, and thereupon sees all the works I have wrought throughout the universe. Those who set themselves against My will, that is to say, who oppose Me with the deeds of man, will fall under My chastisement. I will take the multitudinous stars in the heavens and make them anew and, thanks to Me, the sun and the moon will be renewed—the skies will no longer be as they were and the myriad things on the earth will be renewed. All will become complete through My words. The many nations within the universe will be partitioned afresh and replaced by My kingdom, so that the nations upon the earth will disappear forever and all will become a kingdom that worships Me; all the nations of the earth will be destroyed and cease to exist. Of the human beings within the universe, all those belonging to the devil will be exterminated, and all who worship Satan will be laid low by My burning fire—that is, except for those now within the stream, all will be turned to ashes. When I chastise the many peoples, those in the religious world will, to varying extents, return to My kingdom, conquered by My works, because they will have seen the advent of the Holy One riding on a white cloud. All people will be separated according to their own kind, and will receive chastisements commensurate with their actions. All those who have stood against Me will perish; as for those whose deeds on earth have not involved Me, they will, because of how they have acquitted themselves, continue to exist on the earth under the governance of My sons and My people. I will reveal Myself to the myriad peoples and the myriad nations, and with My own voice, I will sound forth upon the earth, proclaiming the completion of My great work for all mankind to see with their own eyes.

9. Why it is necessary to experience God’s work of judgment in the last days in order to be able to achieve knowledge of God

Relevant Words of God:

In the last days, Christ uses a variety of truths to teach man, to expose the substance of man, and to dissect the words and deeds of man. These words comprise various truths, such as man’s duty, how man should obey God, how man should be loyal to God, how man ought to live out normal humanity, as well as the wisdom and the disposition of God, and so on. These words are all directed at the substance of man and his corrupt disposition. In particular, the words that expose how man spurns God are spoken in regard to how man is an embodiment of Satan, and an enemy force against God. In undertaking His work of judgment, God does not simply make clear the nature of man with a few words; He exposes, deals with, and prunes over the long term. These methods of exposure, dealing, and pruning cannot be substituted with ordinary words, but with the truth of which man is utterly bereft. Only methods such as these can be called judgment; only through judgment of this kind can man be subdued and thoroughly convinced into submission to God, and moreover gain true knowledge of God. What the work of judgment brings about is man’s understanding of the true face of God and the truth about his own rebelliousness. The work of judgment allows man to gain much understanding of the will of God, of the purpose of God’s work, and of the mysteries that are incomprehensible to him. It also allows man to recognize and know his corrupt essence and the roots of his corruption, as well as to discover the ugliness of man. These effects are all brought about by the work of judgment, for the essence of this work is actually the work of opening up the truth, the way, and the life of God to all those who have faith in Him.

Excerpted from “Christ Does the Work of Judgment With the Truth” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

God does the work of judgment and chastisement so that man may gain knowledge of Him, and for the sake of His testimony. Without His judgment of man’s corrupt disposition, man could not possibly know His righteous disposition, which brooks no offense, and nor would man

be able to turn his old knowledge of God into a new one. For the sake of His testimony, and for the sake of His management, He makes His entirety public, thus enabling man, through His public appearance, to arrive at knowledge of God, to be transformed in his disposition, and to bear resounding testimony to God. The transformation of the disposition of man is achieved through many different kinds of God's work; without such changes in his disposition, man would be unable to bear testimony to God and to be after God's heart. The transformation of man's disposition signifies that man has freed himself from Satan's bondage and from the influence of darkness, and has truly become a model and specimen of God's work, a witness of God, and one who is after God's heart. Today, God incarnate has come to do His work on earth, and He requires that man achieve knowledge of Him, obedience to Him, testimony to Him, to know His practical and normal work, to obey all of His words and work which do not accord with the notions of man, and to bear testimony to all the work He does to save man, as well as all the deeds He accomplishes to conquer man. Those who bear testimony to God must have knowledge of God; only this kind of testimony is accurate and real, and only this kind of testimony can shame Satan. God uses those who have come to know Him through undergoing His judgment and chastisement, dealing and pruning, to bear testimony to Him. He uses those who have been corrupted by Satan to bear testimony to Him, and so too does He use those whose disposition has changed, and who have thus gained His blessings, to bear testimony to Him. He does not need man to praise Him with his mouth, nor does He need the praise and testimony of the ilk of Satan, who have not been saved by Him. Only those who know God are qualified to bear testimony to Him, and only those who have been transformed in their disposition are qualified to bear testimony to Him. God will not allow man intentionally to bring shame upon His name.

Excerpted from "Only Those Who Know God Can Bear Testimony to God" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

During the last days, God has come chiefly in order to speak His words. He speaks from the perspective of the Spirit, from the perspective of man, and from a third person perspective; He speaks in different ways, using one way for a period of time, and He uses the method of speaking to change the notions of man and remove the image of the vague God from man's heart. This is the main work done by God. Because man believes that God has come to heal the sick, to cast out demons, to perform miracles, and to bestow material blessings upon man, God

carries out this stage of work—the work of chastisement and judgment—in order to remove such things from the notions of man, so that man may know the reality and normality of God, and so that the image of Jesus may be removed from his heart and replaced by a new image of God. As soon as the image of God within man becomes old, then it becomes an idol. When Jesus came and carried out that stage of work, He did not represent the entirety of God. He performed some signs and wonders, spoke some words, and was ultimately crucified. He represented one part of God. He could not represent all that is of God, but rather He represented God in doing one part of God’s work. That is because God is so great, and so wondrous, and He is unfathomable, and because God only does one part of His work in every age. The work done by God during this age is chiefly the provision of the words for the life of man; the exposure of man’s nature essence and corrupt disposition; and the elimination of religious notions, feudal thinking, outdated thinking, and the knowledge and culture of man. These things must all be cleansed through being exposed by God’s words. In the last days, God uses words, not signs and wonders, to make man perfect. He uses His words to expose man, to judge man, to chastise man, and to make man perfect, so that in the words of God, man comes to see the wisdom and loveliness of God, and comes to understand the disposition of God, and so that through the words of God, man beholds the deeds of God. During the Age of Law, Jehovah led Moses out of Egypt with His words, and spoke some words to the Israelites; at that time, part of the deeds of God were made plain, but because the caliber of man was limited and nothing could make his knowledge complete, God continued to speak and work. In the Age of Grace, man once more saw part of the deeds of God. Jesus was able to show signs and wonders, to heal the sick and cast out demons, and be crucified, three days after which He was resurrected and appeared in the flesh before man. Of God, man knew no more than this. Man knows as much as is shown to him by God, and if God were to show nothing more to man, then such would be the extent of man’s delimitation of God. Thus, God continues to work, so that man’s knowledge of Him may become deeper, and so that man may gradually come to know the essence of God. In the last days, God uses His words to make man perfect. Your corrupt disposition is disclosed by the words of God, and your religious notions are replaced by the reality of God. God incarnate of the last days has chiefly come to fulfill the words “the Word becomes flesh, the Word comes into the flesh, and the Word appears in the flesh,” and if you do not have a thorough knowledge of this, then you will be unable to stand fast. During the last days, God primarily intends to accomplish a stage

of work in which the Word appears in the flesh, and this is one part of God's management plan. Thus, your knowledge must be clear; regardless of how God works, God does not allow man to delimit Him. If God did not do this work during the last days, then man's knowledge of Him could go no further. You would only know that God can be crucified and can destroy Sodom, and that Jesus can be raised from the dead and appear to Peter.... But you would never say that God's words can accomplish all, and can conquer man. Only through experiencing God's words can you speak of such knowledge, and the more of God's work that you experience, the more thorough your knowledge of Him will become. Only then will you cease to delimit God within your own notions. Man comes to know God by experiencing His work; there is no other correct way to know God.

Excerpted from "Knowing God's Work Today" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Today, God has become flesh primarily to complete the work of "the Word appearing in the flesh," to use the word to make man perfect, and make man accept the dealing with the word and the refinement of the word. In His words He causes you to gain provision and gain life; in His words you see His work and deeds. God uses the word to chastise and refine you, and thus, if you suffer hardship, it is also because of the word of God. Today, God does work not with facts, but with words. Only after His word has come upon you can the Holy Spirit work within you and cause you to suffer pain or feel sweetness. Only the word of God can bring you into reality, and only the word of God is capable of making you perfect. And so, at the very least you must understand this: The work done by God during the last days is principally the use of His word to make every person perfect and to guide man. All the work that He does is through the word; He does not use facts to chastise you. There are times when some people resist God. God does not cause you great discomfort, your flesh is not chastised, nor do you suffer hardship—but as soon as His word comes upon you, and refines you, it is unbearable for you. Is that not so? During the time of the service-doers, God said to throw man into the bottomless pit. Did man really arrive at the bottomless pit? Simply through the use of words to refine man, man entered into the bottomless pit. And so, during the last days, when God becomes flesh, He principally uses the word to accomplish all and make all clear. Only in His words can you see what He is; only in His words can you see that He is God Himself. When God incarnate comes to earth, He does no other work but the speaking of words—thus there is no need for facts; words suffice.

That is because He has principally come to do this work, to allow man to behold His power and supremacy in His words, to allow man to see in His words how He humbly hides Himself, and to allow man to know His entirety in His words. All that He has and all that He is are in His words. His wisdom and wondrousness are in His words. In this are you made to see the many methods with which God speaks His words. Most of God's work during all this time has been provision, revelation, and dealing to man. He does not curse a person lightly, and even when He does, it is through the word that He curses them. And so, in this age of God become flesh, do not try to see God heal the sick and cast out demons again, and stop constantly looking for signs—there is no point! Those signs cannot make man perfect! To speak plainly: Today, the real God Himself of the flesh does not act; He only speaks. This is the truth! He uses words to make you perfect, and uses words to feed and water you. He also uses words to work, and He uses words in place of facts to make you know His reality. If you are capable of perceiving this manner of God's work, then it is difficult to be negative. Instead of focusing on things that are negative, you should focus only on that which is positive—which is to say, regardless of whether or not the words of God are fulfilled, or whether or not there is the advent of facts, God causes man to gain life from His words, and this is the greatest of all signs; and even more so, it is an undisputable fact. This is the best evidence through which to know God, and is an even greater sign than signs. Only these words can make man perfect.

Excerpted from "All Is Achieved by the Word of God" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

God became flesh in the most backward and filthy place of all, and it is only in this way that God is able to clearly show the entirety of His holy and righteous disposition. And through what is His righteous disposition shown? It is shown when He judges man's sins, when He judges Satan, when He abhors sin, and when He despises the enemies that oppose and rebel against Him. The words I speak today are to judge man's sins, to judge man's unrighteousness, to curse man's disobedience. Man's crookedness and deceitfulness, man's words and deeds—all that is at odds with God's will must be subjected to judgment, and man's disobedience denounced as sin. His words revolve around the principles of judgment; He uses judgment of man's unrighteousness, the curse of man's rebelliousness, and exposure of man's ugly faces to make manifest His own righteous disposition. Holiness is a representation of His righteous disposition, and in fact God's holiness actually is His righteous disposition. Your corrupt

dispositions are the context of today's words—I use them to speak and to judge, and to carry out the work of conquest. This alone is the real work, and this alone fully makes God's holiness shine. If there is no trace of a corrupt disposition in you, then God will not judge you, nor will He show you His righteous disposition. Since you have a corrupt disposition, God will not let you off, and it is through this that His holiness is shown. If God were to see that man's filthiness and rebelliousness were too great but He did not speak or judge you, nor chastise you for your unrighteousness, then this would prove that He is not God, for He would have no hatred of sin; He would be just as filthy as man. Today, it is because of your filth that I judge you, and it is because of your corruption and rebelliousness that I chastise you. I am not flaunting My power to you or deliberately oppressing you; I do these things because you, who have been born in this land of filth, have been so severely contaminated by filth. You have simply lost your integrity and humanity and you have become like pigs born in the dirtiest corners of the world, and so it is because of this that you are judged and that I unleash My wrath upon you. It is precisely because of this judgment that you have been able to see that God is the righteous God, and that God is the holy God; it is precisely because of His holiness and His righteousness that He judges you and unleashes His wrath upon you. Because He can reveal His righteous disposition when He sees the rebelliousness of man, and because He can reveal His holiness when He sees the filth of man, this is enough to show that He is God Himself, who is holy and pristine, and yet lives in the land of filth.

Excerpted from "How the Effects of the Second Step of the Work of Conquest Are Achieved" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Faced with man's state and man's attitude toward God, God has done new work, allowing man to possess both knowledge of and obedience toward Him, and both love and testimony. Thus, man must experience God's refinement of him, as well as His judgment, dealing and pruning of him, without which man would never know God and would never be capable of truly loving and bearing witness to Him. God's refinement of man is not merely for the sake of a one-sided effect, but for the sake of a multi-faceted effect. Only in this way does God do the work of refinement in those who are willing to seek the truth, in order that their resolve and love be made perfect by God. To those who are willing to seek the truth and who yearn for God, nothing is more meaningful, or of greater assistance, than refinement such as this. God's disposition is

not so easily known or understood by man, for God, in the end, is God. Ultimately, it is impossible for God to have the same disposition as man, and thus it is not easy for man to know His disposition. The truth is not inherently possessed by man, and is not easily understood by those who have been corrupted by Satan; man is devoid of the truth, and of the resolve to put the truth into practice, and if he does not suffer and is not refined or judged, then his resolve will never be made perfect. For all people, refinement is excruciating, and very difficult to accept—yet it is during refinement that God makes plain His righteous disposition to man, and makes public His requirements for man, and provides more enlightenment, and more actual pruning and dealing; through the comparison between the facts and the truth, He gives man a greater knowledge of himself and the truth, and gives man a greater understanding of God’s will, thus allowing man to have a truer and purer love of God. Such are God’s aims in carrying out refinement.

Excerpted from “Only by Experiencing Refinement Can Man Possess True Love” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

If people remain stuck in the Age of Grace, then they shall never be rid of their corrupt disposition, let alone know the inherent disposition of God. If people always live in the midst of an abundance of grace, but do not have the way of life that allows them to know God or to satisfy Him, then they will never truly gain Him in their belief in Him. This type of belief is pitiful indeed. When you have finished reading this book, when you have experienced each step of the work of God incarnate in the Age of Kingdom, you will feel that desires you have had for many years have finally been realized. You will feel that only now have you truly seen God face to face; only now have you gazed upon His countenance, heard His personal utterances, appreciated the wisdom of His work, and truly sensed how real and almighty He is. You will feel that you have gained many things that people in times past had never seen nor possessed. At this time, you will clearly know what it is to believe in God, and what it is to conform to God’s will. Of course, if you cling to views of the past, and reject or deny the fact of the second incarnation of God, then you will remain empty-handed, acquiring nothing, and ultimately you will be pronounced guilty of opposing God. Those who are able to obey the truth and submit to the work of God shall be claimed under the name of the second incarnate God—the Almighty. They will be able to accept God’s personal guidance, gaining more and higher truths, as well as real

life. They shall behold the vision never seen before by people of the past: “And I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks; And in the middle of the seven candlesticks one like to the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the breasts with a golden girdle. His head and His hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and His eyes were as a flame of fire; And His feet like to fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and His voice as the sound of many waters. And He had in His right hand seven stars: and out of His mouth went a sharp two edged sword: and His countenance was as the sun shines in its strength” (Revelation 1:12–16). This vision is the expression of God’s entire disposition, and the expression of His entire disposition is also the expression of the work of God in His present incarnation. In the torrents of chastisements and judgments, the Son of man expresses His inherent disposition by means of utterances, allowing all those who accept His chastisement and judgment to see the true face of the Son of man, which is a faithful depiction of the face of the Son of man seen by John. (Of course, all of this will be invisible to those who do not accept the work of God in the Age of Kingdom.) The true face of God cannot be fully articulated using human language, and so God uses the means by which He expresses His inherent disposition to show His true face to man. Which is to say that all those who have appreciated the inherent disposition of the Son of man have seen the true face of the Son of man, for God is too great and cannot be fully articulated using human language. Once man has experienced each step of God’s work in the Age of Kingdom, then he shall know the true meaning of John’s words when he spoke of the Son of man among the lampstands: “His head and His hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and His eyes were as a flame of fire; And His feet like to fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and His voice as the sound of many waters. And He had in His right hand seven stars: and out of His mouth went a sharp two edged sword: and His countenance was as the sun shines in its strength.”

Excerpted from Preface to The Word Appears in the Flesh

II. Words on God’s Work of Judgment in the Last Days

1. Why God still needs to do the work of judgment in the last days, though the Lord Jesus redeemed mankind

Bible Verses for Reference:

“Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord” (Heb 12:14).

“Truly, truly, I say to you, Whoever commits sin is the servant of sin. And the servant stays not in the house for ever: but the son stays ever” (Jhn 8:34–35).

“So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and to them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin to salvation” (Heb 9:28).

“And if any man hear My words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He that rejects Me, and receives not My words, has one that judges him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day” (Jhn 12:47–48).

Relevant Words of God:

Though Jesus did much work among man, He only completed the redemption of all mankind and became man’s sin offering; He did not rid man of all his corrupt disposition. Fully saving man from the influence of Satan not only required Jesus to become the sin offering and bear the sins of man, but it also required God to do even greater work to rid man completely of his satanically corrupted disposition. And so, now that man has been forgiven of his sins, God has returned to the flesh to lead man into the new age, and begun the work of chastisement and judgment. This work has brought man into a higher realm. All those who submit under His dominion shall enjoy higher truth and receive greater blessings. They shall truly live in the light, and they shall gain the truth, the way, and the life.

Excerpted from Preface to *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

You only know that Jesus shall descend during the last days, but how exactly will He descend? A sinner such as you, who has just been redeemed, and has not been changed, or been perfected by God, can you be after God’s heart? For you, you who are still of your old self, it is true that you were saved by Jesus, and that you are not counted as a sinner because of the salvation of God, but this does not prove that you are not sinful, and are not impure. How can you be saintly if you have not been changed? Within, you are beset by impurity, selfish and mean, yet you still wish to descend with Jesus—you should be so lucky! You have missed a step

in your belief in God: You have merely been redeemed, but you have not been changed. For you to be after God's heart, God must personally do the work of changing and cleansing you; if you are only redeemed, you will be incapable of attaining sanctity. In this way you will be unqualified to share in the good blessings of God, for you have missed out a step in God's work of managing man, which is the key step of changing and perfecting. You, a sinner who has just been redeemed, are therefore incapable of directly inheriting God's inheritance.

Excerpted from "Concerning Appellations and Identity" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Before man was redeemed, many of Satan's poisons had already been planted within him and, after thousands of years of being corrupted by Satan, he has within him an established nature that resists God. Therefore, when man has been redeemed, it is nothing more than a case of redemption in which man is bought at a high price, but the poisonous nature within him has not been eliminated. Man that is so defiled must undergo a change before becoming worthy to serve God. By means of this work of judgment and chastisement, man will fully come to know the filthy and corrupt essence within his own self, and he will be able to change completely and become clean. Only in this way can man become worthy to return before the throne of God. All the work done this day is so that man can be made clean and be changed; through judgment and chastisement by the word, as well as through refinement, man can purge away his corruption and be made pure. Rather than deeming this stage of work to be that of salvation, it would be more apt to say it is the work of purification. In truth, this stage is that of conquest as well as the second stage in the work of salvation. It is through judgment and chastisement by the word that man arrives at being gained by God, and it is through the use of the word to refine, judge, and disclose that all of the impurities, notions, motives, and individual aspirations within man's heart are completely revealed. For all that man may have been redeemed and forgiven of his sins, it can only be considered as God not remembering the transgressions of man and not treating man in accordance with his transgressions. However, when man, who lives in a body of flesh, has not been set free from sin, he can only continue to sin, endlessly revealing his corrupt satanic disposition. This is the life that man leads, an endless cycle of sinning and being forgiven. The majority of mankind sin in the day only to confess in the evening. This way, even though the sin offering is forever effective for man, it will not be able to save man from sin. Only half the work of salvation has been completed, for man still has a corrupt disposition. ... It is

not easy for man to become aware of his sins; he has no way of recognizing his own deeply rooted nature, and he must rely on judgment by the word in order to achieve this result. Only thus can man gradually be changed from this point onward.

Excerpted from “The Mystery of the Incarnation (4)” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The work of the last days is to speak words. Great changes can be effected in man by means of words. The changes now effected in these people upon their accepting these words are much greater than those effected in people upon their accepting the signs and wonders of the Age of Grace. For, in the Age of Grace, the demons were cast out from man with the laying on of hands and prayer, but the corrupt dispositions within man still remained. Man was healed of his sickness and forgiven his sins, but as for just how man was to be purged of the corrupt satanic dispositions within him, this work had yet to be done. Man was only saved and forgiven his sins for his faith, but the sinful nature of man was not extirpated and still remained within him. The sins of man were forgiven through the agency of the incarnate God, but this did not mean that man no longer had sin within him. The sins of man could be forgiven through the sin offering, but as for just how man can be made to sin no more, and how his sinful nature may be extirpated completely and transformed, he has no way of solving this problem. The sins of man were forgiven, and this is because of the work of God’s crucifixion, but man continued to live within his corrupt satanic disposition of old. This being so, man must be completely saved from his corrupt satanic disposition, so that his sinful nature may be completely extirpated, never to develop again, thus enabling the disposition of man to be transformed. This would require man to grasp the path of growth in life, to grasp the way of life, and to grasp the way to change his disposition. Furthermore, it would require man to act in accordance with this path, so that his disposition may gradually be changed and he may live under the shining of the light, so that all that he does may be in accord with the will of God, so that he may cast away his corrupt satanic disposition, and so that he may break free from Satan’s influence of darkness, thereby emerging fully from sin. Only then will man receive complete salvation. At the time that Jesus was doing His work, man’s knowledge of Him was still vague and unclear. Man always believed Him to be the son of David, and proclaimed Him to be a great prophet, the benevolent Lord who redeemed man’s sins. Some, on the strength of their faith, were healed just from touching the edge of His garment; the blind could see and even the dead could be restored to life. However, man was

unable to discover the corrupt satanic disposition deeply rooted within himself, neither did he know how to cast it away. Man received much grace, such as the peace and happiness of the flesh, the faith of one member bringing blessing on an entire family, the healing of sickness, and so on. The rest were the good deeds of man and his godly appearance; if someone could live on the basis of these, they were considered an acceptable believer. Only believers of this kind could enter heaven after death, which meant that they were saved. But, in their lifetime, these people did not understand at all the way of life. All they did was to commit sins and then confess their sins in a constant cycle without any path to change their disposition: Such was the condition of man in the Age of Grace. Has man received complete salvation? No! Therefore, after that stage of work was finished, there still remained the work of judgment and chastisement. This stage is to make man pure by means of the word, and thereby give him a path to follow. This stage would not be fruitful or meaningful if it continued with the casting out of demons, for it would fail to extirpate man's sinful nature, and man would come to a standstill at the forgiveness of his sins. Through the sin offering, man has been forgiven his sins, for the work of the crucifixion has already come to an end and God has prevailed over Satan. But the corrupt disposition of man still remaining within him, man can still sin and resist God, and God has not gained mankind. That is why in this stage of work God uses the word to expose the corrupt disposition of man, causing him to practice in accordance with the right path. This stage is more meaningful than the previous one, as well as more fruitful, for now it is the word that directly supplies man's life and enables the disposition of man to be completely renewed; it is a much more thorough stage of work. Therefore, the incarnation in the last days has completed the significance of God's incarnation and completely finished God's management plan for man's salvation.

Excerpted from "The Mystery of the Incarnation (4)" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The essential purpose of God's work of chastisement and judgment is to purify humanity and to prepare them for their ultimate rest; without such cleansing, none of humanity could be classified into different categories according to kind, or enter into rest. This work is humanity's only path to enter into rest. Only God's work of purification will cleanse humans of their unrighteousness, and only His work of chastisement and judgment will bring to light those disobedient elements of humanity, thereby separating those who can be saved from those who cannot, and those who will remain from those who will not. When this work ends, those people

who are allowed to remain will all be cleansed and enter a higher state of humanity in which they will enjoy a more wonderful second human life upon the earth; in other words, they will commence their human day of rest, and coexist with God. After those who are not allowed to remain have been chastised and judged, their true colors will be entirely exposed, after which they will all be destroyed and, like Satan, will no longer be permitted to survive upon the earth. The humanity of the future will no longer include any of this type of people; such people are not fit to enter the land of the ultimate rest, nor are they fit to join in the day of rest that God and humanity will share, for they are the targets of punishment and are wicked, unrighteous people. They were redeemed once, and they have also been judged and chastised; they also once rendered service to God. However, when the final day comes, they will still be eliminated and destroyed due to their wickedness and as a result of their disobedience and inability to be redeemed; they will never again come into being in the world of the future, and will no longer live among the human race of the future. ... The entire purpose behind God's ultimate work of punishing evil and rewarding good is to thoroughly purify all humans so that He may bring a purely holy humanity into eternal rest. This stage of His work is the most crucial; it is the final stage of the whole of His work of management. If God did not destroy the wicked, but instead allowed them to remain, then every human would still be unable to enter into rest, and God would not be able to bring all of humanity into a better realm. Such work would not be complete. When His work is finished, the whole of humanity will be entirely holy; only in this way will God be able to live in rest peacefully.

Excerpted from "God and Man Will Enter Into Rest Together" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

2. How God's work of judgment in the last days purifies and saves mankind

Bible Verses for Reference:

"And if any man hear My words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He that rejects Me, and receives not My words, has one that judges him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day" (Jhn 12:47-48).

“I have yet many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. However, when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will show you things to come” (Jhn 16:12–13).

“Sanctify them through Your truth: Your word is truth. As you have sent Me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth” (Jhn 17:17–19).

Relevant Words of God:

God’s work in the present incarnation is to express His disposition primarily through chastisement and judgment. Building on this foundation, He brings more truth to man and points out to him more ways of practice, thereby achieving His objective of conquering man and saving him from his own corrupt disposition. This is what lies behind the work of God in the Age of Kingdom.

Excerpted from Preface to The Word Appears in the Flesh

In the last days, Christ uses a variety of truths to teach man, to expose the substance of man, and to dissect the words and deeds of man. These words comprise various truths, such as man’s duty, how man should obey God, how man should be loyal to God, how man ought to live out normal humanity, as well as the wisdom and the disposition of God, and so on. These words are all directed at the substance of man and his corrupt disposition. In particular, the words that expose how man spurns God are spoken in regard to how man is an embodiment of Satan, and an enemy force against God. In undertaking His work of judgment, God does not simply make clear the nature of man with a few words; He exposes, deals with, and prunes over the long term. These methods of exposure, dealing, and pruning cannot be substituted with ordinary words, but with the truth of which man is utterly bereft. Only methods such as these can be called judgment; only through judgment of this kind can man be subdued and thoroughly convinced into submission to God, and moreover gain true knowledge of God. What the work of judgment brings about is man’s understanding of the true face of God and the truth about his own rebelliousness. The work of judgment allows man to gain much understanding of the will of God, of the purpose of God’s work, and of the mysteries that are incomprehensible to

him. It also allows man to recognize and know his corrupt essence and the roots of his corruption, as well as to discover the ugliness of man. These effects are all brought about by the work of judgment, for the essence of this work is actually the work of opening up the truth, the way, and the life of God to all those who have faith in Him. This work is the work of judgment done by God.

Excerpted from “Christ Does the Work of Judgment With the Truth” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The work done by God during this age is chiefly the provision of the words for the life of man; the exposure of man’s nature essence and corrupt disposition; and the elimination of religious notions, feudal thinking, outdated thinking, and the knowledge and culture of man. These things must all be cleansed through being exposed by God’s words. In the last days, God uses words, not signs and wonders, to make man perfect. He uses His words to expose man, to judge man, to chastise man, and to make man perfect, so that in the words of God, man comes to see the wisdom and loveliness of God, and comes to understand the disposition of God, and so that through the words of God, man beholds the deeds of God.

Excerpted from “Knowing God’s Work Today” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

By what means is God’s perfection of man accomplished? It is accomplished by means of His righteous disposition. God’s disposition primarily consists of righteousness, wrath, majesty, judgment, and curse, and He perfects man primarily by means of His judgment. Some people do not understand, and ask why it is that God is only able to make man perfect through judgment and curse. They say, “If God were to curse man, wouldn’t man die? If God were to judge man, wouldn’t man be condemned? Then how can he still be made perfect?” Such are the words of people who do not know the work of God. What God curses is the disobedience of man, and what He judges are the sins of man. Although He speaks harshly and relentlessly, He reveals all that is within man, revealing through these stern words that which is substantive within man, yet through such judgment, He gives man a profound knowledge of the substance of the flesh, and thus man submits before God. The flesh of man is of sin and of Satan, it is disobedient, and it is the object of God’s chastisement. Thus, in order to allow man to know himself, the words of God’s judgment must befall him and there must be employed every kind of refinement; only then can God’s work be effective.

Excerpted from “Only by Experiencing Painful Trials Can You Know the Loveliness of God” in The Word
Appears in the Flesh

Whether God judges man or curses him, both make man perfect: Both are done in order to make perfect that which is impure within man. Through this means man is refined, and that which is lacking within man is made perfect through His words and work. Every step of God’s work—whether it be harsh words, or judgment, or chastisement—makes man perfect, and is absolutely appropriate. Never throughout the ages has God done work such as this; today, He works within you so that you appreciate His wisdom. Although you have suffered some pain within you, your hearts feel steadfast and at peace; it is your blessing to be able to enjoy this stage of the work of God. Regardless of what you are able to gain in the future, all that you see of God’s work in you today is love. If man does not experience God’s judgment and refinement, his actions and fervor will always remain at surface level, and his disposition will always remain unchanged. Does this count as having been gained by God? Today, although there is still much within man that is arrogant and conceited, man’s disposition is much more stable than before. God’s dealing with you is done in order to save you, and although you may feel some pain at the time, the day will come when there occurs a change in your disposition. At that time, you will look back and see how wise the work of God is, and at that time you will be able to truly understand God’s will.

Excerpted from “Only by Experiencing Painful Trials Can You Know the Loveliness of God” in The Word
Appears in the Flesh

What internal state in people are trials aimed at? They are targeted at the rebellious disposition in people that is incapable of satisfying God. There is much that is impure within people, and much that is hypocritical, and so God subjects people to trials in order to purify them. ...

If you do not know God’s disposition, then you will inevitably fall during trials, because you are unaware of how God makes people perfect, by what means He makes them perfect, and when God’s trials come upon you and they do not match your notions, you will be unable to stand firm. God’s true love is His entire disposition, and when God’s entire disposition is shown to people, what does this bring to your flesh? When God’s righteous disposition is shown to

people, their flesh will inevitably suffer much pain. If you do not suffer this pain, then you cannot be made perfect by God, nor will you be able to devote true love to God. If God makes you perfect, He will surely show His entire disposition to you. From the time of creation until today, God has never shown His entire disposition to man—but during the last days He reveals it to this group of people whom He has predestined and selected, and by making people perfect, He lays bare His dispositions, through which He makes complete a group of people. Such is God's true love for people. Experiencing God's true love requires that people endure extreme pain, and pay a high price. Only after this will they be gained by God and be able to give their true love back to God, and only then will God's heart be satisfied. If people wish to be made perfect by God, and if they wish to do His will, and fully give their true love to God, then they must experience much suffering and many torments from their circumstances, to suffer pain worse than death. Ultimately they will be forced to give their true heart back to God. Whether or not someone truly loves God is revealed during hardship and refinement. God purifies people's love, and this is also only achieved amid hardship and refinement.

Excerpted from "Only Loving God Is Truly Believing in God" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

God has many means of perfecting man. He employs all manner of environments to deal with the corrupt disposition of man, and uses various things to lay man bare; in one regard, He deals with man, in another He lays man bare, and in another He reveals man, digging out and revealing the "mysteries" in the depths of man's heart, and showing man his nature by revealing many of his states. God perfects man through many methods—through revelation, through dealing with man, through man's refinement, and chastisement—so that man may know that God is practical.

Excerpted from "Only Those Who Focus on Practice Can Be Perfected" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Each of God's words strikes at one of our mortal spots, leaving us wounded and filled with dread. He exposes our notions, our imaginings, and our corrupt disposition. From all that we say and do, down to every one of our thoughts and ideas, our nature essence is revealed in His words, putting us in a state of fear and trembling with nowhere to hide our shame. One by one, He tells us about all of our actions, our aims and intentions, even the corrupt disposition that we ourselves have never discovered, making us feel exposed in all our wretched imperfection

and, even more, completely won over. He judges us for opposing Him, chastises us for blaspheming and condemning Him, and makes us feel that, in His eyes, we have not one single redeeming feature, that we are the living Satan. Our hopes are dashed, we no longer dare to make any unreasonable demands or to entertain any hopes of Him, and even our dreams vanish overnight. This is a fact that none of us can imagine and which none of us can accept. Within the space of a moment, we lose our inward equilibrium and do not know how to continue on the road that lies ahead, or how to continue in our beliefs. It seems as if our faith has gone back to square one, and as if we have never met the Lord Jesus or gotten to know Him. Everything before our eyes fills us with perplexity and makes us vacillate indecisively. We are dismayed, we are disappointed, and deep in our hearts there is irrepressible rage and disgrace. We try to vent, to find a way out, and, what is more, to continue waiting for our Savior Jesus, that we may pour our hearts out to Him. Though there are times when we appear on the outside to be on an even keel, neither haughty nor humble, in our hearts we are afflicted with a sense of loss we have never felt before. Though sometimes we may seem unusually calm on the outside, our minds are roiling with torment like a stormy sea. His judgment and chastisement have stripped us of all our hopes and dreams, putting an end to our extravagant desires and leaving us unwilling to believe that He is our Savior and capable of saving us. His judgment and chastisement have opened a chasm between us and Him, one so deep that no one is willing to cross it. His judgment and chastisement are the first time that we have suffered such a great setback, such great humiliation in our lives. His judgment and chastisement have caused us truly to appreciate God's honor and intolerance of man's offense, compared to which we are exceedingly base, exceedingly impure. His judgment and chastisement have made us realize for the first time how arrogant and pompous we are, and how man will never be the equal of God, or on a par with God. His judgment and chastisement have made us yearn to live no more in such a corrupt disposition, to rid ourselves of this nature essence as soon as possible, and to cease being vile and detestable to Him. His judgment and chastisement have made us happy to obey His words, no longer rebelling against His orchestrations and arrangements. His judgment and chastisement have once more given us the desire to survive and made us happy to accept Him as our Savior.... We have stepped out of the work of conquest, out of hell, out of the valley of the shadow of death.... Almighty God has gained us, this group of people! He has triumphed over Satan and defeated the multitudes of His enemies!

Excerpted from “Beholding the Appearance of God in His Judgment and Chastisement” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

3. God’s work of judgment in the last days is the work of judgment from the great white throne

Bible Verses for Reference:

“For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God” (1Pe 4:17).

“And I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire” (Rev 20:11–15).

Relevant Words of God:

In the judgment beginning at the house of God spoken of in times past, the “judgment” of these words refers to the judgment that God today passes on those who come before His throne in the last days. There are, perhaps, those who believe in such supernatural imaginings as that, when the last days have arrived, God will erect a big table in the heavens, upon which a white tablecloth will be spread, and then, sitting upon a great throne with all men kneeling on the ground, He will reveal the sins of each man and thereby determine whether they are to ascend to heaven or be sent down to the lake of fire and brimstone. No matter what man imagines, it cannot alter the essence of God’s work. The imaginings of man are nothing but the constructs of man’s thoughts; they come from the brain of man, summed up and pieced together from what man has seen and heard. Therefore I say, however brilliant the images conceived, they are but depictions, and are incapable of substituting the plan of God’s work. Man, after all, has been corrupted by Satan, so how could he fathom the thoughts of God? Man conceives God’s work of

judgment as something fantastic. He believes that since it is God Himself who does the work of judgment, then this work must be of the most tremendous scale, and incomprehensible to mortals, and must resound throughout the heavens and shake the earth; if not, how could it be the work of judgment by God? He believes that, as this is the work of judgment, then God must be particularly imposing and majestic as He works, and those being judged must be howling with tears and on their knees begging for mercy. Such scenes would surely be spectacular, and deeply affecting.... Everyone imagines God's work of judgment to be miraculous. Do you know, however, that, at the time when God has long since begun His work of judgment among man, you remain nestled in lethargic slumber? That at the time when you think God's work of judgment has formally begun, God will have already made heaven and earth anew? At that time, perhaps, you will have only just come to understand the meaning of life, but God's merciless work of punishment shall bring you, still deep in sleep, into hell. Only then will you suddenly realize that God's work of judgment has already concluded.

Excerpted from "Christ Does the Work of Judgment With the Truth" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

In the last days, Christ uses a variety of truths to teach man, to expose the substance of man, and to dissect the words and deeds of man. These words comprise various truths, such as man's duty, how man should obey God, how man should be loyal to God, how man ought to live out normal humanity, as well as the wisdom and the disposition of God, and so on. These words are all directed at the substance of man and his corrupt disposition. In particular, the words that expose how man spurns God are spoken in regard to how man is an embodiment of Satan, and an enemy force against God. In undertaking His work of judgment, God does not simply make clear the nature of man with a few words; He exposes, deals with, and prunes over the long term. These methods of exposure, dealing, and pruning cannot be substituted with ordinary words, but with the truth of which man is utterly bereft. Only methods such as these can be called judgment; only through judgment of this kind can man be subdued and thoroughly convinced into submission to God, and moreover gain true knowledge of God. What the work of judgment brings about is man's understanding of the true face of God and the truth about his own rebelliousness. The work of judgment allows man to gain much understanding of the will of God, of the purpose of God's work, and of the mysteries that are incomprehensible to him. It also allows man to recognize and know his corrupt essence and the roots of his

corruption, as well as to discover the ugliness of man. These effects are all brought about by the work of judgment, for the essence of this work is actually the work of opening up the truth, the way, and the life of God to all those who have faith in Him. This work is the work of judgment done by God.

Excerpted from “Christ Does the Work of Judgment With the Truth” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The work of the last days is to separate all according to their kind, and to conclude the management plan of God, for the time is near and the day of God has come. God brings all who enter His kingdom—all who are loyal to Him to the very end—into the age of God Himself. Yet prior to the arrival of the age of God Himself, God’s work is not to observe the deeds of man, or to inquire into the life of man, but to judge man’s disobedience, for God shall purify all those who come before His throne. All who have followed the footsteps of God to this day are those who come before the throne of God, and this being so, every single person who accepts God’s work in its final phase is the object of God’s purification. In other words, everyone who accepts God’s work in its final phase is the object of God’s judgment.

Excerpted from “Christ Does the Work of Judgment With the Truth” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Some believe that God may at some unknown time come to earth and appear to man, whereupon He shall personally judge the whole of mankind, testing them one by one without anyone being left out. Those who think in this way do not know this stage of work of the incarnation. God does not judge man one by one, and He does not test man one by one; to do thus would not be the work of judgment. Is not the corruption of all mankind the same? Is not the essence of all mankind the same? What is judged is mankind’s corrupt essence, man’s essence corrupted by Satan, and all the sins of man. God does not judge the trifling and insignificant faults of man. The work of judgment is representative, and it is not carried out especially for a certain person. Rather, it is work in which a group of people are judged in order to represent the judgment of all of mankind. By personally carrying out His work on a group of people, God in the flesh uses His work to represent the work of the whole of mankind, after which it is gradually spread. This is also how the work of judgment is. God does not judge a certain kind of person or a certain group of people, but instead judges the unrighteousness of the whole of mankind—man’s opposition to God, for example, or man’s irreverence toward Him,

or man's disturbance of the work of God, and so on. What is judged is mankind's essence of opposition to God, and this work is the work of conquest of the last days. The work and word of the incarnate God witnessed by man are the work of judgment before the great white throne during the last days, which was conceived by man during times past. The work that is currently being done by the incarnate God is exactly the judgment before the great white throne. The incarnate God of today is the God who judges the whole of mankind during the last days. This flesh and His work, His word, and His entire disposition are the entirety of Him. Although the scope of His work is limited, and does not directly involve the entire universe, the essence of the work of judgment is the direct judgment of all mankind—not only for the sake of the chosen people of China, nor for the sake of a small number of people. During the work of God in the flesh, although the scope of this work does not involve the entire universe, it represents the work of the entire universe, and after He concludes the work within the work scope of His flesh, He will immediately expand this work to the entire universe, in the same way that the gospel of Jesus spread throughout the universe following His resurrection and ascension. Regardless of whether it is the work of the Spirit or the work of the flesh, it is work that is carried out within a limited scope, but which represents the work of the entire universe. During the last days, God performs His work by appearing in His incarnate identity, and God in the flesh is the God who judges man before the great white throne. Regardless of whether He is the Spirit or the flesh, He who does the work of judgment is the God who judges mankind during the last days. This is defined based on His work, and it is not defined according to His external appearance or several other factors.

Excerpted from "Corrupt Mankind Is More in Need of the Salvation of the Incarnate God" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Today's work of conquest is intended to make it obvious what man's end will be. Why do I say that today's chastisement and judgment are judgment before the great white throne of the last days? Do you not see this? Why is the work of conquest the final stage? Is it not precisely to make manifest what kind of ending each class of man will meet? Is it not to allow everyone, in the course of the work of conquest of chastisement and judgment, to show their true colors and then afterward to be classified according to their kind? Rather than saying this is conquering mankind, it might be better to say that this is showing what kind of ending there will be for each

class of person. This is about judging people's sins and then revealing the various classes of person, thereby deciding whether they are evil or righteous. After the work of conquest, then comes the work of rewarding good and punishing evil. People who obey completely—meaning the thoroughly conquered—will be placed in the next step of spreading God's work to the entire universe; the unconquered will be placed in darkness and will meet with calamity. Thus will man be classified according to kind, the evildoers grouped with evil, to be without the light of the sun ever again, and the righteous grouped with good, to receive light and live forever in the light.

Excerpted from "The Inside Truth of the Work of Conquest (1)" in The Word Appears in the Flesh

4. How one knows the significance of God's work of judgment in the last days

(1) God's work of judgment in the last days is done to purify, save and perfect man, and to make a group of overcomers

Relevant Words of God:

By what means is God's perfection of man accomplished? It is accomplished by means of His righteous disposition. God's disposition primarily consists of righteousness, wrath, majesty, judgment, and curse, and He perfects man primarily by means of His judgment. Some people do not understand, and ask why it is that God is only able to make man perfect through judgment and curse. They say, "If God were to curse man, wouldn't man die? If God were to judge man, wouldn't man be condemned? Then how can he still be made perfect?" Such are the words of people who do not know the work of God. What God curses is the disobedience of man, and what He judges are the sins of man. Although He speaks harshly and relentlessly, He reveals all that is within man, revealing through these stern words that which is substantive within man, yet through such judgment, He gives man a profound knowledge of the substance of the flesh, and thus man submits before God. The flesh of man is of sin and of Satan, it is disobedient, and it is the object of God's chastisement. Thus, in order to allow man to know himself, the words of God's judgment must befall him and there must be employed every kind of refinement; only then can God's work be effective.

Excerpted from “Only by Experiencing Painful Trials Can You Know the Loveliness of God” in The Word
Appears in the Flesh

Today God judges you, chastises you, and condemns you, but you must know that the point of your condemnation is for you to know yourself. He condemns, curses, judges, and chastises so that you might know yourself, so that your disposition might change, and, moreover, so that you might know your worth, and see that all of God’s actions are righteous and in accordance with His disposition and the requirements of His work, that He works in accordance with His plan for man’s salvation, and that He is the righteous God who loves, saves, judges, and chastises man. If you only know that you are of lowly status, that you are corrupt and disobedient, but do not know that God wishes to make plain His salvation through the judgment and chastisement that He does in you today, then you have no way of gaining experience, much less are you capable of continuing forward. God has not come to kill or destroy, but to judge, curse, chastise, and save. Until His 6,000-year management plan comes to a close—before He reveals the outcome of each category of man—God’s work on earth will be for the sake of salvation; its purpose is purely to make those who love Him complete—thoroughly so—and to bring them into submission under His dominion. No matter how God saves people, it is all done by making them break away from their old satanic nature; that is, He saves them by having them seek life. If they do not do so, then they will have no way to accept God’s salvation. Salvation is the work of God Himself, and the seeking for life is something that man must take on in order to accept salvation. In the eyes of man, salvation is the love of God, and the love of God cannot be chastisement, judgment, and curses; salvation must contain love, compassion, and, moreover, words of solace, as well as boundless blessings bestowed by God. People believe that when God saves man, He does so by moving them with His blessings and grace, so that they can give their hearts to God. That is to say, His touching man is His saving them. This sort of salvation is done by striking a deal. Only when God grants them a hundredfold will man come to submit before God’s name and strive to do well for Him and bring Him glory. This is not what God intends for mankind. God has come to work on earth in order to save corrupt mankind; there is no falsehood in this. If there were, He would certainly not have come to do His work in person. In the past, His means of salvation involved showing the utmost love and compassion, such that He gave His all to Satan in exchange for the whole of mankind. The present is nothing

like the past: The salvation bestowed upon you today occurs at the time of the last days, during the classification of each according to kind; the means of your salvation is not love or compassion, but chastisement and judgment, in order that man may be more thoroughly saved. Thus, all that you receive is chastisement, judgment, and merciless smiting, but know this: In this heartless smiting there is not the slightest punishment. Regardless of how harsh My words might be, what befall you are but a few words that might appear utterly heartless to you, and no matter how angry I might be, what rain upon you are still words of teaching, and I do not mean to harm you or put you to death. Is this not all fact? Know that nowadays, whether it be righteous judgment or heartless refinement and chastisement, everything is for the sake of salvation. Regardless of whether today each is classified according to kind or the categories of man are laid bare, the purpose of all of God's words and work is to save those who truly love God. Righteous judgment is brought to purify man, and heartless refinement is done to cleanse them; harsh words or chastening are both done to purify and are for the sake of salvation.

Excerpted from "You Should Put Aside the Blessings of Status and Understand God's Will to Bring Salvation to Man" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Though My words may be stern, they are all said for man's salvation, as I am only speaking words and not punishing man's flesh. These words cause man to live in the light, to know that the light exists, to know that the light is precious, and, even more so, to know how beneficial these words are to them, as well as to know that God is salvation. Though I have uttered many words of chastisement and judgment, what they represent has not been done unto you in deed. I have come to do My work and to speak My words, and though My words may be strict, they are spoken in judgment of your corruption and your rebelliousness. The purpose of My doing this remains to save man from Satan's domain; I am using My words to save man. My purpose is not to harm man with My words. My words are stern in order to achieve results in My work. Only through such work can man come to know themselves and break away from their rebellious disposition. The greatest significance of the work of words is allowing people to put the truth into practice after having understood it, to achieve changes in their disposition, and to gain knowledge of themselves and of the work of God. Only doing the work by way of speaking words can make possible the communication between God and man, and only words can explain the truth. Working in this way is the best means of conquering man; apart from the

utterance of words, no other method is capable of giving people a clearer understanding of the truth and the work of God. Thus, in His final stage of work, God speaks to man in order to unlock for them all the truths and mysteries that they do not yet understand, allowing them to gain from God the true way and the life, thereby meeting His will.

Excerpted from “You Should Put Aside the Blessings of Status and Understand God’s Will to Bring Salvation to Man” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The work being done now is to cause people to forsake Satan, their old ancestor. All judgments by the word aim to expose humanity’s corrupt disposition and to enable people to understand the essence of life. These repeated judgments pierce people’s hearts. Each judgment directly relates to their fate and is meant to wound their hearts so that they can let go of all those things and thereby come to know life, know this filthy world, know God’s wisdom and almightiness, and also know mankind, which is corrupted by Satan. The more man receives this kind of chastisement and judgment, the more man’s heart can be wounded and the more his spirit can be awakened. Awakening the spirits of these extremely corrupted and most deeply deceived of people is the goal of this kind of judgment. Man has no spirit, that is, his spirit died long ago and he knows not that there is Heaven, knows not that there is a God, and certainly knows not that he is struggling in the abyss of death; how could he possibly know that he is living in this evil hell on earth? How could he possibly know that this putrid corpse of his has, through Satan’s corruption, fallen into Hades of death? How could he possibly know that everything on earth has long been ruined beyond repair by mankind? And how could he possibly know that the Creator has come to the earth today and is searching for a group of corrupt people whom He can save? Even after man experiences every possible refinement and judgment, his dull consciousness still barely stirs and indeed is virtually unresponsive. How degenerate is humanity! And though this kind of judgment is like the cruel hail that falls from the sky, it is of the greatest benefit to man. If not for judging people like this, there would be no result and it would be absolutely impossible to save people from the abyss of misery. If not for this work, it would be very difficult for people to emerge from Hades, because their hearts long ago died and their spirits long ago were trampled by Satan. Saving you who have sunk to the deepest depths of degeneration requires calling out to you strenuously, judging you strenuously; only then will it be possible to awaken your frozen hearts.

Excerpted from “Only the Perfected Can Live a Meaningful Life” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

Faced with man’s state and man’s attitude toward God, God has done new work, allowing man to possess both knowledge of and obedience toward Him, and both love and testimony. Thus, man must experience God’s refinement of him, as well as His judgment, dealing and pruning of him, without which man would never know God and would never be capable of truly loving and bearing witness to Him. God’s refinement of man is not merely for the sake of a one-sided effect, but for the sake of a multi-faceted effect. Only in this way does God do the work of refinement in those who are willing to seek the truth, in order that their resolve and love be made perfect by God. To those who are willing to seek the truth and who yearn for God, nothing is more meaningful, or of greater assistance, than refinement such as this. God’s disposition is not so easily known or understood by man, for God, in the end, is God. Ultimately, it is impossible for God to have the same disposition as man, and thus it is not easy for man to know His disposition. The truth is not inherently possessed by man, and is not easily understood by those who have been corrupted by Satan; man is devoid of the truth, and of the resolve to put the truth into practice, and if he does not suffer and is not refined or judged, then his resolve will never be made perfect. For all people, refinement is excruciating, and very difficult to accept—yet it is during refinement that God makes plain His righteous disposition to man, and makes public His requirements for man, and provides more enlightenment, and more actual pruning and dealing; through the comparison between the facts and the truth, He gives man a greater knowledge of himself and the truth, and gives man a greater understanding of God’s will, thus allowing man to have a truer and purer love of God. Such are God’s aims in carrying out refinement. All the work that God does in man has its own aims and significance; God does not do meaningless work, and nor does He do work that is without benefit to man. Refinement does not mean removing people from before God, and nor does it mean destroying them in hell. Rather, it means changing man’s disposition during refinement, changing his intentions, his old views, changing his love for God, and changing his whole life. Refinement is a real test of man, and a form of real training, and only during refinement can his love serve its inherent function.

Excerpted from “Only by Experiencing Refinement Can Man Possess True Love” in The Word Appears in
the Flesh

When God works to refine man, man suffers. The greater a person's refinement, the greater their love of God will be, and the more of God's might will be revealed in them. Conversely, the less refinement a person receives, the less their love of God will grow, and the less God's might will be revealed in them. The greater such a person's refinement and pain and the more torment they experience, the deeper their love of God will grow, the more genuine their faith in God will become, and the more profound their knowledge of God will be. In your experiences, you will see people who suffer greatly as they are refined, who are dealt with and disciplined much, and you will see that it is those people who have a deep love for God and a more profound and penetrating knowledge of God. Those who have not experienced being dealt with have but a superficial knowledge, and they can only say: "God is so good, He bestows grace upon people so that they can enjoy Him." If people have experienced being dealt with and disciplined, then they are able to speak about the true knowledge of God. So the more wondrous God's work in man is, the more valuable and significant it is. The more impenetrable it is to you and the more incompatible it is with your notions, the more God's work is able to conquer you, gain you, and make you perfect. How great is the significance of God's work! If God did not refine man in this way, if He did not work according to this method, then His work would be ineffectual and without significance. It was said in the past that God would select and gain this group, and make them complete in the last days; in this, there is extraordinary significance. The greater the work He carries out within you, the deeper and purer your love for God. The greater the work of God, the more man is able to grasp something of His wisdom and the deeper is man's knowledge of Him. During the last days, six thousand years of God's plan for management will come to an end. Can it really end easily? Once He conquers mankind, will His work be over? Can it be so simple? People indeed imagine that it is as simple as this, but what God does is not so simple. No matter what part of God's work you care to mention, it all is unfathomable to man. If you were able to fathom it, then God's work would be without significance or value. The work done by God is unfathomable; it is completely counter to your notions, and the more irreconcilable it is with your notions, the more it shows that God's work is meaningful; if it were compatible with your notions, then it would be meaningless. Today, you feel that God's work is so wondrous, and the more wondrous you feel it is, the more you feel that God is unfathomable, and you see how great God's deeds are. If He only did some superficial, perfunctory work to conquer man

and did nothing else afterward, then man would be incapable of beholding the significance of God's work. Although you are receiving a little refinement now, it is of great benefit to your growth in life; so it is of the utmost necessity for you to undergo such hardship. Today, you are receiving a little refinement, but afterward you will truly be able to behold the deeds of God, and ultimately you will say: "God's deeds are so wondrous!" These will be the words in your heart. Having experienced God's refinement for a while (the trial of the service-doers and the time of chastisement), some people ultimately said: "Believing in God is really difficult!" The fact that they used the words, "really difficult," shows that God's deeds are unfathomable, that God's work is possessed of great significance and value, and that His work is highly worthy of being treasured by man. If, after I have done so much work, you had not the slightest knowledge, then could My work still have value? It will make you say: "Service to God is really difficult, the deeds of God are so wondrous, and God truly is wise! God is so lovely!" If, after undergoing a period of experience, you are able to say such words, then this proves that you have gained God's work in you.

Excerpted from "Those Who Are to Be Made Perfect Must Undergo Refinement" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Man lives amid the flesh, which means he lives in a human hell, and without God's judgment and chastisement, man is as filthy as Satan. How could man be holy? Peter believed that chastisement and judgment by God were man's best protection and greatest grace. Only through chastisement and judgment by God could man awaken and hate the flesh, hate Satan. God's strict discipline frees man from the influence of Satan, frees him from his own little world, and allows him to live in the light of God's presence. There is no better salvation than chastisement and judgment! Peter prayed, "O God! As long as You chastise and judge me, I will know that You have not left me. Even if You do not give me joy or peace, and make me live in suffering, and inflict countless chastenings on me, as long as You do not leave me, my heart will be at ease. Today, Your chastisement and judgment have become my best protection and my greatest blessing. The grace You give me protects me. The grace You bestow upon me today is a manifestation of Your righteous disposition, and is chastisement and judgment; moreover, it is a trial, and, more than that, it is a life of suffering." Peter was able to put aside the pleasures of the flesh and seek a deeper love and greater protection, because he had gained so much grace

from God's chastisement and judgment. In his life, if man wishes to be cleansed and achieve changes in his disposition, if he wishes to live out a life of meaning and fulfill his duty as a creature, then he must accept God's chastisement and judgment, and must not allow God's discipline and God's smiting to depart from him, in order that he may free himself from the manipulation and influence of Satan, and live in the light of God. Know that God's chastisement and judgment is the light, and the light of man's salvation, and that there is no better blessing, grace or protection for man.

Excerpted from "The Experiences of Peter: His Knowledge of Chastisement and Judgment" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

God does the work of judgment and chastisement so that man may gain knowledge of Him, and for the sake of His testimony. Without His judgment of man's corrupt disposition, man could not possibly know His righteous disposition, which brooks no offense, and nor would man be able to turn his old knowledge of God into a new one. For the sake of His testimony, and for the sake of His management, He makes His entirety public, thus enabling man, through His public appearance, to arrive at knowledge of God, to be transformed in his disposition, and to bear resounding testimony to God. The transformation of the disposition of man is achieved through many different kinds of God's work; without such changes in his disposition, man would be unable to bear testimony to God and to be after God's heart. The transformation of man's disposition signifies that man has freed himself from Satan's bondage and from the influence of darkness, and has truly become a model and specimen of God's work, a witness of God, and one who is after God's heart. Today, God incarnate has come to do His work on earth, and He requires that man achieve knowledge of Him, obedience to Him, testimony to Him, to know His practical and normal work, to obey all of His words and work which do not accord with the notions of man, and to bear testimony to all the work He does to save man, as well as all the deeds He accomplishes to conquer man. Those who bear testimony to God must have knowledge of God; only this kind of testimony is accurate and real, and only this kind of testimony can shame Satan. God uses those who have come to know Him through undergoing His judgment and chastisement, dealing and pruning, to bear testimony to Him. He uses those who have been corrupted by Satan to bear testimony to Him, and so too does He use those whose disposition has changed, and who have thus gained His blessings, to bear testimony to

Him. He does not need man to praise Him with his mouth, nor does He need the praise and testimony of the ilk of Satan, who have not been saved by Him. Only those who know God are qualified to bear testimony to Him, and only those who have been transformed in their disposition are qualified to bear testimony to Him. God will not allow man intentionally to bring shame upon His name.

Excerpted from “Only Those Who Know God Can Bear Testimony to God” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Belief in God requires obedience to Him and experience of His work. God has done so much work—it could be said that for people it is all perfection, refinement, and even more, chastisement. There has not been a single step of God’s work that has been in line with human notions; what people have enjoyed is God’s stern words. When God comes, people should enjoy His majesty and His wrath. However, no matter how stern His words may be, He comes to save and perfect mankind. As creatures, people should fulfill the duties that they ought to, and stand witness for God in the midst of refinement. In every trial they should uphold the witness that they should bear, and do so resoundingly for the sake of God. A person who does this is an overcomer. No matter how God refines you, you remain full of confidence and never lose confidence in Him. You do what man should do. This is what God requires of man, and man’s heart should be able to fully return to Him and turn toward Him in every passing moment. This is an overcomer. Those whom God refers to as “overcomers” are those who are still able to stand witness and maintain their confidence and devotion to God when under the influence of Satan and while being laid siege to by Satan, that is, when they find themselves amidst the forces of darkness. If you are still able to keep a pure heart before God and maintain your genuine love for God no matter what, then you are standing witness in front of God, and this is what God refers to as being an “overcomer.”

Excerpted from “You Should Maintain Your Devotion to God” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

In the last days, God principally uses the word to make man perfect. He does not use signs and wonders to oppress man, or convince man; this cannot make plain the power of God. If God only showed signs and wonders, then it would be impossible to make plain the reality of God, and thus impossible to make man perfect. God does not make man perfect by signs and wonders,

but uses the word to water and shepherd man, after which is achieved the complete obedience of man and man's knowledge of God. This is the aim of the work He does and the words He speaks. God does not use the method of showing signs and wonders to make man perfect—He uses words, and uses many different methods of work to make man perfect. Whether it be the refinement, dealing, pruning, or provision of words, God speaks from many different perspectives to make man perfect, and to give man a greater knowledge of the work, wisdom and wondrousness of God. ... I have previously said that a group of overcomers are gained from the East, overcomers who come from amid the great tribulation. What is meant by these words? They mean that these people who have been gained only truly obeyed after undergoing judgment and chastisement, and dealing and pruning, and all kinds of refinement. The belief of these people is not vague and abstract, but real. They have not seen any signs and wonders, or any miracles; they do not speak of abstruse letters and doctrines, or profound insights; instead they have reality, and the words of God, and a true knowledge of the reality of God. Is such a group not more capable of making plain the power of God?

Excerpted from "All Is Achieved by the Word of God" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

(2) God's work of judgment in the last days is the work of separating each according to its kind and concluding the entire age, finally achieving the realization of the kingdom of Christ

Bible Verses for Reference:

"And I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (Rev 20:11–15).

"Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all

tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away” (Rev 21:3–4).

“The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever” (Rev 11:15).

Relevant Words of God:

In His final work of concluding the age, God’s disposition is one of chastisement and judgment, in which He reveals all that is unrighteous, in order to publicly judge all peoples, and to perfect those who love Him with a sincere heart. Only a disposition such as this can bring the age to an end. The last days have already arrived. All things in creation will be separated according to their kind, and divided into different categories based on their nature. This is the moment when God reveals humanity’s outcome and their destination. If people do not undergo chastisement and judgment, then there will be no way of exposing their disobedience and unrighteousness. Only through chastisement and judgment can the outcome of all creation be revealed. Man only shows his true colors when he is chastised and judged. Evil shall be put with evil, good with good, and all humanity shall be separated according to their kind. Through chastisement and judgment, the outcome of all creation will be revealed, so that the evil may be punished and the good rewarded, and all people become subject to the dominion of God. All this work must be achieved through righteous chastisement and judgment. Because man’s corruption has reached its peak and his disobedience become exceedingly severe, only God’s righteous disposition, one that is principally compounded of chastisement and judgment and is revealed during the last days, can fully transform and complete man. Only this disposition can expose evil and thus severely punish all the unrighteous. Therefore, a disposition such as this is imbued with the significance of the age, and the revelation and exhibition of His disposition is made manifest for the sake of the work of each new age. It is not that God reveals His disposition arbitrarily and without significance. Supposing that, in revealing the outcome of man during the last days, God were still to bestow upon man infinite compassion and love and continue to be loving toward him, not subjecting man to righteous judgment but rather showing him tolerance, patience, and forgiveness, and pardoning man no matter how grave his sins, without any jot of righteous judgment: when then would all of God’s management ever be brought to a close? When would a disposition such as this be able to lead people into mankind’s appropriate

destination? Take, for example, a judge who is always loving, a judge with a kindly face and a gentle heart. He loves people irrespective of the crimes they may have committed, and he is loving to and forbearing with them whoever they may be. In that case, when will he ever be able to reach a just verdict? During the last days, only righteous judgment can separate man according to their kind and bring man into a new realm. In this way, the entire age is brought to an end through God's righteous disposition of judgment and chastisement.

Excerpted from "The Vision of God's Work (3)" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Today's work of conquest is intended to make it obvious what man's end will be. Why do I say that today's chastisement and judgment are judgment before the great white throne of the last days? Do you not see this? Why is the work of conquest the final stage? Is it not precisely to make manifest what kind of ending each class of man will meet? Is it not to allow everyone, in the course of the work of conquest of chastisement and judgment, to show their true colors and then afterward to be classified according to their kind? Rather than saying this is conquering mankind, it might be better to say that this is showing what kind of ending there will be for each class of person. This is about judging people's sins and then revealing the various classes of person, thereby deciding whether they are evil or righteous. After the work of conquest, then comes the work of rewarding good and punishing evil. People who obey completely—meaning the thoroughly conquered—will be placed in the next step of spreading God's work to the entire universe; the unconquered will be placed in darkness and will meet with calamity. Thus will man be classified according to kind, the evildoers grouped with evil, to be without the light of the sun ever again, and the righteous grouped with good, to receive light and live forever in the light. The end is near for all things; man's end has been clearly shown to his eyes, and all things will be classified according to kind. How, then, can people escape the anguish of each being classed according to kind? The different ends of each class of man are revealed when the end is near for all things, and this is done during the work of conquering the entire universe (including all the work of conquest, starting with the current work). The revelation of the end of all mankind is done before the seat of judgment, in the course of the chastisement, and in the course of the work of conquest of the last days. ... The final stage of conquest is meant to save people, and also to reveal their endings. It is to disclose people's degeneration through judgment, thereby causing them to repent, to rise up, and to pursue life and the right path of

human life. It is to wake up the hearts of the numb and obtuse people and to show, through judgment, their inner rebelliousness. However, if people are still unable to repent, still unable to pursue the right path of human life and unable to cast off these corruptions, then they are beyond salvation, and will be devoured by Satan. Such is the significance of God's conquest: to save people, and also to show their endings. Good endings, bad endings—they are all revealed by the work of conquest. Whether people will be saved or cursed is all revealed during the work of conquest.

Excerpted from "The Inside Truth of the Work of Conquest (1)" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The last days are when all things will be classified according to kind through conquering. Conquering is the work of the last days; in other words, judging each person's sins is the work of the last days. Otherwise, how could people be classified? The work of classification that is done among you is the start of such work in the entire universe. After this, those of all lands and all peoples will also be subjected to the work of conquest. This means every person in creation will be classified according to kind, coming before the seat of judgment to be judged. No person and no thing can escape suffering this chastisement and judgment, nor is any person or thing not classified by kind; every person will be classed, for the end of all things draws near, and all that is in the heavens and upon the earth has reached its conclusion. How could man escape the final days of human existence?

Excerpted from "The Inside Truth of the Work of Conquest (1)" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Do you understand now what is judgment and what is truth? If you do, then I exhort you to submit obediently to being judged, otherwise you shall never have the opportunity to be commended by God or to be brought by Him into His kingdom. Those who only accept judgment but can never be purified, that is, those who flee amidst the work of judgment, shall forever be detested and rejected by God. Their sins are more numerous, and more grievous, than those of the Pharisees, for they have betrayed God and are rebels against God. Such people who are not worthy even to do service shall receive more severe punishment, a punishment that is, moreover, everlasting. God shall not spare any traitor who once evinced loyalty with words but then betrayed Him. People such as these shall receive retribution through punishment of the spirit, soul, and body. Is this not precisely a revelation of the righteous disposition of God?

Is this not God's purpose in judging man, and revealing him? God consigns all who perform all kinds of wicked deeds during the time of judgment to a place infested with evil spirits, and lets these evil spirits destroy their fleshly bodies as they wish, and those people's bodies emit the stench of corpses. Such is their fitting retribution. God writes down in their record books each and every one of the sins of those disloyal false believers, false apostles, and false workers; then, when the time is right, He casts them amidst the unclean spirits, letting these unclean spirits defile their entire bodies at will, so that they may never be reincarnated and never again see the light. Those hypocrites who do service for a time but are incapable of remaining loyal to the end are numbered by God among the wicked, so that they walk in the counsel of the wicked and become part of their disorderly rabble; in the end, God shall annihilate them. God casts aside and takes no notice of those who have never been loyal to Christ or have never contributed anything of their strength, and at the changing of the age He shall annihilate them all. They shall no longer exist on earth, much less gain passage into the kingdom of God. Those who have never been sincere to God, but are forced by circumstance into dealing with Him perfunctorily, are numbered among those who do service for His people. Only a small number of such people will survive, while the majority shall perish along with those who are not qualified even to do service. Ultimately, God shall bring into His kingdom all those who are of the same mind as God, the people and the sons of God, and those predestined by God to be priests. They will be the distillation of God's work. As for those who cannot be classed in any of the categories set by God, they shall be numbered among the unbelievers—and you can surely imagine what their outcome shall be. I have already said to you all that I should say; the road that you select is your choice alone. What you should understand is this: The work of God never waits for any that cannot keep pace with Him, and the righteous disposition of God shows no mercy to any man.

Excerpted from "Christ Does the Work of Judgment With the Truth" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Those who are able to stand firm during God's work of judgment and chastisement during the last days—that is, during the final work of purification—will be the ones who will enter into the final rest alongside God; as such, all those who enter into rest will have broken free of Satan's influence and been obtained by God after having undergone His final work of purification. These humans, who will have been finally obtained by God, will enter into the final rest. The essential purpose of God's work of chastisement and judgment is to purify humanity and to

prepare them for their ultimate rest; without such cleansing, none of humanity could be classified into different categories according to kind, or enter into rest. This work is humanity's only path to enter into rest. Only God's work of purification will cleanse humans of their unrighteousness, and only His work of chastisement and judgment will bring to light those disobedient elements of humanity, thereby separating those who can be saved from those who cannot, and those who will remain from those who will not. When this work ends, those people who are allowed to remain will all be cleansed and enter a higher state of humanity in which they will enjoy a more wonderful second human life upon the earth; in other words, they will commence their human day of rest, and coexist with God. After those who are not allowed to remain have been chastised and judged, their true colors will be entirely exposed, after which they will all be destroyed and, like Satan, will no longer be permitted to survive upon the earth. The humanity of the future will no longer include any of this type of people; such people are not fit to enter the land of the ultimate rest, nor are they fit to join in the day of rest that God and humanity will share, for they are the targets of punishment and are wicked, unrighteous people. They were redeemed once, and they have also been judged and chastised; they also once rendered service to God. However, when the final day comes, they will still be eliminated and destroyed due to their wickedness and as a result of their disobedience and inability to be redeemed; they will never again come into being in the world of the future, and will no longer live among the human race of the future. Whether they are spirits of the dead or people still living in the flesh, all evildoers and all those who have not been saved will be destroyed once the holy among humanity enter into rest. As for these evildoing spirits and humans, or the spirits of righteous people and those who do righteousness, regardless of what era they are in, all those who commit evil will ultimately be destroyed, and all those who are righteous will survive. Whether a person or spirit will receive salvation is not entirely decided on the basis of the work of the final age; rather, it is determined by whether or not they have resisted or been disobedient toward God. People in the previous era who committed evil and could not attain salvation will, undoubtedly, be targets for punishment, and those in the current era who commit evil and cannot be saved will surely be targets for punishment, too. Humans are categorized on the basis of good and evil, not by which epoch they live in. Once thus categorized, they will not be punished or rewarded immediately; rather, God will only carry out His work of punishing evil and rewarding good after He has finished carrying out His work of conquest in the last days.

Actually, He has been separating humans into good and evil ever since He started doing His work among them. It is just that He will reward the righteous and punish the wicked only after His work has come to an end; it is not that He will separate them into categories upon the completion of His work and then immediately set about the task of punishing evil and rewarding good. The entire purpose behind God's ultimate work of punishing evil and rewarding good is to thoroughly purify all humans so that He may bring a purely holy humanity into eternal rest. This stage of His work is the most crucial; it is the final stage of the whole of His work of management. If God did not destroy the wicked, but instead allowed them to remain, then every human would still be unable to enter into rest, and God would not be able to bring all of humanity into a better realm. Such work would not be complete. When His work is finished, the whole of humanity will be entirely holy; only in this way will God be able to live in rest peacefully.

Excerpted from "God and Man Will Enter Into Rest Together" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

God created humans and placed them upon earth, and He has led them ever since. He then saved them and served as a sin offering for humanity. At the end, He still must conquer humanity, save humans entirely, and restore them to their original likeness. This is the work that He has been engaged in ever since the beginning—restoring humanity to their original image and likeness. God will establish His kingdom and restore the original likeness of human beings, which means that God will restore His authority upon earth and among all creation. Humanity lost their God-fearing heart as well as the function incumbent upon God's creatures after being corrupted by Satan, thereby becoming an enemy disobedient to God. Humanity then lived under Satan's domain and followed Satan's orders; thus, God had no way to work among His creatures, and became all the more unable to win their fearful reverence. Humans were created by God, and ought to worship God, but they actually turned their backs on Him and worshiped Satan instead. Satan became the idol in their hearts. Thus, God lost His standing in their hearts, which is to say that He lost the meaning behind His creation of humanity. Therefore, to restore the meaning behind His creation of humanity, He must restore their original likeness and rid humanity of their corrupt dispositions. To reclaim humans from Satan, He must save them from sin. Only in this way can God gradually restore their original likeness and function, and finally, restore His kingdom. The ultimate destruction of those sons of

disobedience will also be carried out in order to allow humans to better worship God and better live upon the earth. Because God created humans, He will make them worship Him; because He wishes to restore humanity's original function, He will restore it completely and without any adulteration. Restoring His authority means making humans worship Him and submit to Him; it means that God will make humans live because of Him and cause His enemies to perish as a result of His authority. It means that God will cause everything about Him to persist among humans without resistance from anybody. The kingdom God wishes to establish is His own kingdom. The humanity He desires is one that will worship Him, one that will submit to Him completely and manifest His glory. If God does not save corrupt humanity, then the meaning behind His creation of humanity will be lost; He will have no more authority among humans, and His kingdom will no longer be able to exist upon the earth. If God does not destroy those enemies who are disobedient to Him, He will be unable to obtain His complete glory, nor will He be able to establish His kingdom upon the earth. These will be marks of the completion of His work and of His great accomplishment: to utterly destroy those among humanity who are disobedient to Him, and to bring into rest those who have been made complete. ... Thenceforth, humanity will enter into rest and begin a life that is on the right track. God will also enter into eternal rest with humanity, and commence an eternal life shared by both Himself and humans. The filth and disobedience upon the earth will have disappeared, and all the wailing will have dissipated, and everything in this world that opposes God will have ceased to exist. Only God and those people to whom He has brought salvation will remain; only His creation will remain.

Excerpted from "God and Man Will Enter Into Rest Together" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Once the work of conquest has been completed, man will be brought into a beautiful world. This life will, of course, still be on earth, but it will be totally unlike man's life today. It is the life that mankind will have after the whole of mankind has been conquered, it will be a new beginning for man on earth, and for mankind to have such a life will be proof that mankind has entered a new and beautiful realm. It will be the beginning of the life of man and God on earth. The premise of such a beautiful life must be that, after man has been purified and conquered, he submits before the Creator. And so, the work of conquest is the last stage of God's work before mankind enters the wonderful destination. Such a life is man's future life on earth, the most beautiful life on earth, the kind of life that man longs for, the kind that man has never

before achieved in the history of the world. It is the final outcome of the 6,000 years of work of management; it is what mankind yearns for most, and it is also God's promise to man. But this promise cannot come to pass immediately: Man will enter the future destination only once the work of the last days has been completed and he has been completely conquered, that is, once Satan has been utterly defeated.

Excerpted from "Restoring the Normal Life of Man and Taking Him to a Wonderful Destination" in The
Word Appears in the Flesh

My wisdom is everywhere on earth, and throughout the entire universe. Among all things are the fruits of My wisdom, among all people seem the masterworks of My wisdom; everything is like all things in My kingdom, and all people dwell in rest beneath My heavens like the sheep upon My pastures. I move above all men and am watching everywhere. Nothing ever looks old, and no person is as he used to be. I rest upon the throne, I recline above the whole universe, and I am fully satisfied, for all things have recovered their holiness, and I can peacefully reside within Zion once again, and the people on earth can lead serene, contented lives under My guidance. All peoples are managing everything in My hand, all peoples have regained their former intelligence and original appearance; they are no longer covered with dust, but, in My kingdom, are as holy as jade, each with a face like that of the holy one within man's heart, for My kingdom has been established among man.

Excerpted from "Chapter 16" of God's Words to the Entire Universe in The Word Appears in the Flesh

5. The consequences and outcome of not accepting God's work of judgment in the last days

Relevant Words of God:

Christ of the last days brings life, and brings the enduring and everlasting way of truth. This truth is the path by which man gains life, and it is the only path by which man shall know God and be approved by God. If you do not seek the way of life provided by Christ of the last days, then you shall never gain the approval of Jesus, and shall never be qualified to enter the gate of the kingdom of heaven, for you are both a puppet and prisoner of history. Those who are

controlled by regulations, by letters, and shackled by history will never be able to gain life nor gain the perpetual way of life. This is because all they have is turbid water which has been clung to for thousands of years instead of the water of life that flows from the throne. Those who are not supplied with the water of life will forever remain corpses, playthings of Satan, and sons of hell. How, then, can they behold God? If you only try to hold on to the past, only try to keep things as they are by standing still, and do not try to change the status quo and discard history, then will you not always be against God? The steps of God's work are vast and mighty, like surging waves and rolling thunders—yet you sit passively awaiting destruction, clinging to your folly and doing nothing. In this way, how can you be considered someone who follows the footsteps of the Lamb? How can you justify the God that you hold on to as a God who is always new and never old? And how can the words of your yellowed books carry you across into a new age? How can they lead you to seek the steps of God's work? And how can they take you up to heaven? What you hold in your hands are letters that can provide but temporary solace, not truths that are capable of giving life. The scriptures you read can only enrich your tongue and are not words of wisdom that can help you know human life, much less the paths that can lead you to perfection. Does this discrepancy not give you cause for reflection? Does it not make you realize the mysteries contained within? Are you capable of delivering yourself to heaven to meet God on your own? Without the coming of God, can you take yourself into heaven to enjoy family happiness with God? Are you still dreaming now? I suggest, then, that you stop dreaming and look at who is working now—look to see who is now carrying out the work of saving man during the last days. If you do not, you shall never gain the truth, and shall never gain life.

Excerpted from "Only Christ of the Last Days Can Give Man the Way of Eternal Life" in The Word
Appears in the Flesh

Those who wish to gain life without relying on the truth spoken by Christ are the most ridiculous people on earth, and those who do not accept the way of life brought by Christ are lost in fantasy. And so I say that those who do not accept Christ of the last days shall forever be despised by God. Christ is man's gateway to the kingdom during the last days, and there are none who can go around Him. None may be perfected by God except through Christ. You believe in God, and so you must accept His words and obey His way. You cannot only think of gaining blessings while being incapable of receiving the truth and incapable of accepting the provision

of life. Christ comes during the last days so that all those who truly believe in Him may be provided with life. His work is for the sake of concluding the old age and entering the new one, and His work is the path that must be taken by all those who would enter the new age. If you are incapable of acknowledging Him, and instead condemn, blaspheme, or even persecute Him, then you are bound to burn for eternity and shall never enter the kingdom of God. For this Christ is Himself the expression of the Holy Spirit, the expression of God, the One whom God has entrusted to do His work on earth. And so I say that if you cannot accept all that is done by Christ of the last days, then you blaspheme the Holy Spirit. The retribution to be had by those who blaspheme the Holy Spirit is self-evident to all. I also tell you that if you resist Christ of the last days, if you spurn Christ of the last days, there will be no one else to bear the consequences on your behalf. Furthermore, from this day onward you will not have another chance to gain the approval of God; even if you try to redeem yourself, you will never again behold the face of God. For what you resist is not a man, what you spurn is not some puny being, but Christ. Do you know what the consequences of this will be? You will not have made a small mistake, but committed a heinous crime. And so I advise everyone not to bare your fangs before the truth, or make careless criticisms, for only the truth can bring you life, and nothing except the truth can allow you to be reborn and behold the face of God again.

Excerpted from “Only Christ of the Last Days Can Give Man the Way of Eternal Life” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

In undertaking His work of judgment, God does not simply make clear the nature of man with a few words; He exposes, deals with, and prunes over the long term. These methods of exposure, dealing, and pruning cannot be substituted with ordinary words, but with the truth of which man is utterly bereft. Only methods such as these can be called judgment; only through judgment of this kind can man be subdued and thoroughly convinced into submission to God, and moreover gain true knowledge of God. What the work of judgment brings about is man’s understanding of the true face of God and the truth about his own rebelliousness. The work of judgment allows man to gain much understanding of the will of God, of the purpose of God’s work, and of the mysteries that are incomprehensible to him. It also allows man to recognize and know his corrupt essence and the roots of his corruption, as well as to discover the ugliness of man. These effects are all brought about by the work of judgment, for the essence of this work

is actually the work of opening up the truth, the way, and the life of God to all those who have faith in Him. This work is the work of judgment done by God. If you do not regard these truths as important, if you think of nothing but how to avoid them, or how to find a new way out that does not involve them, then I say you are a grievous sinner. If you have faith in God, yet seek not the truth or the will of God, nor love the way that brings you closer to God, then I say that you are one who is trying to evade judgment, and that you are a puppet and a traitor who flees from the great white throne. God will not spare any of the rebellious who escape from under His eyes. Such men shall receive even more severe punishment. Those who come before God to be judged, and have moreover been purified, shall forever live in the kingdom of God. Of course, this is something that belongs to the future.

Excerpted from “Christ Does the Work of Judgment With the Truth” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Many have a bad feeling about the second incarnation of God, for people find it difficult to believe that God would become flesh to do the work of judgment. Nevertheless, I must tell you that the work of God often goes far beyond the expectations of man, and is difficult for human minds to accept. For people are but maggots upon the earth, while God is the supreme One who fills the universe; the mind of man is like a pit of foul water that breeds only maggots, whereas each stage of the work directed by the thoughts of God is the distillation of God’s wisdom. People are always trying to contend with God, to which I say it is self-evident who will lose out in the end. I exhort you all not to think yourselves more valuable than gold. If others can accept the judgment of God, why can’t you? How much higher do you stand above others? If others can bow their heads before the truth, why can’t you, too? God’s work has an unstoppable momentum. He will not repeat the work of judgment again just because of the “contribution” you have made, and you will be overcome with regret at letting such a good opportunity slip by. If you do not believe My words, then just wait for that great white throne in the sky to pass judgment upon you! You must know that all of the Israelites spurned and denied Jesus, and yet the fact of Jesus’ redemption of mankind still extended throughout the universe and to the ends of the earth. Isn’t this a reality that God made long ago? If you are still waiting for Jesus to take you up to heaven, then I say that you are an obstinate piece of deadwood.^[a] Jesus will not acknowledge a false believer such as you, who is disloyal to the truth and seeks only blessings.

On the contrary, He will show no mercy in casting you into the lake of fire to burn for tens of thousands of years.

Do you understand now what is judgment and what is truth? If you do, then I exhort you to submit obediently to being judged, otherwise you shall never have the opportunity to be commended by God or to be brought by Him into His kingdom. Those who only accept judgment but can never be purified, that is, those who flee amidst the work of judgment, shall forever be detested and rejected by God. Their sins are more numerous, and more grievous, than those of the Pharisees, for they have betrayed God and are rebels against God. Such people who are not worthy even to do service shall receive more severe punishment, a punishment that is, moreover, everlasting. God shall not spare any traitor who once evinced loyalty with words but then betrayed Him. People such as these shall receive retribution through punishment of the spirit, soul, and body. Is this not precisely a revelation of the righteous disposition of God? Is this not God's purpose in judging man, and revealing him? God consigns all who perform all kinds of wicked deeds during the time of judgment to a place infested with evil spirits, and lets these evil spirits destroy their fleshly bodies as they wish, and those people's bodies emit the stench of corpses. Such is their fitting retribution. God writes down in their record books each and every one of the sins of those disloyal false believers, false apostles, and false workers; then, when the time is right, He casts them amidst the unclean spirits, letting these unclean spirits defile their entire bodies at will, so that they may never be reincarnated and never again see the light. Those hypocrites who do service for a time but are incapable of remaining loyal to the end are numbered by God among the wicked, so that they walk in the counsel of the wicked and become part of their disorderly rabble; in the end, God shall annihilate them. God casts aside and takes no notice of those who have never been loyal to Christ or have never contributed anything of their strength, and at the changing of the age He shall annihilate them all. They shall no longer exist on earth, much less gain passage into the kingdom of God. Those who have never been sincere to God, but are forced by circumstance into dealing with Him perfunctorily, are numbered among those who do service for His people. Only a small number of such people will survive, while the majority shall perish along with those who are not qualified even to do service. Ultimately, God shall bring into His kingdom all those who are of the same mind as God, the people and the sons of God, and those predestined by God to be priests. They will be the distillation of God's work. As for those who cannot be classed in any of the categories set by

God, they shall be numbered among the unbelievers—and you can surely imagine what their outcome shall be. I have already said to you all that I should say; the road that you select is your choice alone. What you should understand is this: The work of God never waits for any that cannot keep pace with Him, and the righteous disposition of God shows no mercy to any man.

Excerpted from “Christ Does the Work of Judgment With the Truth” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

So long as the old world continues to exist, I will hurl forth My rage upon its nations, openly promulgate My administrative decrees throughout the universe, and visit chastisement upon whosoever violates them:

As I turn My face to the universe to speak, all mankind hears My voice, and thereupon sees all the works I have wrought throughout the universe. Those who set themselves against My will, that is to say, who oppose Me with the deeds of man, will fall under My chastisement. I will take the multitudinous stars in the heavens and make them anew and, thanks to Me, the sun and the moon will be renewed—the skies will no longer be as they were and the myriad things on the earth will be renewed. All will become complete through My words. The many nations within the universe will be partitioned afresh and replaced by My kingdom, so that the nations upon the earth will disappear forever and all will become a kingdom that worships Me; all the nations of the earth will be destroyed and cease to exist. Of the human beings within the universe, all those belonging to the devil will be exterminated, and all who worship Satan will be laid low by My burning fire—that is, except for those now within the stream, all will be turned to ashes. When I chastise the many peoples, those in the religious world will, to varying extents, return to My kingdom, conquered by My works, because they will have seen the advent of the Holy One riding on a white cloud. All people will be separated according to their own kind, and will receive chastisements commensurate with their actions. All those who have stood against Me will perish; as for those whose deeds on earth have not involved Me, they will, because of how they have acquitted themselves, continue to exist on the earth under the governance of My sons and My people. I will reveal Myself to the myriad peoples and the myriad nations, and with My own voice, I will sound forth upon the earth, proclaiming the completion of My great work for all mankind to see with their own eyes.

Excerpted from “Chapter 26” of *God’s Words to the Entire Universe in The Word Appears in the Flesh*

God does not want more people to be punished, but instead hopes for more people to be saved, and for more people to keep up with His footsteps and to enter into His kingdom. But if people refuse to recognize their mistakes, if they cannot accept the truth with a humble heart, but instead go nitpicking, trying to find fault and pretending to understand when really they do not, then they will be the ones who lose out in the end. God's work waits for no one. His salvation is not like some piece of trash, to be randomly thrown on just anyone. Rather it is targeted, with an objective and by choice. If you do not know to cherish it, then the only thing awaiting you will be God's righteous judgment and punishment. God treats all people righteously; no matter your age, how senior you are or even how much suffering you have been through, God's righteous disposition is forever unchanged in the face of these things. God does not treat anybody with high regard, nor does He favor anybody. His attitude toward people is based on whether or not they can accept the truth and accept His new work by relinquishing all things. If you can receive His new work and receive the truth that He expresses, then you will be able to gain God's salvation. If you are prideful of your veteran status and you flaunt your seniority, laying down terms to God, then you will be disavowed from God's salvation. Just like the Jews, who could not accept Jesus Christ but only waited for the Messiah, that which befell them in the end was the curse and the ire of God; this is a fact that is there for all to see. ...

... The knowledge and external behaviors of the Pharisees did not save their relationship with Jesus Christ. On the contrary, it harmed them, and it was their knowledge and conceptions, along with the image of God in their hearts, that impelled them to condemn the Lord Jesus. It was their imaginations and minds which misled them, which covered their spiritual eyes, causing them not to recognize the Messiah that had already come, to do all they could to find evidence and to gain a foothold in order to condemn the Lord Jesus. This is their ugly face—using the excuse of upholding God's original work to condemn God's realistic work in the present. Of course, this is a mistake that people living in any age are liable to make—using old doctrines and rules to measure and condemn truths that they have never heard before, thinking that they are adhering to the true way and maintaining their purity before God, that they are being loyal to God. But what are the facts? God is continually doing His new work, continuing His management, always new and never old. And what about people? They always hold fast to some obsolete things that they think to be the entirety of God's expressions, patting themselves on the back, swollen with arrogance, waiting for God to bestow rewards on them with an

attitude that believes God would never discard them, would never mistreat them. And what is the outcome? God's work continues uninterrupted, with more people of the new age following Him and accepting His new work, while those who wait for God to bestow rewards on them are eliminated by God's new work, and even more people fall into God's punishment. At the moment when their punishment begins, their life in believing in God is over, and their ending, and their destination, are brought to an end. This is something that no one wishes to see, but it happens unknowingly before our eyes. So is this down to God's disposition being so merciless, or is it that people's seeking is at fault? Is it really not worth mankind thoroughly examining themselves?

Excerpted from Afterword to Classic Examples of Punishment for Resisting Almighty God

Footnotes:

a. A piece of deadwood: a Chinese idiom, meaning "beyond help."

III. Words on the Three Stages of God's Work of Salvation of Mankind

1. The purpose of the three stages of work of God's management of mankind

Relevant Words of God:

My entire management plan, the six-thousand-year management plan, consists of three stages, or three ages: the Age of Law of the beginning; the Age of Grace (which is also the Age of Redemption); and the Age of Kingdom of the last days. My work in these three ages differs in content according to the nature of each age, but at each stage this work befits the needs of man—or, to be more precise, is done according to the tricks that Satan employs in the war that I wage against it. The purpose of My work is to defeat Satan, to make manifest My wisdom and omnipotence, to expose all of Satan's tricks, and thereby to save the entire human race, which lives under Satan's domain. It is to show My wisdom and omnipotence, and to reveal the unbearable hideousness of Satan; even more than that, it is to allow created beings to discriminate between good and evil, to know that I am the Ruler of all things, to see clearly that Satan is the enemy of humanity, a degenerate, the evil one, and to allow them to tell, with

absolute certainty, the difference between good and evil, truth and falsehood, holiness and filth, and what is great and what is ignoble. Thus will ignorant humanity become able to bear witness to Me that it is not I who corrupt humanity, and only I—the Creator—can save humanity, can bestow upon people the things that they can enjoy; and they will come to know that I am the Ruler of all things and Satan is merely one of the beings that I created and that later turned against Me. My six-thousand-year management plan is divided into three stages, and I work thus to achieve the effect of enabling created beings to bear witness to Me, and comprehend My will, and know that I am the truth.

Excerpted from “The True Story Behind the Work of the Age of Redemption” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The aim of the three stages of work is the salvation of all mankind—this means the complete salvation of man from the domain of Satan. Though each of the three stages of work has a different objective and significance, each is part of the work of saving mankind, and each is different work of salvation carried out according to the requirements of mankind. Once you are aware of the aim of these three stages of work, then you will be aware of how to appreciate the significance of each stage of work, and will recognize how to act in order to satisfy the desire of God. If you can reach this point, then this, the greatest of all visions, will become the foundation of your belief in God.

Excerpted from “Knowing the Three Stages of God’s Work Is the Path to Knowing God” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Such is the management of God: to hand mankind over to Satan—a mankind that does not know what God is, what the Creator is, how to worship God, or why it is necessary to submit to God—and allow Satan to corrupt him. Step by step, God then recovers man from the hands of Satan, until man fully worships God and rejects Satan. This is God’s management. This may sound like a mythical tale, and it may seem perplexing. People feel like this is a mythical story because they have no inkling of how much has happened to man over the past several thousand years, much less do they know how many stories have occurred in the cosmos and the firmament. And furthermore, that is because they cannot appreciate the more astonishing, more fear-inducing world that exists beyond the material world, but which their mortal eyes

prevent them from seeing. It feels incomprehensible to man because man has no understanding of the significance of God's salvation of mankind or the significance of the work of His management, and does not comprehend how God ultimately wishes mankind to be. Is it to be utterly uncorrupted by Satan, like Adam and Eve were? No! The purpose of God's management is to gain a group of people who worship God and submit to Him. Although these people have been corrupted by Satan, they no longer see Satan as their father; they recognize the repulsive face of Satan and reject it, and they come before God to accept God's judgment and chastisement. They come to know what is ugly and how it contrasts with that which is holy, and to recognize the greatness of God and the evil of Satan. A mankind such as this will no longer work for Satan, or worship Satan, or enshrine Satan. This is because they are a group of people who have truly been gained by God. This is the significance of God's work of managing mankind. During the work of God's management of this time, mankind is the object both of Satan's corruption and God's salvation, and man is the product that God and Satan are fighting over. As God performs His work, He is gradually recovering man from the hands of Satan, and so man comes ever closer to God ...

.....

The love and compassion of God permeates each and every detail of the work of His management, and regardless of whether people are able to understand God's good intentions, He is still tirelessly doing the work He set out to accomplish. Irrespective of how much people understand about God's management, the help and the benefits brought to man by God's work can be appreciated by everyone. Perhaps, on this day, you have not felt any of the love or life provided by God, but as long as you do not abandon God and do not give up on your determination to pursue the truth, there will come a day when God's smile will be revealed to you. For the aim of the work of God's management is to recover the people who are under the domain of Satan, not to abandon the people who have been corrupted by Satan and oppose God.

Excerpted from "Man Can Only Be Saved Amidst God's Management" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

God created humans and placed them upon earth, and He has led them ever since. He then saved them and served as a sin offering for humanity. At the end, He still must conquer humanity, save humans entirely, and restore them to their original likeness. This is the work that He has been engaged in ever since the beginning—restoring humanity to their original

image and likeness. God will establish His kingdom and restore the original likeness of human beings, which means that God will restore His authority upon earth and among all creation. Humanity lost their God-fearing heart as well as the function incumbent upon God's creatures after being corrupted by Satan, thereby becoming an enemy disobedient to God. Humanity then lived under Satan's domain and followed Satan's orders; thus, God had no way to work among His creatures, and became all the more unable to win their fearful reverence. Humans were created by God, and ought to worship God, but they actually turned their backs on Him and worshiped Satan instead. Satan became the idol in their hearts. Thus, God lost His standing in their hearts, which is to say that He lost the meaning behind His creation of humanity. Therefore, to restore the meaning behind His creation of humanity, He must restore their original likeness and rid humanity of their corrupt dispositions. To reclaim humans from Satan, He must save them from sin. Only in this way can God gradually restore their original likeness and function, and finally, restore His kingdom. The ultimate destruction of those sons of disobedience will also be carried out in order to allow humans to better worship God and better live upon the earth. Because God created humans, He will make them worship Him; because He wishes to restore humanity's original function, He will restore it completely and without any adulteration. Restoring His authority means making humans worship Him and submit to Him; it means that God will make humans live because of Him and cause His enemies to perish as a result of His authority. It means that God will cause everything about Him to persist among humans without resistance from anybody. The kingdom God wishes to establish is His own kingdom. The humanity He desires is one that will worship Him, one that will submit to Him completely and manifest His glory. If God does not save corrupt humanity, then the meaning behind His creation of humanity will be lost; He will have no more authority among humans, and His kingdom will no longer be able to exist upon the earth. If God does not destroy those enemies who are disobedient to Him, He will be unable to obtain His complete glory, nor will He be able to establish His kingdom upon the earth. These will be marks of the completion of His work and of His great accomplishment: to utterly destroy those among humanity who are disobedient to Him, and to bring into rest those who have been made complete. When humans have been restored to their original likeness, and when they can fulfill their respective duties, keep to their own proper places and submit to all of God's arrangements, God will have obtained a group of people upon the earth who worship Him, and He will also have established a kingdom

upon the earth that worships Him. He will have eternal victory upon the earth, and all those who are opposed to Him will perish for all eternity. This will restore His original intention in creating humanity; it will restore His intention in creating all things, and it will also restore His authority upon earth, among all things, and among His enemies. These will be the symbols of His total victory. Thenceforth, humanity will enter into rest and begin a life that is on the right track. God will also enter into eternal rest with humanity, and commence an eternal life shared by both Himself and humans. The filth and disobedience upon the earth will have disappeared, and all the wailing will have dissipated, and everything in this world that opposes God will have ceased to exist. Only God and those people to whom He has brought salvation will remain; only His creation will remain.

Excerpted from "God and Man Will Enter Into Rest Together" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Perhaps, when the riddle of the three stages of work is made known to mankind, there will appear in succession a group of talented people who know God. Of course, I hope that is the case, and, furthermore, I am in the process of carrying out this work, and hope to see the appearance of more such talented people in the near future. They will become those who bear testimony to the fact of these three stages of work, and, of course, they will also be the first to bear testimony to these three stages of work. But nothing would be more distressing and regrettable than if such talented people do not emerge on the day that God's work comes to an end, or if there are only one or two who have personally accepted being made perfect by God incarnate. However, this is only the worst case scenario. Whatever the case may be, I still hope that those who truly pursue can gain this blessing. Since the beginning of time, there has never before been work such as this; such an undertaking has never occurred in the history of human development. If you can truly become one of the first of those who know God, would this not be the highest honor among all creatures? Would any creature among mankind be more commended by God? Such work is not easy to achieve, but will ultimately still reap rewards. Regardless of their gender or nationality, all those who are capable of achieving the knowledge of God will, in the end, receive God's greatest honor, and will be the only ones that possess the authority of God. This is the work of today, and it is also the work of the future; it is the last and highest work to be accomplished in 6,000 years of work, and it is a way of working that reveals each category of man. Through the work of causing man to know God, the different ranks of

man are revealed: Those who know God are qualified to receive God's blessings and accept His promises, while those who do not know God are unqualified to receive God's blessings and accept His promises. Those who know God are the intimates of God, and those who do not know God cannot be called the intimates of God; the intimates of God can receive any of God's blessings, but those who are not His intimates are not worthy of any of His work. Whether it be tribulations, refinement, or judgment, all these things are for the sake of allowing man to ultimately achieve a knowledge of God, and so that man may submit to God. This is the only effect that will ultimately be achieved.

Excerpted from "Knowing the Three Stages of God's Work Is the Path to Knowing God" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

When the three stages of work come to an end, there will be made a group of those who bear testimony to God, a group of those who know God. These people will all know God and will be able to put the truth into practice. They will possess humanity and sense, and will all know the three stages of God's work of salvation. This is the work that will be accomplished at the end, and these people are the crystallization of the work of 6,000 years of management, and are the most powerful testimony to the ultimate defeat of Satan. Those who can bear testimony to God will be able to receive God's promise and blessing, and will be the group that remains at the very end, the group which possesses the authority of God and bears testimony to God.

Excerpted from "Knowing the Three Stages of God's Work Is the Path to Knowing God" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

All people need to understand the aims of My work on earth, that is, what I ultimately wish to gain, and what level I must achieve in this work before it can be complete. If, after walking with Me to this day, people do not understand what My work is all about, then have they not walked with Me in vain? If people follow Me, they should know My will. I have been working on earth for thousands of years, and to this day, I continue to carry out My work thus. Although My work contains many projects, its purpose remains unchanged; though I am filled with judgment and chastisement toward man, for example, what I do is still for the sake of saving him, and for the sake of better spreading My gospel and further expanding My work among all the Gentile nations once man has been made complete. So today, at a time when many people

have long since sunk deep into dismay, I still continue with My work, I continue the work I must do to judge and chastise man. Despite the fact that man is fed up with what I say, and he has no desire to concern himself with My work, I am still carrying out My duty, for the purpose of My work remains unchanged, and My original plan will not be broken. The function of My judgment is to enable man to better obey Me, and the function of My chastisement is to allow man to more effectively be changed. Though what I do is for the sake of My management, I have never done anything that was without benefit to man, for I wish to make all the nations beyond Israel as obedient as the Israelites, to make them into real human beings, that I might have a foothold in the lands outside Israel. This is My management; it is the work I am accomplishing among the Gentile nations. Even now, many people still do not understand My management, because they have no interest in such things, and care only for their own futures and destinations. No matter what I say, they remain indifferent to the work that I do, instead focusing exclusively on their destinations of tomorrow. If things go on in this way, how can My work expand? How can My gospel be spread throughout the world? Know that when My work spreads, I will scatter you, and smite you just as Jehovah smote each of the tribes of Israel. All this will be done so that My gospel may spread across the earth, so that it may reach the Gentile nations, so that My name may be magnified by adults and children alike, and My holy name exalted in the mouths of people from all tribes and nations. It is so that, in this final era, My name may be magnified among the Gentile nations, so that My deeds may be seen by the Gentiles and they will call Me the Almighty on account of My deeds, and so that My words may soon come to pass. I will make all people know that I am not only the God of the Israelites, but also the God of all the nations of the Gentiles, even those that I have cursed. I will let all people see that I am the God of all creation. This is My greatest work, the purpose of My work plan for the last days, and the only work to be fulfilled in the last days.

Excerpted from “The Work of Spreading the Gospel Is Also the Work of Saving Man” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

After having carried out His six thousand years of work through the present day, God has already revealed many of His acts, the primary purpose of which has been to defeat Satan and bring salvation to all of humanity. He is using this opportunity to allow everything in heaven, everything upon the earth, everything within the seas, and every last object of God’s creation

on earth to see His almightiness and to witness all of His acts. He is seizing the opportunity provided by His defeat of Satan to reveal all of His deeds to humans, and to enable them to praise Him and exalt His wisdom in defeating Satan. Everything on earth, in heaven, and within the seas brings God glory, praises His almightiness, praises every one of His deeds, and shouts His holy name. This is proof of His defeat of Satan; it is proof of His vanquishing of Satan. More importantly, it is proof of His salvation of humanity. The whole of God's creation brings Him glory, praises Him for defeating His enemy and returning victoriously, and extols Him as the great victorious King. His purpose is not merely to defeat Satan, which is why His work has continued for six thousand years. He uses Satan's defeat to save humanity; He uses Satan's defeat to reveal all His acts and all of His glory. He will be glorified, and all the multitude of angels will see all His glory. The messengers in heaven, the humans upon earth, and all objects of creation upon earth will see the glory of the Creator. This is the work that He does. His creation in heaven and on earth will all witness His glory, and He will return triumphantly after utterly defeating Satan, and allow humanity to praise Him, thus achieving a double victory in His work. In the end, all of humanity will be conquered by Him, and He will wipe out anyone who resists or rebels; in other words, He will wipe out all those who belong to Satan.

Excerpted from "You Should Know How the Whole of Humanity Has Developed to the Present Day" in The
Word Appears in the Flesh

2. The aim and significance of each of the three stages of God's work

(1) The aim and significance of God's work in the Age of Law

Relevant Words of God:

The work that Jehovah did upon the Israelites established among humanity God's earthly place of origin, which was also the sacred place where He was present. He confined His work to the people of Israel. At first, He did not work outside of Israel, but instead, He chose people He found suitable in order to restrict the scope of His work. Israel is the place where God created Adam and Eve, and out of the dust of that place Jehovah made man; this place became the base

of His work on earth. The Israelites, who were the descendants of Noah and also the descendants of Adam, were the human foundation of Jehovah's work on earth.

At this time, the significance, purpose, and steps of Jehovah's work in Israel were to initiate His work on the whole earth, which, taking Israel as its center, gradually spread into the Gentile nations. This is the principle according to which He works throughout the universe—to establish a model and then broaden it until all people in the universe shall have received His gospel. The first Israelites were the descendants of Noah. These people were endowed only with the breath of Jehovah, and understood enough to take care of the basic necessities of life, but they did not know what kind of God Jehovah was, or His will for man, much less how they should revere the Lord of all creation. As for whether there were rules and laws to be obeyed,^[a] or whether there was a duty that created beings should perform for the Creator, Adam's descendants knew nothing of these things. All they knew was that the husband should sweat and labor to provide for his family, and that the wife should submit to her husband and perpetuate the race of humans that Jehovah had created. In other words, such people, who had only Jehovah's breath and His life, knew nothing of how to follow God's laws or how to satisfy the Lord of all creation. They understood far too little. So even though there was nothing crooked or deceitful in their hearts and jealousy and contention seldom arose among them, nevertheless they had no knowledge or understanding of Jehovah, the Lord of all creation. These ancestors of man knew only to eat the things of Jehovah, and to enjoy the things of Jehovah, but they did not know to revere Jehovah; they did not know that Jehovah was the One they should worship on bended knees. So how could they be called His creatures? If this were so, would not the words, "Jehovah is the Lord of all creation" and "He created man in order that man might manifest Him, glorify Him, and represent Him" have been spoken in vain? How could people who had no reverence for Jehovah become a testimony to His glory? How could they become manifestations of His glory? Would not Jehovah's words "I created man in My image" then become a weapon in the hands of Satan, the evil one? Would these words not then become a mark of humiliation to Jehovah's creation of man? In order to complete that stage of work, Jehovah, after creating mankind, did not instruct or guide them from Adam to Noah. Rather, it was not until after the flood destroyed the world that He formally began to guide the Israelites, who were the descendants of Noah and also of Adam. His work and utterances in Israel gave guidance to all the people of Israel as they lived their lives throughout the land of

Israel, thereby showing humanity that Jehovah was not only able to blow breath into man, so that he might have life from Him and rise up from the dust into a created human being, but that He could also incinerate mankind, and curse mankind, and use His rod to govern mankind. So, too, did they see that Jehovah could guide man's life on earth, and speak and work among humanity according to the hours of the day and of the night. The work He did was only so that His creatures might know that man came from dust picked up by Him, and moreover that man had been made by Him. Not only this, but He first did His work in Israel so that other peoples and nations (who in fact were not separate from Israel, but rather had branched off from the Israelites, yet were still descended from Adam and Eve) might receive the gospel of Jehovah from Israel, so that all created beings in the universe might be able to revere Jehovah and hold Him to be great. Had Jehovah not begun His work in Israel, but instead, having created mankind, let them live carefree lives on the earth, then in that case, owing to man's physical nature (nature means that man can never know the things he cannot see, which is to say that he would not know that it was Jehovah who created mankind, and even less why He did so), he would never know that it was Jehovah who created mankind or that He is the Lord of all creation. If Jehovah had created man and placed him on the earth, and simply dusted off His hands and left, rather than remaining among mankind to give them guidance for a period of time, then all humanity would have returned to nothingness; even heaven and earth and all the myriad things of His making, and all of humanity, would have returned to nothingness and moreover would have been trampled upon by Satan. In this way Jehovah's wish that "On the earth, that is, in the midst of His creation, He should have a place to stand, a holy place" would have been shattered. And so, after creating mankind, that He was able to remain in their midst to guide them in their lives, and speak to them from within their midst—all of this was in order to realize His desire, and to achieve His plan. The work He did in Israel was meant only to execute the plan He had made before His creation of all things, and therefore His working first among the Israelites and His creation of all things were not at odds with each other, but were done both for the sake of His management, His work, and His glory, and were done in order to deepen the meaning of His creation of mankind. He guided the life of mankind on earth for two thousand years after Noah, during which He taught humanity to understand how to revere Jehovah, the Lord of all creation, how to conduct their lives, and how to go on living, and most

of all, how to act as a witness for Jehovah, render Him obedience, and give Him reverence, even praising Him with music as did David and his priests.

Excerpted from "The Work in the Age of Law" in The Word Appears in the Flesh

In the beginning, guiding man during the Old Testament Age of Law was like guiding the life of a child. Earliest mankind was newly born of Jehovah; they were the Israelites. They had no understanding of how to revere God or how to live on earth. Which is to say, Jehovah created mankind, that is, He created Adam and Eve, but He did not give them the faculties to understand how to revere Jehovah or follow the laws of Jehovah on earth. Without the direct guidance of Jehovah, no one could know this directly, for in the beginning man did not possess such faculties. Man only knew that Jehovah was God, but as for how to revere Him, what kind of conduct could be called revering Him, with what kind of mind one was to revere Him, or what to offer up in reverence of Him, man had absolutely no idea. Man only knew how to enjoy that which could be enjoyed among all the things created by Jehovah, but as for what kind of life on earth was worthy of a creature of God, man had no inkling whatsoever. Without someone to instruct them, without someone to guide them personally, this mankind would never have led a life properly befitting humanity, but would only have been furtively held captive by Satan. Jehovah created mankind, that is to say, He created the ancestors of mankind, Eve and Adam, but He did not bestow upon them any further intellect or wisdom. Although they were already living on earth, they understood almost nothing. And so, Jehovah's work in creating mankind was only half finished, and was far from complete. He had only formed a model of man from clay and given it His breath, but without bestowing unto man sufficient willingness to revere Him. In the beginning, man was not of a mind to revere Him, or to fear Him. Man only knew how to listen to His words but was ignorant of the basic knowledge for life on earth and of the normal rules of human life. And so, although Jehovah created man and woman and finished the project of seven days, He by no means completed the creation of man, for man was but a husk, and lacked the reality of being human. Man only knew that it was Jehovah who had created mankind, but he had no inkling of how to abide by the words or the laws of Jehovah. And so, after mankind came into being, the work of Jehovah was far from over. He still had to fully guide mankind to come before Him, so that they might be able to live together on earth and revere Him, and so that they might be able, with His guidance, to enter upon the right track

of a normal human life on earth. Only in this way was the work that had been principally conducted under the name of Jehovah fully completed; that is, only in this way was Jehovah's work of creating the world fully concluded. And so, having created mankind, He had to guide mankind's life on earth for several thousand years, in order that mankind might be able to abide by His decrees and laws, and partake in all the activities of a normal human life on earth. Only then was Jehovah's work fully complete.

Excerpted from "The Vision of God's Work (3)" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

So, you have read these regulations and principles of the Age of Law, have you? Do the regulations encompass a broad range? First, they cover the Ten Commandments, after which are the regulations for how to build altars, and so on. These are followed by regulations for keeping the Sabbath and observing the three feasts, after which are the regulations for offerings. Did you see how many types of offerings there are? There are burnt offerings, grain offerings, peace offerings, sin offerings, and so on. They are followed by regulations for priests' offerings, including burnt offerings and grain offerings by priests, and other kinds of offerings. The eighth set of regulations is for the eating of offerings by priests. Then there are regulations for what should be observed during people's lives. There are stipulations for many aspects of people's lives, such as the regulations for what they may or may not eat, for the purification of women following childbirth, and for those who have been healed of leprosy. In these regulations, God goes so far as to speak about disease, and there are even rules for the slaughter of sheep and cattle, and so on. Sheep and cattle were created by God, and you should slaughter them however God tells you to; there is, without doubt, reason to God's words; it is undoubtedly right to act as decreed by God, and surely of benefit to people! There are also feasts and rules to be observed, such as the Sabbath day, Passover, and more—God spoke of all of these. Let us look at the final ones: other regulations—burning the lamps, the year of jubilee, the redemption of the land, making vows, the offering of tithes, and so on. Do these encompass a broad range? The first thing to be talked of is the issue of people's offerings. Then there are regulations for theft and compensation, and the observation of the Sabbath day...; every one of life's details is involved. This is to say, when God began the official work of His management plan, He set down many regulations that were to be followed by man. These regulations were in order to allow man to lead the normal life of man on earth, a normal life of man that is inseparable from God and His

guidance. God first told man how to make altars, how to set up the altars. After that, He told man how to make offerings, and established how man was to live—what he was to pay attention to in life, what he was to abide by, and what he should and should not do. What God set out for man was all-embracing, and with these customs, regulations, and principles He standardized people's behavior, guided their lives, guided their initiation to the laws of God, guided them to come before the altar of God, guided them in having a life among all the things God had made for man that was possessed of order, regularity, and moderation. God first used these simple regulations and principles to set limits for man, so that on earth man would have a normal life of worshiping God, would have the normal life of man; such is the specific content of the beginning of His six-thousand-year management plan. The regulations and rules cover a very broad content, they are the specifics of God's guidance of mankind during the Age of Law, they had to be accepted and obeyed by the people who came before the Age of Law, they are a record of the work done by God during the Age of Law, and they are real proof of God's leadership and guidance of all mankind.

Excerpted from "God's Work, God's Disposition, and God Himself II" in The Word Appears in the Flesh

During the Age of Law, the work of guiding mankind was done under the name of Jehovah, and the first stage of work was initiated on earth. At this stage, the work consisted of building the temple and the altar, and using the law to guide the people of Israel and to work in their midst. By guiding the people of Israel, He launched a base for His work on earth. From this base, He expanded His work beyond Israel, which is to say that, starting from Israel, He extended His work outward, so that later generations gradually came to know that Jehovah was God, and that it was Jehovah who created the heavens and earth and all things, and that it was Jehovah who made all creatures. He spread His work through the people of Israel outward beyond them. The land of Israel was the first holy place of Jehovah's work on earth, and it was in the land of Israel that God first went to work on earth. That was the work of the Age of Law.

Excerpted from "The Vision of God's Work (3)" in The Word Appears in the Flesh

During the Age of Law, Jehovah laid down many commandments for Moses to pass on to the Israelites who followed him out of Egypt. These commandments were given by Jehovah to the Israelites and bore no relation to the Egyptians; they were meant to restrain the Israelites,

and He used the commandments to make demands of them. Whether they observed the Sabbath, whether they respected their parents, whether they worshiped idols, and so forth—these were the principles by which they were judged sinful or righteous. Among them, there were some who were struck by Jehovah's fire, some who were stoned to death, and some who received Jehovah's blessing, and this was determined according to whether or not they obeyed these commandments. Those who did not observe the Sabbath were stoned to death. Those priests who did not observe the Sabbath were struck by Jehovah's fire. Those who did not show respect to their parents were also stoned to death. This was all commended by Jehovah. Jehovah established His commandments and laws so that, as He led them in their lives, the people would listen to and obey His word and not rebel against Him. He used these laws to keep the newborn human race under control, the better to lay the foundation for His future work. And so, based on the work that Jehovah did, the first age was called the Age of Law. Though Jehovah made many utterances and did much work, He only guided the people positively, teaching these ignorant people how to be human, how to live, how to understand Jehovah's way. For the most part, the work He did was to cause the people to observe His way and follow His laws. The work was done on people who were shallowly corrupted; it did not extend as far as transforming their disposition or progress in life. He was only concerned with using laws to restrict and control the people. For the Israelites at that time, Jehovah was merely a God in the temple, a God in the heavens. He was a pillar of cloud, a pillar of fire. All Jehovah required them to do was obey what people today know as His laws and commandments—one could even say rules—because what Jehovah did was not meant to transform them, but to give them more things that man ought to have and to instruct them from His own mouth because, after being created, man had nothing that he ought to possess. And so, Jehovah gave to the people the things they ought to possess for their lives on earth, making the people that He had led surpass their ancestors, Adam and Eve, because what Jehovah gave them surpassed what He had given Adam and Eve in the beginning. Regardless, the work Jehovah did in Israel was only to guide humanity and make humanity recognize their Creator. He did not conquer them or transform them, but merely guided them. This is the sum of Jehovah's work in the Age of Law. It is the background, the true story, the essence of His work in the whole land of Israel, and the beginning of His six thousand years of work—to keep mankind under the control of Jehovah's hand. Out of this was born more work in His six-thousand-year management plan.

Excerpted from “The Work in the Age of Law” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

Footnotes:

a. The original text does not contain the phrase “to be obeyed.”

(2) The aim and significance of God’s work in the Age of Grace

Bible Verses for Reference:

“For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved” (Jhn 3:17).

Relevant Words of God:

Jesus represents all the work of the Age of Grace; He was incarnated in the flesh, and nailed to the cross, and He also began the Age of Grace. He was crucified in order to complete the work of redemption, to end the Age of Law and begin the Age of Grace, and so He was called the “Supreme Commander,” the “Sin Offering,” and the “Redeemer.” As a result, the work of Jesus differed in content from the work of Jehovah, although they were the same in principle. Jehovah began the Age of Law, establishing the base—the point of origin—for God’s work on earth, and issuing the laws and commandments. These are the two pieces of work He carried out, and they represent the Age of Law. The work Jesus did in the Age of Grace was not to issue laws, but to fulfill them, thereby ushering in the Age of Grace and concluding the Age of Law that had lasted two thousand years. He was the trailblazer, who came in order to begin the Age of Grace, yet the main part of His work lay in redemption. And so His work was also twofold: opening up a new age, and completing the work of redemption through His crucifixion, after which He departed. And henceforth was the Age of Law ended and the Age of Grace begun.

The work Jesus did was in accordance with the needs of man in that age. His task was to redeem humanity, to forgive them their sins, and so His disposition was wholly one of humility, patience, love, piety, forbearance, mercy, and lovingkindness. He brought to humanity abundant grace and blessings, and all the things that people could possibly enjoy, He gave to them for their enjoyment: peace and happiness, His tolerance and love, His mercy and lovingkindness. At the time, the abundance of things to enjoy that people were faced with—the sense of peace and security within their hearts, the feeling of reassurance within their spirits,

and their dependence on Jesus the Savior—was all down to the age in which they lived. In the Age of Grace, man had already been corrupted by Satan, and so to achieve the work of redeeming all humanity required an abundance of grace, infinite forbearance and patience, and even more than that, an offering sufficient to atone for humanity's sins, in order to have an effect. What humanity saw in the Age of Grace was merely My offering of atonement for the sins of humanity: Jesus. All they knew was that God could be merciful and forbearing, and all they saw was the mercy and lovingkindness of Jesus. This was entirely because they were born in the Age of Grace. And so, before they could be redeemed, they had to enjoy the many kinds of grace that Jesus bestowed on them in order to benefit from it. This way, they could be forgiven of their sins through their enjoyment of grace, and could also have the chance to be redeemed through enjoying Jesus' forbearance and patience. Only through Jesus' forbearance and patience did they win the right to receive forgiveness and enjoy the abundance of grace bestowed by Jesus. Just as Jesus said: I have come to redeem not the righteous but sinners, to allow sinners to be forgiven of their sins. If, when He became flesh, Jesus had brought the disposition of judgment, curse, and intolerance of man's offenses, then man would never have had the chance to be redeemed, and would have remained forever sinful. Had this been so, the six-thousand-year management plan would have come to a stop in the Age of Law, and the Age of Law would have been prolonged for six thousand years. Man's sins would only have grown more numerous and more grievous, and the creation of humanity would have been for naught. Men would only have been able to serve Jehovah under the law, but their sins would have exceeded those of the first created humans. The more Jesus loved mankind, forgiving them their sins and bringing unto them sufficient mercy and lovingkindness, the more mankind was entitled to be saved by Jesus, to be called the lost lambs that Jesus bought back at a great price. Satan could not meddle in this work, for Jesus treated His followers as a loving mother treats the infant at her bosom. He did not grow angry or disdainful toward them, but was full of comfort; He never flew into a rage among them, but forbore with their sins and turned a blind eye to their foolishness and ignorance, to the point of saying, "Forgive others seventy times seven times." Thus were the hearts of others transformed by His heart, and only thus did people receive forgiveness of their sins through His forbearance.

Excerpted from "The True Story Behind the Work of the Age of Redemption" in *The Word Appears in the*

Flesh

Though Jesus in His incarnation was utterly without emotion, He always comforted His disciples, provided for them, helped them, and supported them. However much work He did, or however much suffering He endured, He never made excessive demands of people, but was always patient and forbearing of their sins, such that the people of the Age of Grace affectionately called Him “the lovable Savior Jesus.” To the people of that time—to all people—what Jesus had and was, was mercy and lovingkindness. He never remembered people’s transgressions, and His treatment of them was never based on their transgressions. Because that was a different age, He often bestowed plentiful food upon people so that they could eat their fill. He treated all His followers with grace, healing the sick, driving out demons, raising the dead. In order that people might believe in Him and see that all that He did was done earnestly and sincerely, He went so far as to resurrect a rotting corpse, showing them that in His hands even the dead could come back to life. In this way He endured silently and carried out His work of redemption among them. Even before He was nailed to the cross, Jesus had already taken upon Himself the sins of humanity and become a sin offering for mankind. Even before being crucified, He had opened the way to the cross in order to redeem mankind. Ultimately, He was nailed to the cross, sacrificing Himself for the sake of the cross, and He bestowed all of His mercy, lovingkindness, and holiness upon mankind. Toward humanity, He was always tolerant, never vengeful, forgiving them their sins, exhorting them to repent, and teaching them to have patience, forbearance, and love, to follow in His footsteps and sacrifice themselves for the sake of the cross. His love for the brothers and sisters exceeded His love for Mary. The work that He did took as its principle healing the sick and driving out demons, all for the sake of His redemption. No matter where He went, He treated all who followed Him with grace. He made the poor rich, the lame walk, the blind see, and the deaf hear. He even invited the lowliest, destitute ones, the sinners, to sit at the same table with Him, never shunning them but always being patient, even saying: When a shepherd loses one sheep out of a hundred, he will leave behind the ninety-nine to seek the one lost sheep, and when he finds it he will rejoice greatly. He loved His followers as a ewe loves her lambs. Though they were foolish and ignorant, and were sinners in His eyes, and furthermore were the humblest members of society, He considered these sinners—men whom others despised—as the apple of His eye. Since He favored them, He gave up His life for them, as a lamb was offered up on the altar. He went about

in their midst as if He were their servant, letting them use Him and slaughter Him, submitting to them unconditionally. To His followers He was the lovable Savior Jesus, but to the Pharisees, who lectured people from a high pedestal, He showed not mercy and lovingkindness, but loathing and resentment. He did not do much work among the Pharisees, only occasionally lecturing and rebuking them; He did not go about in their midst doing the work of redemption, nor did He perform signs and wonders. He bestowed all His mercy and lovingkindness upon His followers, enduring for the sake of these sinners till the very end, when He was nailed to the cross, and suffering every humiliation until He had fully redeemed all humanity. This was the sum total of His work.

Without Jesus' redemption, mankind would forever have lived in sin and become the progeny of sin, the descendants of demons. Continuing thus, the whole world would have become the land where Satan dwells, the place of its habitation. The work of redemption, however, required showing mercy and lovingkindness toward mankind; only by such means could mankind receive forgiveness and ultimately win the right to be made complete and fully gained by God. Without this stage of work, the six-thousand-year management plan would not have been able to progress. If Jesus had not been crucified, if He had only healed the sick and exorcised demons, then people could not have been completely forgiven of their sins. In the three and a half years that Jesus spent doing His work on earth, He completed only half of His work of redemption; then, by being nailed to the cross and becoming the likeness of sinful flesh, by being handed over to the evil one, He completed the work of crucifixion and mastered the destiny of mankind. Only after He was delivered into Satan's hands did He redeem mankind. For thirty-three and a half years He suffered on earth, being ridiculed, slandered, and forsaken, even to the point where He had no place to lay His head, no place of rest, and He was later crucified, with His whole being—a holy and innocent body—nailed to the cross. He endured every kind of suffering there is. Those in power mocked and whipped Him, and the soldiers even spat in His face; yet He remained silent and endured until the end, submitting unconditionally to the point of death, whereupon He redeemed all of humanity. Only then was He permitted to rest. The work that Jesus did represents only the Age of Grace; it does not represent the Age of Law, nor is it a substitute for the work of the last days. This is the essence of Jesus' work in the Age of Grace, the second age that mankind has passed through—the Age of Redemption.

Excerpted from “The True Story Behind the Work of the Age of Redemption” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

When Jesus came, He also did part of God’s work and spoke some words—but what was the main work He accomplished? What He mainly accomplished was the work of crucifixion. He became the likeness of sinful flesh to complete the work of crucifixion and redeem all mankind, and it was for the sake of all mankind’s sins that He served as a sin offering. This is the main work He accomplished. Ultimately, He provided the path of the cross to guide those who came later. When Jesus came, it was primarily to complete the work of redemption. He redeemed all mankind, and brought the gospel of the kingdom of heaven to man, and, furthermore, He brought forth the path to the kingdom of heaven. As a result, all those who came after said, “We should walk the path of the cross, and sacrifice ourselves for the cross.” Of course, in the beginning, Jesus also did some other work and spoke some words to make man repent and confess his sins. But His ministry was still the crucifixion, and the three and a half years He spent preaching the way were in preparation for the crucifixion that came after. The several times that Jesus prayed were also for the sake of the crucifixion. The life of a normal man that He led and the thirty-three and a half years that He lived on earth were primarily for the sake of completing the work of crucifixion; they were to give Him strength to undertake this work, as a result of which God entrusted the work of crucifixion to Him.

Excerpted from “All Is Achieved by the Word of God” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

During the Age of Grace, Jesus was the God who saved man. What He had and was was grace, love, compassion, forbearance, patience, humility, care, and tolerance, and so much of the work that He did was for the sake of the redemption of man. His disposition was one of compassion and love, and because He was compassionate and loving, He had to be nailed to the cross for man, in order to show that God loved man as Himself, so much so that He offered up Himself in His entirety. During the Age of Grace, the name of God was Jesus, that is to say, God was a God who saved man, and He was a compassionate and loving God. God was with man. His love, His compassion, and His salvation accompanied each and every person. Only by accepting the name of Jesus and His presence was man able to gain peace and joy, to receive His blessing, His vast and numerous graces, and His salvation. Through the crucifixion of Jesus,

all those who followed Him received salvation and were forgiven their sins. During the Age of Grace, Jesus was the name of God. In other words, the work of the Age of Grace was done principally under the name of Jesus. During the Age of Grace, God was called Jesus. He undertook a stage of new work beyond the Old Testament, and His work ended with the crucifixion. This was the entirety of His work.

Excerpted from “The Vision of God’s Work (3)” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

As soon as the second stage of God’s work was completed—after the crucifixion—God’s work of recovering man from sin (which is to say, recovering man from the hands of Satan) was accomplished. And so, from that moment onward, mankind had only to accept the Lord Jesus as the Savior, and his sins would be forgiven. Nominally speaking, the sins of man were no longer a barrier to his achieving salvation and coming before God, and were no longer the leverage by which Satan accused man. That is because God Himself had done real work, had become the likeness and foretaste of sinful flesh, and God Himself was the sin offering. In this way, man descended from the cross, and was redeemed and saved through the flesh of God—the likeness of this sinful flesh. And so, after having been taken captive by Satan, man came one step closer to accepting His salvation before God. Of course, this stage of work was deeper and more developed than God’s management during the Age of Law.

Excerpted from “Man Can Only Be Saved Amidst God’s Management” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

(3) The aim and significance of God’s work in the Age of Kingdom

Relevant Words of God:

When Jesus came into the world of man, He ushered in the Age of Grace and ended the Age of Law. During the last days, God once more became flesh, and with this incarnation He ended the Age of Grace and ushered in the Age of Kingdom. All those who are able to accept the second incarnation of God will be led into the Age of Kingdom, and will moreover become able to personally accept the guidance of God. Though Jesus did much work among man, He only completed the redemption of all mankind and became man’s sin offering; He did not rid man of all his corrupt disposition. Fully saving man from the influence of Satan not only required Jesus to become the sin offering and bear the sins of man, but it also required God to do even

greater work to rid man completely of his satanically corrupted disposition. And so, now that man has been forgiven of his sins, God has returned to the flesh to lead man into the new age, and begun the work of chastisement and judgment. This work has brought man into a higher realm. All those who submit under His dominion shall enjoy higher truth and receive greater blessings. They shall truly live in the light, and they shall gain the truth, the way, and the life.

Excerpted from Preface to The Word Appears in the Flesh

Before man was redeemed, many of Satan's poisons had already been planted within him and, after thousands of years of being corrupted by Satan, he has within him an established nature that resists God. Therefore, when man has been redeemed, it is nothing more than a case of redemption in which man is bought at a high price, but the poisonous nature within him has not been eliminated. Man that is so defiled must undergo a change before becoming worthy to serve God. By means of this work of judgment and chastisement, man will fully come to know the filthy and corrupt essence within his own self, and he will be able to change completely and become clean. Only in this way can man become worthy to return before the throne of God. All the work done this day is so that man can be made clean and be changed; through judgment and chastisement by the word, as well as through refinement, man can purge away his corruption and be made pure. Rather than deeming this stage of work to be that of salvation, it would be more apt to say it is the work of purification. In truth, this stage is that of conquest as well as the second stage in the work of salvation. It is through judgment and chastisement by the word that man arrives at being gained by God, and it is through the use of the word to refine, judge, and disclose that all of the impurities, notions, motives, and individual aspirations within man's heart are completely revealed. For all that man may have been redeemed and forgiven of his sins, it can only be considered as God not remembering the transgressions of man and not treating man in accordance with his transgressions. However, when man, who lives in a body of flesh, has not been set free from sin, he can only continue to sin, endlessly revealing his corrupt satanic disposition. This is the life that man leads, an endless cycle of sinning and being forgiven. The majority of mankind sin in the day only to confess in the evening. This way, even though the sin offering is forever effective for man, it will not be able to save man from sin. Only half the work of salvation has been completed, for man still has a corrupt disposition. ... It is not easy for man to become aware of his sins; he has no way of recognizing his own deeply

rooted nature, and he must rely on judgment by the word in order to achieve this result. Only thus can man gradually be changed from this point onward.

Excerpted from “The Mystery of the Incarnation (4)” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

The work of the last days is to speak words. Great changes can be effected in man by means of words. The changes now effected in these people upon their accepting these words are much greater than those effected in people upon their accepting the signs and wonders of the Age of Grace. For, in the Age of Grace, the demons were cast out from man with the laying on of hands and prayer, but the corrupt dispositions within man still remained. Man was healed of his sickness and forgiven his sins, but as for just how man was to be purged of the corrupt satanic dispositions within him, this work had yet to be done. Man was only saved and forgiven his sins for his faith, but the sinful nature of man was not extirpated and still remained within him. The sins of man were forgiven through the agency of the incarnate God, but this did not mean that man no longer had sin within him. The sins of man could be forgiven through the sin offering, but as for just how man can be made to sin no more, and how his sinful nature may be extirpated completely and transformed, he has no way of solving this problem. The sins of man were forgiven, and this is because of the work of God’s crucifixion, but man continued to live within his corrupt satanic disposition of old. This being so, man must be completely saved from his corrupt satanic disposition, so that his sinful nature may be completely extirpated, never to develop again, thus enabling the disposition of man to be transformed. This would require man to grasp the path of growth in life, to grasp the way of life, and to grasp the way to change his disposition. Furthermore, it would require man to act in accordance with this path, so that his disposition may gradually be changed and he may live under the shining of the light, so that all that he does may be in accord with the will of God, so that he may cast away his corrupt satanic disposition, and so that he may break free from Satan’s influence of darkness, thereby emerging fully from sin. Only then will man receive complete salvation.

Excerpted from “The Mystery of the Incarnation (4)” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

The work of the last days is to separate all according to their kind, and to conclude the management plan of God, for the time is near and the day of God has come. God brings all who enter His kingdom—all who are loyal to Him to the very end—into the age of God Himself. Yet

prior to the arrival of the age of God Himself, God's work is not to observe the deeds of man, or to inquire into the life of man, but to judge man's disobedience, for God shall purify all those who come before His throne. All who have followed the footsteps of God to this day are those who come before the throne of God, and this being so, every single person who accepts God's work in its final phase is the object of God's purification. In other words, everyone who accepts God's work in its final phase is the object of God's judgment.

Excerpted from "Christ Does the Work of Judgment With the Truth" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

God's work in the present incarnation is to express His disposition primarily through chastisement and judgment. Building on this foundation, He brings more truth to man and points out to him more ways of practice, thereby achieving His objective of conquering man and saving him from his own corrupt disposition. This is what lies behind the work of God in the Age of Kingdom.

Excerpted from Preface to *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

In the last days, Christ uses a variety of truths to teach man, to expose the substance of man, and to dissect the words and deeds of man. These words comprise various truths, such as man's duty, how man should obey God, how man should be loyal to God, how man ought to live out normal humanity, as well as the wisdom and the disposition of God, and so on. These words are all directed at the substance of man and his corrupt disposition. In particular, the words that expose how man spurns God are spoken in regard to how man is an embodiment of Satan, and an enemy force against God. In undertaking His work of judgment, God does not simply make clear the nature of man with a few words; He exposes, deals with, and prunes over the long term. These methods of exposure, dealing, and pruning cannot be substituted with ordinary words, but with the truth of which man is utterly bereft. Only methods such as these can be called judgment; only through judgment of this kind can man be subdued and thoroughly convinced into submission to God, and moreover gain true knowledge of God. What the work of judgment brings about is man's understanding of the true face of God and the truth about his own rebelliousness. The work of judgment allows man to gain much understanding of the will of God, of the purpose of God's work, and of the mysteries that are incomprehensible to him. It also allows man to recognize and know his corrupt essence and the roots of his

corruption, as well as to discover the ugliness of man. These effects are all brought about by the work of judgment, for the essence of this work is actually the work of opening up the truth, the way, and the life of God to all those who have faith in Him. This work is the work of judgment done by God.

Excerpted from "Christ Does the Work of Judgment With the Truth" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

God does the work of judgment and chastisement so that man may gain knowledge of Him, and for the sake of His testimony. Without His judgment of man's corrupt disposition, man could not possibly know His righteous disposition, which brooks no offense, and nor would man be able to turn his old knowledge of God into a new one. For the sake of His testimony, and for the sake of His management, He makes His entirety public, thus enabling man, through His public appearance, to arrive at knowledge of God, to be transformed in his disposition, and to bear resounding testimony to God. The transformation of the disposition of man is achieved through many different kinds of God's work; without such changes in his disposition, man would be unable to bear testimony to God and to be after God's heart. The transformation of man's disposition signifies that man has freed himself from Satan's bondage and from the influence of darkness, and has truly become a model and specimen of God's work, a witness of God, and one who is after God's heart. Today, God incarnate has come to do His work on earth, and He requires that man achieve knowledge of Him, obedience to Him, testimony to Him, to know His practical and normal work, to obey all of His words and work which do not accord with the notions of man, and to bear testimony to all the work He does to save man, as well as all the deeds He accomplishes to conquer man. Those who bear testimony to God must have knowledge of God; only this kind of testimony is accurate and real, and only this kind of testimony can shame Satan. God uses those who have come to know Him through undergoing His judgment and chastisement, dealing and pruning, to bear testimony to Him. He uses those who have been corrupted by Satan to bear testimony to Him, and so too does He use those whose disposition has changed, and who have thus gained His blessings, to bear testimony to Him. He does not need man to praise Him with his mouth, nor does He need the praise and testimony of the ilk of Satan, who have not been saved by Him. Only those who know God are qualified to bear testimony to Him, and only those who have been transformed in their

disposition are qualified to bear testimony to Him. God will not allow man intentionally to bring shame upon His name.

Excerpted from “Only Those Who Know God Can Bear Testimony to God” in The Word Appears in the
Flesh

In the Age of Kingdom, God uses words to usher in the new age, to change the means by which He works, and to do the work of the entire age. This is the principle by which God works in the Age of Word. He became flesh to speak from different perspectives, so that man could truly see God, who is the Word appearing in the flesh, and could behold His wisdom and wondrousness. Such work is done in order better to achieve the goals of conquering man, perfecting man, and eliminating man, which is the true meaning of the use of words to work in the Age of Word. Through these words, people come to know the work of God, the disposition of God, the substance of man, and what man ought to enter into. Through words, the work God wishes to do in the Age of Word is brought to fruition in its entirety. Through these words, people are exposed, eliminated, and tried. People have seen God’s words, heard these words, and recognized the existence of these words. As a result, they have come to believe in the existence of God, in the omnipotence and wisdom of God, as well as in God’s love for man and His desire to save man. The word “words” may be simple and ordinary, but the words spoken from the mouth of the incarnate God shake the universe, they transform people’s hearts, transform their notions and old dispositions, and transform the way the whole world used to appear. Through the ages, only the God of today has worked in this way, and only He speaks thus and comes to save man thus. From this time forward, man lives under the guidance of God’s words, shepherded and supplied by His words. People live in the world of God’s words, amid the curses and the blessings of God’s words, and there are even more people who have come to live under the judgment and chastisement of His words. These words and this work are all for the sake of man’s salvation, for the sake of fulfilling God’s will, and for the sake of changing the original appearance of the world of old creation. God created the world using words, He leads people throughout the universe using words, and He conquers and saves them using words. Ultimately, He shall use words to bring the entire world of old to an end, thus completing the entirety of His management plan.

Excerpted from “The Age of Kingdom Is the Age of Word” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

During the Age of Kingdom, God incarnate speaks words to conquer all those who believe in Him. This is “the Word appearing in the flesh”; God has come during the last days to do this work, which is to say, He has come to accomplish the actual significance of the Word appearing in the flesh. He only speaks words, and rarely is there the advent of facts. This is the very essence of the Word appearing in the flesh, and when God incarnate speaks His words, this is the appearance of the Word in the flesh, and is the Word coming into the flesh. “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God, and the Word became flesh.” This (the work of the appearance of the Word in the flesh) is the work that God will accomplish in the last days, and is the final chapter of His entire management plan, and so God has to come to earth and manifest His words in the flesh. That which is done today, that which will be done in the future, that which will be accomplished by God, man’s final destination, those who will be saved, those who will be destroyed, and so on—all of this work that should be achieved in the end has all been clearly stated, and is all in order to accomplish the actual significance of the Word appearing in the flesh. The administrative decrees and constitution that were previously issued forth, those who will be destroyed, those who will enter into rest—these words must all be fulfilled. This is the work principally accomplished by God incarnate during the last days. He makes people understand where those predestined by God belong and where those not predestined by God belong, how His people and sons will be classified, what will happen to Israel, what will happen to Egypt—in the future, every one of these words will be accomplished. The pace of God’s work is accelerating. God uses the word as the means to reveal to man what is to be done in every age, what is to be done by God incarnate during the last days, and His ministry that is to be performed, and these words are all in order to accomplish the actual significance of the Word appearing in the flesh.

Excerpted from “All Is Achieved by the Word of God” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

In the last days, God principally uses the word to make man perfect. He does not use signs and wonders to oppress man, or convince man; this cannot make plain the power of God. If God only showed signs and wonders, then it would be impossible to make plain the reality of God, and thus impossible to make man perfect. God does not make man perfect by signs and wonders, but uses the word to water and shepherd man, after which is achieved the complete obedience

of man and man's knowledge of God. This is the aim of the work He does and the words He speaks. God does not use the method of showing signs and wonders to make man perfect—He uses words, and uses many different methods of work to make man perfect. Whether it be the refinement, dealing, pruning, or provision of words, God speaks from many different perspectives to make man perfect, and to give man a greater knowledge of the work, wisdom and wondrousness of God. ... I have previously said that a group of overcomers are gained from the East, overcomers who come from amid the great tribulation. What is meant by these words? They mean that these people who have been gained only truly obeyed after undergoing judgment and chastisement, and dealing and pruning, and all kinds of refinement. The belief of these people is not vague and abstract, but real. They have not seen any signs and wonders, or any miracles; they do not speak of abstruse letters and doctrines, or profound insights; instead they have reality, and the words of God, and a true knowledge of the reality of God. Is such a group not more capable of making plain the power of God?

Excerpted from "All Is Achieved by the Word of God" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The last days have already arrived. All things in creation will be separated according to their kind, and divided into different categories based on their nature. This is the moment when God reveals humanity's outcome and their destination. If people do not undergo chastisement and judgment, then there will be no way of exposing their disobedience and unrighteousness. Only through chastisement and judgment can the outcome of all creation be revealed. Man only shows his true colors when he is chastised and judged. Evil shall be put with evil, good with good, and all humanity shall be separated according to their kind. Through chastisement and judgment, the outcome of all creation will be revealed, so that the evil may be punished and the good rewarded, and all people become subject to the dominion of God. All this work must be achieved through righteous chastisement and judgment. Because man's corruption has reached its peak and his disobedience become exceedingly severe, only God's righteous disposition, one that is principally compounded of chastisement and judgment and is revealed during the last days, can fully transform and complete man. Only this disposition can expose evil and thus severely punish all the unrighteous.

Excerpted from "The Vision of God's Work (3)" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Those who are able to stand firm during God's work of judgment and chastisement during the last days—that is, during the final work of purification—will be the ones who will enter into the final rest alongside God; as such, all those who enter into rest will have broken free of Satan's influence and been obtained by God after having undergone His final work of purification. These humans, who will have been finally obtained by God, will enter into the final rest. The essential purpose of God's work of chastisement and judgment is to purify humanity and to prepare them for their ultimate rest; without such cleansing, none of humanity could be classified into different categories according to kind, or enter into rest. This work is humanity's only path to enter into rest. Only God's work of purification will cleanse humans of their unrighteousness, and only His work of chastisement and judgment will bring to light those disobedient elements of humanity, thereby separating those who can be saved from those who cannot, and those who will remain from those who will not. When this work ends, those people who are allowed to remain will all be cleansed and enter a higher state of humanity in which they will enjoy a more wonderful second human life upon the earth; in other words, they will commence their human day of rest, and coexist with God. After those who are not allowed to remain have been chastised and judged, their true colors will be entirely exposed, after which they will all be destroyed and, like Satan, will no longer be permitted to survive upon the earth. The humanity of the future will no longer include any of this type of people; such people are not fit to enter the land of the ultimate rest, nor are they fit to join in the day of rest that God and humanity will share, for they are the targets of punishment and are wicked, unrighteous people. They were redeemed once, and they have also been judged and chastised; they also once rendered service to God. However, when the final day comes, they will still be eliminated and destroyed due to their wickedness and as a result of their disobedience and inability to be redeemed; they will never again come into being in the world of the future, and will no longer live among the human race of the future. Whether they are spirits of the dead or people still living in the flesh, all evildoers and all those who have not been saved will be destroyed once the holy among humanity enter into rest. As for these evildoing spirits and humans, or the spirits of righteous people and those who do righteousness, regardless of what era they are in, all those who commit evil will ultimately be destroyed, and all those who are righteous will survive. Whether a person or spirit will receive salvation is not entirely decided on the basis of the work of the final age; rather, it is determined by whether or not they have resisted or been

disobedient toward God. People in the previous era who committed evil and could not attain salvation will, undoubtedly, be targets for punishment, and those in the current era who commit evil and cannot be saved will surely be targets for punishment, too. Humans are categorized on the basis of good and evil, not by which epoch they live in. Once thus categorized, they will not be punished or rewarded immediately; rather, God will only carry out His work of punishing evil and rewarding good after He has finished carrying out His work of conquest in the last days. Actually, He has been separating humans into good and evil ever since He started doing His work among them. It is just that He will reward the righteous and punish the wicked only after His work has come to an end; it is not that He will separate them into categories upon the completion of His work and then immediately set about the task of punishing evil and rewarding good. The entire purpose behind God's ultimate work of punishing evil and rewarding good is to thoroughly purify all humans so that He may bring a purely holy humanity into eternal rest. This stage of His work is the most crucial; it is the final stage of the whole of His work of management. If God did not destroy the wicked, but instead allowed them to remain, then every human would still be unable to enter into rest, and God would not be able to bring all of humanity into a better realm. Such work would not be complete. When His work is finished, the whole of humanity will be entirely holy; only in this way will God be able to live in rest peacefully.

Excerpted from "God and Man Will Enter Into Rest Together" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Because God created humans, He will make them worship Him; because He wishes to restore humanity's original function, He will restore it completely and without any adulteration. Restoring His authority means making humans worship Him and submit to Him; it means that God will make humans live because of Him and cause His enemies to perish as a result of His authority. It means that God will cause everything about Him to persist among humans without resistance from anybody. The kingdom God wishes to establish is His own kingdom. The humanity He desires is one that will worship Him, one that will submit to Him completely and manifest His glory. If God does not save corrupt humanity, then the meaning behind His creation of humanity will be lost; He will have no more authority among humans, and His kingdom will no longer be able to exist upon the earth. If God does not destroy those enemies who are disobedient to Him, He will be unable to obtain His complete glory, nor will He be able

to establish His kingdom upon the earth. These will be marks of the completion of His work and of His great accomplishment: to utterly destroy those among humanity who are disobedient to Him, and to bring into rest those who have been made complete.

Excerpted from “God and Man Will Enter Into Rest Together” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

As My words are consummated, the kingdom is gradually formed on earth and man is gradually returned to normality, and thus there is established on earth the kingdom in My heart. In the kingdom, all the people of God recover the life of normal man. Gone is the frosty winter, replaced by a world of cities of spring, where spring lasts all year. No longer are people faced with the gloomy, miserable world of man, and no longer do they endure the cold chill of the world of man. People do not fight with each other, countries do not go to war against each other, no longer is there carnage and the blood that flows from carnage; all lands are filled with happiness, and everywhere teems with warmth between men. I move throughout the world, I enjoy from atop My throne, and I live among the stars. The angels offer unto Me new songs and new dances. No longer does their own fragility cause tears to run down their faces. No longer do I hear, before Me, the sound of the angels weeping, and no longer does anyone complain of hardship to Me. Today, you all live before Me; tomorrow, you will all exist in My kingdom. Is this not the greatest blessing that I bestow upon man?

Excerpted from “Chapter 20” of God’s Words to the Entire Universe in The Word Appears in the Flesh

3. The relationship between all the three stages of God’s work

Relevant Words of God:

From the work of Jehovah to that of Jesus, and from the work of Jesus to that of this current stage, these three stages cover in a continuous thread the entire gamut of God’s management, and they are all the work of one Spirit. Since the creation of the world, God has always been at work managing mankind. He is the Beginning and the End, He is the First and the Last, and He is the One who begins an age and the One who brings the age to an end. The three stages of work, in different ages and different locations, are unmistakably the work of one Spirit. All those who separate these three stages stand in opposition to God. Now, it behooves you to understand

that all the work from the first stage until today is the work of one God, the work of one Spirit. Of this there can be no doubt.

Excerpted from “The Vision of God’s Work (3)” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

The three stages of work were done by one God; this is the greatest vision, and this is the only path to knowing God. The three stages of work could only have been done by God Himself, and no man could do such work on His behalf—this is to say that only God Himself could have done His own work from the beginning until today. Though the three stages of God’s work have been carried out in different ages and locations, and though the work of each is different, it is all work done by one God. Of all the visions, this is the greatest vision that man should know, and if it can be completely understood by man, then he will be able to stand fast.

Excerpted from “Knowing the Three Stages of God’s Work Is the Path to Knowing God” in The Word
Appears in the Flesh

After the work of Jehovah, Jesus became flesh to do His work amongst man. His work was not carried out in isolation, but was built upon the work of Jehovah. It was work for a new age that God did after He had concluded the Age of Law. Similarly, after the work of Jesus ended, God went on with His work for the next age, because the entire management of God is always progressing forward. When the old age passes, it will be replaced by a new age, and once the old work has been completed, there will be new work to continue God’s management. This incarnation is God’s second incarnation, which follows upon Jesus’ work. Of course, this incarnation does not occur independently; it is the third stage of work after the Age of Law and the Age of Grace. Every time God initiates a new stage of work, there must always be a new beginning and it must always bring a new age. So too are there corresponding changes in the disposition of God, in the manner of His working, in the location of His work, and in His name. No wonder, then, that it is difficult for man to accept the work of God in the new age. But regardless of how He is opposed by man, God is always doing His work, and is always leading the whole of mankind forward. When Jesus came into the world of man, He ushered in the Age of Grace and ended the Age of Law. During the last days, God once more became flesh, and with this incarnation He ended the Age of Grace and ushered in the Age of Kingdom. All those who are able to accept the second incarnation of God will be led into the Age of Kingdom, and will

moreover become able to personally accept the guidance of God. Though Jesus did much work among man, He only completed the redemption of all mankind and became man's sin offering; He did not rid man of all his corrupt disposition. Fully saving man from the influence of Satan not only required Jesus to become the sin offering and bear the sins of man, but it also required God to do even greater work to rid man completely of his satanically corrupted disposition. And so, now that man has been forgiven of his sins, God has returned to the flesh to lead man into the new age, and begun the work of chastisement and judgment. This work has brought man into a higher realm. All those who submit under His dominion shall enjoy higher truth and receive greater blessings. They shall truly live in the light, and they shall gain the truth, the way, and the life.

Excerpted from Preface to *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The six-thousand-year management plan is divided into three stages of work. No one stage alone can represent the work of the three ages, but only one part of a whole. The name Jehovah cannot represent the whole of God's disposition. The fact that He carried out His work in the Age of Law does not prove that God can only be God under the law. Jehovah set forth laws for man and handed down commandments to him, asking man to build the temple and the altars; the work He did represents only the Age of Law. This work that He did does not prove that God is only a God who asks man to keep the law, or that He is the God in the temple, or that He is the God before the altar. To say this would be untrue. The work done under the law can only represent one age. Therefore, if God only did the work in the Age of Law, then man would confine God within the following definition, saying, "God is the God in the temple, and, in order to serve God we must put on priestly robes and enter the temple." If the work in the Age of Grace had never been carried out and the Age of Law had continued until the present, man would not know that God is also merciful and loving. If the work in the Age of Law had not been done, and instead only the work in the Age of Grace, then all man would know is that God can only redeem man and forgive man's sins. Man would know only that He is holy and innocent, and that for man's sake He is able to sacrifice Himself and be crucified. Man would know only these things but have no understanding of anything else. Each age therefore represents one part of God's disposition. As for which aspects of God's disposition are represented in the Age of Law, which in the Age of Grace, and which in this present stage: only when all three stages have been

integrated into one whole can they reveal the entirety of God's disposition. Only when man has come to know all three stages can he understand it fully. None of the three stages can be omitted. You will only see the disposition of God in its entirety after coming to know these three stages of work. The fact that God completed His work in the Age of Law does not prove that He is only the God under the law, and the fact that He completed His work of redemption does not mean that God will forever redeem mankind. These are all conclusions drawn by man. The Age of Grace having come to an end, you cannot then say that God belongs only to the cross and that the cross alone represents the salvation of God. To do so would be to define God. In the present stage, God is mainly doing the work of the word, but you cannot say then that God has never been merciful to man and that all He has brought is chastisement and judgment. The work in the last days lays bare the work of Jehovah and Jesus and all mysteries not understood by man, so as to reveal the destination and the end of mankind and end all the work of salvation among mankind. This stage of work in the last days brings everything to a close. All mysteries not understood by man need to be unraveled to allow man to plumb them to their depths and have a completely clear understanding in his heart. Only then can the human race be classed according to kind. Only after the six-thousand-year management plan is completed will man come to understand the disposition of God in its entirety, for His management will then have come to an end.

Excerpted from "The Mystery of the Incarnation (4)" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The work of today has pushed forward the work of the Age of Grace; that is, the work under the entire six-thousand-year management plan has moved forward. Though the Age of Grace has ended, there has been progress in God's work. Why do I say time and again that this stage of work builds upon the Age of Grace and the Age of Law? Because the work of this day is a continuation of the work done in the Age of Grace, and an advance over that done in the Age of Law. The three stages are tightly interconnected, with each link in the chain closely tied to the next. Why do I also say that this stage of work builds on that done by Jesus? Supposing that this stage did not build on the work done by Jesus, another crucifixion would have to take place in this stage, and the redemptive work of the previous stage would have to be done all over again. This would be meaningless. And so it is not that the work is completely finished, but that the age has moved forward and the level of the work has been raised higher than before. It can be

said that this stage of work is built on the foundation of the Age of Law and upon the rock of Jesus' work. God's work is built stage by stage, and this stage is not a new beginning. Only the combination of the three stages of work may be deemed the six-thousand-year management plan.

Excerpted from "The Two Incarnations Complete the Significance of the Incarnation" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The whole of God's disposition has been revealed in the course of the six-thousand-year management plan. It is not revealed only in the Age of Grace, nor only in the Age of Law, even less so only in this period of the last days. The work carried out in the last days represents judgment, wrath, and chastisement. The work carried out in the last days cannot replace the work of the Age of Law or that of the Age of Grace. However, the three stages, interconnecting, form one entity, and all are the work of one God. Naturally, the execution of this work is divided into separate ages. The work done in the last days brings everything to a close; that done in the Age of Law was the work of commencement; and that done in the Age of Grace was the work of redemption. As for the visions of the work in this entire six-thousand-year management plan, no one is able to gain insight or understanding, and these visions remain riddles. In the last days, only the work of the word is carried out in order to usher in the Age of Kingdom, but it is not representative of all the ages. The last days are no more than the last days and no more than the Age of Kingdom, and they do not represent the Age of Grace or the Age of Law. It is just that, during the last days, all the work in the six-thousand-year management plan is revealed to you. This is the unveiling of the mystery.

Excerpted from "The Mystery of the Incarnation (4)" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The three stages of work are at the heart of God's entire management, and in them are expressed the disposition of God and what He is. Those who do not know of the three stages of God's work are incapable of realizing how God expresses His disposition, nor do they know the wisdom of God's work. They also remain ignorant of the many ways in which He saves mankind, and of His will for the whole of mankind. The three stages of work are the full expression of the work of saving mankind. Those who do not know the three stages of work will be ignorant of the various methods and principles of the Holy Spirit's work, and those who only rigidly stick

to doctrine that is left over from a certain stage of work are people who limit God to doctrine, and whose belief in God is vague and uncertain. Such people will never receive God's salvation. Only the three stages of God's work can fully express the entirety of God's disposition and completely express God's intention of saving the whole of mankind, and the entire process of mankind's salvation. This is proof that He has defeated Satan and gained mankind; it is proof of God's victory, and is the expression of God's entire disposition. Those who understand only one stage of the three stages of God's work know only part of God's disposition. In the notions of man, it is easy for this single stage of work to become doctrine, and it becomes likely that man will establish fixed rules about God and use this single part of God's disposition as a representation of God's entire disposition. Furthermore, much of man's imagination is mixed within, such that man rigidly constrains the disposition, being, and wisdom of God, as well as the principles of God's work, within limited parameters, believing that if God was like this once, then He will remain the same for all time and never change. Only those who know and appreciate the three stages of work can fully and accurately know God. At the very least, they will not define God as the God of the Israelites, or the Jews, and will not see Him as a God who will be forever nailed to the cross for the sake of man. If one only comes to know God from one stage of His work, then their knowledge is far too small, and amounts to no more than a drop in the ocean. If not, why would many of the religious old guard nail God to the cross alive? Is it not because man confines God within certain parameters?

Excerpted from "Knowing the Three Stages of God's Work Is the Path to Knowing God" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The three stages of work are a record of the entire work of God; they are a record of God's salvation of mankind, and they are not imaginary. If you truly wish to seek a knowledge of God's entire disposition, then you must know the three stages of work carried out by God, and, furthermore, you must not omit any stage. This is the minimum that must be achieved by those who seek to know God. Man himself cannot fabricate a true knowledge of God. This is not something that man himself can imagine, nor is it the consequence of the Holy Spirit's special favor granted to a single person. Rather, it is a knowledge that comes after man has experienced the work of God, and it is a knowledge of God that only comes after having experienced the facts of God's work. Such a knowledge cannot be achieved on a whim, and nor is it something that

can be taught. It is wholly related to personal experience. God's salvation of mankind is at the core of these three stages of work, yet within the work of salvation are included several methods of working and several means by which God's disposition is expressed. This is what is most difficult for man to identify, and it is this that is difficult for man to understand. The separation of the ages, changes in God's work, changes in the location of work, changes in the recipient of this work, and so on—these are all included in the three stages of work. In particular, the difference in the Holy Spirit's way of working, as well as alterations in God's disposition, image, name, identity, or other changes, are all part of the three stages of work. One stage of work can only represent one part, and is limited within a certain scope. It does not involve the separation of the ages, or changes in God's work, much less the other aspects. This is a clearly obvious fact. The three stages of work are the entirety of God's work in saving mankind. Man must know God's work and God's disposition in the work of salvation; without this fact, your knowledge of God consists of nothing but hollow words, nothing more than armchair pontification.

Excerpted from "Knowing the Three Stages of God's Work Is the Path to Knowing God" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The final stage of work does not stand alone, but is part of the whole formed together with the two previous stages, which is to say that it is impossible to complete the entire work of salvation by only doing one of the three stages of work. Even though the final stage of work is able to fully save man, this does not mean that it is only necessary to carry out this single stage on its own, and that the two previous stages of work are not required to save man from the influence of Satan. No single stage of the three stages can be held up as the only vision that must be known by all mankind, for the entirety of the work of salvation is the three stages of work, not a single stage among them. As long as the work of salvation has not been accomplished, the management of God will be unable to come to a complete end. God's being, His disposition, and His wisdom are expressed in the entirety of the work of salvation; they are not revealed to man at the very beginning, but have been gradually expressed in the work of salvation. Each stage of the work of salvation expresses part of the disposition of God, and part of His being; not every stage of work can directly and completely express the entirety of God's being. As such, the work of salvation can only be fully concluded once the three stages of work have been completed, and so man's knowledge of the entirety of God is inseparable from the three stages of God's work.

What man gains from one stage of work is merely the disposition of God that is expressed in a single part of His work. It cannot represent the disposition and being that is expressed in the stages before or after. That is because the work of saving mankind cannot be finished straight away during one period, or in one location, but gradually becomes deeper according to man's level of development at different times and places. It is work that is carried out in stages, and it is not completed in a single stage. So, God's entire wisdom is crystallized in the three stages, rather than in one individual stage. His entire being and His entire wisdom are laid forth in these three stages, and each stage contains His being, and each stage is a record of the wisdom of His work. Man should know the entire disposition of God expressed in these three stages. All this of God's being is of the utmost importance to all mankind, and if people do not have this knowledge when they worship God, then they are no different from those who worship Buddha. God's work among man is not hidden from man, and should be known by all of those who worship God. Since God has carried out the three stages of the work of salvation among man, man should know the expression of what He has and is during these three stages of work. This is what must be done by man. What God hides from man is that which man is incapable of achieving, and that which man should not know, whereas that which God shows to man is that which man should know, and that which man should possess. Each of the three stages of work is carried out upon the foundation of the previous stage; it is not carried out independently, separate from the work of salvation. Though there are great differences in the age and type of work that is carried out, at its core is still the salvation of mankind, and each stage of the work of salvation is deeper than the last.

Excerpted from "Knowing the Three Stages of God's Work Is the Path to Knowing God" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

4. How God's three stages of work deepen by steps such that people may be saved and perfected

Relevant Words of God:

The entire management of God is divided into three stages, and in each stage, fitting requirements are made of man. Furthermore, as the ages pass and progress, God's

requirements of all mankind become ever higher. Thus, step-by-step, this work of God's management reaches its climax, until man beholds the fact of the "appearance of the Word in the flesh," and in this way the requirements of man become even higher, as do the requirements of man to bear testimony. The more man is capable of truly cooperating with God, the more he glorifies God. Man's cooperation is the testimony that he is required to bear, and the testimony that he bears is the practice of man. Therefore, whether or not God's work can have the due effect, and whether or not there can be true testimony, are inextricably linked to the cooperation and testimony of man. When the work is finished, which is to say, when all of God's management has reached its end, man will be required to bear higher testimony, and when the work of God reaches its end, the practice and entry of man will reach their zenith. In the past, man was required to comply with the law and the commandments, and he was required to be patient and humble. Today, man is required to obey all of God's arrangements and possess a supreme love of God, and he is ultimately required to still love God amid tribulation. These three stages are requirements that God makes of man, step-by-step, throughout His entire management. Each stage of God's work goes deeper than the last, and in each stage the requirements of man are more profound than the last, and in this way, God's entire management gradually takes shape. It is precisely because the requirements of man are ever higher that man's disposition comes ever closer to the standards required by God, and only then does the whole of mankind begin to gradually depart from the influence of Satan until, when God's work comes to a complete end, the whole of mankind will have been saved from the influence of Satan.

Excerpted from "God's Work and Man's Practice" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The work of God's management began at the creation of the world, and man is at the core of this work. God's creation of all things, it can be said, is for the sake of man. Because the work of His management spans thousands of years and is not done in the space of mere minutes or seconds, or in the blink of an eye, or one or two years, He had to create more things necessary for mankind's survival, such as the sun, the moon, all sorts of living creatures, food, and a hospitable environment. This was the start of God's management.

After that, God handed mankind over to Satan, and man lived under the domain of Satan, which gradually led to God's work of the first age: the story of the Age of Law.... Over several

thousand years during the Age of Law, mankind became accustomed to the guidance of the Age of Law and took it for granted. Gradually, man left the care of God. And so, while following the law, they also worshiped idols and performed evil deeds. They were without the protection of Jehovah, and merely lived their lives before the altar in the temple. In fact, the work of God had left them long ago, and even though the Israelites still stuck to the law, and spoke the name of Jehovah, and even proudly believed that only they were the people of Jehovah and were the chosen ones of Jehovah, the glory of God quietly abandoned them ...

.....

As has always been the case, after the work of Jehovah in the Age of Law, God began His new work of the second stage: assuming the flesh—being incarnated as man for ten, twenty years—and speaking and doing His work among believers. Yet without exception, no one knew it, and only a small number of people acknowledged that He was God become flesh after the Lord Jesus was nailed to the cross and resurrected. ... As soon as the second stage of God's work was completed—after the crucifixion—God's work of recovering man from sin (which is to say, recovering man from the hands of Satan) was accomplished. And so, from that moment onward, mankind had only to accept the Lord Jesus as the Savior, and his sins would be forgiven. Nominally speaking, the sins of man were no longer a barrier to his achieving salvation and coming before God, and were no longer the leverage by which Satan accused man. That is because God Himself had done real work, had become the likeness and foretaste of sinful flesh, and God Himself was the sin offering. In this way, man descended from the cross, and was redeemed and saved through the flesh of God—the likeness of this sinful flesh. And so, after having been taken captive by Satan, man came one step closer to accepting His salvation before God. Of course, this stage of work was deeper and more developed than God's management during the Age of Law.

Such is the management of God: to hand mankind over to Satan—a mankind that does not know what God is, what the Creator is, how to worship God, or why it is necessary to submit to God—and allow Satan to corrupt him. Step by step, God then recovers man from the hands of Satan, until man fully worships God and rejects Satan. This is God's management. This may sound like a mythical tale, and it may seem perplexing. People feel like this is a mythical story because they have no inkling of how much has happened to man over the past several thousand years, much less do they know how many stories have occurred in the cosmos and the

firmament. And furthermore, that is because they cannot appreciate the more astonishing, more fear-inducing world that exists beyond the material world, but which their mortal eyes prevent them from seeing. It feels incomprehensible to man because man has no understanding of the significance of God's salvation of mankind or the significance of the work of His management, and does not comprehend how God ultimately wishes mankind to be. Is it to be utterly uncorrupted by Satan, like Adam and Eve were? No! The purpose of God's management is to gain a group of people who worship God and submit to Him. Although these people have been corrupted by Satan, they no longer see Satan as their father; they recognize the repulsive face of Satan and reject it, and they come before God to accept God's judgment and chastisement. They come to know what is ugly and how it contrasts with that which is holy, and to recognize the greatness of God and the evil of Satan. A mankind such as this will no longer work for Satan, or worship Satan, or enshrine Satan. This is because they are a group of people who have truly been gained by God. This is the significance of God's work of managing mankind. During the work of God's management of this time, mankind is the object both of Satan's corruption and God's salvation, and man is the product that God and Satan are fighting over. As God performs His work, He is gradually recovering man from the hands of Satan, and so man comes ever closer to God ...

And then came the Age of Kingdom, which is a more practical stage of work, and yet which is also the hardest for man to accept. That is because the closer that man comes to God, the nearer God's rod approaches man, and the more clearly God's face is revealed to man. Following the redemption of mankind, man officially returns to the family of God. Man thought that now was the time for enjoyment, yet he is subjected to a full-frontal assault by God, the likes of which no one could have ever foreseen: As it turns out, this is a baptism that the people of God have to "enjoy." Under such treatment, people have no choice but to stop and think to themselves, "I am the lamb lost for many years that God spent so much to buy back, so why does God treat me like this? Is it God's way of laughing at me, and revealing me? ..." After years have passed, man has become weather-beaten, having experienced the hardship of refinement and chastisement. Although man has lost the "glory" and "romance" of times past, he has, without knowing it, come to understand the principles of human conduct, and has come to appreciate God's years of devotion to saving mankind. Man slowly begins to loathe his own barbarousness. He begins to hate how feral he is, all of his misunderstandings toward God, and the unreasonable demands

he has made of Him. The clock cannot be turned back. Past events become regretful memories of man, and the words and love of God become the driving force in man's new life. Man's wounds heal day by day, his strength returns, and he stands up and looks upon the face of the Almighty ... only to discover that He has always been at my side, and that His smile and His beautiful countenance are still so stirring. His heart still holds concern for the mankind He created, and His hands are still as warm and powerful as they were in the beginning. It is as if man returned to the Garden of Eden, yet this time man no longer listens to the enticements of the serpent and no longer turns away from the face of Jehovah. Man kneels before God, looks up at God's smiling face, and offers his most precious sacrifice—Oh! My Lord, my God!

Excerpted from "Man Can Only Be Saved Amidst God's Management" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Even though the path that man walks today is also the path of the cross and the path of suffering, what man practices, and what he eats, drinks and enjoys today are greatly different from that which fell to man under the law and in the Age of Grace. What is asked of man this day is unlike that in the past and even more unlike that asked of man in the Age of Law. Now, what was asked of man under the law when God was doing His work in Israel? It was no more than that man should keep the Sabbath and the laws of Jehovah. No one was to labor on the Sabbath or transgress the laws of Jehovah. But it is not so now. On the Sabbath, man works, gathers, and prays as usual, and no restrictions are imposed on him. Those in the Age of Grace had to be baptized, and they were further asked to fast, break bread, drink wine, cover their heads and wash the feet of others for them. Now, these rules have been abolished, but greater demands are made of man, for the work of God grows ever deeper and the entry of man reaches ever higher. In the past, Jesus laid His hands upon man and prayed, but now that everything has been said, what is the use of the laying on of hands? Words alone can achieve results. When He laid His hands upon man in the past, it was to bless man and also to heal him of his diseases. This was how the Holy Spirit worked at that time, but it is not so now. Now the Holy Spirit uses words in order to work and achieve results. His words have been made clear to you, and you should put them into practice just as you have been told. His words are His will; they are the work He wishes to do. Through His words, you will understand His will and that which He asks you to attain, and you may just put His words into practice directly without any need for the

laying on of hands. Some may say, “Lay Your hands upon me! Lay Your hands upon me that I may receive Your blessing and that I may partake of You.” All these are outdated practices from the past, now obsolete, for the age has changed. The Holy Spirit works in accordance with the age, neither at random nor in conformity to set rules. The age has changed, and a new age necessarily brings with it new work. This is true of every stage of work, and so His work is never repeated. In the Age of Grace, Jesus did a fair amount of that kind of work, such as healing sickness, casting out demons, laying His hands upon man to pray for him, and blessing man. However, to do so again would be meaningless in the present day. The Holy Spirit worked in that way at the time, for it was the Age of Grace, and there was sufficient grace for man to enjoy. No payment of any kind was asked of him, and so long as he had faith, he would receive grace. All were treated very graciously. Now the age has changed, and the work of God has progressed further; it is through chastisement and judgment that the rebelliousness of man and the unclean things within man will be purged away. That stage being the stage of redemption, it behooved God to work in that way, showing enough grace for man to enjoy, so that man might be redeemed from sin and, by means of grace, be forgiven his sins. This present stage is to expose the unrighteousness within man by means of chastisement, judgment, the smiting of words, as well as the discipline and revelation of words, so that humanity may afterward be saved. This is work more in-depth than redemption. The grace in the Age of Grace was sufficient for man’s enjoyment; now that man has already experienced this grace, he is no longer to enjoy it. This work is now past its time and is no longer to be done. Now man is to be saved through the judgment of the word. After man is judged, chastised, and refined, his disposition is thereby changed. Is this not all because of the words I have spoken? Each stage of work is done in line with the progress of the whole human race and with the age. The work is all significant, and it is all done for the sake of the final salvation, that mankind may have a good destination in the future, and that humanity may be classed according to kind in the end.

Excerpted from “The Mystery of the Incarnation (4)” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

In the work of the last days, the word is mightier than the manifestation of signs and wonders, and the authority of the word surpasses that of signs and wonders. The word exposes all the corrupt dispositions buried deep in the heart of man. You have no way of recognizing them on your own. When they are laid bare before you through the word, you will naturally

come to discover them; you will not be able to deny them, and you will be utterly convinced. Is this not the authority of the word? This is the result achieved by the work of the word today. Therefore, it is not through the healing of sickness and casting out of demons that man can be fully saved from his sins, nor can he be made fully complete by the manifestation of signs and wonders. The authority to heal sickness and cast out demons only gives man grace, but the flesh of man still belongs to Satan and the corrupt satanic disposition still remains within man. In other words, that which has not been made clean still pertains to sin and to filth. Only after he has been made clean through the agency of the word can man be gained by God and become sanctified. When the demons were cast out of man and he was redeemed, this meant only that he was wrested out of Satan's hands and returned to God. However, without being made clean or changed by God, he remains as corrupt man. Within man still exist filth, opposition, and rebelliousness; man has only returned to God through His redemption, but he has not the slightest knowledge of God and is still capable of resisting and betraying Him. Before man was redeemed, many of Satan's poisons had already been planted within him and, after thousands of years of being corrupted by Satan, he has within him an established nature that resists God. Therefore, when man has been redeemed, it is nothing more than a case of redemption in which man is bought at a high price, but the poisonous nature within him has not been eliminated. Man that is so defiled must undergo a change before becoming worthy to serve God. By means of this work of judgment and chastisement, man will fully come to know the filthy and corrupt essence within his own self, and he will be able to change completely and become clean. Only in this way can man become worthy to return before the throne of God. All the work done this day is so that man can be made clean and be changed; through judgment and chastisement by the word, as well as through refinement, man can purge away his corruption and be made pure. Rather than deeming this stage of work to be that of salvation, it would be more apt to say it is the work of purification. In truth, this stage is that of conquest as well as the second stage in the work of salvation. It is through judgment and chastisement by the word that man arrives at being gained by God, and it is through the use of the word to refine, judge, and disclose that all of the impurities, notions, motives, and individual aspirations within man's heart are completely revealed. For all that man may have been redeemed and forgiven of his sins, it can only be considered as God not remembering the transgressions of man and not treating man in accordance with his transgressions. However, when man, who lives in a body of flesh, has not

been set free from sin, he can only continue to sin, endlessly revealing his corrupt satanic disposition. This is the life that man leads, an endless cycle of sinning and being forgiven. The majority of mankind sin in the day only to confess in the evening. This way, even though the sin offering is forever effective for man, it will not be able to save man from sin. Only half the work of salvation has been completed, for man still has a corrupt disposition. ... It is not easy for man to become aware of his sins; he has no way of recognizing his own deeply rooted nature, and he must rely on judgment by the word in order to achieve this result. Only thus can man gradually be changed from this point onward.

Excerpted from “The Mystery of the Incarnation (4)” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The work done by God during this age is chiefly the provision of the words for the life of man; the exposure of man’s nature essence and corrupt disposition; and the elimination of religious notions, feudal thinking, outdated thinking, and the knowledge and culture of man. These things must all be cleansed through being exposed by God’s words. In the last days, God uses words, not signs and wonders, to make man perfect. He uses His words to expose man, to judge man, to chastise man, and to make man perfect, so that in the words of God, man comes to see the wisdom and loveliness of God, and comes to understand the disposition of God, and so that through the words of God, man beholds the deeds of God. During the Age of Law, Jehovah led Moses out of Egypt with His words, and spoke some words to the Israelites; at that time, part of the deeds of God were made plain, but because the caliber of man was limited and nothing could make his knowledge complete, God continued to speak and work. In the Age of Grace, man once more saw part of the deeds of God. Jesus was able to show signs and wonders, to heal the sick and cast out demons, and be crucified, three days after which He was resurrected and appeared in the flesh before man. Of God, man knew no more than this. Man knows as much as is shown to him by God, and if God were to show nothing more to man, then such would be the extent of man’s delimitation of God. Thus, God continues to work, so that man’s knowledge of Him may become deeper, and so that man may gradually come to know the essence of God. In the last days, God uses His words to make man perfect. Your corrupt disposition is disclosed by the words of God, and your religious notions are replaced by the reality of God. God incarnate of the last days has chiefly come to fulfill the words “the Word becomes flesh, the Word comes into the flesh, and the Word appears in the flesh,” and if you do

not have a thorough knowledge of this, then you will be unable to stand fast. During the last days, God primarily intends to accomplish a stage of work in which the Word appears in the flesh, and this is one part of God's management plan. Thus, your knowledge must be clear; regardless of how God works, God does not allow man to delimit Him. If God did not do this work during the last days, then man's knowledge of Him could go no further. You would only know that God can be crucified and can destroy Sodom, and that Jesus can be raised from the dead and appear to Peter.... But you would never say that God's words can accomplish all, and can conquer man. Only through experiencing God's words can you speak of such knowledge, and the more of God's work that you experience, the more thorough your knowledge of Him will become. Only then will you cease to delimit God within your own notions. Man comes to know God by experiencing His work; there is no other correct way to know God.

Excerpted from "Knowing God's Work Today" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

There are three stages to the work of man's salvation, which is to say that the battle with Satan has been split into three stages in order to defeat Satan once and for all. Yet the inner truth of the entire work of the battle with Satan is that its effects are achieved through several steps of work: bestowing grace upon man, becoming man's sin offering, forgiving the sins of man, conquering man, and making man perfect. As a matter of fact, the battle with Satan is not the taking up of arms against Satan, but the salvation of man, the working of the life of man, and the changing of man's disposition so that he may bear testimony to God. This is how Satan is defeated. Satan is defeated through changing the corrupt disposition of man. When Satan has been defeated, that is, when man has been completely saved, then the humiliated Satan will be completely bound, and in this way, man will have been completely saved. Thus, the essence of man's salvation is the war against Satan, and this war is primarily reflected in the salvation of man. The stage of the last days, in which man is to be conquered, is the last stage in the battle with Satan, and it is also the work of man's complete salvation from the domain of Satan. The inner meaning of man's conquest is the return of the embodiment of Satan—man who has been corrupted by Satan—to the Creator following his conquest, through which he will forsake Satan and completely return to God. In this way, man will have been completely saved. And so, the work of conquest is the last work in the battle against Satan and the final stage in God's management for the sake of Satan's defeat. Without this work, the full salvation of man would

ultimately be impossible, the utter defeat of Satan would also be impossible, and mankind would never be able to enter the wonderful destination, or get free from Satan's influence. Consequently, the work of salvation of man cannot be concluded before the battle with Satan is concluded, for the core of the work of God's management is for the sake of mankind's salvation. Earliest mankind was in the hands of God, but because of Satan's temptation and corruption, man was bound up by Satan and fell into the hands of the evil one. Thus, Satan became the object to be defeated in the work of God's management. Because Satan took possession of man, and because man is the capital which God uses to carry out all management, if man is to be saved, then he must be snatched back from the hands of Satan, which is to say that man must be taken back after having been held captive by Satan. Thus, Satan must be defeated through changes in man's old disposition, changes which restore man's original sense of reason. In this way, man, who has been taken captive, can be snatched back from the hands of Satan. If man is freed from the influence and bondage of Satan, then Satan will be shamed, man will ultimately be taken back, and Satan will be defeated. And because man has been freed from the dark influence of Satan, man will become the spoils of this entire battle, and Satan will become the object to be punished once the battle has finished, after which the entire work of mankind's salvation will have been completed.

Excerpted from "Restoring the Normal Life of Man and Taking Him to a Wonderful Destination" in
The Word Appears in the Flesh

IV. Words on the Relationship Between God's Three Stages of Work and His Names

1. Why God has different names in different ages and the significance of His names **Relevant Words of God:**

Could the name of Jesus—"God with us"—represent God's disposition in its entirety? Could it fully articulate God? If man says that God can only be called Jesus and may not have any other name because God cannot change His disposition, these words are blasphemy indeed! Do you believe that the name Jesus, God with us, alone can represent God in His entirety? God may be

called by many names, but among these many names, there is not one that is able to encapsulate all of God, not one that can fully represent God. And so, God has many names, but these many names cannot fully articulate God's disposition, for God's disposition is so rich that it simply exceeds man's capacity to know Him. There is no way for man, using the language of mankind, to encapsulate God fully. Mankind has but a limited vocabulary with which to encapsulate all that they know of God's disposition: great, honored, wondrous, unfathomable, supreme, holy, righteous, wise, and so on. So many words! This limited vocabulary is incapable of describing the little that man has witnessed of God's disposition. Over time, many others added words that they thought better able to describe the fervor in their hearts: God is so great! God is so holy! God is so lovely! Today, human sayings such as these have reached their peak, yet man is still incapable of clearly expressing himself. And so, for man, God has many names, yet He has no one name, and this is because God's being is so bountiful, and the language of man so impoverished. One particular word or name does not have the capacity to represent God in His entirety, so do you think His name can be fixed? God is so great and so holy, yet you will not permit Him to change His name in each new age? Therefore, in every age in which God personally does His own work, He uses a name that befits the age in order to encapsulate the work that He intends to do. He uses this particular name, one that possesses temporal significance, to represent His disposition in that age. This is God using the language of mankind to express His own disposition. Even so, many people who have had spiritual experiences and have personally seen God nevertheless feel that this one particular name is incapable of representing God in His entirety—alas, this cannot be helped—so man no longer addresses God by any name, but simply calls Him “God.” It is as though the heart of man is full of love and yet also beset with contradictions, for man does not know how to explain God. What God is is so bountiful that there is simply no way to describe it. There is no single name that can summarize God's disposition, and there is no single name that can describe all that God has and is. If someone asks Me, “Exactly what name do You use?” I will tell them, “God is God!” Is that not the best name for God? Is it not the best encapsulation of God's disposition? This being so, why do you spend so much effort seeking after the name of God? Why should you cudgel your brains, going without food and sleep, all for the sake of a name? The day will arrive when God is not called Jehovah, Jesus, or Messiah—He will simply be the Creator. At that time, all the names that He has taken on earth shall come to an end, for His work on earth will have come to an end,

after which His names shall be no more. When all things come under the dominion of the Creator, what need has He of a highly appropriate yet incomplete name? Are you still seeking after God's name now? Do you still dare to say that God is only called Jehovah? Do you still dare to say that God can only be called Jesus? Are you able to bear the sin of blasphemy against God? You should know that God originally had no name. He only took on one, or two, or many names because He had work to do and had to manage mankind. Whatever name He is called by—did He not freely choose it Himself? Would He need you—one of His creations—to decide it? The name by which God is called is a name that accords with what man is capable of apprehending, with the language of mankind, but this name is not something that man can encompass. You can only say that there is a God in heaven, that He is called God, that He is God Himself with great power, who is so wise, so exalted, so wondrous, so mysterious, and so almighty, and then you can say no more; this little bit is all you can know. This being so, can the mere name of Jesus represent God Himself? When the last days come, even though it is still God who does His work, His name has to change, for it is a different age.

Excerpted from “The Vision of God's Work (3)” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

“Jehovah” is the name that I took during My work in Israel, and it means the God of the Israelites (God's chosen people) who can take pity on man, curse man, and guide the life of man; the God who possesses great power and is full of wisdom. “Jesus” is Emmanuel, which means the sin offering that is full of love, full of compassion, and which redeems man. He did the work of the Age of Grace, and He represents the Age of Grace, and can only represent one part of the work of the management plan. That is to say, only Jehovah is the God of the chosen people of Israel, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob, the God of Moses, and the God of all the people of Israel. And so, in the current age, all the Israelites, apart from the Jewish people, worship Jehovah. They make sacrifices to Him on the altar and serve Him in the temple wearing priests' robes. What they hope for is the reappearance of Jehovah. Only Jesus is the Redeemer of mankind, and He is the sin offering that redeemed mankind from sin. Which is to say, the name of Jesus came from the Age of Grace and came into existence because of the work of redemption in the Age of Grace. The name of Jesus came into existence to allow the people of the Age of Grace to be reborn and saved, and is a particular name for the redemption of the whole of mankind. Thus, the name Jesus represents the work of redemption, and denotes the

Age of Grace. The name Jehovah is a particular name for the people of Israel who lived under the law. In each age and each stage of work, My name is not baseless, but holds representative significance: Each name represents one age. “Jehovah” represents the Age of Law, and is the honorific for the God worshiped by the people of Israel. “Jesus” represents the Age of Grace, and is the name of the God of all those who were redeemed during the Age of Grace.

Excerpted from “The Savior Has Already Returned Upon a ‘White Cloud’” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

In each age, God does new work and is called by a new name; how could He do the same work in different ages? How could He cling to the old? The name of Jesus was taken for the sake of the work of redemption, so would He still be called by the same name when He returns in the last days? Would He still be doing the work of redemption? Why is it that Jehovah and Jesus are one, yet They are called by different names in different ages? Is it not because the ages of Their work are different? Could a single name represent God in His entirety? This being so, God must be called by a different name in a different age, and He must use the name to change the age and to represent the age. For no one name can fully represent God Himself, and each name is able only to represent the temporal aspect of God’s disposition in a given age; all it needs to do is to represent His work. Therefore, God can choose whatever name befits His disposition to represent the entire age. Regardless of whether it is the age of Jehovah, or the age of Jesus, each age is represented by a name.

Excerpted from “The Vision of God’s Work (3)” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Supposing that the work of God in every age is always the same, and He is always called by the same name, how would man know Him? God must be called Jehovah, and apart from a God called Jehovah, anyone called by any other name is not God. Or else God can only be Jesus, and apart from the name of Jesus He may not be called by any other name; apart from Jesus, Jehovah is not God, and Almighty God is not God either. Man believes it is true that God is almighty, but God is a God who is with man, and He must be called Jesus, for God is with man. To do this is to conform to doctrine, and to confine God to a certain scope. So, in every age, the work that God does, the name by which He is called, and the image that He assumes—the work He does in every stage all the way down to today—these do not follow a single regulation, and

are not subject to any limitations whatsoever. He is Jehovah, but He is also Jesus, as well as Messiah, and Almighty God. His work can undergo gradual transformation, with corresponding changes in His name. No single name can fully represent Him, but all the names by which He is called are able to represent Him, and the work that He does in every age represents His disposition.

Excerpted from “The Vision of God’s Work (3)” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

The work that Jesus did represented the name of Jesus, and it represented the Age of Grace; as for the work done by Jehovah, it represented Jehovah, and it represented the Age of Law. Their work was the work of one Spirit in two different ages. The work that Jesus did could only represent the Age of Grace, and the work that Jehovah did could only represent the Old Testament Age of Law. Jehovah only guided the people of Israel and of Egypt, and of all the nations beyond Israel. The work of Jesus in the New Testament Age of Grace was the work of God under the name of Jesus as He guided the age. ... Although They were called by two different names, it was the same Spirit that accomplished both stages of work, and the work that was done was continuous. As the name was different, and the content of the work was different, the age was different. When Jehovah came, that was the age of Jehovah, and when Jesus came, that was the age of Jesus. And so, with each coming, God is called by one name, He represents one age, and He launches a new path; and on each new path, He assumes a new name, which shows that God is always new and never old, and that His work never ceases to progress in a forward direction. History is always moving forward, and the work of God is always moving forward. For His six-thousand-year management plan to reach its end, it must keep progressing in a forward direction. Each day He must do new work, each year He must do new work; He must launch new paths, launch new eras, begin new and greater work, and along with these, bring new names and new work.

Excerpted from “The Vision of God’s Work (3)” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

If man still longs for the arrival of Jesus the Savior during the last days, and still expects Him to arrive in the image He bore in Judea, then the entire six-thousand-year management plan would have stopped in the Age of Redemption, and could not have progressed any further. The last days, furthermore, would never arrive, and the age would never be brought to an end.

This is because Jesus the Savior is only for the redemption and salvation of mankind. I took the name of Jesus only for the sake of all the sinners in the Age of Grace, but it is not the name by which I shall bring the whole of mankind to an end. Although Jehovah, Jesus, and the Messiah all represent My Spirit, these names only denote the different ages of My management plan, and do not represent Me in My entirety. The names by which people on earth call Me cannot articulate My entire disposition and all that I am. They are merely different names by which I am called during different ages. And so, when the final age—the age of the last days—arrives, My name shall change again. I shall not be called Jehovah, or Jesus, much less the Messiah—I shall be called the powerful Almighty God Himself, and under this name I shall bring the entire age to an end. I was once known as Jehovah. I was also called the Messiah, and people once called Me Jesus the Savior with love and esteem. Today, however, I am no longer the Jehovah or Jesus that people knew in times past; I am the God who has returned in the last days, the God who shall bring the age to an end. I am the God Himself that rises up from the end of the earth, replete with My entire disposition, and full of authority, honor, and glory. People have never engaged with Me, never known Me, and have always been ignorant of My disposition. From the creation of the world until today, not one person has seen Me. This is the God who appears to man in the last days but is hidden among man. He resides among man, true and real, like the burning sun and the blazing flame, filled with power and brimming with authority. There is not a single person or thing that shall not be judged by My words, and not a single person or thing that shall not be purified through the burning of fire. Eventually, all nations shall be blessed because of My words, and also smashed to pieces because of My words. In this way, all people during the last days shall see that I am the Savior returned, and that I am the Almighty God that conquers all of mankind. And all shall see that I was once the sin offering for man, but that in the last days I also become the flames of the sun that incinerate all things, as well as the Sun of righteousness that reveals all things. This is My work in the last days. I took this name and am possessed of this disposition so that all people may see that I am a righteous God, the burning sun, the blazing flame, and so that all may worship Me, the one true God, and so that they may see My true face: I am not only the God of the Israelites, and I am not just the Redeemer; I am the God of all creatures throughout the heavens and the earth and the seas.

Excerpted from “The Savior Has Already Returned Upon a ‘White Cloud’” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

2. The relationship between each stage of God's work and His name

Bible Verses for Reference:

“And God said moreover to Moses, Thus shall you say to the children of Israel, Jehovah, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you: this is My name for ever, and this is My memorial to all generations” (Exo 3:15).

“The angel of the LORD appeared to him in a dream, saying, Joseph, you son of David, fear not to take to you Mary your wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she shall bring forth a son, and you shall call His name JESUS: for He shall save His people from their sins” (Mat 1:20–21).

“And the angel said to her, Fear not, Mary: for you have found favor with God. And, behold, you shall conceive in your womb, and bring forth a son, and shall call His name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give to Him the throne of His father David: And He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end” (Luk 1:30–33).

“I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the Ending, said the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty” (Rev 1:8).

“We give You thanks, O LORD God Almighty, which are, and were, and are to come; because You have taken to You Your great power, and have reigned” (Rev 11:17).

“And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvelous are Your works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are Your ways, You King of saints. Who shall not fear You, O Lord, and glorify Your name?” (Rev 15:3–4).

Relevant Words of God:

The work done by God Himself in each age contains the expression of His true disposition, and both His name and the work that He does change along with the age—they are all new. During the Age of Law, the work of guiding mankind was done under the name of Jehovah, and the first stage of work was initiated on earth. At this stage, the work consisted of building the temple and the altar, and using the law to guide the people of Israel and to work in their midst.

By guiding the people of Israel, He launched a base for His work on earth. From this base, He expanded His work beyond Israel, which is to say that, starting from Israel, He extended His work outward, so that later generations gradually came to know that Jehovah was God, and that it was Jehovah who created the heavens and earth and all things, and that it was Jehovah who made all creatures. He spread His work through the people of Israel outward beyond them. The land of Israel was the first holy place of Jehovah's work on earth, and it was in the land of Israel that God first went to work on earth. That was the work of the Age of Law. During the Age of Grace, Jesus was the God who saved man. What He had and was was grace, love, compassion, forbearance, patience, humility, care, and tolerance, and so much of the work that He did was for the sake of the redemption of man. His disposition was one of compassion and love, and because He was compassionate and loving, He had to be nailed to the cross for man, in order to show that God loved man as Himself, so much so that He offered up Himself in His entirety. During the Age of Grace, the name of God was Jesus, that is to say, God was a God who saved man, and He was a compassionate and loving God. God was with man. His love, His compassion, and His salvation accompanied each and every person. Only by accepting the name of Jesus and His presence was man able to gain peace and joy, to receive His blessing, His vast and numerous graces, and His salvation. Through the crucifixion of Jesus, all those who followed Him received salvation and were forgiven their sins. During the Age of Grace, Jesus was the name of God. In other words, the work of the Age of Grace was done principally under the name of Jesus. During the Age of Grace, God was called Jesus. He undertook a stage of new work beyond the Old Testament, and His work ended with the crucifixion. This was the entirety of His work. Therefore, during the Age of Law Jehovah was the name of God, and in the Age of Grace the name of Jesus represented God. During the last days, His name is Almighty God—the Almighty, who uses His power to guide man, conquer man, and gain man, and in the end, bring the age to its close. In every age, at every stage of His work, God's disposition is evident.

Excerpted from "The Vision of God's Work (3)" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

"Jehovah" is the name that I took during My work in Israel, and it means the God of the Israelites (God's chosen people) who can take pity on man, curse man, and guide the life of man; the God who possesses great power and is full of wisdom. "Jesus" is Emmanuel, which means the sin offering that is full of love, full of compassion, and which redeems man. He did the work

of the Age of Grace, and He represents the Age of Grace, and can only represent one part of the work of the management plan. That is to say, only Jehovah is the God of the chosen people of Israel, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob, the God of Moses, and the God of all the people of Israel. And so, in the current age, all the Israelites, apart from the Jewish people, worship Jehovah. They make sacrifices to Him on the altar and serve Him in the temple wearing priests' robes. What they hope for is the reappearance of Jehovah. Only Jesus is the Redeemer of mankind, and He is the sin offering that redeemed mankind from sin. Which is to say, the name of Jesus came from the Age of Grace and came into existence because of the work of redemption in the Age of Grace. The name of Jesus came into existence to allow the people of the Age of Grace to be reborn and saved, and is a particular name for the redemption of the whole of mankind. Thus, the name Jesus represents the work of redemption, and denotes the Age of Grace. The name Jehovah is a particular name for the people of Israel who lived under the law. In each age and each stage of work, My name is not baseless, but holds representative significance: Each name represents one age. "Jehovah" represents the Age of Law, and is the honorific for the God worshiped by the people of Israel. "Jesus" represents the Age of Grace, and is the name of the God of all those who were redeemed during the Age of Grace.

Excerpted from "The Savior Has Already Returned Upon a 'White Cloud'" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The Age of Grace began with Jesus' name. When Jesus began to perform His ministry, the Holy Spirit began to testify to the name of Jesus, and the name of Jehovah was no longer spoken of; instead, the Holy Spirit undertook the new work principally under the name of Jesus. The testimony of those who believed in Him was borne for Jesus Christ, and the work they did was also for Jesus Christ. The conclusion of the Old Testament Age of Law meant that the work principally conducted under the name of Jehovah had come to an end. Henceforth, the name of God was no longer Jehovah; instead He was called Jesus, and from here on the Holy Spirit began the work principally under the name of Jesus.

Excerpted from "The Vision of God's Work (3)" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Although Jehovah, Jesus, and the Messiah all represent My Spirit, these names only denote the different ages of My management plan, and do not represent Me in My entirety. The names by which people on earth call Me cannot articulate My entire disposition and all that I am. They

are merely different names by which I am called during different ages. And so, when the final age—the age of the last days—arrives, My name shall change again. I shall not be called Jehovah, or Jesus, much less the Messiah—I shall be called the powerful Almighty God Himself, and under this name I shall bring the entire age to an end. I was once known as Jehovah. I was also called the Messiah, and people once called Me Jesus the Savior with love and esteem. Today, however, I am no longer the Jehovah or Jesus that people knew in times past; I am the God who has returned in the last days, the God who shall bring the age to an end. I am the God Himself that rises up from the end of the earth, replete with My entire disposition, and full of authority, honor, and glory. People have never engaged with Me, never known Me, and have always been ignorant of My disposition. From the creation of the world until today, not one person has seen Me. This is the God who appears to man in the last days but is hidden among man. He resides among man, true and real, like the burning sun and the blazing flame, filled with power and brimming with authority. There is not a single person or thing that shall not be judged by My words, and not a single person or thing that shall not be purified through the burning of fire. Eventually, all nations shall be blessed because of My words, and also smashed to pieces because of My words. In this way, all people during the last days shall see that I am the Savior returned, and that I am the Almighty God that conquers all of mankind. And all shall see that I was once the sin offering for man, but that in the last days I also become the flames of the sun that incinerate all things, as well as the Sun of righteousness that reveals all things. This is My work in the last days. I took this name and am possessed of this disposition so that all people may see that I am a righteous God, the burning sun, the blazing flame, and so that all may worship Me, the one true God, and so that they may see My true face: I am not only the God of the Israelites, and I am not just the Redeemer; I am the God of all creatures throughout the heavens and the earth and the seas.

Excerpted from “The Savior Has Already Returned Upon a ‘White Cloud’” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

3. God’s name may change, but His essence never changes

Relevant Words of God:

Each time God comes to earth, He changes His name, His gender, His image, and His work; He does not repeat His work. He is a God who is always new and never old. When He came before, He was called Jesus; can He still be called Jesus this time when He comes again? When He came before, He was male; can He be male again this time? His work when He came during the Age of Grace was to be nailed to the cross; when He comes again, can He still redeem mankind from sin? Can He be nailed to the cross again? Would that not be to repeat His work? Did you not know that God is always new and never old? There are those who say that God is immutable. That is correct, but it refers to the immutability of God's disposition and His essence. Changes in His name and work do not prove that His essence has altered; in other words, God will always be God, and this will never change. If you say that the work of God is unchanging, then would He be able to finish His six-thousand-year management plan? You only know that God is forever unchanging, but do you know that God is always new and never old? If the work of God is unchanging, then could He have led mankind all the way to the present day? If God is immutable, then why is it that He has already done the work of two ages? His work never ceases to move forward, which is to say that His disposition is gradually revealed to man, and what is revealed is His inherent disposition. In the beginning, God's disposition was hidden from man, He never openly revealed His disposition to man, and man simply had no knowledge of Him. Because of this, He uses His work to gradually reveal His disposition to man, but working in this way does not mean that God's disposition changes in every age. It is not the case that God's disposition is constantly changing because His will is always changing. Rather, it is that, because the ages of His work are different, God takes His inherent disposition in its entirety and, step by step, reveals it to man, so that man may be able to know Him. But this is by no means proof that God originally has no particular disposition or that His disposition has gradually changed with the passing of the ages—such an understanding would be erroneous. God reveals to man His inherent and particular disposition—what He is—according to the passing of the ages; the work of a single age cannot express the entire disposition of God. And so, the words “God is always new and never old” refer to His work, and the words “God is immutable” refer to what God inherently has and is. Regardless, you cannot make the work of six thousand years hinge upon a single point, or circumscribe it with dead words. Such is the stupidity of man. God is not as simple as man imagines, and His work cannot linger in any one age. Jehovah, for example, cannot always stand for the name of God; God can also do His work

under the name of Jesus. This is a sign that God's work is always progressing in a forward direction.

Excerpted from "The Vision of God's Work (3)" in The Word Appears in the Flesh

Some say that the name of God does not change. Why, then, did the name of Jehovah become Jesus? It was prophesied that the Messiah would come, so why then did a man by the name of Jesus come? Why did the name of God change? Was such work not carried out long ago? Is God unable to do newer work today? The work of yesterday can be altered, and the work of Jesus can follow on from that of Jehovah. Cannot, then, the work of Jesus be succeeded by other work? If the name of Jehovah can be changed to Jesus, then cannot the name of Jesus also be changed? None of this is odd; it is just that people are too simple-minded. God will always be God. No matter how His work changes, and regardless of how His name might change, His disposition and wisdom will never change. If you believe that God can only be called by the name of Jesus, then your knowledge is far too limited. Do you dare assert that Jesus will forever be the name of God, that God will forever and always go by the name of Jesus, and that this will never change? Dare you assert with certainty that it is the name of Jesus that concluded the Age of Law and will also conclude the final age? Who can say that the grace of Jesus can bring the age to an end?

Excerpted from "How Can Man Who Has Delimited God in His Notions Receive the Revelations of God?" in
The Word Appears in the Flesh

God is always God, and He will never become Satan; Satan is always Satan, and it will never become God. God's wisdom, God's wondrousness, God's righteousness, and God's majesty shall never change. His essence and what He has and is shall never change. As for His work, however, it is always progressing in a forward direction, always going deeper, for He is always new and never old. In every age God assumes a new name, in every age He does new work, and in every age He allows His creations to see His new will and new disposition. If, in a new age, people fail to see the expression of God's new disposition, would they not nail Him to the cross forever? And by doing so, would they not define God?

Excerpted from "The Vision of God's Work (3)" in The Word Appears in the Flesh

4. The nature of the problem of not accepting God's new name

Relevant Words of God:

Since man believes in God, he must closely follow the footsteps of God, step-by-step; he should "follow the Lamb wherever He goes." Only these are the people who seek the true way, only they are the ones who know the work of the Holy Spirit. People who slavishly follow letters and doctrines are those who have been eliminated by the work of the Holy Spirit. In each period of time, God will begin new work, and in each period, there will be a new beginning among man. If man only abides by the truths that "Jehovah is God" and "Jesus is Christ," which are truths that only apply to their respective ages, then man will never keep up with the work of the Holy Spirit, and will forever be incapable of gaining the work of the Holy Spirit. Regardless of how God works, man follows without the slightest doubt, and he follows closely. In this way, how could man be eliminated by the Holy Spirit? Regardless of what God does, as long as man is certain that it is the work of the Holy Spirit, and cooperates in the work of the Holy Spirit without any misgivings, and tries to meet the requirements of God, then how could he be punished? The work of God has never ceased, His footsteps have never halted, and prior to the completion of His management work, He has always been busy, and never stops. But man is different: Having gained but a modicum of the Holy Spirit's work, he treats it as if it will never change; having gained a little knowledge, he does not go forth to follow the footsteps of God's newer work; having seen but a little of God's work, he immediately prescribes God as a particular wooden figure, and believes that God will always remain in this form that he sees before him, that it was like this in the past and will always be thus in the future; having gained but a superficial knowledge, man is so proud that he forgets himself and begins to wantonly proclaim a disposition and a being of God that simply do not exist; and having become certain about one stage of the Holy Spirit's work, no matter what kind of person it is that proclaims the new work of God, man does not accept it. These are people who cannot accept the new work of the Holy Spirit; they are too conservative, and incapable of accepting new things. Such people are those who believe in God but also reject God. Man believes that the Israelites were wrong to "only believe in Jehovah and not believe in Jesus," yet the majority of people act out a role in which they "only believe in Jehovah and reject Jesus" and "long for the return of the Messiah,

but oppose the Messiah who is called Jesus.” No wonder, then, that people still live under the domain of Satan after accepting one stage of the work of the Holy Spirit, and still do not receive God’s blessings. Is this not the result of man’s rebelliousness? ... Only those who follow the footsteps of the Lamb to the very end can gain the final blessing, whereas those “clever people,” who are unable to follow to the very end yet believe they have gained all, are incapable of witnessing the appearance of God. They each believe they are the smartest person on earth, and they cut short the continued development of God’s work for no reason at all, and seem to believe with absolute certainty that God will take them up to heaven, they who “have the utmost loyalty to God, follow God, and abide by the words of God.” Even though they have the “utmost loyalty” toward the words spoken by God, their words and actions are still so disgusting because they oppose the work of the Holy Spirit, and commit deceit and evil. Those who do not follow to the very end, who do not keep up with the work of the Holy Spirit, and who only cleave to the old work have not only failed to achieve loyalty to God, but on the contrary, have become those who oppose God, have become those who are rejected by the new age, and who will be punished. Are there any more pitiable than them?

Excerpted from “God’s Work and Man’s Practice” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

If man always calls Me Jesus Christ, but does not know that I have begun a new age during the last days and have embarked upon new work, and if man continues to obsessively await the arrival of Jesus the Savior, then I shall call people like this the ones who do not believe in Me; they are people who do not know Me, and their belief in Me is false. Could such people witness the arrival of Jesus the Savior from heaven? What they await is not My arrival, but the arrival of the King of the Jews. They do not yearn for Me to annihilate this impure old world, but instead long for the second coming of Jesus, whereupon they will be redeemed. They look forward to Jesus once more redeeming all of mankind from this defiled and unrighteous land. How can such people become ones who complete My work in the last days? The desires of man are incapable of fulfilling My wishes or accomplishing My work, for man merely admires or cherishes the work that I have done before, and has no idea that I am the God Himself who is always new and never old. Man only knows that I am Jehovah, and Jesus, and has no inkling that I am the last One who shall bring mankind to an end. All that man yearns for and knows

comes from their own notions, and is merely that which they can see with their own eyes. It is not in line with the work I do, but in disharmony with it.

Excerpted from “The Savior Has Already Returned Upon a ‘White Cloud’” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

If you use your own notions to measure and delimit God, as if God were an unchanging statue of clay, and if you completely delimit God within the parameters of the Bible and contain Him within a limited scope of work, then this proves that you have condemned God. Because the Jews in the age of the Old Testament took God to be an idol of fixed form that they held in their hearts, as if God could only be called the Messiah, and only He who was called the Messiah could be God, and because humanity served and worshiped God as if He were a (lifeless) clay statue, they nailed the Jesus of that time to the cross, sentencing Him to death—the guiltless Jesus was thus condemned to death. God was innocent of any offense, yet man refused to spare Him, and insisted on sentencing Him to death, and so Jesus was crucified. Man always believes that God is unchanging, and defines Him on the basis of one single book, the Bible, as though man has a perfect understanding of God’s management, as though man holds all that God does in the palm of his hand. People are absurd in the extreme, arrogant in the extreme, and they all have a flair for hyperbole. No matter how great your knowledge of God, I still say that you do not know God, that you are someone who opposes God the most, and that you have condemned God, because you are utterly incapable of obeying the work of God and walking the path of being made perfect by God. Why is God never satisfied with the actions of man? Because man does not know God, because he has too many notions, and because his knowledge of God in no way agrees with reality, but instead monotonously repeats the same theme without variation and uses the same approach for every situation. And so, having come to earth today, God is once more nailed to the cross by man.

Excerpted from “The Wicked Will Surely Be Punished” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

Do you wish to know the root of why the Pharisees opposed Jesus? Do you wish to know the essence of the Pharisees? They were full of fantasies about the Messiah. What is more, they believed only that the Messiah would come, yet did not seek the life truth. And so, even today they still await the Messiah, for they have no knowledge of the way of life, and do not know what the way of truth is. How, say you, could such foolish, stubborn and ignorant people gain God’s

blessing? How could they behold the Messiah? They opposed Jesus because they did not know the direction of the Holy Spirit's work, because they did not know the way of truth spoken by Jesus, and, furthermore, because they did not understand the Messiah. And since they had never seen the Messiah and had never been in the company of the Messiah, they made the mistake of clinging in vain to the name of the Messiah while opposing the essence of the Messiah by any means possible. These Pharisees in essence were stubborn, arrogant, and did not obey the truth. The principle of their belief in God was: No matter how profound Your preaching, no matter how high Your authority, You are not Christ unless You are called the Messiah. Are these views not preposterous and ridiculous? I will ask you further: Is it not extremely easy for you to commit the mistakes of the earliest Pharisees, given that you have not the slightest understanding of Jesus? Are you able to discern the way of truth? Can you truly guarantee that you will not oppose Christ? Are you able to follow the work of the Holy Spirit? If you do not know whether you will oppose Christ, then I say that you are already living on the brink of death. Those who did not know the Messiah were all capable of opposing Jesus, of rejecting Jesus, of slandering Him. People who do not understand Jesus are all capable of rejecting Him and reviling Him. Moreover, they are capable of seeing the return of Jesus as the deceit of Satan, and more people shall condemn Jesus returned to flesh. Does not all of this make you afraid? What you face shall be blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, the ruination of the words of the Holy Spirit to the churches, and the spurning of all that is expressed by Jesus. What can you gain from Jesus if you are so befuddled? How can you understand the work of Jesus when He returns to flesh on a white cloud, if you obstinately refuse to realize your errors? I tell you this: People who do not receive the truth, yet blindly await the arrival of Jesus upon white clouds, will surely blaspheme against the Holy Spirit, and they are the category that shall be destroyed. You merely wish for the grace of Jesus, and merely want to enjoy the blissful realm of heaven, yet you have never obeyed the words spoken by Jesus, and have never received the truth expressed by Jesus when He returns to flesh. What will you hold up in exchange for the fact of Jesus' return upon a white cloud? Is it the sincerity in which you repeatedly commit sins, and then speak your confession, over and over? What will you offer in sacrifice to Jesus who returns upon a white cloud? Is it the years of work with which you exalt yourselves? What will you hold up to make the returned Jesus trust you? Is it that arrogant nature of yours, which does not obey any truth?

Excerpted from “By the Time You Behold the Spiritual Body of Jesus, God Will Have Made Heaven and Earth Anew” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

V. Differences Between God’s Work of Judgment in the Last Days and His Work of Redemption in the Age of Grace

1. The differences between the work of redemption of the Lord Jesus and the work of judgment of Almighty God in the last days

Relevant Words of God:

Though Jesus did much work among man, He only completed the redemption of all mankind and became man’s sin offering; He did not rid man of all his corrupt disposition. Fully saving man from the influence of Satan not only required Jesus to become the sin offering and bear the sins of man, but it also required God to do even greater work to rid man completely of his satanically corrupted disposition. And so, now that man has been forgiven of his sins, God has returned to the flesh to lead man into the new age, and begun the work of chastisement and judgment. This work has brought man into a higher realm. All those who submit under His dominion shall enjoy higher truth and receive greater blessings. They shall truly live in the light, and they shall gain the truth, the way, and the life.

Excerpted from Preface to The Word Appears in the Flesh

The first incarnation was to redeem man from sin, to redeem him by means of the fleshly body of Jesus, that is, He saved man from the cross, but the corrupt satanic disposition still remained within man. The second incarnation is no longer to serve as a sin offering but rather to save fully those who were redeemed from sin. This is done so that those who have been forgiven may be delivered from their sins and made fully clean, and by attaining a changed disposition, break free of Satan’s influence of darkness and return before the throne of God. Only in this way can man be fully sanctified. After the Age of Law had come to an end, and beginning with the Age of Grace, God began the work of salvation, which continues until the last days when, in judging and chastising the human race for their rebelliousness, He will

completely purify mankind. Only then will God conclude His work of salvation and enter into rest.

Excerpted from “The Mystery of the Incarnation (4)” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

In the Age of Grace, Jesus did a fair amount of that kind of work, such as healing sickness, casting out demons, laying His hands upon man to pray for him, and blessing man. However, to do so again would be meaningless in the present day. The Holy Spirit worked in that way at the time, for it was the Age of Grace, and there was sufficient grace for man to enjoy. No payment of any kind was asked of him, and so long as he had faith, he would receive grace. All were treated very graciously. Now the age has changed, and the work of God has progressed further; it is through chastisement and judgment that the rebelliousness of man and the unclean things within man will be purged away. That stage being the stage of redemption, it behooved God to work in that way, showing enough grace for man to enjoy, so that man might be redeemed from sin and, by means of grace, be forgiven his sins. This present stage is to expose the unrighteousness within man by means of chastisement, judgment, the smiting of words, as well as the discipline and revelation of words, so that humanity may afterward be saved. This is work more in-depth than redemption. The grace in the Age of Grace was sufficient for man’s enjoyment; now that man has already experienced this grace, he is no longer to enjoy it. This work is now past its time and is no longer to be done. Now man is to be saved through the judgment of the word. After man is judged, chastised, and refined, his disposition is thereby changed. Is this not all because of the words I have spoken?

Excerpted from “The Mystery of the Incarnation (4)” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

Before man was redeemed, many of Satan’s poisons had already been planted within him and, after thousands of years of being corrupted by Satan, he has within him an established nature that resists God. Therefore, when man has been redeemed, it is nothing more than a case of redemption in which man is bought at a high price, but the poisonous nature within him has not been eliminated. Man that is so defiled must undergo a change before becoming worthy to serve God. By means of this work of judgment and chastisement, man will fully come to know the filthy and corrupt essence within his own self, and he will be able to change completely and become clean. Only in this way can man become worthy to return before the throne of God. All

the work done this day is so that man can be made clean and be changed; through judgment and chastisement by the word, as well as through refinement, man can purge away his corruption and be made pure. Rather than deeming this stage of work to be that of salvation, it would be more apt to say it is the work of purification. In truth, this stage is that of conquest as well as the second stage in the work of salvation. It is through judgment and chastisement by the word that man arrives at being gained by God, and it is through the use of the word to refine, judge, and disclose that all of the impurities, notions, motives, and individual aspirations within man's heart are completely revealed. For all that man may have been redeemed and forgiven of his sins, it can only be considered as God not remembering the transgressions of man and not treating man in accordance with his transgressions. However, when man, who lives in a body of flesh, has not been set free from sin, he can only continue to sin, endlessly revealing his corrupt satanic disposition. This is the life that man leads, an endless cycle of sinning and being forgiven. The majority of mankind sin in the day only to confess in the evening. This way, even though the sin offering is forever effective for man, it will not be able to save man from sin. Only half the work of salvation has been completed, for man still has a corrupt disposition. ... It is not easy for man to become aware of his sins; he has no way of recognizing his own deeply rooted nature, and he must rely on judgment by the word in order to achieve this result. Only thus can man gradually be changed from this point onward.

Excerpted from "The Mystery of the Incarnation (4)" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The work of the last days is to speak words. Great changes can be effected in man by means of words. The changes now effected in these people upon their accepting these words are much greater than those effected in people upon their accepting the signs and wonders of the Age of Grace. For, in the Age of Grace, the demons were cast out from man with the laying on of hands and prayer, but the corrupt dispositions within man still remained. Man was healed of his sickness and forgiven his sins, but as for just how man was to be purged of the corrupt satanic dispositions within him, this work had yet to be done. Man was only saved and forgiven his sins for his faith, but the sinful nature of man was not extirpated and still remained within him. The sins of man were forgiven through the agency of the incarnate God, but this did not mean that man no longer had sin within him. The sins of man could be forgiven through the sin offering, but as for just how man can be made to sin no more, and how his sinful nature may be extirpated

completely and transformed, he has no way of solving this problem. The sins of man were forgiven, and this is because of the work of God's crucifixion, but man continued to live within his corrupt satanic disposition of old. This being so, man must be completely saved from his corrupt satanic disposition, so that his sinful nature may be completely extirpated, never to develop again, thus enabling the disposition of man to be transformed. This would require man to grasp the path of growth in life, to grasp the way of life, and to grasp the way to change his disposition. Furthermore, it would require man to act in accordance with this path, so that his disposition may gradually be changed and he may live under the shining of the light, so that all that he does may be in accord with the will of God, so that he may cast away his corrupt satanic disposition, and so that he may break free from Satan's influence of darkness, thereby emerging fully from sin. Only then will man receive complete salvation. At the time that Jesus was doing His work, man's knowledge of Him was still vague and unclear. Man always believed Him to be the son of David, and proclaimed Him to be a great prophet, the benevolent Lord who redeemed man's sins. Some, on the strength of their faith, were healed just from touching the edge of His garment; the blind could see and even the dead could be restored to life. However, man was unable to discover the corrupt satanic disposition deeply rooted within himself, neither did he know how to cast it away. Man received much grace, such as the peace and happiness of the flesh, the faith of one member bringing blessing on an entire family, the healing of sickness, and so on. The rest were the good deeds of man and his godly appearance; if someone could live on the basis of these, they were considered an acceptable believer. Only believers of this kind could enter heaven after death, which meant that they were saved. But, in their lifetime, these people did not understand at all the way of life. All they did was to commit sins and then confess their sins in a constant cycle without any path to change their disposition: Such was the condition of man in the Age of Grace. Has man received complete salvation? No! Therefore, after that stage of work was finished, there still remained the work of judgment and chastisement. This stage is to make man pure by means of the word, and thereby give him a path to follow. This stage would not be fruitful or meaningful if it continued with the casting out of demons, for it would fail to extirpate man's sinful nature, and man would come to a standstill at the forgiveness of his sins. Through the sin offering, man has been forgiven his sins, for the work of the crucifixion has already come to an end and God has prevailed over Satan. But the corrupt disposition of man still remaining within him, man can still sin and resist God, and God has not gained mankind.

That is why in this stage of work God uses the word to expose the corrupt disposition of man, causing him to practice in accordance with the right path. This stage is more meaningful than the previous one, as well as more fruitful, for now it is the word that directly supplies man's life and enables the disposition of man to be completely renewed; it is a much more thorough stage of work. Therefore, the incarnation in the last days has completed the significance of God's incarnation and completely finished God's management plan for man's salvation.

Excerpted from "The Mystery of the Incarnation (4)" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

2. The differences between the truth expressed by the Lord Jesus and by Almighty God

Bible Verses for Reference:

"Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Mat 4:17).

"I have yet many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. However, when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will show you things to come" (Jhn 16:12–13).

"And if any man hear My words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He that rejects Me, and receives not My words, has one that judges him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day" (Jhn 12:47–48).

Relevant Words of God:

The work of Jesus was only for the sake of man's redemption and for the crucifixion, and so there was no need for Him to say more words in order to conquer any man. Much of what He taught man was drawn from the words of the Scriptures, and even if His work did not exceed the Scriptures, still He was able to accomplish the work of the crucifixion. His was not the work of the word, nor work done for the sake of conquering mankind, but work done in order to redeem mankind. He only acted as the sin offering for mankind, and did not act as the source of the word for mankind. He did not do the work of the Gentiles, which was the work of

conquering man, but the work of the crucifixion, work that was done among those who believed there was a God. Even though His work was carried out upon the foundation of the Scriptures, and even though He used that which had been foretold by the old prophets to condemn the Pharisees, this was sufficient to complete the work of the crucifixion. If the work of today were still carried out upon the foundation of the predictions of the old prophets in the Scriptures, then it would be impossible to conquer you, for the Old Testament contains no record of the disobedience and sins of you Chinese people, and there is no history of your sins. So, if this work still lingered in the Bible, you would never yield. The Bible records only a limited history of the Israelites, one which is incapable of establishing whether you are evil or good, or of judging you. Imagine that I were to judge you according to the history of the Israelites—would you still follow Me as you do today? Do you know how difficult you are? If no words were spoken during this stage, then it would be impossible to complete the work of conquest. Because I have not come to be nailed to the cross, I must speak words that are separate from the Bible, so that you may be conquered.

Excerpted from “The Vision of God’s Work (1)” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

The Sermon on the Mount

The Beatitudes (Mat 5:3–12)

Salt and Light (Mat 5:13–16)

Law (Mat 5:17–20)

Anger (Mat 5:21–26)

Adultery (Mat 5:27–30)

Divorce (Mat 5:31–32)

Vows (Mat 5:33–37)

Eye for Eye (Mat 5:38–42)

Love Your Enemies (Mat 5:43–48)

Instruction About Giving (Mat 6:1–4)

Prayer (Mat 6:5–8)

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Let us first look at each of the various parts of “The Sermon on the Mount.” What do all of these different parts touch upon? It can be said, with certainty, that the contents of these various

parts are all more elevated, more concrete, and closer to people's lives than the regulations of the Age of Law. To speak in modern terms, these things are more relevant to people's actual practice.

Let us read about the following specific content: How should you understand the beatitudes? What should you know about the law? How should anger be defined? How should adulterers be dealt with? How is divorce to be spoken about, and what kind of rules are there about it? Who can get divorced and who cannot get divorced? How about vows, an eye for an eye, loving your enemies, and being charitable? And so on. All of these things relate to every aspect of the practice of mankind's belief in God, and of their following God. Some of these practices are still applicable today, though they are shallower than what is currently required of people—they are fairly elementary truths which people encounter in their belief in God. From the time when the Lord Jesus began working, He was already beginning to carry out work on the life disposition of humans, but these aspects of His work were based on the foundation of the law. Did the rules and the ways of speaking about these topics have anything to do with the truth? Of course they did! All of the previous regulations and principles, as well as these sermons in the Age of Grace, were related to God's disposition and what He has and is, and of course, to the truth. No matter what God expresses, and no matter what mode of expression or language He uses, the things that He expresses all have their foundation, origin, and starting point in the principles of His disposition and what He has and is. This is absolutely true. So even though these things He said seem a little shallow now, you still cannot say that they are not the truth, because they were things that were indispensable for people in the Age of Grace in order to satisfy God's will and to achieve a change in their life disposition. Can you say that any one of these sermons is not in line with the truth? No, you cannot! Every one of them is the truth because they were all God's requirements for mankind; they were all principles and a scope given by God, showing how one should conduct oneself, and they represent God's disposition. However, based on the level of their growth in life at that time, these were the only things that they were able to accept and comprehend. Because mankind's sin had not yet been resolved, these were the only words that the Lord Jesus could issue, and He could only utilize the simple teachings contained within this kind of scope to tell the people of that time how they should act, what they should do, within what principles and scope they should do things, and how they should believe in God and meet His requirements. All of this was determined based on the stature of mankind at that time. It

was not easy for people living under the law to accept these teachings, so what the Lord Jesus taught had to stay within this scope.

Excerpted from “God’s Work, God’s Disposition, and God Himself III” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

At the time, Jesus only gave His disciples a series of sermons in the Age of Grace on such subjects as how to practice, how to gather together, how to supplicate in prayer, how to treat others, and so forth. The work He carried out was that of the Age of Grace, and He expounded only on how the disciples and those who followed Him ought to practice. He only did the work of the Age of Grace, and none of the work of the last days. When Jehovah set down the Old Testament law in the Age of Law, why did He not then do the work of the Age of Grace? Why did He not make clear in advance the work of the Age of Grace? Would this not have helped man to accept it? He only prophesied that a male infant would be born and come to power, but He did not carry out in advance the work of the Age of Grace. The work of God in each age has clear boundaries; He does only the work of the current age, and never carries out the next stage of work in advance. Only thus can His representative work of each age be brought to the fore. Jesus spoke only of the signs of the last days, of how to be patient and how to be saved, of how to repent and confess, and of how to bear the cross and endure suffering; never did He speak of how man in the last days should achieve entry, nor of how he should seek to satisfy God’s will. As such, is it not ridiculous to search the Bible for God’s work of the last days? What can you see by merely clutching the Bible? Be it an expositor of the Bible or a preacher, who could have seen the work of today in advance?

Excerpted from “How Can Man Who Has Delimited God in His Notions Receive the Revelations of God?” in

The Word Appears in the Flesh

At the mention of the word “judgment,” you are likely to think of the words that Jehovah spoke to all the places and the words of rebuke that Jesus spoke to the Pharisees. For all their severity, these words were not God’s judgment of man; they were but words spoken by God within different environments, that is, in different contexts. These words are unlike the words spoken by Christ as He judges man during the last days. In the last days, Christ uses a variety of truths to teach man, to expose the substance of man, and to dissect the words and deeds of man. These words comprise various truths, such as man’s duty, how man should obey God, how

man should be loyal to God, how man ought to live out normal humanity, as well as the wisdom and the disposition of God, and so on. These words are all directed at the substance of man and his corrupt disposition. In particular, the words that expose how man spurns God are spoken in regard to how man is an embodiment of Satan, and an enemy force against God. In undertaking His work of judgment, God does not simply make clear the nature of man with a few words; He exposes, deals with, and prunes over the long term. These methods of exposure, dealing, and pruning cannot be substituted with ordinary words, but with the truth of which man is utterly bereft. Only methods such as these can be called judgment; only through judgment of this kind can man be subdued and thoroughly convinced into submission to God, and moreover gain true knowledge of God. What the work of judgment brings about is man's understanding of the true face of God and the truth about his own rebelliousness. The work of judgment allows man to gain much understanding of the will of God, of the purpose of God's work, and of the mysteries that are incomprehensible to him. It also allows man to recognize and know his corrupt essence and the roots of his corruption, as well as to discover the ugliness of man. These effects are all brought about by the work of judgment, for the essence of this work is actually the work of opening up the truth, the way, and the life of God to all those who have faith in Him. This work is the work of judgment done by God.

Excerpted from "Christ Does the Work of Judgment With the Truth" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The words spoken by God in this age are different from those spoken during the Age of Law, and so, too, do they differ from the words spoken during the Age of Grace. In the Age of Grace, God did not do the work of the word, but simply described the crucifixion in order to redeem all mankind. The Bible only describes why Jesus was to be crucified, and the suffering He was subjected to on the cross, and how man should be crucified for God. During that age, all the work done by God was centered around the crucifixion. During the Age of Kingdom, God incarnate speaks words to conquer all those who believe in Him. This is "the Word appearing in the flesh"; God has come during the last days to do this work, which is to say, He has come to accomplish the actual significance of the Word appearing in the flesh. He only speaks words, and rarely is there the advent of facts. This is the very essence of the Word appearing in the flesh, and when God incarnate speaks His words, this is the appearance of the Word in the flesh, and is the Word coming into the flesh. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with

God, and the Word was God, and the Word became flesh.” This (the work of the appearance of the Word in the flesh) is the work that God will accomplish in the last days, and is the final chapter of His entire management plan, and so God has to come to earth and manifest His words in the flesh. That which is done today, that which will be done in the future, that which will be accomplished by God, man’s final destination, those who will be saved, those who will be destroyed, and so on—all of this work that should be achieved in the end has all been clearly stated, and is all in order to accomplish the actual significance of the Word appearing in the flesh. The administrative decrees and constitution that were previously issued forth, those who will be destroyed, those who will enter into rest—these words must all be fulfilled. This is the work principally accomplished by God incarnate during the last days. He makes people understand where those predestined by God belong and where those not predestined by God belong, how His people and sons will be classified, what will happen to Israel, what will happen to Egypt—in the future, every one of these words will be accomplished. The pace of God’s work is accelerating. God uses the word as the means to reveal to man what is to be done in every age, what is to be done by God incarnate during the last days, and His ministry that is to be performed, and these words are all in order to accomplish the actual significance of the Word appearing in the flesh.

Excerpted from “All Is Achieved by the Word of God” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The work done by God during this age is chiefly the provision of the words for the life of man; the exposure of man’s nature essence and corrupt disposition; and the elimination of religious notions, feudal thinking, outdated thinking, and the knowledge and culture of man. These things must all be cleansed through being exposed by God’s words. In the last days, God uses words, not signs and wonders, to make man perfect. He uses His words to expose man, to judge man, to chastise man, and to make man perfect, so that in the words of God, man comes to see the wisdom and loveliness of God, and comes to understand the disposition of God, and so that through the words of God, man beholds the deeds of God.

Excerpted from “Knowing God’s Work Today” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

In the Age of Kingdom, God uses words to usher in the new age, to change the means by which He works, and to do the work of the entire age. This is the principle by which God works

in the Age of Word. He became flesh to speak from different perspectives, so that man could truly see God, who is the Word appearing in the flesh, and could behold His wisdom and wondrousness. Such work is done in order better to achieve the goals of conquering man, perfecting man, and eliminating man, which is the true meaning of the use of words to work in the Age of Word. Through these words, people come to know the work of God, the disposition of God, the substance of man, and what man ought to enter into. Through words, the work God wishes to do in the Age of Word is brought to fruition in its entirety. Through these words, people are exposed, eliminated, and tried. People have seen God's words, heard these words, and recognized the existence of these words. As a result, they have come to believe in the existence of God, in the omnipotence and wisdom of God, as well as in God's love for man and His desire to save man. The word "words" may be simple and ordinary, but the words spoken from the mouth of the incarnate God shake the universe, they transform people's hearts, transform their notions and old dispositions, and transform the way the whole world used to appear. Through the ages, only the God of today has worked in this way, and only He speaks thus and comes to save man thus. From this time forward, man lives under the guidance of God's words, shepherded and supplied by His words. People live in the world of God's words, amid the curses and the blessings of God's words, and there are even more people who have come to live under the judgment and chastisement of His words. These words and this work are all for the sake of man's salvation, for the sake of fulfilling God's will, and for the sake of changing the original appearance of the world of old creation. God created the world using words, He leads people throughout the universe using words, and He conquers and saves them using words. Ultimately, He shall use words to bring the entire world of old to an end, thus completing the entirety of His management plan.

Excerpted from "The Age of Kingdom Is the Age of Word" in The Word Appears in the Flesh

At the time, Jesus did much work that was incomprehensible to His disciples and said much that people did not understand. This is because, at the time, He did not give any explanation. Thus, several years after He departed, Matthew created a genealogy for Jesus, and others also did much work that was of the will of man. Jesus did not come to perfect and gain man, but to do one stage of work: bringing forth the gospel of the kingdom of heaven and completing the work of the crucifixion. And so, once Jesus was crucified, His work came to a

complete end. But in the current stage—the work of conquest—more words must be spoken, more work must be done, and there must be many processes. So too must the mysteries of the work of Jesus and Jehovah be revealed, so that all people may have understanding and clarity in their belief, for this is the work of the last days, and the last days are the end of God’s work, the time of the work’s conclusion. This stage of work will elucidate for you the law of Jehovah and the redemption of Jesus, and is principally so that you may understand the entire work of God’s six-thousand-year management plan, and appreciate all the significance and essence of this six-thousand-year management plan, and understand the purpose of all the work done by Jesus and the words He spoke, and even your blind credence in and adoration of the Bible. All this it will allow you to understand thoroughly. You will come to understand both the work done by Jesus, and the work of God today; you will understand and behold all of the truth, the life, and the way. In the stage of work done by Jesus, why did Jesus depart without doing the concluding work? Because the stage of Jesus’ work was not the work of conclusion. When He was nailed to the cross, His words also came to an end; after His crucifixion, His work completely finished. The current stage is different: Only after the words are spoken to the end and God’s entire work is concluded will His work have finished. During Jesus’ stage of work, there were many words that remained unsaid, or which were not fully articulated. Yet Jesus cared not what He did or did not say, for His ministry was not a ministry of words, and so after He was nailed to the cross, He departed. That stage of work was chiefly for the sake of the crucifixion, and is unlike the current stage. This current stage of work is principally for the sake of completion, of clearing up, and of bringing all work to a conclusion. If the words are not spoken to their very end, there will be no way of concluding this work, for in this stage of work all work is brought to an end and accomplished using words. At the time, Jesus did much work that was incomprehensible to man. He departed quietly, and today there are still many who do not understand His words, whose understanding is erroneous yet still they believe it to be correct, and do not know that they are wrong. In the end, this current stage will bring God’s work to a complete end, and will provide its conclusion. All will come to understand and know of God’s management plan. The notions within man, his intentions, his erroneous understanding, his notions about the work of Jehovah and Jesus, his views about the Gentiles, and his other deviations and errors will be corrected. And man will understand all the right

paths of life, and all the work done by God, and the entire truth. When that happens, this stage of work will come to an end.

Excerpted from “The Vision of God’s Work (2)” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

3. The differences between church life in the Age of Grace and in the Age of Kingdom

Relevant Words of God:

When, in the Age of Grace, God returned to the third heaven, God’s work of redeeming all of mankind had actually already moved into its final part. All that remained on earth were the cross that Jesus bore on His back, the fine linen that Jesus was wrapped in, and the crown of thorns and scarlet robe that Jesus wore (these were objects with which the Jews mocked Him). That is, after the work of Jesus’ crucifixion caused a great sensation, things settled down again. From then on, Jesus’ disciples began to carry on His work, shepherding and watering in the churches everywhere. The content of their work was as follows: They asked all people to repent, confess their sins, and be baptized; and the apostles all went forth to spread the inside story, the unvarnished account, of Jesus’ crucifixion, and so everyone could not help but fall prostrate before Jesus to confess their sins; and furthermore, the apostles went everywhere transmitting the words Jesus spoke. From that point began the building of churches in the Age of Grace.

Excerpted from “Work and Entry (6)” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

In the past, during the special gatherings or the grand gatherings that were held in various places, only one aspect of the path of practice was spoken of. Such practice was that which was to be put into practice during the Age of Grace, and scarcely bore any relation to the knowledge of God, for the vision of the Age of Grace was only the vision of Jesus’ crucifixion, and there were no greater visions. Man was supposed to know no more than the work of His redemption of mankind through the crucifixion, and so during the Age of Grace there were no other visions for man to know. In this way, man had only a scant knowledge of God, and apart from the knowledge of Jesus’ love and compassion, there were but a few simple and pitiful things for him to put into practice, things that were a far cry from today. In the past, no matter what form his

assembly took, man was incapable of speaking of a practical knowledge of God's work, much less was anyone able to clearly say which was the most suitable path of practice for man to enter upon. Man merely added a few simple details to a foundation of forbearance and patience; there was simply no change in the essence of his practice, for within the same age God did not do any newer work, and the only requirements He made of man were forbearance and patience, or bearing the cross. Apart from such practices, there were no higher visions than the crucifixion of Jesus.

Excerpted from "God's Work and Man's Practice" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Going forward, talk of God's words should be the principle by which you speak. Ordinarily, when you come together, you should engage in fellowship about the words of God, taking God's words as the content of your interactions, talking about what you know of these words, how you put them into practice, and how the Holy Spirit works. As long as you fellowship the words of God, the Holy Spirit will illuminate you. Achieving the world of God's words requires the cooperation of man. If you do not enter into this, God will have no way of working; if you keep your mouth shut and do not talk about His words, He will have no way of illuminating you. Whenever you are not otherwise occupied, talk about the words of God, and do not just engage in idle chit chat! Let your life be filled with the words of God—only then will you be a devout believer. It does not matter if your fellowship is superficial. Without shallowness there can be no depth. There must be a process. Through your training, you will grasp the illumination of the Holy Spirit upon you, and how to effectively eat and drink the words of God. After an interval of probing, you will enter into the reality of the words of God. Only if you are resolved to cooperate will you be able to receive the work of the Holy Spirit.

Excerpted from "The Age of Kingdom Is the Age of Word" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

"Sharing and communing experiences" means giving voice to every thought in your heart, your state of being, your experiences and knowledge of God's words, and the corrupt disposition within you, and then letting others discern them, accept the positive parts, and recognize that which is negative. Only this is sharing, and only this is truly communing. It does not simply involve having certain insights into God's words or a part of a hymn, and then communing as you please without taking it any further or saying anything related to your own actual life.

Everyone talks about doctrinal and theoretical knowledge, but says nothing of knowledge gained from actual experiences. You all avoid talking about such things—about your personal lives, about your life in the church with your brothers and sisters, about your own inner world. In doing so, how can true communication between people occur? How can there be any real trust? There cannot be any! If a wife never voices the words in her heart to her husband, are they confidants? Do they know what is on each other's mind? Suppose that they are constantly saying, "I love you!" They say only this, yet have never laid bare what they are actually thinking deep down, what they want of each other, or what problems they have. They have never spoken to each other of such things, nor have they ever confided in each other—so are they really a couple who love each other? If, when together, they have nothing but superficial niceties for each other, then are they truly husband and wife? Certainly not! If brothers and sisters are to be capable of confiding in each other, helping each other out, and providing for one another, then each person must speak of his or her own true experiences. If you do not talk of your own true experiences, and only speak catchphrases and words that are doctrinal and superficial, then you are not an honest person, and you are incapable of being an honest person.

Excerpted from "The Most Fundamental Practice of Being an Honest Person" in Records of Christ's Talks

When bearing testimony for God, you should mainly talk more about how God judges and chastises people, what trials He uses to refine people and change their dispositions. You should also talk about how much corruption has been revealed in your experience, how much you have endured and how you were eventually conquered by God; talk about how much real knowledge of God's work you have, and how you should bear witness for God and repay Him for His love. You should put substance into this kind of language, while putting it in a simple manner. Do not talk about empty theories. Speak more down-to-earth; speak from the heart. This is how you should experience. Do not equip yourselves with profound-seeming, empty theories in an effort to show off; doing so makes you appear quite arrogant and senseless. You should speak more of real things from your actual experience that are genuine and from the heart; this is most beneficial to others, and most appropriate for them to see. You used to be people who opposed God the most and were least inclined to submit to Him, but now you have been conquered—never forget that. You should ponder and think about these matters more. Once

people have understood them clearly, they will know how to bear testimony; otherwise, they will be liable to commit shameful and senseless acts.

Excerpted from “Only by Pursuing the Truth Can One Achieve a Change in Disposition” in Records of

Christ’s Talks

VI. Differences Between Being Saved in the Age of Grace and Attaining Complete Salvation in the Age of Kingdom

1. What being saved and attaining complete salvation are

Bible Verses for Reference:

“He that believes and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believes not shall be damned” (Mak 16:16).

“For this is My blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins” (Mat 26:28).

“Not every one that said to Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that does the will of My Father which is in heaven” (Mat 7:21).

Relevant Words of God:

At the time, Jesus’ work was the work to redeem all mankind. The sins of all who believed in Him were forgiven; as long as you believed in Him, He would redeem you; if you believed in Him, you were no longer a sinner, you were relieved of your sins. This is what it meant to be saved, and to be justified by faith. Yet in those who believed, there remained that which was rebellious and opposed God, and which still had to be slowly removed. Salvation did not mean man had been completely gained by Jesus, but that man was no longer of sin, that he had been forgiven his sins. Provided you believed, you would never more be of sin.

Excerpted from “The Vision of God’s Work (2)” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

As soon as the second stage of God’s work was completed—after the crucifixion—God’s work of recovering man from sin (which is to say, recovering man from the hands of Satan) was

accomplished. And so, from that moment onward, mankind had only to accept the Lord Jesus as the Savior, and his sins would be forgiven. Nominally speaking, the sins of man were no longer a barrier to his achieving salvation and coming before God, and were no longer the leverage by which Satan accused man. That is because God Himself had done real work, had become the likeness and foretaste of sinful flesh, and God Himself was the sin offering. In this way, man descended from the cross, and was redeemed and saved through the flesh of God—the likeness of this sinful flesh.

Excerpted from “Man Can Only Be Saved Amidst God’s Management” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The significance of belief in God is to be saved, so what does being saved mean? “Being saved,” “breaking away from the dark influence of Satan”—people talk about these topics often, but they do not know what being saved means. What does being saved mean? It relates to God’s will. Simply speaking, to be saved means you can keep on living, and that you are brought back to life. So before that, are you dead? You can speak, and you can breathe, so how can you be said to be dead? (The spirit is dead.) Why is it said that people are dead if their spirit is dead? What is the basis for this saying? Under whose domain do people live before they have attained salvation? (Under the domain of Satan.) And what do people rely on to live under Satan’s domain? (Satan’s philosophies and poisons.) They rely on their satanic nature and corrupt dispositions to live. When a person lives by these things, is their whole being—their flesh, and all other aspects such as their soul and their thought—alive or dead? From God’s point of view, they are dead. On the surface, you appear to be breathing and thinking, but everything you are constantly thinking about is evil; you think about things that are in defiance of God and in rebellion against God, things that God detests, hates, and condemns. In God’s eyes, all these things not only belong to the flesh, but they entirely belong to Satan and to devils. So what are people in God’s eyes? Are they humans? No, they are not. God sees them as devils, as animals, and as Satans, living Satans! People live by the things and the essence of Satan, and in God’s eyes, they themselves are living Satans wearing human flesh. God defines such people as walking corpses; as dead people. God does His current work of salvation to take such people—these walking corpses who live by their corrupt satanic dispositions and by their corrupt satanic essence—He takes these so-called dead people and turns them into the living. This is what it means to be saved.

The point of believing in God is to attain salvation. Being saved means that you turn from a dead person into a living person. The implication of this is that your breath is revived, and you are alive; you are able to know God, and you are able to bow down to worship Him. In your heart you have no further resistance against God; you no longer defy Him, attack Him, or rebel against Him. Only people like these are genuinely alive in God's eyes. If someone just says they acknowledge God, are they then one of the living or not? (No, they aren't.) So what kind of people are the living? What sort of reality do the living possess? At the very least, the living can speak human language. What is that? It means the words they utter involve ideas, thoughts, and discernment. What things do the living frequently think about and do? They are able to engage in human activities and fulfill their duties. What is the nature of what they do and say? It is that everything they reveal, everything they think, and everything they do is done with the nature of fearing God and shunning evil. To put it more aptly, as one of the living, your every deed and every thought are not condemned by God or detested and rejected by God; rather, they are approved and commended by God. This is what the living do, and it is also what the living should do.

Excerpted from "Only Being Truly Obedient Is a Real Belief" in Records of Christ's Talks

If people wish to become living beings and to bear testimony to God, and to be approved of by God, then they must accept God's salvation; they must gladly submit to His judgment and chastisement and must gladly accept the pruning of God and being dealt with by Him. Only then will they be able to put all of the truths required by God into practice, and only then will they gain God's salvation and truly become living beings. The living are saved by God; they have been judged and chastised by God, they are willing to devote themselves and are happy to lay down their lives for God, and they would gladly dedicate their whole lives to God. Only when the living bear testimony to God can Satan be shamed; only the living can spread the gospel work of God, only the living are after God's heart, and only the living are real people. Originally the man made by God was alive, but because of Satan's corruption man lives amid death and lives under the influence of Satan, and so, in this way, people have become the spiritless dead, they have become enemies who oppose God, they have become the tools of Satan, and they have become the captives of Satan. All the living people created by God have become dead people, and so God has lost His testimony, and He has lost mankind which He created and which is the

only thing that has His breath. If God is to take back His testimony and take back those who were made by His own hand but who have been taken captive by Satan, then He must resurrect them so that they become living beings, and He must reclaim them so that they live in His light. The dead are those who have no spirit, those who are numb in the extreme and who oppose God. They are foremost those who do not know God. These people have not the slightest intention of obeying God; they only rebel against Him and oppose Him and have not the slightest loyalty. The living are those whose spirits have been reborn, who know to obey God, and who are loyal to God. They are possessed of the truth, and of testimony, and these people alone are pleasing to God in His house.

Excerpted from “Are You Someone Who Has Come to Life?” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Man’s flesh is of Satan, it is full of rebellious dispositions, it is deplorably filthy, and it is something unclean. People covet the enjoyment of the flesh too much and there are too many manifestations of the flesh; this is why God despises man’s flesh to a certain extent. When people cast off the filthy, corrupt things of Satan, they gain God’s salvation. But if they still do not divest themselves of filth and corruption, then they are still living under the domain of Satan. People’s conniving, deceitfulness, and crookedness are all things of Satan. God’s salvation of you is to extricate you from these things of Satan. God’s work cannot be wrong; it is all done in order to save people from darkness. When you have believed to a certain point and can divest yourself of the corruption of the flesh, and are no longer shackled by this corruption, will you not have been saved? When you live under Satan’s domain you are incapable of manifesting God, you are something filthy, and cannot receive God’s inheritance. Once you have been cleansed and made perfect, you will be holy, you will be a normal person, and you will be blessed by God and delightful to God.

Excerpted from “Practice (2)” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Those who do not pursue a knowledge of matters in the spirit, who do not pursue holiness, and who do not pursue living out the truth, who are content only to be conquered on the negative side, and who cannot live by God’s words and become holy humans—these are people who have not been saved. For, if he is without the truth, man is unable to stand fast during God’s trials; only those who can stand fast during God’s trials are the ones who have been saved.

What I want are people like Peter, people who pursue being made perfect. Today's truth is given to those who yearn for and seek it. This salvation is granted to those who yearn to be saved by God, and is not only meant to be gained by you. Its purpose is that you may be gained by God; you gain God in order that God may gain you. Today I have spoken these words to you, and you have heard them, and you should practice according to these words. In the end, the time when you put these words into practice will be the moment when I have gained you through these words; at the same time, you will have also gained these words, which is to say, you will have gained this supreme salvation. Once you are made clean, you will have become a real human being. If you are incapable of living out the truth, or of living out the likeness of one who has been made perfect, then it can be said that you are not a human, but a walking corpse, a beast, because you are without the truth, which is to say that you are without the breath of Jehovah, and thus you are a dead person that has no spirit! Although it is possible to bear testimony after being conquered, what you gain is but a little salvation, and you have not become a living being possessed of a spirit. Although you have experienced chastisement and judgment, your disposition is not renewed or changed as a result; you are still your old self, you still belong to Satan, and you are not someone who has been cleansed. Only those who have been made perfect are of value, and only people such as this have gained a true life.

Excerpted from "The Experiences of Peter: His Knowledge of Chastisement and Judgment" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

2. The essential differences between being saved and attaining complete salvation

Relevant Words of God:

The work of the last days is to speak words. Great changes can be effected in man by means of words. The changes now effected in these people upon their accepting these words are much greater than those effected in people upon their accepting the signs and wonders of the Age of Grace. For, in the Age of Grace, the demons were cast out from man with the laying on of hands and prayer, but the corrupt dispositions within man still remained. Man was healed of his sickness and forgiven his sins, but as for just how man was to be purged of the corrupt satanic dispositions within him, this work had yet to be done. Man was only saved and forgiven his sins

for his faith, but the sinful nature of man was not extirpated and still remained within him. The sins of man were forgiven through the agency of the incarnate God, but this did not mean that man no longer had sin within him. The sins of man could be forgiven through the sin offering, but as for just how man can be made to sin no more, and how his sinful nature may be extirpated completely and transformed, he has no way of solving this problem. The sins of man were forgiven, and this is because of the work of God's crucifixion, but man continued to live within his corrupt satanic disposition of old. This being so, man must be completely saved from his corrupt satanic disposition, so that his sinful nature may be completely extirpated, never to develop again, thus enabling the disposition of man to be transformed. This would require man to grasp the path of growth in life, to grasp the way of life, and to grasp the way to change his disposition. Furthermore, it would require man to act in accordance with this path, so that his disposition may gradually be changed and he may live under the shining of the light, so that all that he does may be in accord with the will of God, so that he may cast away his corrupt satanic disposition, and so that he may break free from Satan's influence of darkness, thereby emerging fully from sin. Only then will man receive complete salvation. At the time that Jesus was doing His work, man's knowledge of Him was still vague and unclear. Man always believed Him to be the son of David, and proclaimed Him to be a great prophet, the benevolent Lord who redeemed man's sins. Some, on the strength of their faith, were healed just from touching the edge of His garment; the blind could see and even the dead could be restored to life. However, man was unable to discover the corrupt satanic disposition deeply rooted within himself, neither did he know how to cast it away. Man received much grace, such as the peace and happiness of the flesh, the faith of one member bringing blessing on an entire family, the healing of sickness, and so on. The rest were the good deeds of man and his godly appearance; if someone could live on the basis of these, they were considered an acceptable believer. Only believers of this kind could enter heaven after death, which meant that they were saved. But, in their lifetime, these people did not understand at all the way of life. All they did was to commit sins and then confess their sins in a constant cycle without any path to change their disposition: Such was the condition of man in the Age of Grace. Has man received complete salvation? No! Therefore, after that stage of work was finished, there still remained the work of judgment and chastisement. This stage is to make man pure by means of the word, and thereby give him a path to follow. This stage would not be fruitful or meaningful if it continued with the casting out of demons, for it would fail to

extirpate man's sinful nature, and man would come to a standstill at the forgiveness of his sins. Through the sin offering, man has been forgiven his sins, for the work of the crucifixion has already come to an end and God has prevailed over Satan. But the corrupt disposition of man still remaining within him, man can still sin and resist God, and God has not gained mankind. That is why in this stage of work God uses the word to expose the corrupt disposition of man, causing him to practice in accordance with the right path. This stage is more meaningful than the previous one, as well as more fruitful, for now it is the word that directly supplies man's life and enables the disposition of man to be completely renewed; it is a much more thorough stage of work. Therefore, the incarnation in the last days has completed the significance of God's incarnation and completely finished God's management plan for man's salvation.

Excerpted from "The Mystery of the Incarnation (4)" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

A sinner such as you, who has just been redeemed, and has not been changed, or been perfected by God, can you be after God's heart? For you, you who are still of your old self, it is true that you were saved by Jesus, and that you are not counted as a sinner because of the salvation of God, but this does not prove that you are not sinful, and are not impure. How can you be saintly if you have not been changed? Within, you are beset by impurity, selfish and mean, yet you still wish to descend with Jesus—you should be so lucky! You have missed a step in your belief in God: You have merely been redeemed, but you have not been changed. For you to be after God's heart, God must personally do the work of changing and cleansing you; if you are only redeemed, you will be incapable of attaining sanctity. In this way you will be unqualified to share in the good blessings of God, for you have missed out a step in God's work of managing man, which is the key step of changing and perfecting. You, a sinner who has just been redeemed, are therefore incapable of directly inheriting God's inheritance.

Excerpted from "Concerning Appellations and Identity" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Though Jesus did much work among man, He only completed the redemption of all mankind and became man's sin offering; He did not rid man of all his corrupt disposition. Fully saving man from the influence of Satan not only required Jesus to become the sin offering and bear the sins of man, but it also required God to do even greater work to rid man completely of his satanically corrupted disposition. And so, now that man has been forgiven of his sins, God

has returned to the flesh to lead man into the new age, and begun the work of chastisement and judgment. This work has brought man into a higher realm. All those who submit under His dominion shall enjoy higher truth and receive greater blessings. They shall truly live in the light, and they shall gain the truth, the way, and the life.

Excerpted from Preface to The Word Appears in the Flesh

The first incarnation was to redeem man from sin, to redeem him by means of the fleshly body of Jesus, that is, He saved man from the cross, but the corrupt satanic disposition still remained within man. The second incarnation is no longer to serve as a sin offering but rather to save fully those who were redeemed from sin. This is done so that those who have been forgiven may be delivered from their sins and made fully clean, and by attaining a changed disposition, break free of Satan's influence of darkness and return before the throne of God. Only in this way can man be fully sanctified.

Excerpted from "The Mystery of the Incarnation (4)" in The Word Appears in the Flesh

Before man was redeemed, many of Satan's poisons had already been planted within him and, after thousands of years of being corrupted by Satan, he has within him an established nature that resists God. Therefore, when man has been redeemed, it is nothing more than a case of redemption in which man is bought at a high price, but the poisonous nature within him has not been eliminated. Man that is so defiled must undergo a change before becoming worthy to serve God. By means of this work of judgment and chastisement, man will fully come to know the filthy and corrupt essence within his own self, and he will be able to change completely and become clean. Only in this way can man become worthy to return before the throne of God. All the work done this day is so that man can be made clean and be changed; through judgment and chastisement by the word, as well as through refinement, man can purge away his corruption and be made pure. Rather than deeming this stage of work to be that of salvation, it would be more apt to say it is the work of purification. In truth, this stage is that of conquest as well as the second stage in the work of salvation. It is through judgment and chastisement by the word that man arrives at being gained by God, and it is through the use of the word to refine, judge, and disclose that all of the impurities, notions, motives, and individual aspirations within man's heart are completely revealed. For all that man may have been redeemed and forgiven of

his sins, it can only be considered as God not remembering the transgressions of man and not treating man in accordance with his transgressions. However, when man, who lives in a body of flesh, has not been set free from sin, he can only continue to sin, endlessly revealing his corrupt satanic disposition. This is the life that man leads, an endless cycle of sinning and being forgiven. The majority of mankind sin in the day only to confess in the evening. This way, even though the sin offering is forever effective for man, it will not be able to save man from sin. Only half the work of salvation has been completed, for man still has a corrupt disposition. ... It is not easy for man to become aware of his sins; he has no way of recognizing his own deeply rooted nature, and he must rely on judgment by the word in order to achieve this result. Only thus can man gradually be changed from this point onward.

Excerpted from “The Mystery of the Incarnation (4)” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

VII. Differences Between the Way of Repentance in the Age of Grace and the Way of Eternal Life in the Last Days

1. What was preached by the Lord Jesus in the Age of Grace was only the way of repentance

Bible Verses for Reference:

“Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand” (Mat 4:17).

“Then opened He their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, And said to them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem” (Luk 24:45–47).

Relevant Words of God:

At the time, Jesus only gave His disciples a series of sermons in the Age of Grace on such subjects as how to practice, how to gather together, how to supplicate in prayer, how to treat others, and so forth. The work He carried out was that of the Age of Grace, and He expounded only on how the disciples and those who followed Him ought to practice. He only did the work

of the Age of Grace, and none of the work of the last days. ... Jesus spoke only of the signs of the last days, of how to be patient and how to be saved, of how to repent and confess, and of how to bear the cross and endure suffering; never did He speak of how man in the last days should achieve entry, nor of how he should seek to satisfy God's will. As such, is it not ridiculous to search the Bible for God's work of the last days? What can you see by merely clutching the Bible? Be it an expositor of the Bible or a preacher, who could have seen the work of today in advance? Excerpted from "How Can Man Who Has Delimited God in His Notions Receive the Revelations of God?" in

The Word Appears in the Flesh

Though Jesus in His incarnation was utterly without emotion, He always comforted His disciples, provided for them, helped them, and supported them. However much work He did, or however much suffering He endured, He never made excessive demands of people, but was always patient and forbearing of their sins, such that the people of the Age of Grace affectionately called Him "the lovable Savior Jesus." To the people of that time—to all people—what Jesus had and was, was mercy and lovingkindness. He never remembered people's transgressions, and His treatment of them was never based on their transgressions. Because that was a different age, He often bestowed plentiful food upon people so that they could eat their fill. He treated all His followers with grace, healing the sick, driving out demons, raising the dead. In order that people might believe in Him and see that all that He did was done earnestly and sincerely, He went so far as to resurrect a rotting corpse, showing them that in His hands even the dead could come back to life. In this way He endured silently and carried out His work of redemption among them. Even before He was nailed to the cross, Jesus had already taken upon Himself the sins of humanity and become a sin offering for mankind. Even before being crucified, He had opened the way to the cross in order to redeem mankind. Ultimately, He was nailed to the cross, sacrificing Himself for the sake of the cross, and He bestowed all of His mercy, lovingkindness, and holiness upon mankind. Toward humanity, He was always tolerant, never vengeful, forgiving them their sins, exhorting them to repent, and teaching them to have patience, forbearance, and love, to follow in His footsteps and sacrifice themselves for the sake of the cross. His love for the brothers and sisters exceeded His love for Mary. The work that He did took as its principle healing the sick and driving out demons, all for the sake of His redemption. No matter where He went, He treated all who followed Him with

grace. He made the poor rich, the lame walk, the blind see, and the deaf hear. He even invited the lowliest, destitute ones, the sinners, to sit at the same table with Him, never shunning them but always being patient, even saying: When a shepherd loses one sheep out of a hundred, he will leave behind the ninety-nine to seek the one lost sheep, and when he finds it he will rejoice greatly. He loved His followers as a ewe loves her lambs. Though they were foolish and ignorant, and were sinners in His eyes, and furthermore were the humblest members of society, He considered these sinners—men whom others despised—as the apple of His eye. Since He favored them, He gave up His life for them, as a lamb was offered up on the altar. He went about in their midst as if He were their servant, letting them use Him and slaughter Him, submitting to them unconditionally. To His followers He was the lovable Savior Jesus, but to the Pharisees, who lectured people from a high pedestal, He showed not mercy and lovingkindness, but loathing and resentment. He did not do much work among the Pharisees, only occasionally lecturing and rebuking them; He did not go about in their midst doing the work of redemption, nor did He perform signs and wonders. He bestowed all His mercy and lovingkindness upon His followers, enduring for the sake of these sinners till the very end, when He was nailed to the cross, and suffering every humiliation until He had fully redeemed all humanity. This was the sum total of His work.

Excerpted from “The True Story Behind the Work of the Age of Redemption” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

At the time that Jesus was doing His work, man’s knowledge of Him was still vague and unclear. Man always believed Him to be the son of David, and proclaimed Him to be a great prophet, the benevolent Lord who redeemed man’s sins. Some, on the strength of their faith, were healed just from touching the edge of His garment; the blind could see and even the dead could be restored to life. However, man was unable to discover the corrupt satanic disposition deeply rooted within himself, neither did he know how to cast it away. Man received much grace, such as the peace and happiness of the flesh, the faith of one member bringing blessing on an entire family, the healing of sickness, and so on. The rest were the good deeds of man and his godly appearance; if someone could live on the basis of these, they were considered an acceptable believer. Only believers of this kind could enter heaven after death, which meant that they were saved. But, in their lifetime, these people did not understand at all the way of life.

All they did was to commit sins and then confess their sins in a constant cycle without any path to change their disposition: Such was the condition of man in the Age of Grace. Has man received complete salvation? No!

Excerpted from “The Mystery of the Incarnation (4)” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

The gospel of repentance was preached in the Age of Grace, and provided that man believed, then he would be saved. Today, in place of salvation, there is only talk of conquest and perfection. Never is it said that if one person believes, their whole family will be blessed, or that once saved always saved. Today, no one speaks these words, and such things are outdated. At the time, Jesus’ work was the work to redeem all mankind. The sins of all who believed in Him were forgiven; as long as you believed in Him, He would redeem you; if you believed in Him, you were no longer a sinner, you were relieved of your sins. This is what it meant to be saved, and to be justified by faith. Yet in those who believed, there remained that which was rebellious and opposed God, and which still had to be slowly removed. Salvation did not mean man had been completely gained by Jesus, but that man was no longer of sin, that he had been forgiven his sins. Provided you believed, you would never more be of sin. At the time, Jesus did much work that was incomprehensible to His disciples and said much that people did not understand. This is because, at the time, He did not give any explanation. Thus, several years after He departed, Matthew created a genealogy for Jesus, and others also did much work that was of the will of man. Jesus did not come to perfect and gain man, but to do one stage of work: bringing forth the gospel of the kingdom of heaven and completing the work of the crucifixion. And so, once Jesus was crucified, His work came to a complete end.

Excerpted from “The Vision of God’s Work (2)” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

2. The differences between the way of repentance and the way of eternal life

Bible Verses for Reference:

“Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand” (Mat 4:17).

“For this is My blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins” (Mat 26:28).

“I have yet many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. However, when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will show you things to come” (Jhn 16:12–13).

“And if any man hear My words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He that rejects Me, and receives not My words, has one that judges him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day” (Jhn 12:47–48).

Relevant Words of God:

The work Jesus did was in accordance with the needs of man in that age. His task was to redeem humanity, to forgive them their sins, and so His disposition was wholly one of humility, patience, love, piety, forbearance, mercy, and lovingkindness. He brought to humanity abundant grace and blessings, and all the things that people could possibly enjoy, He gave to them for their enjoyment: peace and happiness, His tolerance and love, His mercy and lovingkindness. At the time, the abundance of things to enjoy that people were faced with—the sense of peace and security within their hearts, the feeling of reassurance within their spirits, and their dependence on Jesus the Savior—was all down to the age in which they lived. In the Age of Grace, man had already been corrupted by Satan, and so to achieve the work of redeeming all humanity required an abundance of grace, infinite forbearance and patience, and even more than that, an offering sufficient to atone for humanity’s sins, in order to have an effect. What humanity saw in the Age of Grace was merely My offering of atonement for the sins of humanity: Jesus. All they knew was that God could be merciful and forbearing, and all they saw was the mercy and lovingkindness of Jesus. This was entirely because they were born in the Age of Grace. And so, before they could be redeemed, they had to enjoy the many kinds of grace that Jesus bestowed on them in order to benefit from it. This way, they could be forgiven of their sins through their enjoyment of grace, and could also have the chance to be redeemed through enjoying Jesus’ forbearance and patience. Only through Jesus’ forbearance and patience did they win the right to receive forgiveness and enjoy the abundance of grace bestowed by Jesus. Just as Jesus said: I have come to redeem not the righteous but sinners, to allow sinners to be forgiven of their sins. If, when He became flesh, Jesus had brought the

disposition of judgment, curse, and intolerance of man's offenses, then man would never have had the chance to be redeemed, and would have remained forever sinful. Had this been so, the six-thousand-year management plan would have come to a stop in the Age of Law, and the Age of Law would have been prolonged for six thousand years. Man's sins would only have grown more numerous and more grievous, and the creation of humanity would have been for naught. Men would only have been able to serve Jehovah under the law, but their sins would have exceeded those of the first created humans. The more Jesus loved mankind, forgiving them their sins and bringing unto them sufficient mercy and lovingkindness, the more mankind was entitled to be saved by Jesus, to be called the lost lambs that Jesus bought back at a great price. Satan could not meddle in this work, for Jesus treated His followers as a loving mother treats the infant at her bosom. He did not grow angry or disdainful toward them, but was full of comfort; He never flew into a rage among them, but forbore with their sins and turned a blind eye to their foolishness and ignorance, to the point of saying, "Forgive others seventy times seven times." Thus were the hearts of others transformed by His heart, and only thus did people receive forgiveness of their sins through His forbearance.

Excerpted from "The True Story Behind the Work of the Age of Redemption" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The gospel of repentance was preached in the Age of Grace, and provided that man believed, then he would be saved. Today, in place of salvation, there is only talk of conquest and perfection. Never is it said that if one person believes, their whole family will be blessed, or that once saved always saved. Today, no one speaks these words, and such things are outdated. At the time, Jesus' work was the work to redeem all mankind. The sins of all who believed in Him were forgiven; as long as you believed in Him, He would redeem you; if you believed in Him, you were no longer a sinner, you were relieved of your sins. This is what it meant to be saved, and to be justified by faith. Yet in those who believed, there remained that which was rebellious and opposed God, and which still had to be slowly removed. Salvation did not mean man had been completely gained by Jesus, but that man was no longer of sin, that he had been forgiven his sins. Provided you believed, you would never more be of sin. At the time, Jesus did much work that was incomprehensible to His disciples and said much that people did not understand. This is because, at the time, He did not give any explanation. Thus, several years after He

departed, Matthew created a genealogy for Jesus, and others also did much work that was of the will of man. Jesus did not come to perfect and gain man, but to do one stage of work: bringing forth the gospel of the kingdom of heaven and completing the work of the crucifixion. And so, once Jesus was crucified, His work came to a complete end. But in the current stage—the work of conquest—more words must be spoken, more work must be done, and there must be many processes. So too must the mysteries of the work of Jesus and Jehovah be revealed, so that all people may have understanding and clarity in their belief, for this is the work of the last days, and the last days are the end of God’s work, the time of the work’s conclusion.

Excerpted from “The Vision of God’s Work (2)” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

In the last days, Christ uses a variety of truths to teach man, to expose the substance of man, and to dissect the words and deeds of man. These words comprise various truths, such as man’s duty, how man should obey God, how man should be loyal to God, how man ought to live out normal humanity, as well as the wisdom and the disposition of God, and so on. These words are all directed at the substance of man and his corrupt disposition. In particular, the words that expose how man spurns God are spoken in regard to how man is an embodiment of Satan, and an enemy force against God. In undertaking His work of judgment, God does not simply make clear the nature of man with a few words; He exposes, deals with, and prunes over the long term. These methods of exposure, dealing, and pruning cannot be substituted with ordinary words, but with the truth of which man is utterly bereft. Only methods such as these can be called judgment; only through judgment of this kind can man be subdued and thoroughly convinced into submission to God, and moreover gain true knowledge of God. What the work of judgment brings about is man’s understanding of the true face of God and the truth about his own rebelliousness. The work of judgment allows man to gain much understanding of the will of God, of the purpose of God’s work, and of the mysteries that are incomprehensible to him. It also allows man to recognize and know his corrupt essence and the roots of his corruption, as well as to discover the ugliness of man. These effects are all brought about by the work of judgment, for the essence of this work is actually the work of opening up the truth, the way, and the life of God to all those who have faith in Him. This work is the work of judgment done by God.

Excerpted from “Christ Does the Work of Judgment With the Truth” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

In the Age of Kingdom, God uses words to usher in the new age, to change the means by which He works, and to do the work of the entire age. This is the principle by which God works in the Age of Word. He became flesh to speak from different perspectives, so that man could truly see God, who is the Word appearing in the flesh, and could behold His wisdom and wondrousness. Such work is done in order better to achieve the goals of conquering man, perfecting man, and eliminating man, which is the true meaning of the use of words to work in the Age of Word. Through these words, people come to know the work of God, the disposition of God, the substance of man, and what man ought to enter into. Through words, the work God wishes to do in the Age of Word is brought to fruition in its entirety. Through these words, people are exposed, eliminated, and tried. People have seen God's words, heard these words, and recognized the existence of these words. As a result, they have come to believe in the existence of God, in the omnipotence and wisdom of God, as well as in God's love for man and His desire to save man. The word "words" may be simple and ordinary, but the words spoken from the mouth of the incarnate God shake the universe, they transform people's hearts, transform their notions and old dispositions, and transform the way the whole world used to appear. Through the ages, only the God of today has worked in this way, and only He speaks thus and comes to save man thus. From this time forward, man lives under the guidance of God's words, shepherded and supplied by His words. People live in the world of God's words, amid the curses and the blessings of God's words, and there are even more people who have come to live under the judgment and chastisement of His words. These words and this work are all for the sake of man's salvation, for the sake of fulfilling God's will, and for the sake of changing the original appearance of the world of old creation. God created the world using words, He leads people throughout the universe using words, and He conquers and saves them using words. Ultimately, He shall use words to bring the entire world of old to an end, thus completing the entirety of His management plan.

Excerpted from "The Age of Kingdom Is the Age of Word" in The Word Appears in the Flesh

Christ of the last days brings life, and brings the enduring and everlasting way of truth. This truth is the path by which man gains life, and it is the only path by which man shall know God and be approved by God. If you do not seek the way of life provided by Christ of the last

days, then you shall never gain the approval of Jesus, and shall never be qualified to enter the gate of the kingdom of heaven, for you are both a puppet and prisoner of history. Those who are controlled by regulations, by letters, and shackled by history will never be able to gain life nor gain the perpetual way of life. This is because all they have is turbid water which has been clung to for thousands of years instead of the water of life that flows from the throne. Those who are not supplied with the water of life will forever remain corpses, playthings of Satan, and sons of hell. How, then, can they behold God? If you only try to hold on to the past, only try to keep things as they are by standing still, and do not try to change the status quo and discard history, then will you not always be against God? The steps of God's work are vast and mighty, like surging waves and rolling thunders—yet you sit passively awaiting destruction, clinging to your folly and doing nothing. In this way, how can you be considered someone who follows the footsteps of the Lamb? How can you justify the God that you hold on to as a God who is always new and never old? And how can the words of your yellowed books carry you across into a new age? How can they lead you to seek the steps of God's work? And how can they take you up to heaven? What you hold in your hands are letters that can provide but temporary solace, not truths that are capable of giving life. The scriptures you read can only enrich your tongue and are not words of wisdom that can help you know human life, much less the paths that can lead you to perfection. Does this discrepancy not give you cause for reflection? Does it not make you realize the mysteries contained within? Are you capable of delivering yourself to heaven to meet God on your own? Without the coming of God, can you take yourself into heaven to enjoy family happiness with God? Are you still dreaming now? I suggest, then, that you stop dreaming and look at who is working now—look to see who is now carrying out the work of saving man during the last days. If you do not, you shall never gain the truth, and shall never gain life.

Excerpted from “Only Christ of the Last Days Can Give Man the Way of Eternal Life” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

3. The truths expressed by Almighty God in the last days are the way of eternal life
Bible Verses for Reference:

“I have yet many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. However, when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will show you things to come” (Jhn 16:12–13).

“He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches; He that overcomes shall not be hurt of the second death” (Rev 2:11).

Relevant Words of God:

Only Christ of the Last Days Can Give Man the Way of Eternal Life

(A Selected Chapter of God’s Word)

The way of life is not something that anyone can possess, nor is it something anyone can attain easily. This is because life can only come from God, which is to say, only God Himself possesses the essence of life, and only God Himself has the way of life. And so only God is the source of life, and the ever-flowing wellspring of living water of life. Ever since He created the world, God has done much work involving the vitality of life, has done much work that brings life to man, and has paid a great price so that man might gain life. This is because God Himself is eternal life, and God Himself is the way by which man is resurrected. God is never absent from the heart of man, and He lives among man at all times. He has been the driving force of man’s living, the root of man’s existence, and a rich deposit for man’s existence after birth. He causes man to be reborn, and enables him to tenaciously live out his every role. Thanks to His power and His inextinguishable life force, man has lived for generation after generation, throughout which the power of God’s life has been the mainstay of man’s existence, and for which God has paid a price that no ordinary man has ever paid. God’s life force can prevail over any power; moreover, it exceeds any power. His life is eternal, His power extraordinary, and His life force cannot be overwhelmed by any created being or enemy force. The life force of God exists and shines its brilliant radiance regardless of time or place. Heaven and earth may undergo great changes, but God’s life is forever the same. All things may pass away, but God’s life will still remain, for God is the source of the existence of all things and the root of their

existence. Man's life originates from God, the existence of heaven is because of God, and the existence of earth stems from the power of God's life. No object possessed of vitality can transcend the sovereignty of God, and no thing with vigor can elude the domain of God's authority. In this way, regardless of who they are, everyone must submit under the dominion of God, everyone must live under God's command, and no one can escape from His hands.

Perhaps what you now desire is to gain life, or perhaps you desire to gain the truth. Whatever the case, you wish to find God, to find the God that you can rely on, and who can provide you with eternal life. If you wish to gain eternal life, you must first understand the source of eternal life and must first know where God is. I have already said that only God is immutable life, and only God possesses the way of life. Since His life is immutable, it is thus eternal; since only God is the way of life, God Himself is thus the way of eternal life. As such, you should first understand where God is, and how to gain this way of eternal life. Let us now engage in fellowship on these two issues separately.

If you truly wish to gain the way of eternal life, and if you are voracious in your search for it, then first answer this question: Where is God today? Perhaps you would reply, "God lives in heaven, of course—He wouldn't be living in your home, would He?" Perhaps you might say that God obviously lives among all things. Or you might say that God lives in each person's heart, or that God is in the spiritual world. I don't deny any of this, but I must clarify the issue. It isn't totally correct to say that God lives in the heart of man, but neither is it entirely wrong. That is because, among believers in God, there are those whose belief is true and those whose belief is false, there are those of whom God approves and those of whom He disapproves, there are those who please Him and those whom He detests, and there are those whom He makes perfect and those whom He eliminates. And so I say that God lives in but a few people's hearts, and these people are undoubtedly those who truly believe in God, those of whom God approves, those who please Him, and those whom He makes perfect. They are the ones who are led by God. Since they are led by God, they are the people who have already heard and seen God's way of eternal life. Those whose belief in God is false, those who are not approved by God, those who are despised by God, those who are eliminated by God—they are bound to be rejected by God, are bound to remain without the way of life, and are bound to remain ignorant of where God is. In contrast, those who have God living in their hearts know where He is. They are the people unto whom God bestows the way of eternal life, and they are the ones who follow God. Now do

you know where God is? God is both in the heart of man and at man's side. He is not only in the spiritual world, and above all things, but even more on the earth upon which man exists. And so the arrival of the last days has taken the steps of God's work into new territory. God holds sovereignty over all things in the universe, and He is the mainstay of man in his heart, and moreover, He exists among man. Only in this way can He bring the way of life to mankind, and bring man into the way of life. God has come to earth, and lives among man, so that man may gain the way of life, and so that man may exist. At the same time, God also commands all things in the universe, so that they might cooperate with His management among man. And so, if you only acknowledge the doctrine that God is in heaven and in the heart of man, yet do not acknowledge the truth of God's existence among man, then you shall never gain life, and shall never gain the way of truth.

God Himself is life, and the truth, and His life and truth coexist. Those who are incapable of gaining the truth shall never gain life. Without the guidance, support, and provision of the truth, you shall only gain letters, doctrines, and, above all, death. God's life is ever-present, and His truth and life coexist. If you cannot find the source of truth, then you will not gain the nourishment of life; if you cannot gain the provision of life, then you will surely have no truth, and so apart from imaginations and notions, the entirety of your body shall be nothing but your flesh—your stench-ridden flesh. Know that the words of books do not count as life, the records of history cannot be feted as the truth, and the regulations of the past cannot serve as an account of words presently spoken by God. Only that which is expressed by God when He comes to earth and lives among man is the truth, life, God's will, and His current way of working. If you apply the records of words spoken by God during ages past to today, that makes you an archaeologist, and the best way of describing you is as an expert on historical heritage. That is because you always believe in traces of the work that God did in times past, only believe in the shadow of God left from when He previously worked among man, and only believe in the way that God gave to His followers in former times. You do not believe in the direction of God's work today, do not believe in the glorious countenance of God today, and do not believe in the way of truth presently expressed by God. And so you are undeniably a daydreamer who is completely out of touch with reality. If now you still cling to words that are incapable of bringing life to man, then you are a hopeless piece of deadwood,^[a] for you are too conservative, too intractable, too impervious to reason!

God become flesh is called Christ, and so the Christ that can give people the truth is called God. There is nothing excessive about this, for He possesses the essence of God, and possesses God's disposition, and wisdom in His work, that are unattainable by man. Those who call themselves Christ, yet cannot do the work of God, are frauds. Christ is not merely the manifestation of God on earth, but also the particular flesh assumed by God as He carries out and completes His work among man. This flesh cannot be supplanted by just any man, but is a flesh that can adequately bear God's work on earth, and express the disposition of God, and well represent God, and provide man with life. Sooner or later, those who impersonate Christ will all fall, for although they claim to be Christ, they possess none of the essence of Christ. And so I say that the authenticity of Christ cannot be defined by man, but is answered and decided by God Himself. In this way, if you truly wish to seek the way of life, you must first acknowledge it is by coming to earth that God performs the work of bestowing the way of life unto man, and you must acknowledge it is during the last days that He comes to earth to bestow the way of life unto man. This is not the past; it is happening today.

Christ of the last days brings life, and brings the enduring and everlasting way of truth. This truth is the path by which man gains life, and it is the only path by which man shall know God and be approved by God. If you do not seek the way of life provided by Christ of the last days, then you shall never gain the approval of Jesus, and shall never be qualified to enter the gate of the kingdom of heaven, for you are both a puppet and prisoner of history. Those who are controlled by regulations, by letters, and shackled by history will never be able to gain life nor gain the perpetual way of life. This is because all they have is turbid water which has been clung to for thousands of years instead of the water of life that flows from the throne. Those who are not supplied with the water of life will forever remain corpses, playthings of Satan, and sons of hell. How, then, can they behold God? If you only try to hold on to the past, only try to keep things as they are by standing still, and do not try to change the status quo and discard history, then will you not always be against God? The steps of God's work are vast and mighty, like surging waves and rolling thunders—yet you sit passively awaiting destruction, clinging to your folly and doing nothing. In this way, how can you be considered someone who follows the footsteps of the Lamb? How can you justify the God that you hold on to as a God who is always new and never old? And how can the words of your yellowed books carry you across into a new age? How can they lead you to seek the steps of God's work? And how can they take you up to

heaven? What you hold in your hands are letters that can provide but temporary solace, not truths that are capable of giving life. The scriptures you read can only enrich your tongue and are not words of wisdom that can help you know human life, much less the paths that can lead you to perfection. Does this discrepancy not give you cause for reflection? Does it not make you realize the mysteries contained within? Are you capable of delivering yourself to heaven to meet God on your own? Without the coming of God, can you take yourself into heaven to enjoy family happiness with God? Are you still dreaming now? I suggest, then, that you stop dreaming and look at who is working now—look to see who is now carrying out the work of saving man during the last days. If you do not, you shall never gain the truth, and shall never gain life.

Those who wish to gain life without relying on the truth spoken by Christ are the most ridiculous people on earth, and those who do not accept the way of life brought by Christ are lost in fantasy. And so I say that those who do not accept Christ of the last days shall forever be despised by God. Christ is man's gateway to the kingdom during the last days, and there are none who can go around Him. None may be perfected by God except through Christ. You believe in God, and so you must accept His words and obey His way. You cannot only think of gaining blessings while being incapable of receiving the truth and incapable of accepting the provision of life. Christ comes during the last days so that all those who truly believe in Him may be provided with life. His work is for the sake of concluding the old age and entering the new one, and His work is the path that must be taken by all those who would enter the new age. If you are incapable of acknowledging Him, and instead condemn, blaspheme, or even persecute Him, then you are bound to burn for eternity and shall never enter the kingdom of God. For this Christ is Himself the expression of the Holy Spirit, the expression of God, the One whom God has entrusted to do His work on earth. And so I say that if you cannot accept all that is done by Christ of the last days, then you blaspheme the Holy Spirit. The retribution to be had by those who blaspheme the Holy Spirit is self-evident to all. I also tell you that if you resist Christ of the last days, if you spurn Christ of the last days, there will be no one else to bear the consequences on your behalf. Furthermore, from this day onward you will not have another chance to gain the approval of God; even if you try to redeem yourself, you will never again behold the face of God. For what you resist is not a man, what you spurn is not some puny being, but Christ. Do you know what the consequences of this will be? You will not have made a small mistake, but committed a heinous crime. And so I advise everyone not to bare your fangs before the truth,

or make careless criticisms, for only the truth can bring you life, and nothing except the truth can allow you to be reborn and behold the face of God again.

from The Word Appears in the Flesh

Footnotes:

a. A piece of deadwood: a Chinese idiom, meaning “beyond help.”

VIII. Differences Between the Work of God and the Work of Man

1. The essential differences between the work of God and the work of man

Relevant Words of God:

The work of God Himself involves the work of all of mankind, and it also represents the work of the entire era, which means that God’s own work represents every dynamic and trend of the work of the Holy Spirit, whereas the work of the apostles comes after God’s own work and follows from it, and it does not lead the era, nor does it represent trends of the Holy Spirit’s work in a whole era. They only do the work man ought to do, which has nothing at all to do with the management work. The work God does Himself is a project within the management work. Man’s work is only the duty that people who are used fulfill, and it is unrelated to the management work. Despite the fact that they are both the work of the Holy Spirit, due to differences in identities and representations of the work, there are clear and essential differences between God’s own work and the work of man. Moreover, the extent of the work done by the Holy Spirit varies on objects with different identities. These are the principles and scope of the work of the Holy Spirit.

Excerpted from “God’s Work and Man’s Work” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

The incarnate God is essentially different from the people used by God. The incarnate God is able to do the work of divinity, whereas the people used by God are not. At the beginning of each age, God’s Spirit speaks personally and launches the new era to bring man into a new beginning. When He has finished speaking, this signifies that God’s work within His divinity is

done. Thereafter, people all follow the lead of those used by God to enter into their life experience.

Excerpted from “The Essential Difference Between the Incarnate God and the People Used by God” in The
Word Appears in the Flesh

The work of God incarnate begins a new era, and those who continue His work are those who are used by Him. The work done by man is all within the ministry of God in the flesh, and it is incapable of going beyond this scope. If God incarnate had not come to do His work, man would not be able to bring the old age to an end and would not be able to usher in a new era. The work done by man is merely within the range of his duty that is humanly possible to do, and it does not represent the work of God. Only the incarnate God can come and complete the work that He should do and, besides Him, no one can do this work on His behalf. Of course, what I speak of is in regard to the work of incarnation.

Excerpted from “Corrupt Mankind Is More in Need of the Salvation of the Incarnate God” in The Word
Appears in the Flesh

Even a man who is used by the Holy Spirit cannot represent God Himself. This is not only to say that such a man cannot represent God, but also that the work he does cannot directly represent God. In other words, human experience cannot be placed directly within the management of God, and it cannot represent the management of God. The work that God Himself does is entirely the work He intends to do in His own management plan and it pertains to the great management. The work done by man consists of supplying their individual experience. It consists of finding out a new path of experience beyond that trodden by those who have gone before, and of guiding their brothers and sisters while under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. What these people supply is their individual experience or the spiritual writings of spiritual people. Although these people are used by the Holy Spirit, the work they do is unrelated to the great work of management in the six-thousand-year plan. They are merely those who have been raised up by the Holy Spirit in different periods to lead the people in the stream of the Holy Spirit, until the functions they can perform are at an end or until their lives come to an end. The work they do is only to prepare an appropriate path for God Himself or to continue a certain aspect of the management of God Himself on earth. In themselves, these

people are unable to do the greater work of His management, nor can they open up new ways out, even less can any of them bring to a conclusion all of God's work from the former age. Therefore, the work they do represents only a created being performing his function and cannot represent God Himself performing His ministry. This is because the work they do is unlike that done by God Himself. The work of ushering in a new age is not something that can be done by man in God's place. It cannot be done by any other than God Himself. All the work done by man consists of performing his duty as a created being and is done when he is moved or enlightened by the Holy Spirit. The guidance that these people provide consists entirely of showing man the path of practice in daily life and how he should act in harmony with the will of God. The work of man neither involves the management of God nor represents the work of the Spirit. As an example, the work of Witness Lee and Watchman Nee was to lead the way. Be the way new or old, the work was premised upon the principle of remaining within the Bible. Whether it was to restore the local church or build the local church, their work had to do with establishing churches. The work they did carried on the work that Jesus and His apostles had left unfinished or had not further developed in the Age of Grace. What they did in their work was to restore what Jesus had in His early work asked of the generations coming after Him, such as keeping their heads covered, receiving baptism, breaking bread, or drinking wine. It could be said that their work was to keep to the Bible and to seek paths within the Bible. They made no new advances of any kind. Therefore, one can see in their work only the discovery of new ways within the Bible, as well as better and more realistic practices. But one cannot find in their work the present will of God, much less find the new work that God in the last days plans to do. This is because the path they walked was still an old one—there was no renewal and no advancement. They continued to hold onto the fact of the crucifixion of Jesus, to observe the practice of asking people to repent and confess their sins, to adhere to the sayings that he who endures to the end shall be saved and that man is the head of woman, and woman must obey her husband, and even more to the traditional notion that sisters cannot preach, but only obey. If such manner of leadership had continued to be observed, the Holy Spirit would never have been able to carry out new work, to set people free from doctrine, or to lead them into a realm of freedom and beauty. Therefore, this stage of work, which changes the age, must be done and spoken by God Himself; otherwise no man can do so in His stead. Thus far, all the work of the Holy Spirit outside of this stream has come to a standstill, and those who were used by the Holy Spirit have

lost their bearings. Therefore, since the work of the people used by the Holy Spirit is unlike the work done by God Himself, their identities and the subjects on behalf of whom they act are likewise different. This is because the work the Holy Spirit intends to do is different, and on this account those who alike do work are accorded different identities and statuses. The people used by the Holy Spirit may also do some work that is new and may also eliminate some work done in the former age, but what they do cannot express the disposition and the will of God in the new age. They work only to do away with the work of the former age, and not in order to do new work for the purpose of directly representing the disposition of God Himself. Thus, no matter how many outdated practices they abolish or how many new practices they introduce, they still represent man and created beings. When God Himself carries out work, however, He does not openly declare the abolishment of the practices of the old age or directly declare the commencement of a new age. He is direct and straightforward in His work. He is forthright in performing the work He intends to do; that is, He directly expresses the work that He has brought about, directly does His work as originally intended, expressing His being and disposition. As man sees it, His disposition and so too His work differ from those in ages past. However, from the perspective of God Himself, this is merely a continuation and further development of His work. When God Himself works, He expresses His word and directly brings the new work. In contrast, when man works, it is through deliberation and study, or it is an extension of knowledge and systematization of practice founded on the work of others. That is to say, the essence of the work done by man is to follow an established order and to “walk old paths in new shoes.” This means that even the path walked by the people used by the Holy Spirit is built upon that launched by God Himself. So, when all is said and done, man is still man, and God is still God.

Excerpted from “The Mystery of the Incarnation (1)” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

When the prophets and those people used by the Holy Spirit spoke and worked, this was to carry out the duties of man, it was to serve the function of a created being, and it was something that man ought to do. However, the words and the work of God incarnate were to carry out His ministry. Though His external form was that of a created being, His work was not to carry out His function but His ministry. The term “duty” is used with regard to created beings, whereas “ministry” is used with regard to the flesh of God incarnate. There is a substantive

difference between the two; they are not interchangeable. The work of man is only to do his duty, whereas the work of God is to manage, and to carry out His ministry. Therefore, though many apostles were used by the Holy Spirit and many prophets were filled with Him, their work and words were merely to perform their duty as created beings. Their prophecies may have exceeded the way of life spoken of by God incarnate, and their humanity may have even transcended that of God incarnate, but they were still doing their duty, and not fulfilling a ministry. The duty of man refers to the function of man; it is what is attainable by man. However, the ministry carried out by God incarnate is related to His management, and this is unattainable by man. Whether God incarnate speaks, works, or manifests wonders, He is doing great work amidst His management, and such work cannot be done by man in His stead. The work of man is only to do his duty as a created being in a given stage of God's work of management. Without God's management, that is, if the ministry of God incarnate were to be lost, the duty of a created being would be lost. God's work in carrying out His ministry is to manage man, whereas man's performance of his duty is the fulfillment of his own obligation to meet the demands of the Creator, and can in no way be considered the carrying out of one's ministry. To the inherent substance of God—to His Spirit—the work of God is His management, but to God incarnate, who wears the external form of a created being, His work is the carrying out of His ministry. Whatever work He does is to carry out His ministry; all that man can do is to give his best within the scope of God's management and under His guidance.

Excerpted from "The Difference Between the Ministry of God Incarnate and the Duty of Man" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Some people will ask, "What is the difference between the work done by God incarnate and that of the prophets and apostles of times past? David was also called the Lord, and so too was Jesus; although the work they did was different, they were called the same thing. Tell me, why were their identities not the same? What John witnessed was a vision, one that also came from the Holy Spirit, and he was able to say the words that the Holy Spirit intended to say; why was the identity of John different from that of Jesus?" The words spoken by Jesus were able to fully represent God, and they fully represented the work of God. What John saw was a vision, and he was incapable of completely representing the work of God. Why is it that John, Peter, and Paul spoke many words, as Jesus did, and yet they did not have the same identity as Jesus? It is

chiefly because the work they did was different. Jesus represented the Spirit of God and was the Spirit of God working directly. He did the work of the new age, the work that no one had done before. He opened up a new way, He represented Jehovah, and He represented God Himself, whereas with Peter, Paul, and David, regardless of what they were called, they only represented the identity of a creature of God, and were sent by Jesus or Jehovah. So no matter how much work they did, no matter how great the miracles they performed, they were still just creatures of God, and incapable of representing the Spirit of God. They worked in the name of God or worked after being sent by God; furthermore, they worked in the ages begun by Jesus or Jehovah, and they did no other work. They were, after all, merely creatures of God.

Excerpted from "Concerning Appellations and Identity" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

In the Age of Grace, Jesus also spoke many words and did much work. How was He different from Isaiah? How was He different from Daniel? Was He a prophet? Why is it said that He is Christ? What are the differences between them? They were all men who spoke words, and their words appeared more or less the same to man. They all spoke words and did work. The prophets of the Old Testament spoke prophecies, and similarly, so could Jesus. Why is this so? The distinction here is based on the nature of the work. To discern this matter, you must not consider the nature of the flesh, nor should you consider the depth or superficiality of their words. Always you must first consider their work and the effects their work achieves in man. The prophecies spoken by the prophets at the time did not supply the life of man, and the inspirations received by those such as Isaiah and Daniel were merely prophecies, and not the way of life. If not for the direct revelation of Jehovah, none could have done that work, which is not possible for mortals. Jesus, too, spoke many words, but such words were the way of life from which man could find a path to practice. That is to say, first, He could supply the life of man, for Jesus is life; second, He could reverse the deviations of man; third, His work could succeed that of Jehovah in order to carry on the age; fourth, He could grasp the needs within man and understand what man lacks; fifth, He could usher in a new age and conclude the old. That is why He is called God and Christ; not only is He different from Isaiah but also from all other prophets. Take Isaiah as a comparison for the work of the prophets. First, he could not supply the life of man; second, he could not usher in a new age. He was working under the leadership of Jehovah and not to usher in a new age. Third, the words he spoke were beyond

him. He was receiving revelations directly from the Spirit of God, and others would not understand, even having listened to them. These few things alone are sufficient to prove that his words were no more than prophecies, no more than an aspect of work done in Jehovah's stead. He could not, however, completely represent Jehovah. He was Jehovah's servant, an instrument in Jehovah's work. He was only doing work within the Age of Law and within the scope of the work of Jehovah; he did not work beyond the Age of Law. On the contrary, the work of Jesus differed. He surpassed the scope of Jehovah's work; He worked as God incarnate and underwent crucifixion in order to redeem all mankind. That is to say, He carried out new work outside of the work done by Jehovah. This was the ushering in of a new age. In addition, He was able to speak of that which man could not achieve. His work was work within the management of God and involved the whole of mankind. He did not work in just a few men, nor was His work meant to lead a limited number of men. As for how God was incarnated as a man, how the Spirit gave revelations at that time, and how the Spirit descended upon a man to do work—these are matters that man cannot see or touch. It is utterly impossible for these truths to serve as proof that He is God incarnate. As such, distinction can only be made among the words and work of God, which are tangible to man. Only this is real. This is because matters of the Spirit are not visible to you and are known clearly only by God Himself, and not even God's incarnate flesh knows all; you can only verify whether He is God from the work He has done. From His work, it can be seen that, first, He is able to open up a new age; second, He is able to supply the life of man and show man the way to follow. This is sufficient to establish that He is God Himself. At the very least, the work He does can fully represent the Spirit of God, and from such work it can be seen that the Spirit of God is within Him. As the work done by God incarnate was mainly to usher in a new age, lead new work, and open up a new realm, these alone are sufficient to establish that He is God Himself. This thus differentiates Him from Isaiah, Daniel, and the other great prophets.

Excerpted from "The Difference Between the Ministry of God Incarnate and the Duty of Man" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The work in the stream of the Holy Spirit, whether it is God's own work or the work of people being used, is the work of the Holy Spirit. The essence of God Himself is the Spirit, which can be called the Holy Spirit or the sevenfold intensified Spirit. All in all, They are the Spirit of

God, though the Spirit of God has been called different names in different eras. Their essence is still one. Therefore, the work of God Himself is the work of the Holy Spirit, while the work of the incarnate God is nothing less than the Holy Spirit at work. The work of people who are used is also the work of the Holy Spirit. Yet the work of God is the complete expression of the Holy Spirit, which is absolutely true, whereas the work of people being used is mixed with many human things, and is not the direct expression of the Holy Spirit, let alone His complete expression.

Excerpted from "God's Work and Man's Work" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

My speech represents My being, but what I say is beyond the reach of man. What I say is not that which man experiences, and it is not something that man can see; it is also not something that man can touch, but is what I am. Some people acknowledge only that what I fellowship is what I have experienced, but they do not recognize that it is the direct expression of the Spirit. Of course, what I say is what I have experienced. It is I who have done the management work for six thousand years. I have experienced everything from the beginning of the creation of mankind until now; how would I be unable to discuss that? When it comes to man's nature, I have seen clearly; I observed it long ago. How would I be unable to talk clearly about it? Since I have seen the substance of man clearly, I am qualified to chastise man and judge him, because all of man came from Me but has been corrupted by Satan. Of course, I am also qualified to assess the work I have done. Although this work is not done by My flesh, it is the direct expression of the Spirit, and this is what I have and what I am. Therefore, I am qualified to express it and to do the work I ought to do. What people say is what they have experienced. It is what they have seen, what their minds can reach, and what their senses can detect. That is what they can fellowship. The words spoken by God's incarnate flesh are the direct expression of the Spirit and they express the work that has been done by the Spirit, which the flesh has not experienced or seen, yet He still expresses His being, for the essence of the flesh is the Spirit, and He expresses the work of the Spirit. It is work already done by the Spirit, though it is beyond the reach of the flesh. After incarnation, through the expression of the flesh, He enables people to know God's being and allows people to see God's disposition and the work that He has done. The work of man gives people greater clarity about what they should enter into and what they should understand; it involves leading people toward understanding and

experiencing the truth. Man's work is to sustain people; God's work is to open up new paths and new eras for mankind, and to reveal to people that which is not known by mortals, enabling them to know His disposition. God's work is to lead all of mankind.

Excerpted from "God's Work and Man's Work" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The work of man signifies his experience and his humanity. What man provides and the work he does represent him. Man's insight, man's reasoning, man's logic, and his rich imagination are all included in his work. Man's experience is particularly able to signify his work, and a person's experiences become the components of his work. Man's work can express his experience. When some people experience negatively, most of the language of their fellowship will consist of negative elements. If their experience for a period of time is positive and they are especially possessed of a path in the positive aspect, their fellowship is very encouraging, and people can obtain positive provisions from them. If a worker becomes negative for a period of time, his fellowship will always carry negative elements. This kind of fellowship is depressing, and others will unconsciously become depressed after his fellowship. The state of followers changes depending on that of the leader. Whatever a worker is like inside, that is what he expresses, and the work of the Holy Spirit often changes with man's state. He works according to people's experience and does not force them, but makes demands of people according to the normal course of their experience. This is to say that man's fellowship differs from the word of God. What people fellowship conveys their individual insights and experience, expressing their insights and experience on the basis of God's work. Their responsibility is to find out, after God works or speaks, what of it they ought to practice or enter into, and then to deliver it to followers. Therefore, man's work represents his entry and practice. Of course, such work is mixed with human lessons and experience or some human thoughts. However the Holy Spirit works, whether on man or in God incarnate, the workers always express what they are. Though it is the Holy Spirit who works, the work is founded on what man inherently is, because the Holy Spirit does not work without foundation. In other words, the work does not come from nothing, but is always done in accord with actual circumstances and real conditions. Only in this way can man's disposition be transformed and his old notions and old thoughts be changed. What man expresses is what he sees, experiences, and can imagine, and it is attainable by man's thinking, even if it is doctrine or notions. Man's work cannot exceed the scope of man's

experience, nor what man sees, nor what man can imagine or conceive, regardless of the size of that work. All God expresses is what He Himself is, and this is unattainable by man—that is, beyond the reach of man’s thinking. He expresses His work of leading all mankind, and this is unrelated to the details of human experience, but is concerned instead with His own management. What man expresses is his experience, while what God expresses is His being, which is His inherent disposition, beyond the reach of man. Man’s experience is his insight and knowledge acquired on the basis of God’s expression of His being. Such insight and knowledge are called man’s being, and the basis of their expression is man’s inherent disposition and caliber—this is why they are also called man’s being. Man is able to fellowship what he experiences and sees. No one can fellowship that which they have not experienced, have not seen, or their thinking cannot reach, those being things they do not have inside of them. If what man expresses is not from his experience, it is then his imagination or doctrine. Simply put, there is no reality in his words. Were you never to come into contact with the things of society, you would not be able to fellowship clearly the complex relationships of society. If you had no family, were others to talk about family issues, you would not understand most of what they said. So, what man fellowships and the work he does represent his inner being.

Excerpted from “God’s Work and Man’s Work” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The work of man stays within a range and is limited. One person can only do work of a certain phase and cannot do the work of the entire era—otherwise, he would lead people into the midst of rules. The work of man can only apply to a particular time or phase. This is because man’s experience has its scope. One cannot compare the work of man with the work of God. Man’s ways of practice and his knowledge of the truth are all applicable to a particular scope. You cannot say that the path man treads is completely the will of the Holy Spirit, because man can only be enlightened by the Holy Spirit, and cannot be completely filled with the Holy Spirit. The things man can experience are all within the scope of normal humanity and cannot exceed the range of thoughts in the normal human mind. All those who can live out truth reality experience within this range. When they experience the truth, it is always an experience of normal human life enlightened by the Holy Spirit; it is not a way of experiencing that deviates from normal human life. They experience the truth enlightened by the Holy Spirit on the foundation of living their human lives. Moreover, this truth varies from person to person, and

its depth is related to the state of the person. One can only say that the path they walk is the normal human life of someone pursuing the truth, and it may be called the path walked by a normal person enlightened by the Holy Spirit. One cannot say that the path they walk is the path the Holy Spirit takes. In normal human experience, because people who pursue are not the same, the work of the Holy Spirit is also not the same. In addition, because the environments people experience and the ranges of their experience are not the same, and because of the admixture of their mind and thoughts, their experience is mixed to different degrees. Each person understands a truth according to their different, individual conditions. Their understanding of the real meaning of the truth is not complete and is only one or several aspects of it. The scope of the truth man experiences differs from person to person in line with each person's conditions. In this way, the knowledge of the same truth, as expressed by different people, is not the same. This is to say, man's experience always has limitations and cannot completely represent the will of the Holy Spirit, nor can the work of man be perceived as the work of God, even if what is expressed by man corresponds very closely to God's will, and even if the experience of man is very close to the perfecting work that the Holy Spirit performs. Man can only be God's servant, doing the work that God entrusts to him. Man can only express knowledge enlightened by the Holy Spirit and truths obtained from his personal experiences. Man is unqualified and does not meet the conditions to be the outlet of the Holy Spirit. He is not entitled to say that his work is the work of God. Man has man's working principles, and all men have different experiences and possess varying conditions. Man's work includes all his experiences under the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit. These experiences can only represent man's being and do not represent the being of God or the will of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, the path man walks cannot be said to be the path walked by the Holy Spirit, because the work of man cannot represent the work of God, and man's work and man's experience are not the complete will of the Holy Spirit.

Excerpted from "God's Work and Man's Work" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Man's work is susceptible to falling into rules, and the method of his work is easily confined to a limited scope, and is unable to lead people to a free way. Most followers live within a limited scope, and their way of experiencing is also limited in its scope. Man's experience is always limited; the method of his work is also limited to a few types and cannot be compared with the

work of the Holy Spirit or the work of God Himself. This is because man's experience, in the end, is limited. However God does His work, it is unbound by rules; however it is done, it is not limited to a single method. There are no rules whatsoever to God's work—all His work is released and free. No matter how much time man spends following Him, he cannot distill any laws that govern God's ways of working. Although His work is principled, it is always done in new ways and always has new developments, and it is beyond man's reach. In a single period, God may have several different types of work and different ways of leading people, making it so people always have new entries and changes. You cannot discern the laws of His work because He is always working in new ways, and only thus do followers of God not become bound by rules. The work of God Himself always avoids people's notions and counters them. Only those who follow and pursue Him with a true heart can have their dispositions transformed and be able to live freely, not subjected to any rules or restrained by any religious notions. The work of man makes demands of people based on his own experience and what he himself can achieve. The standard of these requirements is limited within a certain scope, and the methods of practice are also very limited. Followers thus unconsciously live within this limited scope; as time passes, these things become rules and rituals. If the work of one period is led by someone who has not undergone God's personal perfecting and not received judgment, his followers will all become religionists and experts in resisting God. Therefore, if someone is a qualified leader, that person must have undergone judgment and accepted being perfected. Those who have not undergone judgment, even though they may have the work of the Holy Spirit, express only vague and unreal things. With time, they will lead people into vague and supernatural rules. The work that God performs does not accord with the flesh of man. It does not accord with man's thoughts, but counters man's notions; it is not tainted with vague religious colorings. The results of God's work cannot be achieved by someone who has not been perfected by Him; they are beyond the reach of man's thinking.

Excerpted from "God's Work and Man's Work" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

You must know how to differentiate God's work from the work of man. What can you see in the work of man? There are many elements of man's experience in his work; what man expresses is what he is. God's own work also expresses what He is, but His being is different from man's. Man's being represents man's experience and life (what man experiences or

encounters in his life, or the philosophies for living he has), and people living in different environments express different beings. Whether you have experiences of society and how you actually live in your family and experience within it can be seen in what you express, whereas you cannot see in the work of God incarnate whether He has social experiences. He is well aware of the substance of man and can reveal all kinds of practices pertaining to all kinds of people. He is even better at revealing the corrupt dispositions and the rebellious behavior of humans. He does not live among worldly people, but He is aware of the nature of mortals and all the corruptions of worldly people. This is His being. Though He does not deal with the world, He knows the rules of dealing with the world, because He understands human nature fully. He knows about the Spirit's work that man's eyes cannot see and man's ears cannot hear, both of today and of the past. This includes wisdom that is not a philosophy for living and wonders that are hard for people to fathom. This is His being, open to people and also hidden from people. What He expresses is not the being of an extraordinary person, but the inherent attributes and being of the Spirit. He does not travel the world but knows everything of it. He contacts the "anthropoids" who have no knowledge or insight, but He expresses words that are higher than knowledge and above great men. He lives within a group of obtuse and numb people who are without humanity and who do not understand the conventions and life of humanity, but He can ask mankind to live out normal humanity, at the same time revealing the base and low humanity of mankind. All this is His being, higher than the being of any flesh-and-blood person. For Him, it is unnecessary to experience a complicated, cumbersome, and sordid social life to do the work He needs to do and reveal the substance of corrupt mankind thoroughly. A sordid social life does not edify His flesh. His work and words only reveal man's disobedience and do not provide man with experience and lessons for dealing with the world. He does not need to investigate society or man's family when He supplies man with life. Exposing and judging man is not an expression of the experiences of His flesh; it is His revelation of man's unrighteousness after having known man's disobedience for a long time and abhorring mankind's corruption. The work He does is all meant to reveal His disposition to man and to express His being. Only He can do this work; it is not something a flesh-and-blood person could achieve. From His work, man cannot tell what kind of person He is. Man is also unable to classify Him as a created person on the basis of His work. His being also makes Him unclassifiable as a created person. Man can only consider Him a non-human, but does not know in which category to put Him, so man is

forced to list Him in the category of God. It is not unreasonable for man to do so, for God has done much work among people that man is unable to do.

Excerpted from "God's Work and Man's Work" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The work God does is not representative of the experience of His flesh; the work man does is representative of his experience. Everyone talks about their personal experience. God can express the truth directly, while man can only express the experience that corresponds to his having experienced the truth. God's work has no rules and is not subject to time or geographical constraints. He can express what He is at anytime, anywhere. He works as He pleases. Man's work has conditions and context; without them, he would be unable to work and unable to express his knowledge of God or his experience of the truth. To tell whether something is God's own work or man's work, you must simply compare the differences between the two. If there is no work done by God Himself and there is only the work of man, you will simply know that man's teachings are high, beyond the capacity of anyone else; their tones of speaking, their principles in handling things, and their experienced and steady manner in working are beyond the reach of others. You all admire these people of good caliber and lofty knowledge, but you cannot see from God's work and words how high His humanity is. Instead, He is ordinary, and, when working, He is normal and real yet also immeasurable by mortals, which therefore makes people feel a kind of reverence for Him. Perhaps a person's experience in his work is particularly advanced, or his imagination and reasoning are particularly advanced, and his humanity is particularly good; such attributes can only gain people's admiration, but not arouse their awe and fear. People all admire those who can work well, who have particularly deep experience, and who can practice the truth, but such people can never elicit awe, only admiration and envy. But people who have experienced God's work do not admire God; instead, they feel His work is beyond human reach and is unfathomable to man, that it is fresh and wonderful. When people experience God's work, their first knowledge of Him is that He is unfathomable, wise, and wonderful, and they unconsciously revere Him and feel the mystery of the work He does, which is beyond the ken of man's mind. People want only to be able to meet His requirements, to satisfy His desires; they do not wish to exceed Him, because the work He does goes beyond man's thinking and imagination and could not be done by man in His stead. Even man himself does not know his own inadequacies, yet God has forged a new path and has come to bring man

into a newer and more beautiful world, and so mankind has made new progress and has had a new start. What people feel for God is not admiration, or rather, is not only admiration. Their deepest experience is awe and love; their feeling is that God is indeed wonderful. He does work that man is unable to do and says things that man is unable to say. People who have experienced God's work always have an indescribable feeling. People of deep enough experience can understand the love of God; they can feel His loveliness, that His work is so wise, so wonderful, and thereby is infinite power generated among them. It is not fear or occasional love and respect, but a deep sense of God's compassion for man and tolerance of him. However, people who have experienced His chastisement and judgment sense His majesty and that He tolerates no offense. Even people who have experienced much of His work are unable to fathom Him; all who truly revere Him know that His work is not in line with people's notions but always goes against their notions. He does not need people to admire him wholly or present the appearance of submission to Him; rather, they should achieve true reverence and true submission. In so much of His work, anyone with true experience feels reverence for Him, which is higher than admiration. People have seen His disposition due to His work of chastisement and judgment, and they therefore revere Him in their hearts. God is meant to be revered and obeyed, because His being and His disposition are not the same as those of a created being and are above those of a created being. God is self-existent and everlasting, He is a non-created being, and only God is worthy of reverence and obedience; man is not qualified for this.

Excerpted from "God's Work and Man's Work" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

2. The differences between the work of those used by God and the work of religious leaders

Bible Verses for Reference:

"And Jesus answered and said to him, ... And I say also to you, That you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give to you the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatever you shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatever you shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (Mat 16:17-19).

“Thus said the Lord Jehovah to the shepherds; Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! should not the shepherds feed the flocks? You eat the fat, and you clothe you with the wool, you kill them that are fed: but you feed not the flock. The diseased have you not strengthened, neither have you healed that which was sick, neither have you bound up that which was broken, neither have you brought again that which was driven away, neither have you sought that which was lost; but with force and with cruelty have you ruled them. And they were scattered, because there is no shepherd: and they became meat to all the beasts of the field, when they were scattered. My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and on every high hill: yes, My flock was scattered on all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek after them” (Eze 34:2–6).

“But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for you neither go in yourselves, neither suffer you them that are entering to go in. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you devour widows’ houses, and for a pretense make long prayer: therefore you shall receive the greater damnation. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, you make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves” (Mat 23:13–15).

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought you to have done, and not to leave the other undone. You blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel” (Mat 23:23–24).

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like to white washed sepulchers, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men’s bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but within you are full of hypocrisy and iniquity” (Mat 23:27–28).

Relevant Words of God:

The work carried out by the one who is used by God is in order to cooperate with the work of Christ or the Holy Spirit. This man is raised up among man by God, he is there to lead all of God’s chosen ones, and he is also raised up by God in order to do the work of human cooperation. With someone such as this, who is able to do the work of human cooperation, more of God’s requirements toward man and the work that the Holy Spirit must do among man can be

achieved through him. Another way of putting it is like this: God's aim in using this man is so that all those who follow God can better understand God's will, and can attain more of God's requirements. Because people are incapable of directly understanding God's words or God's will, God has raised someone up who is used to carry out such work. This person who is used by God can also be described as a medium through which God guides people, as the "translator" who communicates between God and man. Thus, such a man is unlike any of those who work in God's household or who are His apostles. Like them, he can be said to be someone who serves God, yet in the essence of his work and the background of his use by God he differs greatly from the other workers and apostles. In terms of the essence of his work and the background of his use, the man who is used by God is raised up by Him, he is prepared by God for God's work, and he cooperates in the work of God Himself. No person could ever do his work in his stead—this is human cooperation that is indispensable alongside the divine work. The work carried out by other workers or apostles, meanwhile, is but the conveyance and implementation of the many aspects of the arrangements for the churches during each period, or else the work of some simple provision of life in order to maintain the church life. These workers and apostles are not appointed by God, much less can they be called those who are used by the Holy Spirit. They are selected from among the churches and, after they have been trained and cultivated for a period of time, those who are fit are kept on, while those who are unfit are sent back to where they came from. Because these people are selected from among the churches, some show their true colors after becoming leaders, and some even do many bad things and end up being eliminated. The man who is used by God, on the other hand, is someone who has been prepared by God, and who possesses a certain caliber, and has humanity. He has been prepared and made perfect in advance by the Holy Spirit, and is completely led by the Holy Spirit, and, particularly when it comes to his work, he is directed and commanded by the Holy Spirit—as a result of this there is no deviation on the path of leading God's chosen ones, for God surely takes responsibility for His own work, and God does His own work at all times.

Excerpted from "Concerning God's Use of Man" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Work in the mind of man is too easy for man to achieve. Pastors and leaders in the religious world, for example, rely on their gifts and positions to do their work. People who follow them for a long time will be infected by their gifts and influenced by some of their being. They focus

on people's gifts, abilities and knowledge, and they pay attention to supernatural things and many profound, unrealistic doctrines (of course, these profound doctrines are unattainable). They do not focus on changes in people's dispositions, but rather on training people to preach and work, improving people's knowledge and their abundant religious doctrines. They do not focus on how much people's disposition is changed nor on how much people understand of the truth. They do not concern themselves with people's essence, and much less do they try to know people's normal and abnormal states. They do not counter people's notions, nor do they reveal their notions, much less do they prune people for their deficiencies or corruptions. Most who follow them serve with their gifts, and all they release is religious notions and theological theories, which are out of touch with reality and completely unable to confer life onto people. In fact, the essence of their work is nurturing talent, nurturing a person with nothing into a talented seminary graduate who later goes on to work and lead.

Excerpted from "God's Work and Man's Work" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

You serve God with your natural character, and according to your personal preferences. What's more, you always think that the things you are willing to do are what are delightful to God, and that the things you do not wish to do are what are hateful to God; you work entirely according to your own preferences. Can this be called serving God? Ultimately, there will not be the slightest change in your life disposition; instead, your service will make you even more stubborn, thus deeply ingraining your corrupt disposition, and as such, there will be formed within you rules about service to God that are primarily based on your own character, and experiences derived from your service according to your own disposition. These are the experiences and lessons of man. It is man's philosophy of living in the world. People like this can be classed as Pharisees and religious officials. If they never wake up and repent, then they will surely turn into the false Christs and the antichrists who deceive people in the last days. The false Christs and the antichrists that were spoken of will arise from among such people. If those who serve God follow their own character and act according to their own will, they run the risk of being cast out at any time. Those who apply their many years of experience acquired to serving God in order to win the hearts of others, to lecture them and control them, and to stand on high—and who never repent, never confess their sins, never renounce the benefits of position—these people shall fall before God. They are of the same kind as Paul, presuming upon

their seniority and flaunting their qualifications. God will not bring people like this to perfection. Such service interferes with the work of God.

Excerpted from “Religious Service Must Be Purged” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Look at the leaders of each denomination—they are all arrogant and self-righteous, and their interpretations of the Bible lack context and are guided by their own imaginings. They all rely on gifts and erudition to do their work. If they could not preach at all, would people follow them? They do, after all, possess some knowledge and can preach on some doctrine, or they know how to win others over and make use of some artifice. They use these to bring people before themselves and deceive them. Nominally, those people believe in God, but in reality, they follow their leaders. When they encounter someone preaching the true way, some of them say, “We have to consult our leader about our faith.” A human is the medium of their faith in God; is that not a problem? What have those leaders become, then? Have they not become Pharisees, false shepherds, antichrists, and stumbling blocks to people’s acceptance of the true way?

Excerpted from “Only to Pursue the Truth Is Truly to Believe in God” in *Records of Christ’s Talks*

There are those who read the Bible in grand churches and recite it all day long, yet not one among them understands the purpose of God’s work. Not one among them is able to know God; still less can any one among them accord with God’s will. They are all worthless, vile people, each standing on high to lecture God. They willfully oppose God even as they carry His banner. Claiming faith in God, still they eat the flesh and drink the blood of man. All such people are devils that devour the soul of man, head demons that deliberately get in the way of those trying to step onto the right path, and stumbling blocks impeding those who seek God. They may appear of “sound constitution,” but how are their followers to know that they are none other than antichrists who lead people to stand against God? How are their followers to know that they are living devils dedicated to the devouring of human souls? Those who hold themselves in high esteem in God’s presence are the most abject of men, while those who humble themselves are the most honored. And those who think they know the work of God and who are, moreover, capable of proclaiming the work of God to others with great fanfare even as they look directly at Him—these are the most ignorant of men. Such people are without the testimony of God, arrogant and full of conceit. Those who believe that they have too little knowledge of God,

despite having actual experience and practical knowledge of Him, are those most beloved by Him. Only such people truly have testimony and are truly capable of being perfected by God. Those who do not understand the will of God are opponents of God; those who understand the will of God and yet do not practice the truth are opponents of God; those who eat and drink the words of God, and yet go against the essence of God's words, are opponents of God; those who have notions about the incarnate God, and moreover have a mind to engage in rebellion, are opponents of God; those who pass judgment on God are opponents of God; and whoever is unable to know God or to bear witness to Him is an opponent of God.

Excerpted from "All People Who Do Not Know God Are People Who Oppose God" in The Word Appears in
the Flesh

If you have believed in God for many years, and yet have never obeyed Him, and do not accept the entirety of His words, and instead ask that God submit to you and act according to your notions, then you are the most rebellious of all, you are a nonbeliever. How could such people be able to obey the work and words of God that do not conform to the notions of man? Most rebellious of all are those who intentionally defy and resist God. They are the enemies of God, the antichrists. Theirs is always an attitude of hostility toward the new work of God; they never have the slightest inclination to submit, nor have they ever gladly submitted or humbled themselves. They exalt themselves before others and never submit to anyone. Before God, they consider themselves the best at preaching the word, and the most skillful in working on others. Never do they discard the "treasures" in their possession, but treat them as family heirlooms for worship, for preaching about to others, and they use them to lecture those fools who idolize them. There are indeed a certain number of people like this in the church. It can be said that they are "indomitable heroes," generation after generation sojourning in the house of God. They take preaching the word (doctrine) to be their highest duty. Year after year, generation after generation, they go about vigorously enforcing their "sacred and inviolable" duty. None dare touch them; not a single person dares openly reproach them. They become "kings" in the house of God, running rampant as they tyrannize others from age to age. This pack of demons seeks to join hands and demolish My work; how can I allow these living devils to exist before My eyes?

Excerpted from "Those Who Obey God With a True Heart Shall Surely Be Gained by God" in The Word
Appears in the Flesh

3. Believers must be able to identify false shepherds and antichrists in order to cast off religion and return to God

Bible Verses for Reference:

“Thus said the Lord Jehovah to the shepherds; Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! should not the shepherds feed the flocks? You eat the fat, and you clothe you with the wool, you kill them that are fed: but you feed not the flock. The diseased have you not strengthened, neither have you healed that which was sick, neither have you bound up that which was broken, neither have you brought again that which was driven away, neither have you sought that which was lost; but with force and with cruelty have you ruled them. And they were scattered, because there is no shepherd: and they became meat to all the beasts of the field, when they were scattered. My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and on every high hill: yes, My flock was scattered on all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek after them” (Eze 34:2–6).

“Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves” (Mat 7:15).

“They be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch” (Mat 15:14).

“For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist” (2Jn 1:7).

“Hereby know you the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesses not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof you have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world” (1Jn 4:2–3).

Relevant Words of God:

Look at the leaders of each denomination—they are all arrogant and self-righteous, and their interpretations of the Bible lack context and are guided by their own imaginings. They all rely on gifts and erudition to do their work. If they could not preach at all, would people follow

them? They do, after all, possess some knowledge and can preach on some doctrine, or they know how to win others over and make use of some artifice. They use these to bring people before themselves and deceive them. Nominally, those people believe in God, but in reality, they follow their leaders. When they encounter someone preaching the true way, some of them say, “We have to consult our leader about our faith.” A human is the medium of their faith in God; is that not a problem? What have those leaders become, then? Have they not become Pharisees, false shepherds, antichrists, and stumbling blocks to people’s acceptance of the true way? Such people are of the same ilk as Paul. ...

Previously, believers in God might have followed a person, or they might not have satisfied God’s will; in this final stage, they will have to come before God. If your foundation is your experience of this stage of work, yet you continue to follow a person, then you are unforgivable, and will end up as Paul did.

Excerpted from “Only to Pursue the Truth Is Truly to Believe in God” in Records of Christ’s Talks

There are those who read the Bible in grand churches and recite it all day long, yet not one among them understands the purpose of God’s work. Not one among them is able to know God; still less can any one among them accord with God’s will. They are all worthless, vile people, each standing on high to lecture God. They willfully oppose God even as they carry His banner. Claiming faith in God, still they eat the flesh and drink the blood of man. All such people are devils that devour the soul of man, head demons that deliberately get in the way of those trying to step onto the right path, and stumbling blocks impeding those who seek God. They may appear of “sound constitution,” but how are their followers to know that they are none other than antichrists who lead people to stand against God? How are their followers to know that they are living devils dedicated to the devouring of human souls? Those who hold themselves in high esteem in God’s presence are the most abject of men, while those who humble themselves are the most honored. And those who think they know the work of God and who are, moreover, capable of proclaiming the work of God to others with great fanfare even as they look directly at Him—these are the most ignorant of men. Such people are without the testimony of God, arrogant and full of conceit. Those who believe that they have too little knowledge of God, despite having actual experience and practical knowledge of Him, are those most beloved by Him. Only such people truly have testimony and are truly capable of being perfected by God.

Those who do not understand the will of God are opponents of God; those who understand the will of God and yet do not practice the truth are opponents of God; those who eat and drink the words of God, and yet go against the essence of God's words, are opponents of God; those who have notions about the incarnate God, and moreover have a mind to engage in rebellion, are opponents of God; those who pass judgment on God are opponents of God; and whoever is unable to know God or to bear witness to Him is an opponent of God.

Excerpted from "All People Who Do Not Know God Are People Who Oppose God" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The work of a qualified worker can bring people to the right way and grant them greater entry into the truth. His work can bring people before God. In addition, the work he does can vary from individual to individual and is not bound by rules, allowing people liberation and freedom, and the capacity gradually to grow in life and to have a more profound entry into the truth. The work of an unqualified worker falls far short. His work is foolish. He can only bring people into rules, and what he demands of people does not vary from individual to individual; he does not work according to people's actual needs. In this type of work, there are too many rules and too many doctrines, and it cannot bring people into reality, nor into normal practice of growth in life. It can only enable people to adhere to a few worthless rules. Such guidance can only lead people astray. He leads you to become like him; he can bring you into what he has and is. For followers to discern whether leaders are qualified, the key is to look at the path on which they lead and the results of their work, and to see whether followers receive principles in accordance with the truth, and whether they receive ways of practice suitable for their transformation. You should distinguish between the different work of different types of people; you should not be a foolish follower. This bears on the matter of people's entry. If you are unable to distinguish which person's leadership has a path and which does not, you will easily be deceived. All of this has a direct bearing on your own life.

Excerpted from "God's Work and Man's Work" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Work in the mind of man is too easy for man to achieve. Pastors and leaders in the religious world, for example, rely on their gifts and positions to do their work. People who follow them for a long time will be infected by their gifts and influenced by some of their being. They focus

on people's gifts, abilities and knowledge, and they pay attention to supernatural things and many profound, unrealistic doctrines (of course, these profound doctrines are unattainable). They do not focus on changes in people's dispositions, but rather on training people to preach and work, improving people's knowledge and their abundant religious doctrines. They do not focus on how much people's disposition is changed nor on how much people understand of the truth. They do not concern themselves with people's essence, and much less do they try to know people's normal and abnormal states. They do not counter people's notions, nor do they reveal their notions, much less do they prune people for their deficiencies or corruptions. Most who follow them serve with their gifts, and all they release is religious notions and theological theories, which are out of touch with reality and completely unable to confer life onto people. In fact, the essence of their work is nurturing talent, nurturing a person with nothing into a talented seminary graduate who later goes on to work and lead.

Excerpted from "God's Work and Man's Work" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Many people behind My back covet the blessing of status, they gorge themselves on food, they love to sleep and give every care to the flesh, always afraid that there is no way out for the flesh. They do not perform their proper function in the church, but freeload off the church, or else they admonish their brothers and sisters with My words, lording themselves over others from positions of authority. These people keep saying they are doing God's will and always say they are God's intimates—is this not absurd? If you have the right intentions, but are unable to serve in accordance with God's will, then you are being foolish; but if your intentions are not right, and you still say you serve God, then you are someone who opposes God, and you ought to be punished by God! I have no sympathy for such people! In the house of God, they freeload, always coveting the comforts of the flesh, and give no consideration to the interests of God. They always seek what is good for them, and they pay no heed to God's will. They do not accept the scrutiny of God's Spirit in anything they do. They are always maneuvering and deceiving their brothers and sisters, and being two-faced, like a fox in a vineyard, always stealing grapes and trampling over the vineyard. Could such people be God's intimates? Are you fit to receive God's blessings? You take no burden for your life and the church, are you fit to receive God's commission? Who would dare trust someone like you? When you serve like this, could God dare to entrust you with a greater task? Would this not cause delays to the work?

Excerpted from “How to Serve in Harmony With God’s Will” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

You serve God with your natural character, and according to your personal preferences. What’s more, you always think that the things you are willing to do are what are delightful to God, and that the things you do not wish to do are what are hateful to God; you work entirely according to your own preferences. Can this be called serving God? Ultimately, there will not be the slightest change in your life disposition; instead, your service will make you even more stubborn, thus deeply ingraining your corrupt disposition, and as such, there will be formed within you rules about service to God that are primarily based on your own character, and experiences derived from your service according to your own disposition. These are the experiences and lessons of man. It is man’s philosophy of living in the world. People like this can be classed as Pharisees and religious officials. If they never wake up and repent, then they will surely turn into the false Christs and the antichrists who deceive people in the last days. The false Christs and the antichrists that were spoken of will arise from among such people. If those who serve God follow their own character and act according to their own will, they run the risk of being cast out at any time. Those who apply their many years of experience acquired to serving God in order to win the hearts of others, to lecture them and control them, and to stand on high—and who never repent, never confess their sins, never renounce the benefits of position—these people shall fall before God. They are of the same kind as Paul, presuming upon their seniority and flaunting their qualifications. God will not bring people like this to perfection. Such service interferes with the work of God.

Excerpted from “Religious Service Must Be Purged” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

Some people only arm themselves with certain truths for emergencies or to forsake themselves and help others, and not to solve their own troubles; we call them “selfless people.” They regard others as puppets of the truth and themselves as its masters, teaching others to hold fast to the truth and not to be passive, while they themselves remain as spectators on the sidelines. What kind of people are these? They arm themselves with some words of truth but merely use them to lecture others, while doing nothing at all to keep from meeting their own destruction. How pathetic! If their words can help others, then why can they not help themselves? We should label them as hypocrites who have no reality. They supply words of

truth to others and ask others to put them into practice, while making no effort to practice them themselves. Are they not despicable? They themselves clearly cannot do it, yet they force others to put the words of truth into practice—what a cruel method this is! They are not using reality to help others; they are not using love to provide for others. They are simply deceiving and harming people. If this continues, with each person passing the words of truth onto the next, then will this not end up with everyone merely speaking the words of truth while being incapable themselves of putting it into practice? How can such people change? They do not recognize their own problems at all; how can there be a path forward for them?

Excerpted from “Those Who Love the Truth Have a Path Forward” in Records of Christ’s Talks

When God becomes flesh and comes to work among men, all behold Him and hear His words, and all see the deeds that God works from within His body of flesh. At that moment, all man’s notions become foam. As for those who have seen God appearing in the flesh, they shall not be condemned if they willingly obey Him, whereas those who purposefully stand against Him shall be deemed an opponent of God. Such people are antichrists, enemies who willfully stand against God. Those who harbor notions regarding God but are still ready and willing to obey Him will not be condemned. God condemns man on the basis of man’s intentions and actions, never for his thoughts and ideas. If He were to condemn man on the basis of his thoughts and ideas, then not a single person would be able to escape from the wrathful hands of God. Those who willfully stand against the incarnate God shall be punished for their disobedience. With regard to these people that willfully stand against God, their opposition stems from the fact that they harbor notions about God, which leads them in turn into actions that disrupt God’s work. These people intentionally resist and destroy the work of God. They do not merely have notions about God, but they also engage in activities that disrupt His work, and for this reason people of this kind shall be condemned.

Excerpted from “All People Who Do Not Know God Are People Who Oppose God” in The Word Appears in
the Flesh

If you have believed in God for many years, and yet have never obeyed Him, and do not accept the entirety of His words, and instead ask that God submit to you and act according to your notions, then you are the most rebellious of all, you are a nonbeliever. How could such

people be able to obey the work and words of God that do not conform to the notions of man? Most rebellious of all are those who intentionally defy and resist God. They are the enemies of God, the antichrists. Theirs is always an attitude of hostility toward the new work of God; they never have the slightest inclination to submit, nor have they ever gladly submitted or humbled themselves. They exalt themselves before others and never submit to anyone. Before God, they consider themselves the best at preaching the word, and the most skillful in working on others. Never do they discard the “treasures” in their possession, but treat them as family heirlooms for worship, for preaching about to others, and they use them to lecture those fools who idolize them. There are indeed a certain number of people like this in the church. It can be said that they are “indomitable heroes,” generation after generation sojourning in the house of God. They take preaching the word (doctrine) to be their highest duty. Year after year, generation after generation, they go about vigorously enforcing their “sacred and inviolable” duty. None dare touch them; not a single person dares openly reproach them. They become “kings” in the house of God, running rampant as they tyrannize others from age to age. This pack of demons seeks to join hands and demolish My work; how can I allow these living devils to exist before My eyes?

Excerpted from “Those Who Obey God With a True Heart Shall Surely Be Gained by God” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Your opposition to God and obstruction of the work of the Holy Spirit is caused by your notions and inherent arrogance. It is not because God’s work is wrong, but because you are naturally too disobedient. After finding their belief in God, some people cannot even say with certainty where man came from, yet they dare to make public speeches appraising the rights and wrongs of the Holy Spirit’s work. They even lecture the apostles who have the Holy Spirit’s new work, passing comment and speaking out of turn; their humanity is too low, and there is not the slightest sense in them. Will the day not come when such people are rejected by the work of the Holy Spirit, and burned by the fires of hell? They do not know the work of God, but instead criticize His work, and also try to instruct God how to work. How can such unreasonable people know God? Man comes to know God during the process of seeking and experiencing; it is not through criticizing at whim that man comes to know God through the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit. The more accurate people’s knowledge of God becomes, the less they oppose Him. In contrast, the less people know of God, the more likely they are to oppose Him. Your

notions, your old nature, and your humanity, character and moral outlook are the “capital” with which you resist God, and the more corrupt, degraded and low you become, the more you are the enemy of God. Those who are possessed of strong notions and who have a self-righteous disposition are even more in enmity of God incarnate; such people are the antichrists.

Excerpted from “Knowing the Three Stages of God’s Work Is the Path to Knowing God” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Do many people not oppose God and obstruct the work of the Holy Spirit because they do not know the varied and diverse work of God, and, furthermore, because they possess but a smidgeon of knowledge and doctrine with which to measure the work of the Holy Spirit? Though the experiences of such people are superficial, they are arrogant and indulgent in nature and they regard the work of the Holy Spirit with contempt, ignore the disciplines of the Holy Spirit and, moreover, use their trivial old arguments to “confirm” the work of the Holy Spirit. They also put on an act, and are wholly convinced of their own learning and erudition, and convinced that they are able to travel across the world. Are such people not those who are despised and rejected by the Holy Spirit, and will they not be eliminated by the new age? Are not those who come before God and openly oppose Him ignorant and under-informed little people, who are merely trying to show how brilliant they are? With but a meager knowledge of the Bible, they try to straddle the world’s “academia”; with but a superficial doctrine to teach people, they try to reverse the work of the Holy Spirit and attempt to make it revolve around their own thought process. Short-sighted as they are, they try to behold in one glance 6,000 years of God’s work. These people do not have any sense worth mentioning! In fact, the greater people’s knowledge of God, the slower they are to judge His work. Furthermore, they only talk a little of their knowledge of God’s work today, but they are not rash in their judgments. The less people know of God, the more arrogant and overconfident they are and the more wantonly they proclaim God’s being—yet they only talk of theory, and offer no real evidence. Such people are of no value whatsoever. Those who see the work of the Holy Spirit as a game are frivolous! Those who are not cautious when they encounter the new work of the Holy Spirit, who run their mouths off, are quick to judge, who give free rein to their natural instinct to deny the rightness of the Holy Spirit’s work, and who also insult and blaspheme it—are such disrespectful people not ignorant of the Holy Spirit’s work? Are they not, furthermore, people of great arrogance,

people who are inherently proud and ungovernable? Even if a day comes when such people accept the new work of the Holy Spirit, still God will not tolerate them. Not only do they look down upon those who work for God, but they also blaspheme against God Himself. Such foolhardy people will not be forgiven, either in this age or the age to come, and they shall forever perish in hell! Such disrespectful, indulgent people are pretending to believe in God, and the more people are like this, the more liable they are to offend God's administrative decrees. Do not all those arrogant ones who are innately unbridled, and who have never obeyed anyone, all walk upon this path? Do they not oppose God day after day, God who is always new and never old?

Excerpted from "Knowing the Three Stages of God's Work Is the Path to Knowing God" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

What are the conditions a person must meet in order to receive salvation? First of all, they must possess the ability to identify satanic antichrists; they must have this aspect of the truth. It is only by possessing this aspect of the truth that they can genuinely believe in God and refrain from worshipping or following man; only people who can identify antichrists have the ability to truly believe in God and follow and bear witness to Him. In order to identify antichrists, people must first learn to see people and things with complete clarity and understanding; they must be able to perceive the essence of antichrists, and they must see through all of their conspiracies, tricks, inner motivations, and objectives. If you can do this, then you can stand firm. If you want to obtain salvation, then the first test you must pass is to learn how to defeat Satan and how to overcome and triumph over hostile forces and interference from the outside world. Once you possess stature and sufficient truth to persevere to the end in a battle against Satan's forces, and have defeated them, then—and only then—can you seek the truth steadily, and only then can you step steadfastly and without mishap upon the path of seeking the truth and being granted salvation. If you cannot pass this test, then it can be said that you are in great danger, and you are liable to be captured by an antichrist and come to live under Satan's influence. ... So, if you want to get to where you can be granted salvation, the first test you must pass is one of being able to see through Satan, and you must also have the courage to stand up and expose and forsake Satan. Where, then, is Satan? Satan is at your side and all around you; it might even be living inside your heart. If you are living within Satan's disposition, it can be said that you

belong to Satan. You cannot see or touch the Satan of the spiritual realm, but the Satan that exists in practical life is everywhere. Any person who detests the truth is evil, and any leader or worker who does not accept the truth is an antichrist and an evil person. Are such people not living Satans? These people might be the very ones you worship and look up to; they could be the people who lead you or the people you have long hoped for, admired, trusted and relied upon in your hearts. In fact, however, they are roadblocks standing in your way and hindering you from obtaining salvation; they are antichrists. They can take control of your life and the path you walk, and they can ruin your chance to be granted salvation. If you fail to identify them and see through them, then at any moment, you could plummet into their traps or be captured and taken away by them. Thus, you are in great danger.

Excerpted from “For Leaders and Workers, Choosing a Path Is of Utmost Importance (1)” in Records of Christ’s Talks

IX. Christ Is the Manifestation of God Himself

1. How one knows Christ’s divine essence

Bible Verses for Reference:

“Jesus said to him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man comes to the Father, but by Me. If you had known Me, you should have known My Father also: and from now on you know Him, and have seen Him” (Jhn 14:6–7).

“The words that I speak to you I speak not of Myself: but the Father that dwells in Me, He does the works. Believe Me that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me: or else believe Me for the very works’ sake” (Jhn 14:10–11).

“I and My Father are one” (Jhn 10:30).

Relevant Words of God:

He who is God incarnate shall possess the essence of God, and He who is God incarnate shall possess the expression of God. Since God becomes flesh, He shall bring forth the work He intends to do, and since God becomes flesh, He shall express what He is, and shall be able to bring the truth to man, bestow life upon him, and point the way for him. Flesh that does not

have the essence of God is decidedly not the incarnate God; of this there is no doubt. If man intends to inquire into whether it is God's incarnate flesh, then he must corroborate this from the disposition He expresses and the words He speaks. Which is to say, to corroborate whether or not it is God's incarnate flesh, and whether or not it is the true way, one must discriminate on the basis of His essence. And so, in determining whether it is the flesh of God incarnate, the key lies in His essence (His work, His utterances, His disposition, and many other aspects), rather than external appearance. If man scrutinizes only His external appearance, and as a result overlooks His essence, this shows that man is benighted and ignorant.

Excerpted from Preface to *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

What should you know about the practical God? The Spirit, the Person, and the Word make up the practical God Himself, and this is the true meaning of the practical God Himself. If you only know the Person—if you know His habits and personality—but do not know the work of the Spirit, or what the Spirit does in the flesh, and if you only pay attention to the Spirit, and the Word, and only pray before the Spirit, but do not know the work of God's Spirit in the practical God, then this yet proves that you do not know the practical God. Knowledge of the practical God includes knowing and experiencing His words, and grasping the rules and principles of the work of the Holy Spirit and how the Spirit of God works in the flesh. It also includes knowing that every action of God in the flesh is governed by the Spirit, and that the words He speaks are the direct expression of the Spirit. Thus, to know the practical God, it is paramount to know how God works in humanity and in divinity; this, in turn, concerns the expressions of the Spirit, with which all people engage.

Excerpted from "You Should Know That the Practical God Is God Himself" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Knowing God must be achieved through reading and understanding God's words. Some say: "I haven't seen God incarnate, so how could I know God?" In fact, God's words are an expression of His disposition. From God's words, you can see His love and salvation for humans, as well as His method for saving them.... This is because His words are expressed by God Himself, not written by humans. They have been personally expressed by God; God Himself is expressing His own words and His inner voice. Why are they called words from the heart? It is

because they are issued from deep down, and express His disposition, His will, His thoughts, His love for mankind, His salvation of mankind, and His expectations of mankind.... God's utterances include harsh words, and gentle and considerate words, as well as some revelatory words that are not in line with human wishes. If you look only at the revelatory words, you might feel that God is rather stern. If you look only at the gentle words, you might feel that God is not very authoritative. You therefore should not take them out of context; rather, look at them from every angle. Sometimes God speaks from a gentle and compassionate perspective, and then people see His love for mankind; sometimes He speaks from a very strict perspective, and then people see the disposition of His that will tolerate no offense. Man is deplorably filthy, and is not worthy of seeing God's face or of coming before Him. That people are now allowed to come before Him is purely by His grace. God's wisdom can be seen from the way He works and in the significance of His work. People can still see these things in God's words, even without any direct contact from Him. When someone who genuinely knows God comes into contact with Christ, his encounter with Christ can correspond with his existing knowledge of God; however, when someone who has only a theoretical understanding encounters God, he cannot see the correlation. This aspect of the truth is the most profound of mysteries; it is difficult to fathom. Sum up God's words on the mystery of the incarnation, look at them from all angles, and then pray together, ponder, and fellowship further on this aspect of the truth. In doing so, you will be able to gain the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit and come to understand. Because humans have no chance of having direct contact with God, they must rely on this kind of experience to feel their way through and enter a little bit at a time in order to attain true knowledge of God.

Excerpted from "How to Know God Incarnate" in Records of Christ's Talks

Although the outward appearance of God incarnate is exactly the same as a human, and although He learns human knowledge and speaks human language, and sometimes even expresses His ideas through mankind's own methods or ways of speaking, nevertheless, the way He sees humans and sees the essence of things is absolutely not the same as the way corrupt people see mankind and the essence of things. His perspective and the elevation at which He stands is something unattainable for a corrupt person. This is because God is truth, because the flesh that He wears also possesses the essence of God, and His thoughts and that which is

expressed by His humanity are also the truth. For corrupt people, what He expresses in the flesh are provisions of the truth, and of life. These provisions are not just for one person, but for all of mankind. In any corrupt person's heart, there are only those few people who are associated with them. They care and are concerned only for this handful of people. When disaster is on the horizon, they first think of their own children, spouse, or parents. At most, a more compassionate person would spare some thought for some relative or good friend, but do the thoughts of even such a compassionate person extend further than that? No, never! Because humans are, after all, humans, and they can only look at everything from the elevation and perspective of a human being. However, God incarnate is entirely different from a corrupt human. No matter how ordinary, how normal, how lowly God's incarnate flesh is, or even with what contempt people look down on Him, His thoughts and His attitude toward mankind are things that no man could possess, that no man could imitate. He will always observe mankind from the perspective of divinity, from the elevation of His position as the Creator. He will always see mankind through the essence and the mindset of God. He absolutely cannot see mankind from the lowly elevation of an average person, or from the perspective of a corrupt person. When people look at mankind, they do so with human vision, and they use things such as human knowledge and human rules and theories as their measure. This is within the scope of what people can see with their eyes and the scope that is achievable by corrupt people. When God looks at mankind, He looks with divine vision, and He uses His essence and what He has and is as a measure. This scope includes things that people cannot see, and this is where God incarnate and corrupt humans are entirely different. This difference is determined by humans' and God's different essences—it is these different essences that determine their identities and positions as well as the perspective and elevation from which they see things.

Excerpted from "God's Work, God's Disposition, and God Himself III" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

You will never see God hold similar views on things to human beings, and moreover you will not see Him use mankind's viewpoints, knowledge, science, philosophy or imagination to handle matters. Rather, everything God does and everything He reveals is connected to truth. That is, every word He has said and every action He has taken is bound to the truth. This truth is not the product of some baseless fantasy; this truth and these words are expressed by God by virtue of His essence and His life. Because these words and the essence of everything God has

done are truth, we can say that God's essence is holy. In other words, everything God says and does brings vitality and light to people, enables people to see positive things and the reality of those positive things, and points the way for humanity so that they may walk the right path. These things are all determined by God's essence and by the essence of His holiness.

Excerpted from "God Himself, the Unique V" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

God, too, was born in the land of filth, yet He remains unsullied by filth. He lives in the same filthy world as you, but He is possessed of reason and perception, and He despises the filth. You may not even be able to detect anything filthy in your words and deeds, but He can, and He points them out to you. Those old things of yours—your lack of cultivation, insight, and sense, and your backward ways of living—have now been brought into the light by today's revelations; only by God coming to earth to work thus do people behold His holiness and righteous disposition. He judges and chastises you, causing you to gain understanding; sometimes, your demonic nature is manifested, and He points it out to you. He knows man's essence like the back of His hand. He lives among you, He eats the same food as you, and He lives in the same environment—but even so, He knows more; He can expose you and see through the corrupt essence of humanity. There is nothing He despises more than man's philosophies for living and crookedness and deceitfulness. He particularly abhors people's fleshly interactions. He may not be familiar with man's philosophies for living, but He can clearly see and expose the corrupt dispositions that people reveal. He works to speak and teach man through these things, He uses these things to judge people, and to make manifest His own righteous and holy disposition. Thus do people become foils to His work. Only God incarnate can make plain the corrupt dispositions of man and all the ugly faces of Satan. Though He does not punish you, and merely uses you as a foil to His righteousness and holiness, you feel ashamed and find no place to hide yourself, for you are too filthy. He speaks using those things which are exposed in man, and only when these things are brought to light do people become aware of how holy God is. He does not overlook even the slightest impurity in people, not even the filthy thoughts in their hearts; if people's words and deeds are at odds with His will, then He does not excuse them. In His words, there is no room for the filth of humans or of anything else—it all must be brought to light. Only then do you see that He really is unlike man. If there is the slightest filth in people, then He utterly detests them. There are even times when people

are unable to understand, and say, “God, why are You so angry? Why are You not mindful of man’s weaknesses? Why can’t You be a little forgiving of people? Why are You so inconsiderate to man? Clearly, You know to what extent people have been corrupted, so why do You still treat them like this?” He despises sin, He is disgusted by it, and He is particularly disgusted if there is any trace of disobedience in you. When you reveal a rebellious disposition, He sees it and is deeply disgusted—extraordinarily disgusted. It is through these things that His disposition and what God is are manifested. When you hold yourself up in comparison, you see that although He eats the same food as man, wears the same clothes, enjoys the same things they do, and lives and dwells with them, He is yet unlike man. Is this not the significance of a foil? It is through these human things that the power of God is shown; it is darkness that sets off the precious existence of the light.

Excerpted from “How the Effects of the Second Step of the Work of Conquest Are Achieved” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

He is well aware of the substance of man and can reveal all kinds of practices pertaining to all kinds of people. He is even better at revealing the corrupt dispositions and the rebellious behavior of humans. He does not live among worldly people, but He is aware of the nature of mortals and all the corruptions of worldly people. This is His being. Though He does not deal with the world, He knows the rules of dealing with the world, because He understands human nature fully. He knows about the Spirit’s work that man’s eyes cannot see and man’s ears cannot hear, both of today and of the past. This includes wisdom that is not a philosophy for living and wonders that are hard for people to fathom. This is His being, open to people and also hidden from people. What He expresses is not the being of an extraordinary person, but the inherent attributes and being of the Spirit. He does not travel the world but knows everything of it. He contacts the “anthropoids” who have no knowledge or insight, but He expresses words that are higher than knowledge and above great men. He lives within a group of obtuse and numb people who are without humanity and who do not understand the conventions and life of humanity, but He can ask mankind to live out normal humanity, at the same time revealing the base and low humanity of mankind. All this is His being, higher than the being of any flesh-and-blood person. For Him, it is unnecessary to experience a complicated, cumbersome, and sordid social life to do the work He needs to do and reveal the substance of corrupt mankind thoroughly. A

sordid social life does not edify His flesh. His work and words only reveal man's disobedience and do not provide man with experience and lessons for dealing with the world. He does not need to investigate society or man's family when He supplies man with life. Exposing and judging man is not an expression of the experiences of His flesh; it is His revelation of man's unrighteousness after having known man's disobedience for a long time and abhorring mankind's corruption. The work He does is all meant to reveal His disposition to man and to express His being. Only He can do this work; it is not something a flesh-and-blood person could achieve. From His work, man cannot tell what kind of person He is. Man is also unable to classify Him as a created person on the basis of His work. His being also makes Him unclassifiable as a created person. Man can only consider Him a non-human, but does not know in which category to put Him, so man is forced to list Him in the category of God. It is not unreasonable for man to do so, for God has done much work among people that man is unable to do.

Excerpted from "God's Work and Man's Work" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The Spirit of God is the authority over all creation. The flesh with the essence of God is also possessed of authority, but God in the flesh can do all the work that obeys the will of the heavenly Father. This cannot be attained or conceived by any one person. God Himself is authority, but His flesh can submit to His authority. This is what is implied when it is said that "Christ obeys the will of God the Father." God is a Spirit and can do the work of salvation, as can God become man. At any rate, God Himself does His own work; He neither interrupts nor interferes, much less does He carry out work that contradicts itself, for the essence of the work done by the Spirit and the flesh is alike. Be it the Spirit or the flesh, both work to fulfill one will and to manage the same work. Though the Spirit and the flesh have two disparate qualities, their essences are the same; both have the essence of God Himself, and the identity of God Himself. God Himself possesses no elements of disobedience; His essence is good. He is the expression of all beauty and goodness, as well as all love. Even in the flesh, God does not do anything that disobeys God the Father. Even at the expense of sacrificing His life, He would be wholeheartedly willing to do so, and He would make no other choice. God possesses no elements of self-righteousness or self-importance, or those of conceit and arrogance; He possesses no elements of crookedness. Everything that disobeys God comes from Satan; Satan

is the source of all ugliness and wickedness. The reason that man has qualities similar to those of Satan is because man has been corrupted and processed by Satan. Christ has not been corrupted by Satan, hence He possesses only the characteristics of God, and none of the characteristics of Satan. No matter how arduous the work or weak the flesh, God, while He lives in the flesh, will never do anything that interrupts the work of God Himself, much less forsake the will of God the Father in disobedience. He would rather suffer pains of the flesh than betray the will of God the Father; it is just as Jesus said in prayer, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me: nevertheless not as I will, but as You will." People make their own choices, but Christ does not. Though He has the identity of God Himself, He still seeks the will of God the Father, and fulfills what is entrusted to Him by God the Father, from the perspective of the flesh. This is something that man cannot attain to.

Excerpted from "The Essence of Christ Is Obedience to the Will of the Heavenly Father" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Unbeknownst to us, this insignificant man has led us into one step after another of God's work. We undergo countless trials, bear innumerable chastenings, and are tested by death. We learn of God's righteous and majestic disposition, enjoy, too, His love and mercy, come to appreciate God's great power and wisdom, witness the loveliness of God, and behold God's eager desire to save man. In the words of this ordinary person, we come to know the disposition and essence of God, to understand God's will, to know the nature essence of man, and see the way to salvation and perfection. His words cause us to "die," and they cause us to be "reborn"; His words bring us comfort, yet also leave us wracked with guilt and a sense of indebtedness; His words bring us joy and peace, but also infinite pain. Sometimes we are as lambs to the slaughter in His hands; sometimes we are like the apple of His eye, and enjoy His tender love; sometimes we are like His enemy, and under His gaze are turned to ashes by His wrath. We are the human race saved by Him, we are the maggots in His eyes, and we are the lost lambs that, day and night, He is bent on finding. He is merciful toward us, He despises us, He raises us up, He comforts and exhorts us, He guides us, He enlightens us, He chastens and disciplines us, and He even curses us. Night and day, He never ceases to worry about us, and protects and cares for us, night and day, never leaving our side, but spills His heart's blood for our sake and pays any price for us. Within the utterances of this small and ordinary body of flesh, we have

enjoyed the entirety of God and beheld the destination that God has bestowed upon us. Notwithstanding this, vanity still stirs up trouble within our hearts, and we are still unwilling actively to accept a person like this as our God. Though He has given us so much manna, so much to enjoy, none of this can take the Lord's place in our hearts. We honor this person's special identity and status only with great reluctance. As long as He does not open His mouth to ask us to acknowledge that He is God, we will never take it upon ourselves to acknowledge Him as the God that is soon to arrive and yet has long been working in our midst.

God continues His utterances, employing various methods and perspectives to admonish us about what we should do while, at the same time, giving voice to His heart. His words carry life power, show us the way we should walk, and enable us to understand what the truth is. We begin to be drawn by His words, we begin to focus on the tone and manner of His speaking, and subconsciously we begin to take an interest in the innermost feelings of this unremarkable person. He spits up His heart's blood in working on our behalf, loses sleep and appetite on our account, weeps for us, sighs for us, groans in sickness for us, suffers humiliation for the sake of our destination and salvation, and our numbness and rebelliousness draw tears and blood from His heart. This way of being and of having belongs to no ordinary person, nor can it be possessed or attained by any corrupted human being. He shows tolerance and patience possessed by no ordinary person, and His love is not something with which any created being is endowed. No one apart from Him can know all of our thoughts, or have such a clear and complete grasp of our nature and essence, or judge the rebelliousness and corruption of mankind, or speak to us and work among us like this on behalf of God in heaven. No one apart from Him is endowed with the authority, wisdom, and dignity of God; the disposition of God and what God has and is are brought forth, in their entirety, in Him. No one apart from Him can show us the way and bring us light. No one apart from Him can reveal the mysteries that God has not disclosed since creation until today. No one apart from Him can save us from Satan's bondage and our own corrupt disposition. He represents God. He expresses the inmost heart of God, the exhortations of God, and God's words of judgment toward all mankind. He has begun a new age, a new era, and ushered in a new heaven and earth and new work, and He has brought us hope, ending the life we led in vagueness and enabling our whole being to behold, in total clarity, the path to salvation. He has conquered our whole being and gained our hearts. From that moment onward, our minds have become conscious, and our spirits seem to be revived: This ordinary,

insignificant person, who lives among us and has long been rejected by us—is this not the Lord Jesus, who is ever in our thoughts, waking or dreaming, and for whom we long night and day? It is He! It really is He! He is our God! He is the truth, the way, and the life! He has enabled us to live again and to see the light and has stopped our hearts from wandering. We have returned to the home of God, we have returned before His throne, we are face-to-face with Him, we have witnessed His countenance, and we have seen the road that lies ahead. At this time, our hearts are completely conquered by Him; we no longer doubt who He is, no longer oppose His work and His word, and we fall down prostrate before Him. We wish for nothing more than to follow the footprints of God for the rest of our lives, and to be made perfect by Him, and to repay His grace, and repay His love for us, and to obey His orchestrations and arrangements, and to cooperate with His work, and to do everything we can to complete what He entrusts to us.

Being conquered by God is like a martial arts contest.

Each of God's words strikes at one of our mortal spots, leaving us wounded and filled with dread. He exposes our notions, our imaginings, and our corrupt disposition. From all that we say and do, down to every one of our thoughts and ideas, our nature essence is revealed in His words, putting us in a state of fear and trembling with nowhere to hide our shame. One by one, He tells us about all of our actions, our aims and intentions, even the corrupt disposition that we ourselves have never discovered, making us feel exposed in all our wretched imperfection and, even more, completely won over. He judges us for opposing Him, chastises us for blaspheming and condemning Him, and makes us feel that, in His eyes, we have not one single redeeming feature, that we are the living Satan. Our hopes are dashed, we no longer dare to make any unreasonable demands or to entertain any hopes of Him, and even our dreams vanish overnight. This is a fact that none of us can imagine and which none of us can accept. Within the space of a moment, we lose our inward equilibrium and do not know how to continue on the road that lies ahead, or how to continue in our beliefs. It seems as if our faith has gone back to square one, and as if we have never met the Lord Jesus or gotten to know Him. Everything before our eyes fills us with perplexity and makes us vacillate indecisively. We are dismayed, we are disappointed, and deep in our hearts there is irrepressible rage and disgrace. We try to vent, to find a way out, and, what is more, to continue waiting for our Savior Jesus, that we may pour our hearts out to Him. Though there are times when we appear on the outside to be on an even keel, neither haughty nor humble, in our hearts we are afflicted with a sense of loss we have

never felt before. Though sometimes we may seem unusually calm on the outside, our minds are roiling with torment like a stormy sea. His judgment and chastisement have stripped us of all our hopes and dreams, putting an end to our extravagant desires and leaving us unwilling to believe that He is our Savior and capable of saving us. His judgment and chastisement have opened a chasm between us and Him, one so deep that no one is willing to cross it. His judgment and chastisement are the first time that we have suffered such a great setback, such great humiliation in our lives. His judgment and chastisement have caused us truly to appreciate God's honor and intolerance of man's offense, compared to which we are exceedingly base, exceedingly impure. His judgment and chastisement have made us realize for the first time how arrogant and pompous we are, and how man will never be the equal of God, or on a par with God. His judgment and chastisement have made us yearn to live no more in such a corrupt disposition, to rid ourselves of this nature essence as soon as possible, and to cease being vile and detestable to Him. His judgment and chastisement have made us happy to obey His words, no longer rebelling against His orchestrations and arrangements. His judgment and chastisement have once more given us the desire to survive and made us happy to accept Him as our Savior.... We have stepped out of the work of conquest, out of hell, out of the valley of the shadow of death.... Almighty God has gained us, this group of people! He has triumphed over Satan and defeated the multitudes of His enemies!

Excerpted from "Beholding the Appearance of God in His Judgment and Chastisement" in The Word
Appears in the Flesh

2. Whether Christ is the Son of God or God Himself

Bible Verses for Reference:

"Jesus said to him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man comes to the Father, but by Me. If you had known Me, you should have known My Father also: and from now on you know Him, and have seen Him. Philip said to Him, Lord, show us the Father, and it suffices us. Jesus said to him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet have you not known Me, Philip? he that has seen Me has seen the Father; and how say you then, Show us the Father? Believe you not that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? the words that I speak to you I speak not

of Myself: but the Father that dwells in Me, He does the works. Believe Me that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me: or else believe Me for the very works' sake" (Jhn 14:6–11).

"I and My Father are one" (Jhn 10:30).

Relevant Words of God:

The incarnate God is called Christ, and Christ is the flesh donned by the Spirit of God. This flesh is unlike any man that is of the flesh. This difference is because Christ is not of flesh and blood; He is the incarnation of the Spirit. He has both a normal humanity and a complete divinity. His divinity is not possessed by any man. His normal humanity sustains all His normal activities in the flesh, while His divinity carries out the work of God Himself. Be it His humanity or divinity, both submit to the will of the heavenly Father. The essence of Christ is the Spirit, that is, the divinity. Therefore, His essence is that of God Himself; this essence will not interrupt His own work, and He could not possibly do anything that destroys His own work, nor would He ever utter any words that go against His own will. Therefore, the incarnate God would absolutely never do any work that interrupts His own management. This is what all people should understand. The essence of the work of the Holy Spirit is to save man, and is for the sake of God's own management. Similarly, the work of Christ is also to save man, and is for the sake of God's will. Given that God becomes flesh, He realizes His essence within His flesh, such that His flesh is sufficient to undertake His work. Therefore, all the work of God's Spirit is replaced by the work of Christ during the time of incarnation, and at the core of all work throughout the time of incarnation is the work of Christ. It cannot be commingled with work from any other age. And since God becomes flesh, He works in the identity of His flesh; since He comes in the flesh, He then finishes in the flesh the work that He ought to do. Be it the Spirit of God or be it Christ, both are God Himself, and He does the work that He ought to do and performs the ministry that He ought to perform.

Excerpted from "The Essence of Christ Is Obedience to the Will of the Heavenly Father" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

He who is God incarnate shall possess the essence of God, and He who is God incarnate shall possess the expression of God. Since God becomes flesh, He shall bring forth the work He intends to do, and since God becomes flesh, He shall express what He is, and shall be able to

bring the truth to man, bestow life upon him, and point the way for him. Flesh that does not have the essence of God is decidedly not the incarnate God; of this there is no doubt. If man intends to inquire into whether it is God's incarnate flesh, then he must corroborate this from the disposition He expresses and the words He speaks. Which is to say, to corroborate whether or not it is God's incarnate flesh, and whether or not it is the true way, one must discriminate on the basis of His essence. And so, in determining whether it is the flesh of God incarnate, the key lies in His essence (His work, His utterances, His disposition, and many other aspects), rather than external appearance. If man scrutinizes only His external appearance, and as a result overlooks His essence, this shows that man is benighted and ignorant.

Excerpted from Preface to *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The incarnate Son of man expressed God's divinity through His humanity and conveyed the will of God to mankind. And through His expression of God's will and disposition, He also revealed to people the God that cannot be seen or touched who dwells in the spiritual realm. What people saw was God Himself in tangible form, made of flesh and blood. So the incarnate Son of man made things such as the identity of God Himself, God's status, image, disposition, and what He has and is, concrete and humanized. Even though the external appearance of the Son of man had some limitations regarding the image of God, His essence and what He has and is were entirely able to represent the identity and status of God Himself—there were merely some differences in the form of expression. We cannot deny that the Son of man represented the identity and status of God Himself, both in the form of His humanity and in His divinity. During this time, however, God worked through the flesh, spoke from the perspective of the flesh, and stood before mankind with the identity and status of the Son of man, and this gave people the opportunity to encounter and experience the true words and work of God among mankind. It also allowed people insight into His divinity and His greatness in the midst of humility, as well as to gain a preliminary understanding and definition of the authenticity and reality of God. Even though the work completed by the Lord Jesus, His ways of working, and the perspective from which He spoke differed from God's real person in the spiritual realm, everything about Him truly represented God Himself, whom mankind had never seen before—this cannot be denied! That is to say, no matter in what form God appears, no matter from which perspective He speaks, or in what image He faces mankind, God represents nothing but Himself.

He can represent neither any one human, nor any of corrupted mankind. God is God Himself, and this cannot be denied.

Excerpted from “God’s Work, God’s Disposition, and God Himself III” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

When Jesus called God in heaven by the name of Father as He prayed, this was done only from the perspective of a created man, only because the Spirit of God had put on an ordinary and normal flesh and had the exterior cover of a created being. Even if within Him was the Spirit of God, His exterior appearance was still that of a normal man; in other words, He had become the “Son of man” of which all men, including Jesus Himself, spoke. Given that He is called the Son of man, He is a person (whether man or woman, in any case one with the exterior shell of a human being) born into a normal family of ordinary people. Therefore, Jesus calling God in heaven by the name of Father was the same as how you at first called Him Father; He did so from the perspective of a created man. Do you still remember the Lord’s Prayer that Jesus taught you to memorize? “Our Father in heaven....” He asked all man to call God in heaven by the name of Father. And since He too called Him Father, He did so from the perspective of one who stands on an equal footing with you all. Since you called God in heaven by the name of Father, this shows that Jesus saw Himself to be on equal footing with you, and as a man on earth chosen by God (that is, the Son of God). If you call God Father, is this not because you are a created being? However great the authority of Jesus on earth, prior to the crucifixion, He was merely a Son of man, governed by the Holy Spirit (that is, God), and one of the earth’s created beings, for He had yet to complete His work. Therefore, His calling God in heaven Father was solely His humility and obedience. His addressing God (that is, the Spirit in heaven) in such a manner, however, does not prove that He was the Son of the Spirit of God in heaven. Rather, it was simply that His perspective was different, not that He was a different person. The existence of distinct persons is a fallacy! Prior to His crucifixion, Jesus was a Son of man bound by the limitations of the flesh, and He did not fully possess the authority of the Spirit. That is why He could only seek the will of God the Father from the perspective of a created being. It is as He thrice prayed in Gethsemane: “Not as I will, but as You will.” Before He was laid on the cross, He was but the King of the Jews; He was Christ, the Son of man, and not a body of glory. That is why, from the standpoint of a created being, He called God Father. Now, you cannot say that all who call God Father are the Son. If this were so, then would you not have all become the Son

once Jesus taught you the Lord's Prayer? If you are still not convinced, then tell Me, who is the one that you call Father? If you are referring to Jesus, then who is the Father of Jesus to you? After Jesus went away, this idea of the Father and the Son was no more. This idea was only appropriate for the years when Jesus became flesh; under all other circumstances, the relationship is one between the Lord of creation and a created being when you call God Father.

Excerpted from "Does the Trinity Exist?" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

There are still those who say, "Did not God expressly state that Jesus was His beloved Son?" Jesus is the beloved Son of God, in whom He is well pleased—this was certainly spoken by God Himself. That was God bearing witness to Himself, but merely from a different perspective, that of the Spirit in heaven bearing witness to His own incarnation. Jesus is His incarnation, not His Son in heaven. Do you understand? Do not the words of Jesus, "I am in the Father, and the Father in Me," indicate that They are one Spirit? And is it not because of the incarnation that They were separated between heaven and earth? In reality, They are still one; no matter what, it is simply God bearing witness to Himself. Owing to the change in ages, the requirements of the work, and the differing stages of His management plan, the name by which man calls Him also differs. When He came to carry out the first stage of work, He could only be called Jehovah, shepherd of the Israelites. In the second stage, the incarnate God could only be called Lord, and Christ. But at that time, the Spirit in heaven stated only that He was the beloved Son of God and made no mention of His being the only Son of God. This simply did not happen. How could God have an only child? Then would God not have become man? Because He was the incarnation, He was called the beloved Son of God, and, from this, came the relationship between Father and Son. It was simply because of the separation between heaven and earth. Jesus prayed from the perspective of the flesh. Since He had put on a flesh of such normal humanity, it is from the perspective of the flesh that He said: "My outer shell is that of a created being. Since I put on a flesh to come to this earth, I am now a long, long way from heaven." For this reason, He could only pray to God the Father from the perspective of the flesh. This was His duty, and it was that which the incarnate Spirit of God should be furnished with. It cannot be said that He was not God simply because He prayed to the Father from the perspective of the flesh. Though He was called the beloved Son of God, He was still God Himself, for He was but the incarnation of the Spirit, and His essence was still the Spirit.

Excerpted from “Does the Trinity Exist?” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

What man first saw was the Holy Spirit descending like a dove upon Jesus; it was not the Spirit exclusive to Jesus, but rather the Holy Spirit. Then can the Spirit of Jesus be separated from the Holy Spirit? If Jesus is Jesus, the Son, and the Holy Spirit is the Holy Spirit, then how could They be one? The work could not be carried out if so. The Spirit within Jesus, the Spirit in heaven, and the Spirit of Jehovah are all one. It can be called the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of God, the sevenfold intensified Spirit, and the all-inclusive Spirit. The Spirit of God can carry out much work. He is able to create the world and destroy it by flooding the earth; He can redeem all mankind, and moreover, He can conquer and destroy all mankind. This work is all carried out by God Himself and cannot have been done by any other of the persons of God in His stead. His Spirit can be called by the name of Jehovah and Jesus, as well as the Almighty. He is the Lord, and Christ. He can also become the Son of man. He is in the heavens and also on the earth; He is on high above the universes and among the multitude. He is the only Master of the heavens and earth! From the time of creation until now, this work has been carried out by the Spirit of God Himself. Be it the work in the heavens or in the flesh, all is carried out by His own Spirit. All creatures, whether in heaven or on earth, are in the palm of His almighty hand; all of this is the work of God Himself and can be done by no other in His stead. In the heavens, He is the Spirit but also God Himself; among men, He is flesh but remains God Himself. Though He may be called by hundreds of thousands of names, He is still Himself, and all the work is the direct expression of His Spirit. The redemption of all mankind through His crucifixion was the direct work of His Spirit, and so too is the proclamation unto all nations and all lands during the last days. At all times, God can only be called the almighty and one true God, the all-inclusive God Himself. The distinct persons do not exist, much less this idea of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. There is only one God in heaven and on earth!

Excerpted from “Does the Trinity Exist?” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

3. The nature and consequences of the problem of acknowledging God alone without acknowledging the truth

Relevant Words of God:

Anyone who does not believe in God incarnate—that is, anyone who does not believe in the visible God or in His work and words, and instead worships the invisible God in heaven—is a person who does not have God in their heart. Such people are rebellious and resistant to God. They lack humanity and reason, to say nothing of truth. Moreover, for these people, the visible and tangible God all the more cannot be believed, yet they consider the invisible and intangible God to be most credible and most gladdening. What they seek is not the actual truth, nor is it the true essence of life; much less is it God’s will. Rather, they seek excitement. Whichever things can most enable them to fulfill their own desires are, without a doubt, what they believe in and what they pursue. They only believe in God in order to satisfy their own desires, not to seek the truth. Are such people not evildoers? They are extremely self-confident, and they do not at all believe that God in heaven will destroy such “good people” as themselves. Instead, they believe that God will allow them to remain and, moreover, will reward them handsomely due to having done many things for God and displayed considerable “loyalty” toward Him. If they were to also pursue the visible God, as soon as their desires were not met, they would immediately strike back against God or fly into a rage. They show themselves to be vile little dogs who are always just seeking to satisfy their own desires; they are not people of integrity in pursuit of the truth. Such people are the so-called wicked ones who follow Christ. Those people who do not seek the truth cannot possibly believe the truth, and are all the more unable to perceive humanity’s future outcome, for they do not believe any work or words of the visible God—and this includes not being able to believe in humanity’s future destination. Therefore, even if they follow the visible God, they still commit evil and do not at all seek the truth, nor do they practice the truth that I require. Those people who do not believe that they will be destroyed are, conversely, the very ones who will be destroyed. They all believe themselves to be so clever, and they think that they themselves are people who practice the truth. They consider their evil conduct to be the truth and therefore cherish it. Such wicked people are very self-confident; they take the truth to be doctrine and take their evil acts to be truth, but in the end, they can only reap what they have sown. The more self-confident people are and the more wildly arrogant they are, the more they are unable to obtain truth; the more people believe in the God in heaven, the more they resist God. These people are the ones who will be punished. Before humanity enters into rest, whether each sort of person is punished or rewarded will be

determined according to whether they have sought the truth, whether they know God, and whether they can submit to the visible God. Those who have rendered service to the visible God, yet neither know Him nor submit to Him, lack truth. Such people are evildoers, and evildoers will undoubtedly be objects of punishment; furthermore, they shall be punished according to their wicked conduct. God is for humans to believe in, and He is also worthy of their obedience. Those who only have faith in the vague and invisible God are people who do not believe in God and are unable to submit to God. If these people still cannot manage to believe in the visible God by the time His work of conquest is finished, and continue to be disobedient and resist the God who is visible in the flesh, then these “vagueists” will, without a doubt, become objects of destruction. It is just like some among you—anyone who verbally recognizes God incarnate, yet cannot practice the truth of submission to God incarnate, will ultimately become objects of elimination and destruction. Moreover, anyone who verbally recognizes the visible God, eating and drinking of the truth expressed by Him while also seeking after the vague and invisible God, will be even more likely to be destroyed in the future. None of these people will be able to remain until the time of rest that will come after God’s work has finished, nor can a single individual similar to such people remain in that time of rest.

Excerpted from “God and Man Will Enter Into Rest Together” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Today, I live on earth, and I live among man. People experience My work, and watch My utterances, and along with this I bestow all truths upon each of My followers, that they may receive life from Me and thus obtain a path that they can tread. For I am God, Giver of life. During the many years of My work, people have gained much, and forsaken much, yet still I say that they do not truly believe in Me. For people merely acknowledge that I am God with their mouths, but they disagree with the truths I speak, and, moreover, do not practice the truths that I ask of them. Which is to say, people acknowledge only the existence of God, but not that of the truth; people acknowledge only the existence of God, but not that of the life; people acknowledge only God’s name, but not His essence. I despise them for their zeal, for they only use nice-sounding words to deceive Me; none of them truly worship Me. Your words contain the temptation of the serpent; further, they are conceited in the extreme, a veritable proclamation by the archangel. What is more, your deeds are tattered and torn to a disgraceful degree; your immoderate desires and covetous intentions are offensive to the ear. You have all

become moths in My house, objects to be discarded with loathing. For none of you love the truth; instead, you desire to be blessed, to ascend to heaven, to behold the magnificent vision of Christ wielding His power on earth. But have you ever thought how someone like you, someone so deeply corrupted, who has no idea what God is, could be worthy of following God? How could you ascend to heaven? How could you be worthy of beholding such magnificent scenes, scenes without precedent in their splendor?

Excerpted from “Many Are Called, but Few Are Chosen” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Your many years of behavior before Me have given Me an answer without precedent, and the question to this answer is: “What is man’s attitude before the truth and the true God?” The efforts I have devoted to man prove My essence of love for man, and man’s every action before Me proves his essence of loathing toward the truth and opposition to Me. At all times, I am concerned for all who follow Me, yet at no time are those who follow Me able to receive My words; they are not even able to accept My suggestions. This is what saddens Me most of all. No one has ever been able to understand Me and nor, moreover, has anyone ever been able to accept Me, even though My attitude is sincere, and My words are gentle. Everyone tries to do the work I have entrusted to them according to their own ideas; they do not seek My intentions, let alone do they ask what I require of them. They still claim to serve Me loyally, all while they rebel against Me. Many believe that the truths that are unacceptable to them or that they cannot practice are not truths. In such people, My truths become something that is denied and cast aside. At the same time, people recognize Me as God in word, yet also believe Me an outsider who is not the truth, the way, or the life. No one knows this truth: My words are the forever unchanging truth. I am the supply of life for man and the only guide for mankind. The worth and meaning of My words are not determined by whether they are recognized or accepted by mankind, but by the essence of the words themselves. Even if not a single person on this earth can receive My words, the value of My words and their help to mankind are inestimable to any man. Therefore, when faced with the many people who rebel against, refute, or are utterly contemptuous of My words, My stance is only this: Let time and facts be My witness and show that My words are the truth, the way, and the life. Let them show that all I have said is right, that it is that which man should be furnished with and, moreover, that which man should accept. I will let all who follow Me know this fact: Those who cannot fully accept My words, those who

cannot practice My words, those who cannot find a purpose in My words, and those who cannot receive salvation because of My words, are those who have been condemned by My words and, moreover, have lost My salvation, and My rod shall never stray from them.

Excerpted from “You Ought to Consider Your Deeds” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

God has done all this work, and people have experienced it, and witnessed all these steps of God’s work with their own eyes. No matter which way people look at it, the work performed by God and the words He speaks are beyond question by man, and must not be doubted by man. Regardless of how ordinary and normal this fleshly body is, how unremarkable it may appear to people, they must still accept God’s words as the truth. Some say, “Because Your flesh is so insignificant and ordinary, because the person that You are is so incapable of inspiring obedience or admiration in us, and cannot be of any greater benefit to us, we ought to treat You as an ordinary person.” What do you think of such a view? Others say, “Because some of the things You have done have left us unconvinced, have given us notions, and are incomprehensible to us, and because You have said some things that are unacceptable to us, You cannot represent the God in heaven—and so we must fight You to the very end. If You ask us to spread the gospel, we will not, if You ask us to perform our duty, we will not, and if You ask us to accept Your words as the life and the truth, we will not. We shall fight the person that You are to the very end—let’s see what You can do to us.” In the hearts of these people who do not accept the truth at all, there are a thousand—ten thousand—reasons to deny the work of God, to deny that the words of God are the truth, to deny His incarnate flesh. But there is one thing that might not be so clear to them: No matter how many reasons they have, if they do not accept these truths, they will not be saved. If you do not accept the person that I am or the work of God, and do not acknowledge these words of God, that is fine—but if you do not take these words as the truth and put them into practice, I tell you this in all honesty: You will never be saved, nor will you ever pass through the gate of the kingdom of heaven. For if you circumvent these words of God, these truths, and this person who works, this Christ, then no matter how much doctrine you understand, or how much work you have done, you shall receive nothing; you are just a piece of trash. No matter under whose banner you perform your duty, under what name you believe in God, you cannot be saved. And if you cannot be saved, what blessings can you receive? Some people vie with the God of heaven, some vie with the God on earth, some

contest the words of God, and some contest the truth—but they never contest their own destination. Is this not vile? These villains are so abhorrent, every one of them is evil. They are all nonbelievers, opportunists, people without shame, and this is the essence of antichrists.

Excerpted from “For Leaders and Workers, Choosing a Path Is of Utmost Importance (14)” in Records of Christ’s Talks

Your loyalty is in word only, your knowledge is merely intellectual and conceptual, your labors are for the sake of gaining the blessings of heaven, and so what must your faith be like? Even today, you still turn a deaf ear to each and every word of truth. You do not know what God is, you do not know what Christ is, you do not know how to revere Jehovah, you do not know how to enter into the work of the Holy Spirit, and you do not know how to distinguish between the work of God Himself and the deceptions of man. You know only to condemn any word of truth expressed by God that does not conform to your own thoughts. Where is your humility? Where is your obedience? Where is your loyalty? Where is your desire to seek the truth? Where is your reverence for God? I tell you, those who believe in God because of the signs are surely the category that shall be destroyed. Those who are incapable of receiving the words of Jesus who has returned to flesh are surely the progeny of hell, the descendants of the archangel, the category that shall be subjected to everlasting destruction. Many people may not care what I say, but I still want to tell every so-called saint who follows Jesus that, when you see Jesus descend from the heaven upon a white cloud with your own eyes, this will be the public appearance of the Sun of righteousness. Perhaps that will be a time of great excitement for you, yet you should know that the time when you witness Jesus descend from the heaven is also the time when you go down to hell to be punished. That will be the time of the end of God’s management plan and it will be when God rewards the good and punishes the wicked. For the judgment of God will have ended before man sees signs, when there is only the expression of truth. Those who accept the truth and do not seek signs, and thus have been purified, shall have returned before the throne of God and entered the Creator’s embrace. Only those who persist in the belief that “The Jesus who does not ride upon a white cloud is a false Christ” shall be subjected to everlasting punishment, for they only believe in the Jesus who exhibits signs, but do not acknowledge the Jesus who proclaims severe judgment and releases the true way of life. And so it can only be that Jesus deals with them when He openly returns upon a white cloud.

They are too stubborn, too confident in themselves, too arrogant. How could such degenerates be rewarded by Jesus? The return of Jesus is a great salvation for those who are capable of accepting the truth, but for those who are unable to accept the truth it is a sign of condemnation. You should choose your own path, and should not blaspheme against the Holy Spirit and reject the truth. You should not be an ignorant and arrogant person, but someone who obeys the guidance of the Holy Spirit and longs for and seeks the truth; only in this way will you benefit. I advise you to tread the path of belief in God with care. Do not jump to conclusions; what is more, do not be casual and thoughtless in your belief in God. You should know that, at the very least, those who believe in God should be humble and reverential. Those who have heard the truth and yet turn their nose up at it are foolish and ignorant. Those who have heard the truth and yet carelessly jump to conclusions or condemn it are beset by arrogance. No one who believes in Jesus is qualified to curse or condemn others. You should all be someone with sense and who accepts the truth. Perhaps, having heard the way of truth and having read the word of life, you believe that only one in 10,000 of these words are in line with your convictions and the Bible, and then you should continue to seek in that 10,000th of these words. I still advise you to be humble, to not be over-confident, and to not exalt yourself too highly. With your heart holding such meager reverence for God, you will gain greater light. If you carefully examine and repeatedly contemplate these words, you shall understand whether or not they are the truth, and whether or not they are life. Perhaps, having only read a few sentences, some people will blindly condemn these words, saying, "This is nothing more than some enlightenment of the Holy Spirit," or, "This is a false Christ come to deceive people." Those who say such things are blinded by ignorance! You understand too little of the work and wisdom of God, and I advise you to start again from scratch! You must not blindly condemn the words expressed by God because of the appearance of false Christs during the last days, and you must not be someone who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit because you fear deception. Would that not be a great pity? If, after much examination, you still believe that these words are not the truth, are not the way, and are not the expression of God, then you shall ultimately be punished, and you shall be without blessings. If you cannot accept such truth spoken so plainly and so clearly, then are you not unfit for God's salvation? Are you not someone who is not blessed enough to return before the throne of God?

Excerpted from “By the Time You Behold the Spiritual Body of Jesus, God Will Have Made Heaven and Earth Anew” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

Those who wish to gain life without relying on the truth spoken by Christ are the most ridiculous people on earth, and those who do not accept the way of life brought by Christ are lost in fantasy. And so I say that those who do not accept Christ of the last days shall forever be despised by God. Christ is man’s gateway to the kingdom during the last days, and there are none who can go around Him. None may be perfected by God except through Christ. You believe in God, and so you must accept His words and obey His way. You cannot only think of gaining blessings while being incapable of receiving the truth and incapable of accepting the provision of life. Christ comes during the last days so that all those who truly believe in Him may be provided with life. His work is for the sake of concluding the old age and entering the new one, and His work is the path that must be taken by all those who would enter the new age. If you are incapable of acknowledging Him, and instead condemn, blaspheme, or even persecute Him, then you are bound to burn for eternity and shall never enter the kingdom of God. For this Christ is Himself the expression of the Holy Spirit, the expression of God, the One whom God has entrusted to do His work on earth. And so I say that if you cannot accept all that is done by Christ of the last days, then you blaspheme the Holy Spirit. The retribution to be had by those who blaspheme the Holy Spirit is self-evident to all. I also tell you that if you resist Christ of the last days, if you spurn Christ of the last days, there will be no one else to bear the consequences on your behalf. Furthermore, from this day onward you will not have another chance to gain the approval of God; even if you try to redeem yourself, you will never again behold the face of God. For what you resist is not a man, what you spurn is not some puny being, but Christ. Do you know what the consequences of this will be? You will not have made a small mistake, but committed a heinous crime. And so I advise everyone not to bare your fangs before the truth, or make careless criticisms, for only the truth can bring you life, and nothing except the truth can allow you to be reborn and behold the face of God again.

Excerpted from “Only Christ of the Last Days Can Give Man the Way of Eternal Life” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

X. Words on Knowing God

1. What knowing God is, and whether an understanding of Biblical knowledge and theological theory qualifies as knowledge of God

Relevant Words of God:

What does it mean to know God? It means being able to comprehend His joy, anger, sorrow, and happiness; this is knowing God. You claim that you have seen Him, yet you do not understand His joy, anger, sorrow, and happiness and you do not understand His disposition. You also understand neither His righteousness nor His mercifulness, nor do you know what He likes or what He loathes. This is not knowledge of God. Therefore, some people can follow God but are not necessarily capable of truly believing in Him; herein lies the difference. If you know God, understand Him, and are able to comprehend some of His will, then you can truly believe in Him, truly submit to Him, truly love Him, and truly worship Him. If you do not understand these things, then you are just a follower who runs along and goes with the flow. That cannot be called true submission or true worship. How does true worship come about? Without exception, all who genuinely know God worship and revere Him whenever they see Him; they are all compelled to bow down and worship Him. At present, while God incarnate is at work, the more understanding people have of His disposition and of what He has and is, the more they will treasure these things and the more they will revere Him. Generally, the less understanding people have, the more careless they are, and so they treat God as human. If people really knew and saw God, they would tremble with fear. “He that comes after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear”—why did John say this? Though deep down he did not have a very profound understanding, he knew that God is awe-inspiring. How many people these days are capable of revering God? If they do not know His disposition, then how can they revere God? People neither know Christ’s essence nor understand God’s disposition, much less are they able to truly worship God. If they see only the ordinary and normal outward appearance of Christ, yet do not know His essence, then it is easy for them to treat Christ as just an ordinary man. They may adopt an irreverent attitude toward Him and can cheat Him, resist Him, disobey Him, and cast judgment on Him. They can be self-righteous and not take His words seriously; they can even give rise to notions, condemnations, and

blasphemy against God. To resolve these issues, one must know Christ's essence and divinity. This is the main aspect of knowing God; it is what everyone who believes in the practical God must enter and achieve.

Excerpted from "How to Know God Incarnate" in Records of Christ's Talks

What should you know about the practical God? The Spirit, the Person, and the Word make up the practical God Himself, and this is the true meaning of the practical God Himself. If you only know the Person—if you know His habits and personality—but do not know the work of the Spirit, or what the Spirit does in the flesh, and if you only pay attention to the Spirit, and the Word, and only pray before the Spirit, but do not know the work of God's Spirit in the practical God, then this yet proves that you do not know the practical God. Knowledge of the practical God includes knowing and experiencing His words, and grasping the rules and principles of the work of the Holy Spirit and how the Spirit of God works in the flesh. It also includes knowing that every action of God in the flesh is governed by the Spirit, and that the words He speaks are the direct expression of the Spirit. Thus, to know the practical God, it is paramount to know how God works in humanity and in divinity; this, in turn, concerns the expressions of the Spirit, with which all people engage.

Excerpted from "You Should Know That the Practical God Is God Himself" in The Word Appears in the
Flesh

The process of coming to know the word of God is the process of coming to know God and the work of God. So, knowing visions not only refers to knowing the humanity of God incarnate, but also includes knowing the word and the work of God. From the word of God people come to understand God's will, and from the work of God they come to know God's disposition and what God is. Belief in God is the first step to knowing God. The process of advancing from this initial belief in God to the most profound belief in Him is the process of coming to know God, the process of experiencing the work of God. If you only believe in God for the sake of believing in God, and not for the sake of coming to know Him, then there is no reality to your faith, and your faith cannot become pure—of this there is no doubt. If, during the process by which man experiences God's work, he gradually comes to know God, then his disposition will gradually change, and his belief will become increasingly true. In this way, when man achieves success in

his belief in God, he will have completely gained God. The reason why God went to such great lengths to become flesh for the second time to do His work in person was so that man would be able to know Him and to see Him. Knowing God^[a] is the final effect to be achieved at the conclusion of God's work; it is the last requirement God makes of mankind. The reason why He does this is for the sake of His final testimony; He does this work in order that man may finally and completely turn to Him. Man can only come to love God by knowing God, and to love God he must know God. No matter how he seeks, or what he seeks to gain, he must be able to achieve knowledge of God. Only in this way can man satisfy God's heart. Only by knowing God can man have true faith in God, and only by knowing God can he truly revere and obey God. Those who do not know God will never arrive at true obedience and reverence of God. Knowing God includes knowing His disposition, understanding His will, and knowing what He is. Yet whichever aspect one comes to know, each one requires man to pay a price and requires the will to obey, without which no one would be able to continue following to the end.

Excerpted from "Only Those Who Know God Can Bear Testimony to God" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The three stages of work are at the heart of God's entire management, and in them are expressed the disposition of God and what He is. Those who do not know of the three stages of God's work are incapable of realizing how God expresses His disposition, nor do they know the wisdom of God's work. They also remain ignorant of the many ways in which He saves mankind, and of His will for the whole of mankind. The three stages of work are the full expression of the work of saving mankind. Those who do not know the three stages of work will be ignorant of the various methods and principles of the Holy Spirit's work, and those who only rigidly stick to doctrine that is left over from a certain stage of work are people who limit God to doctrine, and whose belief in God is vague and uncertain. Such people will never receive God's salvation. Only the three stages of God's work can fully express the entirety of God's disposition and completely express God's intention of saving the whole of mankind, and the entire process of mankind's salvation. This is proof that He has defeated Satan and gained mankind; it is proof of God's victory, and is the expression of God's entire disposition. Those who understand only one stage of the three stages of God's work know only part of God's disposition. In the notions of man, it is easy for this single stage of work to become doctrine, and it becomes likely that

man will establish fixed rules about God and use this single part of God's disposition as a representation of God's entire disposition. Furthermore, much of man's imagination is mixed within, such that man rigidly constrains the disposition, being, and wisdom of God, as well as the principles of God's work, within limited parameters, believing that if God was like this once, then He will remain the same for all time and never change. Only those who know and appreciate the three stages of work can fully and accurately know God. At the very least, they will not define God as the God of the Israelites, or the Jews, and will not see Him as a God who will be forever nailed to the cross for the sake of man. If one only comes to know God from one stage of His work, then their knowledge is far too small, and amounts to no more than a drop in the ocean. If not, why would many of the religious old guard nail God to the cross alive? Is it not because man confines God within certain parameters? Do many people not oppose God and obstruct the work of the Holy Spirit because they do not know the varied and diverse work of God, and, furthermore, because they possess but a smidgeon of knowledge and doctrine with which to measure the work of the Holy Spirit? Though the experiences of such people are superficial, they are arrogant and indulgent in nature and they regard the work of the Holy Spirit with contempt, ignore the disciplines of the Holy Spirit and, moreover, use their trivial old arguments to "confirm" the work of the Holy Spirit. They also put on an act, and are wholly convinced of their own learning and erudition, and convinced that they are able to travel across the world. Are such people not those who are despised and rejected by the Holy Spirit, and will they not be eliminated by the new age? Are not those who come before God and openly oppose Him ignorant and under-informed little people, who are merely trying to show how brilliant they are? With but a meager knowledge of the Bible, they try to straddle the world's "academia"; with but a superficial doctrine to teach people, they try to reverse the work of the Holy Spirit and attempt to make it revolve around their own thought process. Short-sighted as they are, they try to behold in one glance 6,000 years of God's work. These people do not have any sense worth mentioning! In fact, the greater people's knowledge of God, the slower they are to judge His work. Furthermore, they only talk a little of their knowledge of God's work today, but they are not rash in their judgments. The less people know of God, the more arrogant and overconfident they are and the more wantonly they proclaim God's being—yet they only talk of theory, and offer no real evidence. Such people are of no value whatsoever. Those who see the work of the Holy Spirit as a game are frivolous! Those who are not cautious when they encounter

the new work of the Holy Spirit, who run their mouths off, are quick to judge, who give free rein to their natural instinct to deny the rightness of the Holy Spirit's work, and who also insult and blaspheme it—are such disrespectful people not ignorant of the Holy Spirit's work? Are they not, furthermore, people of great arrogance, people who are inherently proud and ungovernable? Even if a day comes when such people accept the new work of the Holy Spirit, still God will not tolerate them. Not only do they look down upon those who work for God, but they also blaspheme against God Himself. Such foolhardy people will not be forgiven, either in this age or the age to come, and they shall forever perish in hell! Such disrespectful, indulgent people are pretending to believe in God, and the more people are like this, the more liable they are to offend God's administrative decrees. Do not all those arrogant ones who are innately unbridled, and who have never obeyed anyone, all walk upon this path? Do they not oppose God day after day, God who is always new and never old?

Excerpted from “Knowing the Three Stages of God's Work Is the Path to Knowing God” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

However much understanding of God there is in people's hearts, that is also the extent of the position He holds in their hearts. However great the degree of knowledge of God is in their hearts, that is how great God is in their hearts. If the God that you know is empty and vague, then the God you believe in is also empty and vague. The God that you know is limited to the scope of your own personal life, and has nothing to do with the true God Himself. Thus, knowing God's practical actions, knowing the reality of God and His omnipotence, knowing the true identity of God Himself, knowing what He has and is, knowing the actions that He has manifested among all the things of His creation—these things are very important to every single person who pursues knowledge of God. They have a direct bearing on whether people can enter truth reality. If you limit your understanding of God to just words, if you limit it to your own little experiences, to what you figure to be God's grace, or your little testimonies to God, then I say that the God you believe in is absolutely not the true God Himself. Not only that, but it can also be said that the God you believe in is an imaginary God, not the true God. This is because the true God is the One that rules over everything, that walks among everything, that manages everything. He is the One that holds the fate of all of mankind and of everything in His hands. The work and actions of the God that I am talking about are not just limited to a small portion

of people. That is, they are not limited to just the people who currently follow Him. His deeds are manifested among all things, in the survival of all things, and in the laws of change of all things.

Excerpted from “God Himself, the Unique IX” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

All those in Christianity who study theology, Scripture, and even the history of God’s work—are they true believers? Are they any different from the believers and followers of God that God speaks of? In the eyes of God, do they believe in God? (No.) They study theology, they study God. Is there a difference between them who study God and those who study other things? There is no difference. They are just the same as people who study history, who study philosophy, who study law, who study biology, who study astronomy—they just do not like science, or biology, or any other subjects; they just like theology. These people study God by searching for clues and giveaways in the work of God—and what comes out of their research? Are they able to determine whether God exists? They never will. Are they able to determine the will of God? (No.) Why? Because they live amid words and phrases, they live amid knowledge, they live amid philosophy, they live amid the minds and thoughts of humans. They will never be able to see God, they will never gain the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit. What does God define them as? As nonbelievers, as unbelievers. These nonbelievers and unbelievers mingle with the so-called Christian community, acting like people who believe in God, acting like Christians—but do they, in fact, truly worship God? Do they truly obey Him? No. Why? One thing is certain: It is because, in their hearts, they do not believe that God created the world, that He rules all things, that He can become flesh, much less do they believe that God exists. What does this unbelief indicate? Doubt, denial, and even an attitude of hoping the prophecies spoken by God—particularly those about the disasters—do not come true and are not fulfilled. This is the attitude with which they treat belief in God, and it is also the essence and real face of their so-called faith. These people study God because they have an especial interest in the scholarship and knowledge of theology, and are interested in the historical facts of God’s work. They are nothing more than a bunch of intellectuals studying theology. These “intellectuals” do not believe in the existence of God, so what do they do when God comes to work and His words are fulfilled? What is their first reaction when they hear that God has become flesh, and is performing new work? “Impossible!” They condemn whoever preaches the new work of God,

and even want to kill them. What is this a manifestation of? Is this not the manifestation of them being bona fide antichrists? They are hostile toward the work of God and the fulfillment of His words, to say nothing of His incarnate flesh: “If You were not incarnated and Your words have not been fulfilled then You are God. If Your words have been fulfilled and You were incarnated, then You are not.” What is the subtext to this? It is that they do not permit the incarnation of God so long as they exist. Is this not a bona fide antichrist? This is a genuine antichrist. Do such assertions exist in the religious community? Such assertions are made very loudly, and also very forcefully: “It’s wrong that God has incarnated, it’s impossible! Any incarnation is a sham!” Some ask, “Have these people been misled?” Absolutely not. They just do not have true faith in God. They do not believe in the existence of God, they do not believe in the incarnation of God, they do not believe in God’s work of creating the world, much less do they believe in God’s work of being crucified and redeeming all mankind. To them, the theology they study is a series of historical events, it is a kind of doctrine or theory.

Excerpted from “For Leaders and Workers, Choosing a Path Is of Utmost Importance (7)” in Records of Christ’s Talks

What was the chief manifestation of the hypocrisy of the Pharisees? They only pored over Scripture and did not seek the truth. When they read God’s words, they did not pray or seek; instead, they studied the words of God, they studied what God said and did, and so turned His words into a kind of theory, into a doctrine that they taught to others. This is what poring over God’s words is. So why did they do that? What was it they pored over? In their eyes, these were not the words of God, they were not the expressions of God, much less were they the truth, but rather a form of scholarship. Such scholarship, in their eyes, should be passed on, it should be spread, and only this would have been spreading the way of God and the gospel. This is what they called “preaching,” and the sermon they preached was theology.

... The Pharisees treated the theology and theory they had mastered as a kind of knowledge, as a tool for condemning people and measuring whether they were right or wrong. They even used it on the Lord Jesus—that was how the Lord Jesus was condemned. Their appraisal of people, and the way they treated them, was never based on their essence, or on whether what they said was right or wrong, much less on the source or provenance of their words. They just condemned and measured people based on unyielding words and doctrines that they had

mastered. And so, even though these Pharisees knew that what the Lord Jesus did was not a sin, and did not contravene the law, they still condemned Him, because what the Lord Jesus said appeared to be at odds with the knowledge and scholarship they had mastered and the theological theory they expounded. And the Pharisees just would not loosen their grip on these words and phrases, they clung onto this knowledge and would not let it go. What was the only possible outcome in the end? They would not acknowledge that the Lord Jesus was the Messiah who would come, or that there was truth in what the Lord Jesus said, much less that what the Lord Jesus did was in keeping with the truth. They found some unsubstantiated charges to condemn the Lord Jesus with—but in fact, in their hearts, did they know whether these sins they condemned Him with were valid? They did. So why did they still condemn Him thus? (They did not want to believe that the high and mighty God in their minds could have been the Lord Jesus, this image of an ordinary Son of man.) They did not want to accept this fact. And what was the nature of their refusal to accept this? Was there not something of trying to reason with God in this? What they meant was, “Could God do that? If God were incarnated, He must surely be born of distinguished lineage. What’s more, He must accept the tutelage of scribes and Pharisees, learn this knowledge, and read much Scripture. Only after He possesses this knowledge can He take on the title of ‘incarnation’.” They believed that, firstly, You are not thus qualified, so You are not God; secondly, without this knowledge You cannot do the work of God, much less can You be God; thirdly, You cannot work outside the temple—You are not in the temple now, You are always among the sinners, so the work You do is beyond the scope of God’s work. Where did the basis of their condemnation come from? From Scripture, from the mind of man, and from the theological education they had received. Because they were swollen with notions, imaginings, and knowledge, they believed this knowledge to be right, to be the truth, to be the basis, and at no time could God contravene these things. Did they seek the truth? They did not. What they sought were their own notions and imaginings, and their own experiences, and they tried to use these to define God and determine whether He was right or wrong. What was the ultimate outcome of this? They condemned the work of God and nailed Him to the cross.

Excerpted from “For Leaders and Workers, Choosing a Path Is of Utmost Importance (7)” in Records of

Christ’s Talks

Man has been corrupted and lives in Satan's trap. All people live in the flesh, live in selfish desires, and there is not a single one among them who is compatible with Me. There are those who say that they are compatible with Me, but such people all worship vague idols. Although they acknowledge My name as holy, they tread a path that runs contrary to Me, and their words are full of arrogance and self-confidence. This is because, at root, they are all against Me and incompatible with Me. Every day, they seek traces of Me in the Bible and find "suitable" passages at random which they read endlessly and recite as scriptures. They do not know how to be compatible with Me nor what it means to be against Me. They merely read scriptures blindly. Within the Bible, they constrain a vague God that they have never seen, and are incapable of seeing, and take it out to look at at their leisure. They believe in My existence only within the scope of the Bible, and they equate Me with the Bible; without the Bible there is no Me, and without Me there is no Bible. They pay no heed to My existence or actions, but instead devote extreme and special attention to each and every word of Scripture. Many more even believe that I should not do anything I wish to do unless it is foretold by Scripture. They attach too much importance to Scripture. It can be said that they see words and expressions as too important, to the extent that they use verses from the Bible to measure every word I say and to condemn Me. What they seek is not the way of compatibility with Me or the way of compatibility with the truth, but the way of compatibility with the words of the Bible, and they believe that anything that does not conform to the Bible is, without exception, not My work. Are such people not the dutiful descendants of the Pharisees? The Jewish Pharisees used the law of Moses to condemn Jesus. They did not seek compatibility with the Jesus of that time, but diligently followed the law to the letter, to the extent that—after having charged Him with not following the law of the Old Testament and not being the Messiah—they ultimately nailed the innocent Jesus to the cross. What was their substance? Was it not that they didn't seek the way of compatibility with the truth? They obsessed over each and every word of Scripture while paying heed neither to My will nor to the steps and methods of My work. They were not people who sought the truth, but people who rigidly clung to words; they were not people who believed in God, but people who believed in the Bible. Essentially, they were watchdogs of the Bible. In order to safeguard the interests of the Bible, to uphold the dignity of the Bible, and to protect the reputation of the Bible, they went so far as to nail the merciful Jesus to the cross. This they did merely for the sake of defending the Bible, and for the sake of maintaining the status of each

and every word of the Bible in people's hearts. So they preferred to forsake their future and the sin offering to condemn Jesus, who did not conform to the doctrine of Scripture, to death. Were they not all lackeys to each and every word of Scripture?

And what of people today? Christ has come to release the truth, yet they would rather expel Him from this world so that they may gain entry into heaven and receive grace. They would rather completely deny the coming of the truth in order to safeguard the interests of the Bible, and they would rather nail the Christ returned to flesh to the cross again in order to ensure the everlasting existence of the Bible. How can man receive My salvation when his heart is so malicious and his nature so antagonistic toward Me? I live among man, yet man does not know of My existence. When I shine My light upon man, he still remains ignorant of My existence. When I unleash My wrath upon man, he denies My existence with even greater vigor. Man searches for compatibility with words and compatibility with the Bible, yet not a single person comes before Me to seek the way of compatibility with the truth. Man looks up to Me in heaven and devotes particular concern to My existence in heaven, yet no one cares about Me in the flesh, for I who live among man am simply too insignificant. Those who only seek compatibility with the words of the Bible and who only seek compatibility with a vague God are a wretched sight to Me. That is because what they worship are dead words, and a God that is capable of giving them untold treasures; what they worship is a God that would lay Himself at the mercy of man—a God who does not exist. What, then, can such people gain from Me? Man is simply too lowly for words. Those who are against Me, who make limitless demands of Me, who have no love of the truth, who are rebellious toward Me—how could they be compatible with Me?

... Those who only care about the words of the Bible and are concerned neither with the truth nor with seeking My footsteps—they are against Me, for they limit Me according to the Bible, constrain Me within the Bible, and so are blasphemous in the extreme toward Me. How could such people come before Me? They pay no heed to My deeds, or My will, or the truth, but instead obsess over words—words that kill. How could such people be compatible with Me?

Excerpted from “You Should Seek the Way of Compatibility With Christ” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Footnotes:

a. The original text reads “The work of knowing God.”

2. How one knows God's disposition and essence

Relevant Words of God:

God is what He is and He has what He has. All that He expresses and reveals are representations of His essence and of His identity. What He is and what He has, as well as His essence and identity, are things that cannot be replaced by any man. His disposition encompasses His love for mankind, solace of mankind, hatred of mankind, and even more, a thorough understanding of mankind. The personality of man, however, may be optimistic, lively, or unfeeling. The disposition of God is one that belongs to the Ruler of all things and living beings, to the Lord of all creation. His disposition represents honor, power, nobility, greatness, and most of all, supremacy. His disposition is the symbol of authority, the symbol of all that is righteous, the symbol of all that is beautiful and good. More than that, it is a symbol of Him who cannot be^[a] overcome or invaded by the darkness and any enemy force, as well as a symbol of Him who cannot be offended (nor will He tolerate being offended)^[b] by any created being. His disposition is the symbol of the highest power. No person or persons can or may disturb His work or His disposition. But the personality of man is no more than a mere symbol of the slight superiority of man over beast. Man in and of himself has no authority, no autonomy, and no ability to transcend the self, but is in his essence one who cowers at the mercy of all manner of people, events, and things. The joy of God is due to the existence and emergence of righteousness and light, because of the destruction of darkness and evil. He takes delight in bringing the light and a good life to mankind; His joy is a righteous joy, a symbol of the existence of all that is positive and, even more, a symbol of auspiciousness. The anger of God is due to the harm that the existence and interference of injustice brings upon His mankind, because of the existence of evil and darkness, because of the existence of things that drive out the truth, and even more, because of the existence of things that oppose what is good and beautiful. His anger is a symbol that all things negative no longer exist and, even more than that, it is a symbol of His holiness. His sorrow is due to mankind, for whom He has hopes but who has fallen into darkness, because the work He does on man does not come up to His expectations, and because the mankind He loves cannot all live in the light. He feels sorrow for the innocent mankind, for the honest but ignorant man, and for the man who is good but lacking in his own views. His sorrow is a symbol of His goodness and of His mercy, a symbol of beauty and of kindness. His

happiness, of course, comes from defeating His enemies and gaining the good faith of man. More than this, it arises from the expulsion and destruction of all enemy forces, and because mankind receives a good and peaceful life. The happiness of God is unlike the joy of man; rather, it is the feeling of garnering good fruits, a feeling even greater than joy. His happiness is a symbol of mankind breaking free of suffering from this time forth, and a symbol of mankind entering a world of light. The emotions of mankind, on the other hand, all arise for the sake of his own interests, not for righteousness, light, or what is beautiful, and least of all for the grace bestowed by Heaven. The emotions of mankind are selfish and belong to the world of darkness. They do not exist for the sake of the will, much less for the plan of God, and so man and God can never be spoken of in the same breath. God is forever supreme and ever honorable, while man is forever base, forever worthless. This is because God is forever making sacrifices and devoting Himself to mankind; man, however, forever takes and strives only for himself. God is forever taking pains for mankind's survival, yet man never contributes anything for the sake of the light or for righteousness. Even if man makes an effort for a time, it is so weak that it cannot withstand a single blow, for the effort of man is always for his own sake and not for others. Man is always selfish, while God is forever selfless. God is the source of all that is just, good, and beautiful, while man is he who succeeds to and makes manifest all ugliness and evil. God will never alter His essence of righteousness and beauty, yet man is perfectly capable, at any time and in any situation, of betraying righteousness and straying far from God.

Excerpted from "It Is Very Important to Understand God's Disposition" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The three stages of work are a record of the entire work of God; they are a record of God's salvation of mankind, and they are not imaginary. If you truly wish to seek a knowledge of God's entire disposition, then you must know the three stages of work carried out by God, and, furthermore, you must not omit any stage. This is the minimum that must be achieved by those who seek to know God. Man himself cannot fabricate a true knowledge of God. This is not something that man himself can imagine, nor is it the consequence of the Holy Spirit's special favor granted to a single person. Rather, it is a knowledge that comes after man has experienced the work of God, and it is a knowledge of God that only comes after having experienced the facts of God's work. Such a knowledge cannot be achieved on a whim, and nor is it something that can be taught. It is wholly related to personal experience. God's salvation of mankind is at the

core of these three stages of work, yet within the work of salvation are included several methods of working and several means by which God's disposition is expressed. This is what is most difficult for man to identify, and it is this that is difficult for man to understand. The separation of the ages, changes in God's work, changes in the location of work, changes in the recipient of this work, and so on—these are all included in the three stages of work. In particular, the difference in the Holy Spirit's way of working, as well as alterations in God's disposition, image, name, identity, or other changes, are all part of the three stages of work. One stage of work can only represent one part, and is limited within a certain scope. It does not involve the separation of the ages, or changes in God's work, much less the other aspects. This is a clearly obvious fact. The three stages of work are the entirety of God's work in saving mankind. Man must know God's work and God's disposition in the work of salvation; without this fact, your knowledge of God consists of nothing but hollow words, nothing more than armchair pontification.

Excerpted from "Knowing the Three Stages of God's Work Is the Path to Knowing God" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

God does the work of judgment and chastisement so that man may gain knowledge of Him, and for the sake of His testimony. Without His judgment of man's corrupt disposition, man could not possibly know His righteous disposition, which brooks no offense, and nor would man be able to turn his old knowledge of God into a new one. For the sake of His testimony, and for the sake of His management, He makes His entirety public, thus enabling man, through His public appearance, to arrive at knowledge of God, to be transformed in his disposition, and to bear resounding testimony to God. The transformation of the disposition of man is achieved through many different kinds of God's work; without such changes in his disposition, man would be unable to bear testimony to God and to be after God's heart. The transformation of man's disposition signifies that man has freed himself from Satan's bondage and from the influence of darkness, and has truly become a model and specimen of God's work, a witness of God, and one who is after God's heart. Today, God incarnate has come to do His work on earth, and He requires that man achieve knowledge of Him, obedience to Him, testimony to Him, to know His practical and normal work, to obey all of His words and work which do not accord with the notions of man, and to bear testimony to all the work He does to save man, as well as all the deeds He accomplishes to conquer man. Those who bear testimony to God must have

knowledge of God; only this kind of testimony is accurate and real, and only this kind of testimony can shame Satan. God uses those who have come to know Him through undergoing His judgment and chastisement, dealing and pruning, to bear testimony to Him. He uses those who have been corrupted by Satan to bear testimony to Him, and so too does He use those whose disposition has changed, and who have thus gained His blessings, to bear testimony to Him. He does not need man to praise Him with his mouth, nor does He need the praise and testimony of the ilk of Satan, who have not been saved by Him. Only those who know God are qualified to bear testimony to Him, and only those who have been transformed in their disposition are qualified to bear testimony to Him. God will not allow man intentionally to bring shame upon His name.

Excerpted from “Only Those Who Know God Can Bear Testimony to God” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Knowing God must be achieved through reading and understanding God’s words. Some say: “I haven’t seen God incarnate, so how could I know God?” In fact, God’s words are an expression of His disposition. From God’s words, you can see His love and salvation for humans, as well as His method for saving them.... This is because His words are expressed by God Himself, not written by humans. They have been personally expressed by God; God Himself is expressing His own words and His inner voice. Why are they called words from the heart? It is because they are issued from deep down, and express His disposition, His will, His thoughts, His love for mankind, His salvation of mankind, and His expectations of mankind.... God’s utterances include harsh words, and gentle and considerate words, as well as some revelatory words that are not in line with human wishes. If you look only at the revelatory words, you might feel that God is rather stern. If you look only at the gentle words, you might feel that God is not very authoritative. You therefore should not take them out of context; rather, look at them from every angle. Sometimes God speaks from a gentle and compassionate perspective, and then people see His love for mankind; sometimes He speaks from a very strict perspective, and then people see the disposition of His that will tolerate no offense. Man is deplorably filthy, and is not worthy of seeing God’s face or of coming before Him. That people are now allowed to come before Him is purely by His grace. God’s wisdom can be seen from the way He works and in the significance of His work. People can still see these things in God’s words, even without

any direct contact from Him. When someone who genuinely knows God comes into contact with Christ, his encounter with Christ can correspond with his existing knowledge of God; however, when someone who has only a theoretical understanding encounters God, he cannot see the correlation. This aspect of the truth is the most profound of mysteries; it is difficult to fathom. Sum up God's words on the mystery of the incarnation, look at them from all angles, and then pray together, ponder, and fellowship further on this aspect of the truth. In doing so, you will be able to gain the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit and come to understand. Because humans have no chance of having direct contact with God, they must rely on this kind of experience to feel their way through and enter a little bit at a time in order to attain true knowledge of God.

Excerpted from "How to Know God Incarnate" in Records of Christ's Talks

God's possessions and being, God's essence, God's disposition—all has been made known in His words to humankind. When he experiences God's words, man will in the process of putting them into practice come to understand the purpose behind the words God speaks, and to understand the source and background of God's words, and to understand and appreciate the intended effect of God's words. For humanity, these are all things that man must experience, grasp, and attain in order to attain truth and life, grasp God's intentions, become transformed in his disposition, and become able to obey God's sovereignty and arrangements. At the same time that man experiences, grasps, and attains these things, he will gradually have gained an understanding of God, and at this time he will also have gained different degrees of knowledge about Him. This understanding and knowledge does not come out of something man has imagined or composed, but rather from what he appreciates, experiences, feels, and confirms within himself. Only after appreciating, experiencing, feeling, and confirming these things does man's knowledge of God acquire content; only the knowledge that man obtains at this time is actual, real, and accurate, and this process—of attaining genuine understanding and knowledge of God through appreciating, experiencing, feeling, and confirming His words—is no other than true communion between man and God. In the midst of this kind of communion, man comes truly to understand and comprehend God's intentions, comes truly to understand and know God's possessions and being, comes truly to understand and know God's essence, comes gradually to understand and know God's disposition, arrives at real certainty about, and a

correct definition of, the fact of God's dominion over all creation, and gains an essential bearing on and knowledge of God's identity and position. In the midst of this kind of communion, man changes, step by step, his ideas about God, no longer imagining Him out of thin air, or giving rein to his own suspicions about Him, or misunderstanding Him, or condemning Him, or passing judgment on Him, or doubting Him. Thus, man will have fewer disputes with God, he will have fewer conflicts with God, and there will be fewer occasions on which man rebels against God. Conversely, man's caring for and obedience to God will grow greater, and his reverence for God will become more real and more profound. In the midst of such communion, man will not only attain the provision of truth and the baptism of life, but he will at the same time also attain true knowledge of God. In the midst of such communion, man will not only be transformed in his disposition and receive salvation, but he will at the same time also garner the true reverence and worship of a created being toward God. Having had this kind of communion, man's faith in God will no longer be a blank sheet of paper, or a promise offered up in lip service, or a form of blind pursuit and idolization; only with this kind of communion will man's life grow toward maturity day by day, and only now will his disposition gradually become transformed, and his faith in God will, step by step, pass from a vague and uncertain belief into genuine obedience and caring, into real reverence, and man will also, in the process of following God, gradually progress from a passive to an active stance, from the negative to the positive; only with this kind of communion will man arrive at true understanding and comprehension of God, at true knowledge of God.

Excerpted from "Knowing God Is the Path to Fearing God and Shunning Evil" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

When reading God's words, Peter was not focused on understanding doctrines, much less was he focused on obtaining theological knowledge; instead, he concentrated on comprehending the truth and grasping God's will, as well as achieving an understanding of His disposition and His loveliness. Peter also attempted to understand the various corrupt states of man from God's words, as well as man's corrupt nature and actual shortcoming, thus meeting all aspects of God's requirements of man in order to satisfy Him. Peter had so many correct practices that abided by the words of God; this was most in line with God's will, and it was the best way a person could cooperate while experiencing God's work. When experiencing the

hundreds of trials from God, Peter examined himself strictly against every word of God's judgment of man, every word of God's revelation of man, and every word of His demands of man, and strived to fathom the meaning of those words. He tried in earnest to ponder and memorize every word that Jesus said to him, and achieved very good results. Through this manner of practicing, he was able to achieve an understanding of himself from God's words, and he not only came to understand the various corrupt states of man, but also came to understand man's essence, nature, and various shortcomings. This is what it means to truly understand oneself. From God's words, Peter not only achieved a true understanding of himself, but from the things expressed in God's words—God's righteous disposition, what He has and is, God's will for His work, His demands of mankind—from these words he came to know God completely. He came to know God's disposition, and His essence; he came to know and understand what God has and is, as well as God's loveliness and God's demands for man. Although God did not speak back then as much as He does today, results in these aspects were nevertheless achieved in Peter. This was a rare and precious thing. Peter went through hundreds of trials, but did not suffer in vain. He not only came to understand himself from the words and the work of God, but he also came to know God.

Excerpted from "How to Walk the Path of Peter" in Records of Christ's Talks

No matter what stage you have arrived at in your experience, you are inseparable from God's word or the truth, and what you understand of God's disposition and what you know of what God has and is are all expressed in God's words; they are inextricably linked with the truth. God's disposition and what He has and is are, in themselves, the truth; the truth is an authentic manifestation of God's disposition and what He has and is. It makes what He has and is concrete, and it makes a clear statement of what He has and is; it tells you more straightforwardly what God likes, what He does not like, what He wants you to do and what He does not permit you to do, which people He despises and which people He delights in. Behind the truths that God expresses, people can see His pleasure, anger, sorrow, and happiness, as well as His essence—this is the revealing of His disposition. Aside from knowing what God has and is, and understanding His disposition from His word, what is most important is the need to reach this understanding through practical experience. If a person removes themselves from real life in order to know God, they will not be able to achieve that. Even if there are people who can gain

some understanding from the word of God, their understanding is limited to theories and words, and there arises a disparity with what God Himself is really like.

Excerpted from “God’s Work, God’s Disposition, and God Himself III” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

Knowledge of God’s authority, God’s power, God’s own identity, and God’s essence cannot be achieved by relying on your imagination. Since you cannot rely on imagination to know the authority of God, then in what way can you achieve a true knowledge of God’s authority? The way to do this is through eating and drinking the words of God, through fellowship, and through experiencing the words of God. Thus, you will have a gradual experience and verification of God’s authority and you will gain a gradual understanding and incremental knowledge of it. This is the only way to achieve the knowledge of God’s authority; there are no shortcuts. Asking you not to imagine is not the same as making you sit passively to await destruction, or stopping you from doing anything. Not using your brain to think and imagine means not using logic to infer, not using knowledge to analyze, not using science as the basis, but instead appreciating, verifying, and confirming that the God you believe in has authority, confirming that He holds sovereignty over your fate, and that His power at all times proves Him to be the true God Himself, through the words of God, through the truth, through everything that you encounter in life. This is the only way that anyone can achieve an understanding of God. Some say that they wish to find a simple way of achieving this aim, but can you think of such a way? I tell you, there is no need to think: There are no other ways! The only way is to conscientiously and steadfastly know and verify what God has and is through every word that He expresses and everything that He does. This is the only way to know God. For what God has and is, and everything of God, is not hollow and empty, but real.

Excerpted from “God Himself, the Unique I” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

People often say that it is not an easy thing to know God. However, I say that knowing God is not a difficult matter at all, for God frequently displays His deeds for man to see. God has never ceased His dialogue with mankind, and He has never concealed Himself from man, and nor has He hidden Himself. His thoughts, His ideas, His words and His deeds are all revealed to mankind. Therefore, so long as man wishes to know God, he can come to understand and know Him through all sorts of means and methods. The reason why man blindly thinks that

God has intentionally avoided him, that God has intentionally hidden Himself from humanity, that God has no intention of allowing man to understand and know Him, is because he does not know who God is and nor does he wish to understand God. Even more than that, man does not concern himself with the Creator's thoughts, words or deeds.... Truthfully speaking, if a person just uses their spare time to focus upon and understand the Creator's words or deeds, and if they pay just a little attention to the Creator's thoughts and the voice of His heart, it will not be difficult for that person to realize that the Creator's thoughts, words, and deeds are visible and transparent. Likewise, it will take little effort to realize that the Creator is among man at all times, that He is always in conversation with man and the entirety of creation, and that He is performing new deeds every day. His essence and disposition are expressed in His dialogue with man; His thoughts and ideas are revealed completely in His deeds; He accompanies and observes mankind at all times. He speaks quietly to mankind and all of creation with His silent words: "I am in the heavens, and I am amongst My creation. I am keeping watch; I am waiting; I am at your side...." His hands are warm and strong; His footsteps are light; His voice is soft and graceful; His form passes and turns, embracing all of mankind; His countenance is beautiful and gentle. He has never left, never vanished. Day and night, He is mankind's constant companion, never to leave their side.

Excerpted from "God Himself, the Unique II" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Footnotes:

- a. The original text reads "it is a symbol of being unable to be."
- b. The original text reads "as well as a symbol of being unable to be offended (and not tolerating being offended)."

3. How God manifests His righteous disposition to mankind

Relevant Words of God:

God does the work of judgment and chastisement so that man may gain knowledge of Him, and for the sake of His testimony. Without His judgment of man's corrupt disposition, man could not possibly know His righteous disposition, which brooks no offense, and nor would man be able to turn his old knowledge of God into a new one. For the sake of His testimony, and for

the sake of His management, He makes His entirety public, thus enabling man, through His public appearance, to arrive at knowledge of God, to be transformed in his disposition, and to bear resounding testimony to God. The transformation of the disposition of man is achieved through many different kinds of God's work; without such changes in his disposition, man would be unable to bear testimony to God and to be after God's heart. The transformation of man's disposition signifies that man has freed himself from Satan's bondage and from the influence of darkness, and has truly become a model and specimen of God's work, a witness of God, and one who is after God's heart. Today, God incarnate has come to do His work on earth, and He requires that man achieve knowledge of Him, obedience to Him, testimony to Him, to know His practical and normal work, to obey all of His words and work which do not accord with the notions of man, and to bear testimony to all the work He does to save man, as well as all the deeds He accomplishes to conquer man. Those who bear testimony to God must have knowledge of God; only this kind of testimony is accurate and real, and only this kind of testimony can shame Satan. God uses those who have come to know Him through undergoing His judgment and chastisement, dealing and pruning, to bear testimony to Him. He uses those who have been corrupted by Satan to bear testimony to Him, and so too does He use those whose disposition has changed, and who have thus gained His blessings, to bear testimony to Him. He does not need man to praise Him with his mouth, nor does He need the praise and testimony of the ilk of Satan, who have not been saved by Him. Only those who know God are qualified to bear testimony to Him, and only those who have been transformed in their disposition are qualified to bear testimony to Him. God will not allow man intentionally to bring shame upon His name.

Excerpted from "Only Those Who Know God Can Bear Testimony to God" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

God became flesh in the most backward and filthy place of all, and it is only in this way that God is able to clearly show the entirety of His holy and righteous disposition. And through what is His righteous disposition shown? It is shown when He judges man's sins, when He judges Satan, when He abhors sin, and when He despises the enemies that oppose and rebel against Him. The words I speak today are to judge man's sins, to judge man's unrighteousness, to curse man's disobedience. Man's crookedness and deceitfulness, man's words and deeds—all that is

at odds with God's will must be subjected to judgment, and man's disobedience denounced as sin. His words revolve around the principles of judgment; He uses judgment of man's unrighteousness, the curse of man's rebelliousness, and exposure of man's ugly faces to make manifest His own righteous disposition. Holiness is a representation of His righteous disposition, and in fact God's holiness actually is His righteous disposition. Your corrupt dispositions are the context of today's words—I use them to speak and to judge, and to carry out the work of conquest. This alone is the real work, and this alone fully makes God's holiness shine. If there is no trace of a corrupt disposition in you, then God will not judge you, nor will He show you His righteous disposition. Since you have a corrupt disposition, God will not let you off, and it is through this that His holiness is shown. If God were to see that man's filthiness and rebelliousness were too great but He did not speak or judge you, nor chastise you for your unrighteousness, then this would prove that He is not God, for He would have no hatred of sin; He would be just as filthy as man. Today, it is because of your filth that I judge you, and it is because of your corruption and rebelliousness that I chastise you. I am not flaunting My power to you or deliberately oppressing you; I do these things because you, who have been born in this land of filth, have been so severely contaminated by filth. You have simply lost your integrity and humanity and you have become like pigs born in the dirtiest corners of the world, and so it is because of this that you are judged and that I unleash My wrath upon you. It is precisely because of this judgment that you have been able to see that God is the righteous God, and that God is the holy God; it is precisely because of His holiness and His righteousness that He judges you and unleashes His wrath upon you. Because He can reveal His righteous disposition when He sees the rebelliousness of man, and because He can reveal His holiness when He sees the filth of man, this is enough to show that He is God Himself, who is holy and pristine, and yet lives in the land of filth. ... When people's corrupt dispositions are revealed, God speaks in order to judge people, and only then do people see that He is holy. As He judges and chastises man for his sins, all the while exposing the sins of man, no person or thing can escape this judgment; all that is filthy is judged by Him, and it is only thus that His disposition can be said to be righteous. If it were otherwise, how could it be said that you are foils in both name and fact?

Excerpted from "How the Effects of the Second Step of the Work of Conquest Are Achieved" in *The Word*

Appears in the Flesh

What is the extent of your knowledge today? Your ideas, your thoughts, your behavior, your words and deeds—do all of these expressions not amount to a foil to God’s righteousness and holiness? Are your expressions not manifestations of the corrupt disposition revealed by God’s words? Your thoughts and ideas, your motivations, and the corruption that is revealed in you show the righteous disposition of God, as well as His holiness. God, too, was born in the land of filth, yet He remains unsullied by filth. He lives in the same filthy world as you, but He is possessed of reason and perception, and He despises the filth. You may not even be able to detect anything filthy in your words and deeds, but He can, and He points them out to you. Those old things of yours—your lack of cultivation, insight, and sense, and your backward ways of living—have now been brought into the light by today’s revelations; only by God coming to earth to work thus do people behold His holiness and righteous disposition. He judges and chastises you, causing you to gain understanding; sometimes, your demonic nature is manifested, and He points it out to you. He knows man’s essence like the back of His hand. He lives among you, He eats the same food as you, and He lives in the same environment—but even so, He knows more; He can expose you and see through the corrupt essence of humanity. There is nothing He despises more than man’s philosophies for living and crookedness and deceitfulness. He particularly abhors people’s fleshly interactions. He may not be familiar with man’s philosophies for living, but He can clearly see and expose the corrupt dispositions that people reveal. He works to speak and teach man through these things, He uses these things to judge people, and to make manifest His own righteous and holy disposition.

Excerpted from “How the Effects of the Second Step of the Work of Conquest Are Achieved” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

God’s intolerance of offense is His unique essence; God’s wrath is His unique disposition; God’s majesty is His unique essence. The principle behind God’s anger is the demonstration of His identity and status, which only He possesses. It goes without saying that this principle is also a symbol of the essence of the unique God Himself. God’s disposition is His own inherent essence, which is not changed at all by the passage of time, and nor is it altered by changes of geographical location. His inherent disposition is His intrinsic essence. Regardless of whom He carries out His work upon, His essence does not change, and neither does His righteous disposition. When one angers God, that which God sends forth is His inherent disposition; at

this time the principle behind His anger does not change, nor do His unique identity and status. He does not grow angry because of a change in His essence or because different elements arise from His disposition, but because man's opposition against Him offends His disposition. Man's flagrant provocation of God is a severe challenge to God's own identity and status. In God's view, when man challenges Him, man is contesting Him and testing His anger. When man opposes God, when man contests God, when man continuously tests God's anger—and it is at such times when sin runs rampant—God's wrath will naturally reveal and present itself. Therefore, God's expression of His wrath is a symbol that all evil forces will cease to exist, and it is a symbol that all hostile forces will be destroyed. This is the uniqueness of God's righteous disposition, and of God's wrath. When God's dignity and holiness are challenged, when the forces of justice are obstructed and unseen by man, then God will send forth His wrath. Because of God's essence, all those forces on earth which contest God, oppose Him and contend with Him, are evil, corrupt and unjust; they come from and belong to Satan. Because God is just and is of the light and flawlessly holy, thus all things evil, corrupt and belonging to Satan will vanish when God's wrath is unleashed.

Excerpted from "God Himself, the Unique II" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Although God's Wrath Is Hidden and Unknown to Man, It Tolerates No Offense

God's treatment of the whole of humanity, foolish and ignorant as humanity is, is primarily based on mercy and tolerance. His wrath, on the other hand, is kept concealed for the vast majority of time and in the vast majority of events, and it is unknown to man. As a result, it is difficult for man to see God express His wrath, and it is also difficult to understand His wrath. As such, man makes light of God's wrath. When man faces God's final work and step of tolerance and forgiveness for man—that is, when God's final instance of mercy and His final warning comes upon mankind—if people still use the same methods to oppose God and do not make any effort to repent, to mend their ways and accept His mercy, then God will no longer bestow His tolerance and patience upon them. On the contrary, God will retract His mercy at this time. Following this, He will only send forth His wrath. He can express His wrath in different ways, just as He can use different methods to punish and destroy people.

God's use of fire to destroy the city of Sodom is His swiftest method of utterly annihilating a humanity or any other thing. Burning the people of Sodom destroyed more than their physical bodies; it destroyed the entirety of their spirits, their souls and their bodies, ensuring that the people inside the city would cease to exist in both the material world and the world that is invisible to man. This is one way in which God reveals and expresses His wrath. This manner of revelation and expression is one aspect of the essence of God's wrath, just as it is naturally also a revelation of the essence of God's righteous disposition. When God sends forth His wrath, He ceases to reveal any mercy or lovingkindness, nor does He display any more of His tolerance or patience; there is no person, thing or reason that can persuade Him to continue to be patient, to give His mercy again, to bestow His tolerance once more. In place of these things, without a moment's hesitation, God sends forth His wrath and majesty, doing what He desires. He will do these things in a swift and clean manner in accordance with His own wishes. This is the way in which God sends forth His wrath and majesty, which man must not offend, and it is also an expression of one aspect of His righteous disposition. When people witness God showing concern and love toward man, they are unable to detect His wrath, see His majesty or feel His intolerance toward offense. These things have always led people to believe that God's righteous disposition is one solely of mercy, tolerance and love. However, when one sees God destroy a city or detest a humanity, His rage in the destruction of man and His majesty allow people to glimpse the other side of His righteous disposition. This is God's intolerance to offense. God's disposition that tolerates no offense surpasses the imagination of any created being, and among the non-created beings, none is capable of interfering with it or affecting it; even less can it be impersonated or imitated. Thus, this aspect of God's disposition is the one that humanity should know the most. Only God Himself has this kind of disposition, and only God Himself is possessed of this kind of disposition. God is possessed of this kind of righteous disposition because He detests wickedness, darkness, rebelliousness and Satan's evil acts—corrupting and devouring mankind—because He detests all acts of sin in opposition to Him and because of His holy and undefiled essence. It is because of this that He will not suffer any of the created or non-created beings to openly oppose or contest Him. Even an individual to whom He had once shown mercy or whom He had chosen, need only provoke His disposition and transgress His principles of patience and tolerance, and God will unleash and reveal His righteous disposition that tolerates no offense without the least bit of mercy or hesitation.

Excerpted from “God Himself, the Unique II” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

Regardless of how angry God had been with the Ninevites, as soon as they declared a fast and donned sackcloth and ashes, His heart began to soften and He began to change His mind. When He proclaimed to them that He would destroy their city—the moment prior to their confession and repentance for their sins—God was still angry with them. Once they had carried out a series of repentant acts, God’s anger for the people of Nineveh gradually transformed into mercy and tolerance for them. There is nothing contradictory about the coinciding revelation of these two aspects of God’s disposition in the same event. So, how should one understand and know this lack of contradiction? God expressed and revealed each of these two polar-opposite essences in turn as the people of Nineveh repented, allowing people to see the realness and the unoffendableness of God’s essence. God used His attitude to tell people the following: It is not that God does not tolerate people, or that He does not want to show mercy to them; rather, it is that they rarely truly repent to God, and it is rare that people truly turn away from their evil ways and abandon the violence in their hands. In other words, when God is angry with man, He hopes that man will be able to truly repent, and indeed He hopes to see man’s true repentance, in which case He will then liberally continue to bestow His mercy and tolerance upon man. This is to say that man’s evil conduct incurs God’s wrath, whereas God’s mercy and tolerance are bestowed upon those who listen to God and truly repent before Him, upon those who can turn away from their evil ways and abandon the violence in their hands. God’s attitude was very clearly revealed in His treatment of the Ninevites: God’s mercy and tolerance are not at all difficult to obtain, and what He requires is one’s true repentance. As long as people turn away from their evil ways and abandon the violence in their hands, God will change His heart and His attitude toward them.

Excerpted from “God Himself, the Unique II” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

The mercy and tolerance of God do indeed exist, but God’s holiness and righteousness when He unleashes His wrath also show man the side of God that brooks no offense. When man is fully capable of obeying the commands of God and acts in accordance with God’s requirements, God is abundant in His mercy toward man; when man has been filled with corruption, hatred and enmity for Him, God is profoundly angry. To what extent is He

profoundly angry? His wrath will last until God no longer sees man's resistance and evil deeds, until they are no longer before His eyes. Only then will God's anger disappear. In other words, no matter who the person is, if their heart has become distant from God and turned away from God, never to return, then regardless of how, to all appearances or in terms of their subjective desires, they wish to worship and follow and obey God in their body or in their thinking, God's wrath will be unleashed without cease. It will be such that when God deeply unleashes His anger, having given man ample opportunities, once it is unleashed there will be no way of taking it back, and He will never again be merciful and tolerant of such a mankind. This is one side of God's disposition that tolerates no offense. ... He is tolerant and merciful toward things that are kind and beautiful and good; toward things that are evil, sinful, and wicked, He is profoundly wrathful, such that He is unceasing in His wrath. These are the two principal and most prominent aspects of God's disposition, and, moreover, they have been revealed by God from beginning to end: abundant mercy and profound wrath.

Excerpted from "God's Work, God's Disposition, and God Himself II" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

People say that God is a righteous God, and that as long as man follows Him to the very end, He will surely be impartial toward man, for He is most righteous. If man follows Him to the very end, could He cast man aside? I am impartial toward all men, and judge all men with My righteous disposition, yet there are suitable conditions to the requirements I make of man, and that which I require must be accomplished by all men, regardless of who they are. I care not how your qualifications are, or how long you have held them; I care only whether you walk in My way, and whether or not you love and thirst for the truth. If you lack the truth, and instead bring shame upon My name, and do not act according to My way, merely following without care or concern, then at that time I will strike you down and punish you for your evil, and what will you have to say then? Will you be able to say that God is not righteous? Today, if you have complied with the words I have spoken, then you are the kind of person whom I approve. You say you have always suffered whilst following God, that you have followed Him through thick and thin, and have shared with Him the good times and the bad, but you have not lived out the words spoken by God; you wish only to run about for God and expend yourself for God each day, and have never thought to live out a life of meaning. You also say, "In any case, I believe God is righteous. I have suffered for Him, run around for Him, and devoted myself for Him,

and I have worked hard despite not receiving any recognition; He is sure to remember me.” It is true that God is righteous, yet this righteousness is untainted by any impurities: It contains no human will, and it is not tainted by the flesh, or by human transactions. All who are rebellious and in opposition, all who are not in compliance with His way, will be punished; none is forgiven, and none is spared! Some people say, “Today I run around for You; when the end comes, can You give me a little blessing?” So I ask you, “Have you complied with My words?” The righteousness that you speak of is based on a transaction. You think only that I am righteous and impartial toward all men, and that all those who follow Me to the very end are sure to be saved and gain My blessings. There is inner meaning to My words that “all those who follow Me to the very end are sure to be saved”: Those who follow Me to the very end are the ones who will be fully gained by Me, they are those who, after being conquered by Me, seek the truth and are made perfect. What conditions have you achieved? You have only achieved following Me to the very end, but what else? Have you complied with My words? You have accomplished one of My five requirements, yet you have no intention of accomplishing the remaining four. You have simply found the simplest, easiest path, and pursued it with an attitude of just hoping to get lucky. Toward such a person as you My righteous disposition is one of chastisement and judgment, it is one of righteous retribution, and it is the righteous punishment of all evildoers; all those who do not walk in My way will surely be punished, even if they follow to the very end. This is the righteousness of God. When this righteous disposition is expressed in the punishment of man, man will be dumbfounded, and feel regret that, whilst following God, he did not walk in His way. “At that time, I only suffered a little whilst following God, but did not walk in the way of God. What excuses are there? There is no option but to be chastised!” Yet in his mind he is thinking, “Anyway, I have followed to the very end, so even if You chastise me, it can’t be too severe a chastisement, and after exacting this chastisement You will still want me. I know You are righteous, and will not treat me that way forever. After all, I’m not like those who will be wiped out; those who are to be wiped out will receive a heavy chastisement, whereas my chastisement will be lighter.” Righteous disposition is not as you say. It is not the case that those who are good at confessing their sins are dealt with leniently. Righteousness is holiness, and is a disposition that is intolerant of offense by man, and all that is filthy and has not changed is the target of God’s disgust. God’s righteous disposition is not law, but administrative decree: It is administrative decree within the kingdom, and this administrative decree is the righteous

punishment of anyone who does not possess the truth and has not changed, and there is no margin for salvation. For when each man is classified according to kind, the good will be rewarded and the evil will be punished. It is when the destination of man will be made clear; it is the time that the work of salvation will come to an end, after which, the work of saving man will no longer be done, and retribution will be brought upon every one of those who commit evil.

Excerpted from "The Experiences of Peter: His Knowledge of Chastisement and Judgment" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Do you understand now what is judgment and what is truth? If you do, then I exhort you to submit obediently to being judged, otherwise you shall never have the opportunity to be commended by God or to be brought by Him into His kingdom. Those who only accept judgment but can never be purified, that is, those who flee amidst the work of judgment, shall forever be detested and rejected by God. Their sins are more numerous, and more grievous, than those of the Pharisees, for they have betrayed God and are rebels against God. Such people who are not worthy even to do service shall receive more severe punishment, a punishment that is, moreover, everlasting. God shall not spare any traitor who once evinced loyalty with words but then betrayed Him. People such as these shall receive retribution through punishment of the spirit, soul, and body. Is this not precisely a revelation of the righteous disposition of God? Is this not God's purpose in judging man, and revealing him? God consigns all who perform all kinds of wicked deeds during the time of judgment to a place infested with evil spirits, and lets these evil spirits destroy their fleshly bodies as they wish, and those people's bodies emit the stench of corpses. Such is their fitting retribution. God writes down in their record books each and every one of the sins of those disloyal false believers, false apostles, and false workers; then, when the time is right, He casts them amidst the unclean spirits, letting these unclean spirits defile their entire bodies at will, so that they may never be reincarnated and never again see the light. Those hypocrites who do service for a time but are incapable of remaining loyal to the end are numbered by God among the wicked, so that they walk in the counsel of the wicked and become part of their disorderly rabble; in the end, God shall annihilate them. God casts aside and takes no notice of those who have never been loyal to Christ or have never contributed anything of their strength, and at the changing of the age He shall annihilate them all. They

shall no longer exist on earth, much less gain passage into the kingdom of God. Those who have never been sincere to God, but are forced by circumstance into dealing with Him perfunctorily, are numbered among those who do service for His people. Only a small number of such people will survive, while the majority shall perish along with those who are not qualified even to do service. Ultimately, God shall bring into His kingdom all those who are of the same mind as God, the people and the sons of God, and those predestined by God to be priests. They will be the distillation of God's work. As for those who cannot be classed in any of the categories set by God, they shall be numbered among the unbelievers—and you can surely imagine what their outcome shall be. I have already said to you all that I should say; the road that you select is your choice alone. What you should understand is this: The work of God never waits for any that cannot keep pace with Him, and the righteous disposition of God shows no mercy to any man.

Excerpted from "Christ Does the Work of Judgment With the Truth" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

4. The ways in which God's almightiness and wisdom are primarily revealed

Relevant Words of God:

From when He commenced the creation of all things, the power of God began to be expressed and revealed, for God used words to create all things. Regardless of in what manner He created them, regardless of why He created them, all things came into being and stood fast and existed because of the words of God; this is the unique authority of the Creator. In the time before mankind appeared in the world, the Creator used His power and authority to create all things for mankind, and employed His unique methods to prepare a suitable living environment for mankind. All that He did was in preparation for mankind, who would soon receive His breath. This is to say, in the time before mankind was created, the authority of God was shown forth in all creatures different from mankind, in things as great as the heavens, the lights, the seas, and the land, and in those as small as animals and birds, as well as in all sorts of insects and microorganisms, including various bacteria invisible to the naked eye. Each was given life by the words of the Creator, each proliferated because of the words of the Creator, and each lived under the sovereignty of the Creator because of His words. Although they did not receive the breath of the Creator, they still showed forth the vitality of life bestowed upon them by the

Creator through their different forms and structures; although they did not receive the ability to speak given to mankind by the Creator, they each received a way of expressing their life that was bestowed upon them by the Creator, and which differed from the language of man. The authority of the Creator not only gives the vitality of life to seemingly static material objects, so that they will never disappear, but He also gives the instinct to reproduce and multiply to every living being, so that they will never vanish, and so that, generation after generation, they will pass on the laws and principles of survival endowed to them by the Creator. The manner in which the Creator exerts His authority does not rigidly adhere to a macro or micro viewpoint, and is not limited to any form; He is able to command the operations of the universe and hold sovereignty over the life and death of all things, and, moreover, He is able to maneuver all things so that they serve Him; He can manage all the workings of the mountains, rivers, and lakes, and rule all things within them, and, beyond that, He is able to provide that which is needed by all things. This is the manifestation of the unique authority of the Creator amongst all things besides mankind. Such a manifestation is not just for a lifetime; it will never cease, nor rest, and it cannot be altered or damaged by any person or thing, nor can it be added to or reduced by any person or thing—for none can replace the identity of the Creator, and, therefore, the authority of the Creator cannot be replaced by any created being; it is unattainable by any non-created being.

Excerpted from “God Himself, the Unique I” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Before this humanity came into being, the cosmos—all the planets and all the stars in the heavens—already existed. On the macro level, these heavenly bodies have been orbiting regularly, under God’s control, for their entire existence, however many years that has been. What planet goes where at what particular time; what planet performs what task, and when; what planet revolves along what orbit, and when it disappears or is replaced—all these things proceed without the slightest error. The positions of the planets and the distances between them all follow strict patterns, all of which can be described by precise data; the paths along which they travel, the speed and patterns of their orbits, the times when they are in various positions—all of these can be quantified precisely and described by special laws. For eons the planets have followed these laws, without the slightest deviation. No power can change or disrupt their orbits or the patterns they follow. Because the special laws that govern their motion and the precise

data that describe them are predestined by the Creator's authority, they obey these laws of their own accord, under the Creator's sovereignty and control. On the macro level, it is not hard for man to discover some patterns, some data, and some strange and unexplainable laws or phenomena. Though humanity does not admit that God exists nor accept the fact that the Creator made and has dominion over everything, and moreover does not recognize the existence of the Creator's authority, human scientists, astronomers, and physicists are nonetheless finding more and more that the existence of all things in the universe, and the principles and patterns that dictate their movements, are all governed and controlled by a vast and invisible dark energy. This fact compels man to confront and acknowledge that there is a Mighty One in the midst of these patterns of movement, orchestrating everything. His power is extraordinary, and though no one can see His true face, He governs and controls everything at every moment. No man or force can reach beyond His sovereignty. Faced with this fact, man must recognize that the laws governing the existence of all things cannot be controlled by humans, cannot be changed by anyone; he must also admit that human beings cannot fully understand these laws, and they are not naturally occurring, but are dictated by a Sovereign. These are all expressions of the authority of God that mankind can perceive on a macro level.

On the micro level, all the mountains, rivers, lakes, seas, and landmasses that man may behold on earth, all the seasons that he experiences, all the things that inhabit the earth, including plants, animals, microorganisms, and humans, are subject to God's sovereignty and control. Under God's sovereignty and control, all things come into being or disappear in accordance with His thoughts; laws arise that govern their existence, and they grow and multiply in keeping with them. No human being or thing is above these laws. Why is this? The only answer is this: It is because of God's authority. Or, to put it another way, it is because of God's thoughts and God's words; because of the personal actions of God Himself. This means that it is God's authority and God's mind that give rise to these laws, which shift and change according to His thoughts, and these shifts and changes all occur or fade away for the sake of His plan.

Excerpted from "God Himself, the Unique III" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

After reading "Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him" in Genesis 18:18, can you feel the authority of God? Can

you sense the extraordinariness of the Creator? Can you sense the supremacy of the Creator? The words of God are certain. God does not say such words because of, or in representation of, His confidence in success; they are, instead, proof of the authority of God's utterances, and are a commandment that fulfills the words of God. There are two expressions that you should pay attention to here. When God says "Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him," is there any element of ambiguity in these words? Is there any element of concern? Is there any element of fear? Because of the words "shall surely" and "shall be" in God's utterances, these elements, which are particular to man and often exhibited in him, have never borne any relation to the Creator. No one would dare to use such words when wishing others well, no one would dare to bless another with such certainty as to give them a great and mighty nation, or promise that all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him. The more certain the words of God, the more that they prove something—and what is that something? They prove that God has such authority, that His authority can accomplish these things, and that their accomplishment is inevitable. God was certain in His heart, without the slightest hesitation, of all that He blessed Abraham with. Furthermore, the entirety of this would be accomplished in accordance with His words, and no force would be able to alter, obstruct, impair, or disturb its fulfillment. Regardless of what else happened, nothing could abrogate or influence the fulfillment and accomplishment of God's words. This is the very might of the words uttered from the mouth of the Creator, and the authority of the Creator that does not brook the denial of man! Having read these words, do you still feel doubt? These words were spoken from the mouth of God, and there is power, majesty, and authority in the words of God. Such might and authority, and the inevitability of the accomplishment of fact, are unattainable by any created or non-created being, and unsurpassable by any created or non-created being. Only the Creator can converse with mankind with such a tone and intonation, and facts have proven that His promises are not empty words, or idle boasts, but are the expression of unique authority that is unsurpassable by any person, event, or thing.

Excerpted from "God Himself, the Unique I" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Let us look at the following passage of scripture: "And when He thus had spoken, He cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. And he that was dead came forth...." When the Lord

Jesus did this, He said just one thing: “Lazarus, come forth.” Lazarus then came out from his tomb—this was accomplished because of just a few words uttered by the Lord. During this time, the Lord Jesus did not set up an altar, and He did not carry out any other actions. He just said this one thing. Should this be called a miracle or a command? Or was it some sort of wizardry? On the surface, it seems it could be called a miracle, and if you look at it from a modern perspective, of course you could still call it a miracle. However, it certainly could not be considered magic of the kind that is supposed to call a soul back from the dead, and it absolutely was not wizardry, of any sort. It is correct to say that this miracle was the most normal, tiny demonstration of the Creator’s authority. This is the authority and power of God. God has the authority to have a person die, to have his spirit leave his body and return to Hades, or wherever else it should go. The timing of a person’s death, and the place they will go after death—these are determined by God. He can make these decisions anytime and anywhere, unconstrained by humans, events, objects, space, or geography. If He wants to do it, He can do it, because all things and living beings are under His rule, and all things proliferate, exist, and perish by His word and His authority. He can resurrect a dead man, and this too is something He can do anytime, anywhere. This is the authority that only the Creator possesses.

When the Lord Jesus did things like bringing Lazarus back from the dead, His goal was to give proof for humans and for Satan to see, and to let humans and Satan know that everything about mankind, mankind’s life and death are determined by God, and that even though He had become flesh, He remained in command of the physical world which can be seen as well as the spiritual world which humans cannot see. This was so that mankind and Satan would know that everything about mankind is not under the command of Satan. This was a revelation and demonstration of God’s authority, and it was also a way for God to send a message to all things, that mankind’s life and death are in God’s hands. The Lord Jesus’ resurrection of Lazarus was one of the ways in which the Creator teaches and instructs mankind. It was a concrete action in which He used His power and authority to instruct and provide for mankind. It was a way, without using words, for the Creator to allow mankind to see the truth that He is in command of all things. It was a way for Him to tell mankind through practical actions that there is no salvation other than through Him. This silent means which He used to instruct mankind is everlasting, indelible, bringing to human hearts a shock and enlightenment that can never fade. The resurrection of Lazarus glorified God—this has a deep impact on every single one of God’s

followers. It firmly fixes in every person who deeply understands this event the understanding, the vision that only God can command mankind's life and death. ...

When the Lord Jesus brought Lazarus back from the dead, He used only these few words: "Lazarus, come forth." He said nothing aside from this. So, what do these words demonstrate? They demonstrate that God can accomplish anything by speaking, including resurrecting a dead man. When God created all things, when He created the world, He did so with words—spoken commands, words with authority, and in this way all things were created, and thus, it was accomplished. These few words spoken by the Lord Jesus were just like the words spoken by God when He created the heavens and earth and all things; in the same way, they held the authority of God and the power of the Creator. All things were formed and stood fast because of words from God's mouth, and in the same way, Lazarus walked out from his tomb because of the words from the Lord Jesus' mouth. This was the authority of God, demonstrated and realized in His incarnate flesh. This type of authority and ability belonged to the Creator, and to the Son of man in whom the Creator was realized. This is the understanding taught to mankind by God bringing Lazarus back from the dead.

Excerpted from "God's Work, God's Disposition, and God Himself III" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

I stand by what I say, and what I stand by I always bring to completion, and no one can change this—it is absolute. Whether they are words I have said in the past or words I will say in the future, I will make them all come true, one by one, and allow all of mankind to see them come true. This is the principle behind My words and work. ... Of everything that occurs in the universe, there is nothing in which I do not have the final say. Is there anything that is not in My hands? Whatever I say is done, and who among human beings can change My mind? Could it be the covenant I made on the earth? Nothing can hinder My plan from going forward; I am ever present in My work as well as in the plan of My management. Who among human beings can put his hand in to meddle? Is it not I who have personally made these arrangements? Entering into this realm today does not stray outside My plan or what I have foreseen; it was all determined by Me long ago. Who among you can fathom this step of My plan? My people will assuredly listen to My voice, and each and every one of those who sincerely love Me shall assuredly return before My throne.

Excerpted from "Chapter 1" of *God's Words to the Entire Universe* in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

In the Age of Kingdom, God uses words to usher in the new age, to change the means by which He works, and to do the work of the entire age. This is the principle by which God works in the Age of Word. He became flesh to speak from different perspectives, so that man could truly see God, who is the Word appearing in the flesh, and could behold His wisdom and wondrousness. Such work is done in order better to achieve the goals of conquering man, perfecting man, and eliminating man, which is the true meaning of the use of words to work in the Age of Word. Through these words, people come to know the work of God, the disposition of God, the substance of man, and what man ought to enter into. Through words, the work God wishes to do in the Age of Word is brought to fruition in its entirety. Through these words, people are exposed, eliminated, and tried. People have seen God's words, heard these words, and recognized the existence of these words. As a result, they have come to believe in the existence of God, in the omnipotence and wisdom of God, as well as in God's love for man and His desire to save man. The word "words" may be simple and ordinary, but the words spoken from the mouth of the incarnate God shake the universe, they transform people's hearts, transform their notions and old dispositions, and transform the way the whole world used to appear. Through the ages, only the God of today has worked in this way, and only He speaks thus and comes to save man thus. From this time forward, man lives under the guidance of God's words, shepherded and supplied by His words. People live in the world of God's words, amid the curses and the blessings of God's words, and there are even more people who have come to live under the judgment and chastisement of His words. These words and this work are all for the sake of man's salvation, for the sake of fulfilling God's will, and for the sake of changing the original appearance of the world of old creation. God created the world using words, He leads people throughout the universe using words, and He conquers and saves them using words. Ultimately, He shall use words to bring the entire world of old to an end, thus completing the entirety of His management plan.

Excerpted from "The Age of Kingdom Is the Age of Word" in The Word Appears in the Flesh

In the work of the last days, the word is mightier than the manifestation of signs and wonders, and the authority of the word surpasses that of signs and wonders. The word exposes all the corrupt dispositions buried deep in the heart of man. You have no way of recognizing

them on your own. When they are laid bare before you through the word, you will naturally come to discover them; you will not be able to deny them, and you will be utterly convinced. Is this not the authority of the word? This is the result achieved by the work of the word today. Therefore, it is not through the healing of sickness and casting out of demons that man can be fully saved from his sins, nor can he be made fully complete by the manifestation of signs and wonders. The authority to heal sickness and cast out demons only gives man grace, but the flesh of man still belongs to Satan and the corrupt satanic disposition still remains within man. In other words, that which has not been made clean still pertains to sin and to filth. Only after he has been made clean through the agency of the word can man be gained by God and become sanctified. When the demons were cast out of man and he was redeemed, this meant only that he was wrested out of Satan's hands and returned to God. However, without being made clean or changed by God, he remains as corrupt man. Within man still exist filth, opposition, and rebelliousness; man has only returned to God through His redemption, but he has not the slightest knowledge of God and is still capable of resisting and betraying Him. Before man was redeemed, many of Satan's poisons had already been planted within him and, after thousands of years of being corrupted by Satan, he has within him an established nature that resists God. Therefore, when man has been redeemed, it is nothing more than a case of redemption in which man is bought at a high price, but the poisonous nature within him has not been eliminated. Man that is so defiled must undergo a change before becoming worthy to serve God. By means of this work of judgment and chastisement, man will fully come to know the filthy and corrupt essence within his own self, and he will be able to change completely and become clean. Only in this way can man become worthy to return before the throne of God. All the work done this day is so that man can be made clean and be changed; through judgment and chastisement by the word, as well as through refinement, man can purge away his corruption and be made pure. ... So, what you have experienced today are results achieved through the word, even greater than those achieved through Jesus' working of signs and wonders. The glory of God that you see and the authority of God Himself that you see are not merely seen by means of the crucifixion, by means of the healing of sickness and the casting out of demons, but even more so by means of the judgment of His word. This shows you that the authority and power of God do not consist only of the working of signs, the healing of sickness, and the casting out of

demons, but that the judgment of God's word is better able to represent the authority of God and to reveal His almightiness.

Excerpted from "The Mystery of the Incarnation (4)" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

None of God's work among humanity had already been prepared upon the creation of the world; rather, it is the development of things that has allowed God to perform His work among humanity step by step and in a more realistic and practical manner. For example, Jehovah God did not create the serpent in order to tempt the woman; that was not His specific plan, nor was it something that He had intentionally predestined. One could say that this was an unexpected occurrence. Thus, it was because of this that Jehovah expelled Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden and vowed to never again create man. However, people only discover God's wisdom upon this foundation. It is just as I said earlier: "I exercise My wisdom based upon Satan's plots." No matter how corrupt humanity grows or how the serpent tempts them, Jehovah still has His wisdom; as such, He has been engaged in new work ever since He created the world, and none of the steps of this work has ever been repeated. Satan has continuously put plots into motion, humanity has constantly been corrupted by Satan, and Jehovah God has unceasingly carried out His wise work. He has never failed, nor has He ever stopped working, ever since the world was created. After humans were corrupted by Satan, He has kept working amongst them to defeat it, the enemy that was the source of their corruption. This battle has raged since the beginning, and will continue until the world's end. In doing all this work, Jehovah God has not only allowed humans, who have been corrupted by Satan, to receive His great salvation, but also allowed them to see His wisdom, almightiness, and authority. Furthermore, in the end, He will let them see His righteous disposition—punishing the wicked and rewarding the good. He has battled Satan to this very day and has never been defeated. This is because He is a wise God, and He exercises His wisdom based upon Satan's plots. Therefore, God not only makes everything in heaven submit to His authority, but He also has everything upon earth rest below His footstool and, not least, He makes the wicked who invade and harass humanity fall within His chastisement. The results of all this work are brought about because of His wisdom. He had never revealed His wisdom prior to the existence of humanity, for He had no enemies in heaven, upon earth, or anywhere in the entire universe, and there were no dark forces invading anything among nature. After the archangel betrayed Him, He created humanity upon the earth, and it

was because of humanity that He formally began His millennia-long war with Satan, the archangel—a war that grows more heated with every successive stage. His almightiness and wisdom are present in each of these stages. Only then has everything in heaven and upon earth witnessed God’s wisdom, almightiness, and, in particular, God’s reality. He still carries out His work in this same realistic manner to this day; in addition, as He carries out His work, He also reveals His wisdom and almightiness. He allows you to see the inside truth of each stage of work, to see exactly how to explain God’s almightiness, and, moreover, to see a definitive explanation of God’s reality.

Excerpted from “You Should Know How the Whole of Humanity Has Developed to the Present Day” in The
Word Appears in the Flesh

In My plan, Satan has, all along, been stalking behind each step and, as the foil of My wisdom, has always been trying to find ways and means to disrupt My original plan. Yet could I succumb to its deceitful schemes? Everything in heaven and on earth serves Me; could the deceitful schemes of Satan be any different? This is precisely where My wisdom intersects; it is precisely that which is wondrous about My deeds, and it is the principle of operation for My entire management plan. During the era of the building of the kingdom, still I do not avoid the deceitful schemes of Satan, but continue to do the work I must. Among the universe and all things, I have chosen the deeds of Satan as My foil. Is this not a manifestation of My wisdom? Is this not precisely that which is wondrous about My work?

Excerpted from “Chapter 8” of God’s Words to the Entire Universe in The Word Appears in the Flesh

When I formally begin My work, all people move as I move, such that people throughout the universe occupy themselves in step with Me, there is “jubilation” across the universe, and man is spurred onward by Me. In consequence, the great red dragon itself is whipped into a state of frenzy and bewilderment by Me, and it serves My work, and, despite being unwilling, it is unable to follow its own desires, but is left with no choice but to submit to My control. In all of My plans, the great red dragon is My foil, My enemy, and also My servant; as such, I have never relaxed My “requirements” of it. Therefore, the final stage of the work of My incarnation is completed in its household. In this way, the great red dragon is more able to do service for Me properly, through which I will conquer it and complete My plan.

Excerpted from “Chapter 29” of God’s Words to the Entire Universe in The Word Appears in the Flesh

God’s victory over Satan is inevitable! Actually, Satan already failed long ago. When the gospel began to spread throughout the land of the great red dragon—that is, when God incarnate began His work and this work was set in motion—Satan was utterly defeated, for the very purpose of the incarnation was to vanquish Satan. As soon as Satan saw that God had once again become flesh and begun to carry out His work, which no force could stop, it therefore became dumbfounded at the sight of this work, and did not dare to do any further mischief. At first Satan thought that it, too, was endowed with plenty of wisdom, and it interrupted and harassed God’s work; however, it did not expect that God would once again become flesh, or that in His work, God would use Satan’s rebelliousness to serve as a revelation and judgment for humanity, thereby conquering humans and defeating Satan. God is wiser than Satan, and His work far exceeds it. Therefore, as I have previously stated, “The work that I do is carried out in response to Satan’s ruses; in the end, I will reveal My almightiness and Satan’s powerlessness.” God will do His work in the forefront, while Satan will trail behind, until, in the end, it is finally destroyed—it will not even know what hit it! It will only realize the truth once it has already been smashed and crushed, and by then, it will already have been incinerated in the lake of fire. Will it not be completely convinced then? For Satan will then have no more schemes to employ!

Excerpted from “You Should Know How the Whole of Humanity Has Developed to the Present Day” in The
Word Appears in the Flesh

Today, God has returned to the world to do His work. His first stop is the grand assemblage of dictatorial rulers: China, the staunch bastion of atheism. God has gained a group of people by His wisdom and power. During this period, He has been hunted by China’s ruling party by every means and subjected to great suffering, with no place to rest His head, unable to find shelter. Despite this, God still continues the work He intends to do: He utters His voice and spreads the gospel. None can fathom the almightiness of God. In China, a country that regards God as an enemy, God has never ceased His work. Instead, more people have accepted His work and word, for God saves each and every member of mankind to the greatest extent possible. We trust that no country or power can stand in the way of what God wishes to achieve. Those who

obstruct God's work, resist the word of God and disturb and impair the plan of God shall ultimately be punished by God. He who defies the work of God shall be sent to hell; any country that defies the work of God shall be destroyed; any nation that rises up to oppose the work of God shall be wiped from this earth and shall cease to exist. ...

The work of God surges onward like a mighty wave. No one can detain Him, and no one can halt His march. Only those who listen carefully to His words, and who seek and thirst for Him, can follow His footsteps and receive His promise. Those who do not shall be subjected to overwhelming disaster and well-deserved punishment.

Excerpted from "God Presides Over the Fate of All Mankind" in The Word Appears in the Flesh

5. How God has led and provided for mankind until the present day

Relevant Words of God:

The way of life is not something that anyone can possess, nor is it something anyone can attain easily. This is because life can only come from God, which is to say, only God Himself possesses the essence of life, and only God Himself has the way of life. And so only God is the source of life, and the ever-flowing wellspring of living water of life. Ever since He created the world, God has done much work involving the vitality of life, has done much work that brings life to man, and has paid a great price so that man might gain life. This is because God Himself is eternal life, and God Himself is the way by which man is resurrected. God is never absent from the heart of man, and He lives among man at all times. He has been the driving force of man's living, the root of man's existence, and a rich deposit for man's existence after birth. He causes man to be reborn, and enables him to tenaciously live out his every role. Thanks to His power and His inextinguishable life force, man has lived for generation after generation, throughout which the power of God's life has been the mainstay of man's existence, and for which God has paid a price that no ordinary man has ever paid. God's life force can prevail over any power; moreover, it exceeds any power. His life is eternal, His power extraordinary, and His life force cannot be overwhelmed by any created being or enemy force. The life force of God exists and shines its brilliant radiance regardless of time or place. Heaven and earth may undergo great changes, but God's life is forever the same. All things may pass away, but God's

life will still remain, for God is the source of the existence of all things and the root of their existence. Man's life originates from God, the existence of heaven is because of God, and the existence of earth stems from the power of God's life. No object possessed of vitality can transcend the sovereignty of God, and no thing with vigor can elude the domain of God's authority. In this way, regardless of who they are, everyone must submit under the dominion of God, everyone must live under God's command, and no one can escape from His hands.

Excerpted from "Only Christ of the Last Days Can Give Man the Way of Eternal Life" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Ever since God created all things, they have been functioning and continuing to progress in an orderly way and in accordance with the laws that He prescribed. Under His gaze, under His rule, mankind has survived, and all the while all things have been developing in an orderly way. There is nothing that can change or destroy these laws. It is because of God's rule that all beings can multiply, and it is because of His rule and management that all beings can survive. This is to say that under God's rule all beings come into existence, thrive, disappear, and reincarnate in an orderly fashion. When spring arrives, drizzling rain brings the feeling of the fresh season and wets the earth. The ground begins to thaw, and grass pushes its way up through the soil and begins to sprout, while the trees gradually turn green. All these living things bring fresh vitality to the earth. This is what it looks like when all beings are coming into existence and thriving. All sorts of animals come out of their burrows to feel the warmth of spring and start a new year. All beings bask in the heat during the summer and enjoy the warmth brought by the season. They grow rapidly. Trees, grass, and all types of plants are growing with great speed, until they finally bloom and bear fruit. All beings are busy during the summer, including humans. In the fall, rains bring autumn's coolness, and all types of living beings start to sense the arrival of the harvest season. All beings bear fruit, and humans begin to harvest these various kinds of fruits in order to have food in preparation for winter. In the winter, all beings gradually begin to settle down in quietness and rest as the cold weather sets in, and people also take a break during this season. From season to season, transitioning from spring to summer to fall to winter—these changes all occur according to the laws established by God. He leads all things and mankind using these laws and has devised for mankind a rich and colorful way of life, preparing an environment for survival that has varying temperatures and

seasons. Hence, within this kind of orderly environment for survival, humans can survive and multiply in an orderly way. Humans cannot change these laws and no person or being can break them. Though countless changes have occurred—seas have become fields, while fields have become seas—these laws continue to exist. They exist because God exists, and because of His rule and His management. With this type of orderly, large-scale environment, people’s lives proceed within these laws and rules. Under these laws were raised generation after generation of people, and generation after generation of people have survived under them. People have enjoyed this orderly environment for survival as well as all of the many things created by God for generation after generation. Even though people feel that these types of laws are innate and contemptuously take them for granted, and even though they cannot feel that God is orchestrating these laws, that God is ruling over these laws, no matter what, God is always engaged in this unchanging work. His purpose in this unchanging work is the survival of mankind, and so that mankind may live on.

Excerpted from “God Himself, the Unique IX” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

God commands the rules that govern the operation of all things; He commands the rules that govern the survival of all things; He controls all things, and sets them to both reinforce and depend on each other, so that they do not perish or disappear. Only thus can mankind live on; only thus can they live under God’s guidance in such an environment. God is the master of these rules of operation, and no one can interfere with them, nor can they change them. Only God Himself knows these rules and only God Himself manages them. When the trees will sprout; when it will rain; how much water and how many nutrients the earth will give to the plants; in what season the leaves will fall; in what season the trees will bear fruit; how many nutrients the sunlight will give to the trees; what the trees will exhale after having been fed by the sunlight—all these things were preordained by God when He created all things, as rules that no one can break. The things that God created, whether living or, in the eyes of man, non-living, sit in His hand, where He controls them and reigns over them. No one can change or break these rules. This is to say, when God created all things, He predetermined that without the earth, the tree could not set down roots, sprout, and grow; that if the earth had no trees, then it would dry out; that the tree should become the home of the birds and a place where they may shelter from the wind. Can a tree live without sunlight? (No.) Nor could it live with only the earth. All of these

things are for mankind, for mankind's survival. From the tree, man receives fresh air, and man lives upon the earth, which is protected by the tree. Man cannot live without sunlight or various living beings. Though these relationships are complex, you must remember that God created the rules that govern all things so that they may strengthen each other, depend on each other, and exist together. In other words, every single thing He created has value and significance. If God created something without significance, God would have it disappear. This is one of the methods God uses to provide for all things.

Excerpted from "God Himself, the Unique VII" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

"God provides for all things" is a phrase with very broad significance and scope. God does not merely provide people with their daily food and drink; He provides mankind with everything they need, including everything that people can see, but also things that cannot be seen. God upholds, manages, and reigns over this living environment, which is essential to mankind. That is to say, whatever environment mankind needs for each season, God has prepared it. God also manages the type of air and the temperature so that they may be suitable for human survival. The rules that govern these things do not occur by themselves or at random; they are the result of God's sovereignty and His deeds. God Himself is the source of all of these rules and the source of life for all things. Regardless of whether or not you believe it, whether or not you can see it, or whether or not you can understand it, this remains an established and unassailable fact.

Excerpted from "God Himself, the Unique VII" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

What are the basic conditions underpinning these different human lifestyles? Is it not absolutely necessary that the environments in which they are able to survive be preserved on a basic level? That is, if those who subsist on hunting were to lose the mountain forests or the birds and the beasts, the source of their livelihood would be gone. The direction in which this ethnicity and this sort of people should go would become uncertain, and they might even disappear. And what of those who herd animals for their livelihood? What do they rely upon? What they truly depend on is not their livestock, but the environment in which their livestock are able to survive—the grasslands. If there were no grasslands, where would the herders graze their livestock? What would the cattle and sheep eat? Without the livestock, these nomadic

peoples would have no livelihood. Without a source for their livelihood, where would these peoples go? It would become very difficult for them to continue to survive; they would not have a future. If there were no sources of water, and rivers and lakes completely dried up, would all those fish, which depend on water to live, still exist? They would not. Would these people who depend on the water and the fish for their livelihood continue to survive? When they no longer have food, when they no longer have the source of their livelihood, these peoples would not be able to continue to survive. That is, if any given ethnicity should ever run into a problem with their livelihood or their survival, then that ethnicity would no longer continue, and they could disappear from the face of the earth and become extinct. And if those who farm for a living lost their land, if they could not cultivate all kinds of plants and derive food from those plants, then what would the outcome be? Without food, would people not starve to death? If people are starving to death, would that race of human beings not be wiped out? So this is God's purpose in maintaining different kinds of environment. God only has one purpose in maintaining different environments and ecosystems and all the different living beings within them—and that is to nurture all kinds of people, to nurture people who live in different geographical environments.

If all the things of creation lost their own laws, they would no longer exist; if the laws of all things were lost, then the living beings amongst all things would not be able to continue. Humanity would also lose their environments upon which they depend for survival. If humanity lost all of that, they would not be able to continue, as they have been doing, to thrive and multiply generation after generation. The reason human beings have survived until now is because God has supplied them with all the things of creation to nurture them, to nurture mankind in different ways. It is only because God nurtures mankind in different ways that mankind has survived until now, the present day. With a fixed environment for survival that is favorable and in which the natural laws are in good order, all the different kinds of people of the earth, all the different races, can survive within their own prescribed areas. No one can go beyond these areas or the boundaries between them because it is God who has delineated them.

Excerpted from "God Himself, the Unique IX" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

God created this world and brought man, a living being unto which He bestowed life, into it. Next, man came to have parents and kin, and was no longer alone. Ever since man first laid

eyes on this material world, he was destined to exist within the ordination of God. The breath of life from God supports each and every living being throughout growth into adulthood. During this process, no one feels that man is growing up under the care of God; rather, they believe that man is doing so under the loving care of his parents, and that it is his own life instinct that directs his growing up. This is because man knows not who bestowed his life, or from whence it came, much less the way in which the instinct of life creates miracles. He knows only that food is the basis on which his life continues, that perseverance is the source of his existence, and that the beliefs in his mind are the capital upon which his survival depends. Of God's grace and provision, man is utterly oblivious, and thus does he fritter away the life bestowed upon him by God.... Not a single one of this humanity that God cares for day and night takes it upon themselves to worship Him. God only continues to work on man, for whom He holds out no expectations, as He has planned. He does so in the hope that one day, man will awaken from his dream and suddenly realize the value and meaning of life, the price God paid for all that He has given him, and the eager solicitude with which God waits for man to turn back to Him. No one has ever looked into the secrets governing the origin and continuation of man's life. Only God, who understands all of this, silently endures the hurt and the blows that man, who has received everything from God but is not thankful, gives Him. Man takes for granted all that life brings, and, likewise, it is "a matter of course" that God is betrayed by man, forgotten by man, and extorted by man. Could it be that God's plan is truly of such importance? Could it be that man, this living being that came from the hand of God, is truly of such importance? The plan of God is assuredly of importance; however, this living being created by the hand of God exists for the sake of His plan. Therefore, God cannot lay waste to His plan out of hatred for this human race. It is for the sake of His plan and for the breath He exhaled that God endures all torments, not for the flesh of man but for the life of man. He does so in order to take back not the flesh of man but the life He breathed out. This is His plan.

All who come into this world must pass through life and death, and the majority of them have passed through the cycle of death and rebirth. Those who are living will soon die, and the dead will soon return. All of this is the course of life arranged by God for each living being. Yet this course and this cycle are precisely the truth that God wishes for man to behold: that the life bestowed upon man by God is limitless, unfettered by physicality, time, or space. Such is the mystery of life bestowed upon man by God, and proof that life came from Him. Though many

may not believe that life came from God, man inevitably enjoys all that comes from God, whether they believe in or deny His existence. Should God one day have a sudden change of heart and wish to reclaim all that exists in the world and to take back the life He has given, then all shall be no more. God uses His life to supply all things, both living and lifeless, bringing all to good order by virtue of His might and authority. This is a truth that can be conceived or comprehended by none, and these incomprehensible truths are the very manifestation of, and testament to, the life force of God. Now let Me tell you a secret: The greatness of the life of God and the power of His life are unfathomable to any creature. It is thus now, as it was in the past, and it will be thus in the time to come. The second secret I shall impart is this: The source of life comes from God, for all created beings, however different they may be in form or structure. Whatever kind of living being you are, you cannot turn against the life trajectory set by God. In any case, all I wish is for man to understand this: Without the care, keeping, and provision of God, man cannot receive all that he was meant to receive, no matter how diligently he tries or how arduously he struggles. Without the supply of life from God, man loses the sense of value in living and the sense of the meaning of life. How could God allow man, who frivolously wastes the value of His life, to be so carefree? As I have said before: Do not forget that God is the source of your life. If man fails to cherish all that God has bestowed, not only will God take back what He gave in the beginning, but He will exact, as recompense from man, doubly the price of all that He has given.

Excerpted from “God Is the Source of Man’s Life” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The work of God’s management began at the creation of the world, and man is at the core of this work. God’s creation of all things, it can be said, is for the sake of man. Because the work of His management spans thousands of years and is not done in the space of mere minutes or seconds, or in the blink of an eye, or one or two years, He had to create more things necessary for mankind’s survival, such as the sun, the moon, all sorts of living creatures, food, and a hospitable environment. This was the start of God’s management.

After that, God handed mankind over to Satan, and man lived under the domain of Satan, which gradually led to God’s work of the first age: the story of the Age of Law.... Over several thousand years during the Age of Law, mankind became accustomed to the guidance of the Age of Law and took it for granted. Gradually, man left the care of God. And so, while following the

law, they also worshiped idols and performed evil deeds. They were without the protection of Jehovah, and merely lived their lives before the altar in the temple. In fact, the work of God had left them long ago, and even though the Israelites still stuck to the law, and spoke the name of Jehovah, and even proudly believed that only they were the people of Jehovah and were the chosen ones of Jehovah, the glory of God quietly abandoned them ...

When God does His work, He always quietly leaves one place and softly carries out the new work He begins in another place. This seems incredible to people, who are benumbed. People have always treasured the old and regarded new, unfamiliar things with enmity or seen them as a nuisance. And so, whatever new work God does, from the start to the very end, man is the last, among all things, to know of it.

As has always been the case, after the work of Jehovah in the Age of Law, God began His new work of the second stage: assuming the flesh—being incarnated as man for ten, twenty years—and speaking and doing His work among believers. Yet without exception, no one knew it, and only a small number of people acknowledged that He was God become flesh after the Lord Jesus was nailed to the cross and resurrected. ... As soon as the second stage of God's work was completed—after the crucifixion—God's work of recovering man from sin (which is to say, recovering man from the hands of Satan) was accomplished. And so, from that moment onward, mankind had only to accept the Lord Jesus as the Savior, and his sins would be forgiven. Nominally speaking, the sins of man were no longer a barrier to his achieving salvation and coming before God, and were no longer the leverage by which Satan accused man. That is because God Himself had done real work, had become the likeness and foretaste of sinful flesh, and God Himself was the sin offering. In this way, man descended from the cross, and was redeemed and saved through the flesh of God—the likeness of this sinful flesh. And so, after having been taken captive by Satan, man came one step closer to accepting His salvation before God. Of course, this stage of work was deeper and more developed than God's management during the Age of Law.

Such is the management of God: to hand mankind over to Satan—a mankind that does not know what God is, what the Creator is, how to worship God, or why it is necessary to submit to God—and allow Satan to corrupt him. Step by step, God then recovers man from the hands of Satan, until man fully worships God and rejects Satan. This is God's management. This may sound like a mythical tale, and it may seem perplexing. People feel like this is a mythical story

because they have no inkling of how much has happened to man over the past several thousand years, much less do they know how many stories have occurred in the cosmos and the firmament. And furthermore, that is because they cannot appreciate the more astonishing, more fear-inducing world that exists beyond the material world, but which their mortal eyes prevent them from seeing. It feels incomprehensible to man because man has no understanding of the significance of God's salvation of mankind or the significance of the work of His management, and does not comprehend how God ultimately wishes mankind to be. Is it to be utterly uncorrupted by Satan, like Adam and Eve were? No! The purpose of God's management is to gain a group of people who worship God and submit to Him. Although these people have been corrupted by Satan, they no longer see Satan as their father; they recognize the repulsive face of Satan and reject it, and they come before God to accept God's judgment and chastisement. They come to know what is ugly and how it contrasts with that which is holy, and to recognize the greatness of God and the evil of Satan. A mankind such as this will no longer work for Satan, or worship Satan, or enshrine Satan. This is because they are a group of people who have truly been gained by God. This is the significance of God's work of managing mankind. During the work of God's management of this time, mankind is the object both of Satan's corruption and God's salvation, and man is the product that God and Satan are fighting over. As God performs His work, He is gradually recovering man from the hands of Satan, and so man comes ever closer to God ...

And then came the Age of Kingdom, which is a more practical stage of work, and yet which is also the hardest for man to accept. That is because the closer that man comes to God, the nearer God's rod approaches man, and the more clearly God's face is revealed to man. Following the redemption of mankind, man officially returns to the family of God. Man thought that now was the time for enjoyment, yet he is subjected to a full-frontal assault by God, the likes of which no one could have ever foreseen: As it turns out, this is a baptism that the people of God have to "enjoy." Under such treatment, people have no choice but to stop and think to themselves, "I am the lamb lost for many years that God spent so much to buy back, so why does God treat me like this? Is it God's way of laughing at me, and revealing me? ..." After years have passed, man has become weather-beaten, having experienced the hardship of refinement and chastisement. Although man has lost the "glory" and "romance" of times past, he has, without knowing it, come to understand the principles of human conduct, and has come to appreciate God's years

of devotion to saving mankind. Man slowly begins to loathe his own barbarousness. He begins to hate how feral he is, all of his misunderstandings toward God, and the unreasonable demands he has made of Him. The clock cannot be turned back. Past events become regretful memories of man, and the words and love of God become the driving force in man's new life. Man's wounds heal day by day, his strength returns, and he stands up and looks upon the face of the Almighty ... only to discover that He has always been at my side, and that His smile and His beautiful countenance are still so stirring. His heart still holds concern for the mankind He created, and His hands are still as warm and powerful as they were in the beginning. It is as if man returned to the Garden of Eden, yet this time man no longer listens to the enticements of the serpent and no longer turns away from the face of Jehovah. Man kneels before God, looks up at God's smiling face, and offers his most precious sacrifice—Oh! My Lord, my God!

Excerpted from "Man Can Only Be Saved Amidst God's Management" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Since the existence of God's management, He has always been fully dedicated to carrying out His work. Despite veiling His person from man, He has always been by man's side, doing work on man, expressing His disposition, guiding all of humanity with His essence, and doing His work on every single person through His might, His wisdom, and His authority, thus bringing into being the Age of Law, the Age of Grace, and today's Age of Kingdom. Though God conceals His person from man, His disposition, His being and possessions, and His will toward mankind are unreservedly revealed to man for man to see and experience. In other words, though human beings cannot see or touch God, the disposition and essence of God encountered by humanity are absolutely expressions of God Himself. Is that not the truth? Regardless of the way or angle of approach God chooses for His work, He always treats people through His true identity, does the work incumbent upon Him, and says the words He is bound to say. No matter what position God speaks from—He could be standing in the third heaven, or standing in the flesh, or even as an ordinary person—He always speaks to man with all His heart and all His mind, without any deception or concealment. When He carries out His work, God expresses His word and His disposition, and expresses what He has and is, without any reservation whatsoever. He guides mankind with His life and His being and possessions.

Excerpted from "God's Work, God's Disposition, and God Himself I" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Several thousand years have passed, and mankind still enjoys the light and air bestowed by God, still breathes the breath exhaled by God Himself, still enjoys the flowers, birds, fish and insects created by God, and enjoys all the things provided by God; day and night still continually replace each other; the four seasons alternate as usual; the geese flying in the sky depart in the winter, and still return in the next spring; the fish in the water never leave the rivers and lakes—their home; the cicadas on the earth sing their hearts out during the summer days; the crickets in the grass gently hum in time to the wind during autumn; the geese gather into flocks, while the eagles remain solitary; the prides of lions sustain themselves by hunting; the elk do not stray from the grass and flowers.... Every kind of living creature amongst all things departs and returns, and then departs again, a million changes occurring in the twinkling of an eye—but what does not change are their instincts and the laws of survival. They live under the provision and nourishment of God, and no one can change their instincts, and neither can anyone impair their rules of survival. Although mankind, who lives among all things, has been corrupted and deceived by Satan, man still cannot forgo the water made by God, and the air made by God, and all things made by God, and man still lives and proliferates in this space created by God. The instincts of mankind have not changed. Man still relies on his eyes to see, on his ears to hear, on his brain to think, on his heart to understand, on his legs and feet to walk, on his hands to work, and so on; all the instincts that God bestowed upon man in order that he could accept the provision of God remain unaltered, the faculties through which man cooperates with God have not changed, mankind's faculty for performing the duty of a created being has not changed, mankind's spiritual needs have not changed, mankind's desire to find his origins has not changed, mankind's yearning to be saved by the Creator has not changed. Such are the current circumstances of mankind, who lives under the authority of God, and who has endured the bloody destruction wrought by Satan. Though mankind has been subjected to the oppression of Satan, and is no longer Adam and Eve from the beginning of creation, but instead is full of things that are antagonistic to God, such as knowledge, imagination, notions, and so on, and full of the corrupt satanic disposition, in the eyes of God, mankind is still the same mankind that He created. Mankind is still ruled and orchestrated by God, and still lives within the course set out by God, and so in the eyes of God, mankind, who has been corrupted by Satan, is merely covered in grime, with a rumbling tummy, with reactions that are a little slow, a memory that is not as good as it used to be, and is slightly older—but all the functions and instincts of man

are completely undamaged. This is the mankind that God intends to save. This mankind has but to hear the call of the Creator, and hear the voice of the Creator, and he will stand up and rush to locate the source of this voice. This mankind has but to see the figure of the Creator and he will become heedless of all else, and forsake everything, in order to devote himself to God, and will even lay down his life for Him. When the heart of mankind understands the heartfelt words of the Creator, mankind will reject Satan and come to the side of the Creator; when mankind has completely washed the dirt from his body, and has once more received the provision and nourishment of the Creator, then the memory of mankind will be restored, and at this time mankind will have truly returned to the dominion of the Creator.

Excerpted from "God Himself, the Unique I" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

6. How God rules over and administers the entire universe world

Relevant Words of God:

In the vastness of the cosmos and the firmament, countless creatures live and reproduce, follow the cyclical law of life, and adhere to one constant rule. Those who die take with them the stories of the living, and those who are living repeat the same tragic history of those who have perished. And so, mankind cannot help but ask himself: Why do we live? And why do we have to die? Who commands this world? And who created this mankind? Was mankind really created by Mother Nature? Is mankind really in control of his own fate? ... These are the questions mankind has asked ceaselessly for thousands of years. Unfortunately, the more that man has become obsessed with these questions, the more of a thirst he has developed for science. Science offers brief gratification and temporary enjoyment of the flesh, but is far from sufficient to free man from the solitariness, loneliness, and barely-concealed terror and helplessness deep within his soul. Mankind merely uses scientific knowledge that he can see with his naked eye and understand with his brain in order to anesthetize his heart. Yet such scientific knowledge is not enough to stop mankind from exploring mysteries. Mankind simply does not know who the Sovereign of the universe and all things is, much less the beginning and future of mankind. Mankind merely lives, perforce, amidst this law. None can escape it and none can change it, for among all things and in the heavens there is but One from everlasting

to everlasting who holds sovereignty over everything. He is the One who has never been beheld by man, the One whom mankind has never known, in whose existence mankind has never believed—yet He is the One who blew the breath into mankind’s ancestors and gave life to mankind. He is the One who provides and nourishes mankind, allowing him to exist; and He is the One who has guided mankind up to the present day. Moreover, He and He alone is the One mankind depends on for survival. He holds sovereignty over all things and rules all living beings in the universe. He commands the four seasons, and it is He who calls forth wind, frost, snow, and rain. He brings mankind sunshine and ushers in the night. It was He who laid out the heavens and earth, providing man with the mountains, lakes, and rivers and all of the living things within them. His deeds are omnipresent, His power is omnipresent, His wisdom is omnipresent, and His authority is omnipresent. Each of these laws and rules is the embodiment of His deeds, and each one reveals His wisdom and authority. Who can exempt themselves from His sovereignty? And who can discharge themselves from His designs? All things exist beneath His gaze, and moreover, all things live under His sovereignty. His deeds and His power leave mankind with no choice but to acknowledge the fact that He really does exist and holds sovereignty over all things. Nothing apart from Him can command the universe, much less endlessly provide for this mankind. Regardless of whether you are able to recognize God’s deeds, and regardless of whether you believe in the existence of God, there is no doubt that your fate is determined by God, and there is no doubt that God will always hold sovereignty over all things. His existence and authority are not predicated upon whether or not they are recognized and comprehended by man. Only He knows man’s past, present, and future, and only He can determine the fate of mankind. Regardless of whether you are able to accept this fact, it will not be long before mankind witnesses all of this with his own eyes, and this is the fact that God will soon bring to bear. Mankind lives and dies under the eyes of God. Man lives for the management of God, and when his eyes close for the final time, it is for this management that they close as well. Man comes and goes over and over again, back and forth. Without exception, it is all part of God’s sovereignty and His design. God’s management has never ceased; it is perpetually advancing. He will make mankind aware of His existence, trust in His sovereignty, behold His deeds, and return to His kingdom. This is His plan, and the work that He has been managing for thousands of years.

Excerpted from “Man Can Only Be Saved Amidst God’s Management” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Before this humanity came into being, the cosmos—all the planets and all the stars in the heavens—already existed. On the macro level, these heavenly bodies have been orbiting regularly, under God’s control, for their entire existence, however many years that has been. What planet goes where at what particular time; what planet performs what task, and when; what planet revolves along what orbit, and when it disappears or is replaced—all these things proceed without the slightest error. The positions of the planets and the distances between them all follow strict patterns, all of which can be described by precise data; the paths along which they travel, the speed and patterns of their orbits, the times when they are in various positions—all of these can be quantified precisely and described by special laws. For eons the planets have followed these laws, without the slightest deviation. No power can change or disrupt their orbits or the patterns they follow. Because the special laws that govern their motion and the precise data that describe them are predestined by the Creator’s authority, they obey these laws of their own accord, under the Creator’s sovereignty and control. On the macro level, it is not hard for man to discover some patterns, some data, and some strange and unexplainable laws or phenomena. Though humanity does not admit that God exists nor accept the fact that the Creator made and has dominion over everything, and moreover does not recognize the existence of the Creator’s authority, human scientists, astronomers, and physicists are nonetheless finding more and more that the existence of all things in the universe, and the principles and patterns that dictate their movements, are all governed and controlled by a vast and invisible dark energy. This fact compels man to confront and acknowledge that there is a Mighty One in the midst of these patterns of movement, orchestrating everything. His power is extraordinary, and though no one can see His true face, He governs and controls everything at every moment. No man or force can reach beyond His sovereignty. Faced with this fact, man must recognize that the laws governing the existence of all things cannot be controlled by humans, cannot be changed by anyone; he must also admit that human beings cannot fully understand these laws, and they are not naturally occurring, but are dictated by a Sovereign. These are all expressions of the authority of God that mankind can perceive on a macro level.

On the micro level, all the mountains, rivers, lakes, seas, and landmasses that man may behold on earth, all the seasons that he experiences, all the things that inhabit the earth, including plants, animals, microorganisms, and humans, are subject to God’s sovereignty and

control. Under God's sovereignty and control, all things come into being or disappear in accordance with His thoughts; laws arise that govern their existence, and they grow and multiply in keeping with them. No human being or thing is above these laws. Why is this? The only answer is this: It is because of God's authority. Or, to put it another way, it is because of God's thoughts and God's words; because of the personal actions of God Himself. This means that it is God's authority and God's mind that give rise to these laws, which shift and change according to His thoughts, and these shifts and changes all occur or fade away for the sake of His plan.

Excerpted from "God Himself, the Unique III" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

When God created all things, He drew boundaries for mountains, plains, deserts, hills, rivers, and lakes. On the earth there are mountains, plains, deserts and hills, as well as various bodies of water. These constitute different types of terrain, do they not? Between them, God drew boundaries. When we speak of drawing boundaries, it means that mountains have their delineations, plains have their own delineations, deserts have certain limits, and hills have a fixed area. There is also a fixed quantity of bodies of water such as rivers and lakes. That is, when God created all things, He divided everything very clearly. God has already determined how many kilometers the radius of any given mountain should be and what its scope is. He has also determined how many kilometers the radius of any given plain should be and what its scope is. When creating all things, He also determined the limits of the deserts as well as the range of the hills and their proportions, and what they are bordered by—all of this was determined by Him. He determined the range of rivers and lakes during the act of creating them—they all have their boundaries. So what does it mean when we talk about "boundaries"? We just talked about how God rules over all things by establishing laws for all things. That is, the range and boundaries of mountains will not expand or decrease because of the rotation of the earth or the passing of time. They are fixed, unchanging, and it is God who dictates their unchangeability. As for the areas of the plains, what their range is, what they are bounded by—this has been set by God. They have their boundaries, and as such it would be impossible for a mound of earth to rise up at random from the ground of a plain. The plain cannot suddenly turn into a mountain—this would be impossible. This is the meaning of the laws and boundaries we just talked about. As for the deserts, we will not mention the specific functions of the deserts or any other type of

terrain or geographical location here, only their boundaries. Under God's rule, the limits of the desert will not expand either. This is because God has given it its law, its limits. How large its area is and what its function is, what it is bounded by, and where it is located—this has already been set by God. It will not exceed its limits or shift its position, and its area will not expand arbitrarily. Although the flows of waters such as rivers and lakes are all orderly and continuous, they will never move outside of their range or beyond their boundaries. They all flow in one direction, the direction in which they are supposed to flow, in an orderly way. So under the laws of God's rule, no river or lake will dry up arbitrarily or arbitrarily change the direction or quantity of its flow due to the rotation of the earth or the passing of time. All this is within God's control. That is to say, all things created by God in the midst of this mankind have their set places, areas, and limits. That is, when God created all things, their boundaries were established, and they cannot be arbitrarily altered, renewed, or changed. What does "arbitrarily" mean? It means that they will not randomly shift, expand, or change their original form due to the weather, temperature, or the rotational speed of the earth. For example, a mountain is of a certain height, its base is of a certain area, it has a certain altitude, and it has a certain amount of vegetation. This is all planned and calculated by God and it will not be arbitrarily changed. As for plains, the majority of humans reside in the plains, and no shifts in the climate will impact their areas or the value of their existence. Not even the things contained within these various terrains and geographical environments that were created by God will be arbitrarily changed. For example, the composition of the desert, types of underground mineral deposits, the amount of sand a desert contains and its color, the thickness of the desert—these will not arbitrarily change. Why is it that they will not arbitrarily change? It is because of God's rule and His management. Within all of these different terrains and geographical environments created by God, He is managing everything in a planned and orderly way. So all of these geographical environments still exist and are still performing their functions thousands and even tens of thousands of years after they were created by God. Although there are certain periods when volcanoes erupt, and periods when earthquakes occur, and there are major shifts of the land, God absolutely will not allow any type of terrain to lose its original function. It is only because of this management by God, His rule and control over these laws, that all of this—all of this which is seen and enjoyed by mankind—can survive on the earth in an orderly way.

Excerpted from "God Himself, the Unique IX" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

All things created by God—no matter if they are fixed in one place or whether they can breathe through their nostrils—have their own laws for survival. Long before God created these living beings, He had already prepared for them their own homes and their own environments for survival. These living beings had their own fixed environments for survival, their own food and their own fixed homes, and they had their own fixed places suitable for their survival, places with temperatures suitable for their survival. Thus, they would not wander around any which way or undermine mankind's survival or impact people's lives. This is how God manages all things, providing for mankind the best environment for survival. The living beings within all things each have their own life-sustaining food within their own environments for survival. With that food, they are attached to their native environment for survival. In that kind of environment, they continue to survive, multiply, and move forward in accordance with the laws God has established for them. Because of these types of laws, because of God's predestination, all things live in harmony with mankind, and mankind coexists together in interdependence with all things.

Excerpted from "God Himself, the Unique IX" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

When God created all things, He used all sorts of methods and ways to balance them, to balance the living conditions of the mountains and lakes, of the plants and all kinds of animals, birds, and insects. His goal was to allow all kinds of living beings to live and multiply under the laws that He had established. None of the things of creation can go outside of these laws, and the laws cannot be broken. Only within this type of basic environment can humans safely survive and multiply, generation after generation. If any living creature goes beyond the quantity or scope established by God, or if it exceeds the growth rate, reproduction frequency, or number dictated by Him, mankind's environment for survival would suffer varying degrees of destruction. And at the same time, mankind's survival would be threatened. If one type of living creature is too great in number, it will rob people of their food, destroy people's water sources, and ruin their homelands. That way, mankind's reproduction or state of survival would be immediately impacted. For example, water is very important for all things. If there are too many mice, ants, locusts, frogs, or any kind of other animal, they will drink more water. As the amount of water they drink increases, people's drinking water and water sources within the

fixed scope of sources of drinking water and aqueous areas will be reduced and they will experience water shortages. If people's drinking water is destroyed, contaminated, or is cut off because all kinds of animals have increased in number, under that kind of harsh environment for survival, mankind's survival will be seriously threatened. If just one type or several types of living beings exceed their appropriate number, then the air, temperature, humidity, and even the composition of the air within mankind's space for survival will be poisoned and destroyed to varying degrees. Under these circumstances, humans' survival and fate will also be subject to the threats posed by these ecological factors. So, if these balances are lost, the air that people breathe will be ruined, the water that they drink will be contaminated, and the temperatures that they require will also change and be impacted to varying degrees. If that happens, the environments for survival that inherently belong to mankind will be subject to enormous impacts and challenges. In this type of scenario where humans' basic environments for survival have been destroyed, what would mankind's fate and prospects be? This is a very serious problem! Because God knows for what reason each of the things of creation exists for the sake of mankind, what the role is of every type of thing that He created, what kind of impact each thing has on mankind, and to what degree it benefits mankind, because in God's heart there is a plan for all of this and He manages every single aspect of all the things that He created, that is why every single thing that He does is so important and necessary for mankind. So from now on, whenever you observe some ecological phenomenon among the things of God's creation, or some natural law at play among the things of God's creation, you will no longer be doubtful of the necessity of every single thing created by God. You will no longer use ignorant words to make arbitrary judgments on God's arrangements of all things and His various ways of providing for mankind. Nor will you come to arbitrary conclusions about God's laws for all the things of His creation.

Excerpted from "God Himself, the Unique IX" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

From the moment you come crying into this world, you begin to fulfill your duty. Performing your role in God's plan and in His ordination, you start your life's journey. Whatever your background, and whatever the journey ahead of you, no one can escape the orchestrations and arrangements of the Heaven, and no one is in control of their own destiny, for only He who rules over all things is capable of such work. Since the day man came into existence, God has

ever worked thus, managing the universe, directing the rules of change for all things and the trajectory of their movement. Like all things, man is quietly and unknowingly nourished by the sweetness and rain and dew from God; like all things, man unknowingly lives beneath the orchestration of God's hand. Man's heart and spirit are held in the hand of God, everything of his life is beheld in the eyes of God. Regardless of whether or not you believe this, any and all things, whether living or dead, will shift, change, renew, and disappear in accordance with God's thoughts. Such is the way in which God presides over all things.

Excerpted from "God Is the Source of Man's Life" in The Word Appears in the Flesh

God created this world, He created this mankind and, moreover, He was the architect of ancient Greek culture and human civilization. Only God consoles this mankind, and only God cares for this mankind night and day. Human development and progress are inseparable from the sovereignty of God, and the history and future of mankind are inextricable from the designs of God. If you are a true Christian, then you will surely believe that the rise and fall of any country or nation occurs according to the designs of God. God alone knows the fate of a country or nation, and God alone controls the course of this mankind. If mankind wishes to have a good fate, if a country wishes to have a good fate, then man must bow down to God in worship, repent and confess before God, or else the fate and destination of man will be an unavoidable catastrophe.

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Perhaps your country currently prospers, but if you allow your people to stray from God, then it shall find itself increasingly bereft of the blessings of God. The civilization of your country shall be increasingly trampled underfoot and, before long, the people shall rise up against God and curse Heaven. And so, unbeknownst to man, the fate of a country shall be ruined. God shall raise up powerful countries to deal with those countries that have been cursed by God, and may even wipe them from the face of the earth. The rise and fall of a country or nation is predicated upon whether its rulers worship God, and whether they lead their people to become closer to God and to worship Him. And yet, in this final era, because those who truly seek and worship God are increasingly scarce, God bestows special favor upon countries in which Christianity is the state religion. He gathers those countries together to form the world's relatively righteous camp, while the atheistic countries and those that do not worship the true

God become the opponents of the righteous camp. In this way, God not only has a place among mankind in which to conduct His work, but also gains countries that can exercise righteous authority, allowing sanctions and restrictions to be imposed on those countries that resist Him. Yet despite this, still no more people come forward to worship God, because man has strayed too far from Him, and man has forgotten God for too long. There remain on earth only countries that exercise righteousness and resist unrighteousness. But this is far from the wishes of God, for no country's rulers will allow God to preside over their people, and no political party will gather together its people to worship God; God has lost His rightful place in the heart of every country, nation, ruling party, and even in the heart of every person. Although righteous forces do exist in this world, rule in which God holds no place in the heart of man is fragile. Without the blessing of God, the political arena shall fall into disarray and become vulnerable to attack. For mankind, being without the blessing of God is like being without the sun. Regardless of how assiduously rulers work for their people, regardless of how many righteous conferences mankind holds together, none of this shall change the course of events or alter the fate of mankind. Man believes that a country in which people are fed and clothed, in which they live together peacefully, is a good country, and one with good leadership. But God does not think so. He believes that a country in which no one worships Him is one that He shall annihilate. Man's way of thinking is too much at odds with that of God. So, if the head of a country does not worship God, then the fate of this country shall be a tragic one, and the country shall have no destination.

God does not partake in the politics of man, yet the fate of a country or nation is controlled by God. God controls this world and the entire universe. The fate of man and the plan of God are intimately connected, and no man, country or nation is exempt from the sovereignty of God. If man wishes to know his fate, then he must come before God. God shall cause those who follow and worship Him to prosper and shall bring decline and extinction upon those who resist and reject Him.

Excerpted from "God Presides Over the Fate of All Mankind" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The existence of the spiritual world is inextricably linked to the material world of mankind. It plays a major role in the cycle of human life and death in God's dominion over all things; this is its role, and this is one of the reasons that its existence is important. Because it is a place that

is indiscernible to the five senses, no one can accurately judge whether the spiritual world exists or not. Its various dynamics are intimately connected to human existence, as a result of which the order of life of mankind is also hugely influenced by the spiritual world. Does this involve God's sovereignty or not? It does. When I say this, you understand why I am discussing this topic: It is because it concerns God's sovereignty, as well as His administration. In a world such as this—one that is invisible to people—its every heavenly edict, decree, and administrative system is far above the laws and systems of any nation of the material world, and no being living in this world would dare to contravene or violate them. Does this relate to God's sovereignty and administration? In the spiritual world, there are clear administrative decrees, clear heavenly edicts, and clear statutes. At different levels and in various areas, attendants strictly abide by their duties and observe rules and regulations, for they know what the consequence of violating a heavenly edict is; they are clearly aware of how God punishes evil and rewards good, and of how He administers and rules over all things. Moreover, they clearly see how He carries out His heavenly edicts and statutes. Are these different from the material world inhabited by mankind? They are indeed enormously different. The spiritual world is a world that is completely different to the material world. Since there are heavenly edicts and statutes, this touches upon God's sovereignty, administration and, moreover, His disposition, as well as what He has and is.

Excerpted from "God Himself, the Unique X" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The fates of humanity and of the universe are intimately entwined with the Creator's sovereignty, inseparably tied to the Creator's orchestrations; in the end, they are inseparable from the Creator's authority. In the laws of all things, man comes to understand the Creator's orchestrations and His sovereignty; in the rules of survival of all things, he comes to perceive the Creator's governance; in the fates of all things, he comes to infer the ways the Creator exercises His sovereignty and control over them; and in the life cycles of human beings and all things, man truly comes to experience the Creator's orchestrations and arrangements for all things and living beings, to witness how those orchestrations and arrangements supersede all earthly laws, rules, and institutions, all other powers and forces. This being so, humanity is compelled to recognize that the Creator's sovereignty cannot be violated by any created being, that no force can usurp upon or alter the events and things predestined by the Creator. It is

under these divine laws and rules that humans and all things live and propagate, generation after generation. Is this not the true embodiment of the Creator's authority?

Excerpted from "God Himself, the Unique III" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

God is the One who rules over all things and administers all things. He created all that there is, He administers all that there is, He rules over all that there is, and He provides for all that there is. This is the status of God, and it is His identity. For all things and all that there is, God's true identity is the Creator and the Ruler of all of creation. Such is the identity possessed by God, and He is unique among all things. None of God's creatures—whether they be among mankind or in the spiritual world—can use any means or excuse to impersonate or replace God's identity and status, for there is only One, among all things, who is possessed of this identity, power, authority, and ability to rule over creation: our unique God Himself. He lives and moves among all things; He can rise to the highest place, above all things. He can humble Himself by becoming human, becoming one among those of flesh and blood, coming face-to-face with people and sharing weal and woe with them, while at the same time, He commands all that there is, deciding the fate of all that there is and in what direction it all moves. Moreover, He guides the fate of all mankind, and steers the direction of mankind. A God such as this should be worshiped, obeyed, and known by all living beings. Thus, regardless of which group or type among mankind you belong to, believing in God, following God, revering God, accepting His rule, and accepting His arrangements for your fate is the only choice—the necessary choice—for any person and for any living being. In God's uniqueness, people see that His authority, His righteous disposition, His essence, and the means by which He provides to all things are all completely unique; this uniqueness determines the true identity of God Himself, and it also determines His status. Therefore, among all creatures, if any living being in the spiritual world or among mankind wished to stand in God's stead, success would be impossible, as would be that of any attempt to impersonate God. This is fact.

Excerpted from "God Himself, the Unique X" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

XI. Words on the Relationship Between God and the Bible

1. The Bible is only a record of the two stages of God's work that were the Age of Law and the Age of Grace; it is not a record of the entirety of God's work

Bible Verses for Reference:

“And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written” (Jhn 21:25).

“I have yet many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. However, when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will show you things to come” (Jhn 16:12–13).

“Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof” (Rev 5:5).

“He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches; To him that overcomes will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knows saving he that receives it” (Rev 2:17).

Relevant Words of God:

What kind of book is the Bible? The Old Testament is the work of God during the Age of Law. The Old Testament of the Bible records all the work of Jehovah during the Age of Law and His work of creation. All of it records the work done by Jehovah, and it ultimately ends the accounts of Jehovah's work with the Book of Malachi. The Old Testament records two pieces of work done by God: One is the work of creation, and one is the decreeing of the law. Both were the work done by Jehovah. The Age of Law represents the work under the name of Jehovah God; it is the entirety of the work carried out primarily under the name of Jehovah. Thus, the Old Testament records the work of Jehovah, and the New Testament records the work of Jesus, work which was carried out primarily under the name of Jesus. The significance of Jesus' name and the work He did are mostly recorded in the New Testament. During the Old Testament Age of Law, Jehovah built the temple and the altar in Israel, He guided the life of the Israelites on earth, proving that they were His chosen people, the first group of people that He selected on earth and who were after His own heart, the first group that He had personally led. The twelve tribes of Israel were Jehovah's first chosen ones, and so He always worked in them, right up

until the work of Jehovah of the Age of Law was concluded. The second stage of work was the work of the Age of Grace of the New Testament, and it was carried out among the Jewish people, among one of the twelve tribes of Israel. The scope of this work was smaller because Jesus was God become flesh. Jesus worked only throughout the land of Judea, and only did three-and-a-half years of work; thus, what is recorded in the New Testament is far from able to surpass the amount of work recorded in the Old Testament.

Excerpted from “Concerning the Bible (1)” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The Bible is a book of history. Of course, it also contains some of the foretelling of prophets, and such foretelling is by no means history. The Bible includes several parts—there is not just prophecy, or only the work of Jehovah, nor are there only the Pauline epistles. You must know how many parts the Bible includes; the Old Testament contains Genesis, Exodus..., and there are also the books of prophecy that the prophets wrote. At the end, the Old Testament finishes with the Book of Malachi. It records the work of the Age of Law, which was led by Jehovah; from Genesis to the Book of Malachi, it is a comprehensive record of all the work of the Age of Law. Which is to say, the Old Testament records all that was experienced by the people who were guided by Jehovah in the Age of Law. ... The prophets of that time were inspired by Jehovah and spoke some prophecy, they spoke many words, and they prophesied the things of the Age of Grace, as well as the destruction of the world in the last days—the work that Jehovah planned to do. The remaining books all record the work done by Jehovah in Israel. Thus, when you read the Bible, you are mainly reading about what Jehovah did in Israel; the Bible’s Old Testament primarily records Jehovah’s work of guiding Israel, His use of Moses to guide the Israelites out of Egypt, who rid them of the Pharaoh’s shackles, and took them out into the wilderness, after which they entered Canaan and everything following this was their life in Canaan. All apart from this is made up of records of Jehovah’s work throughout Israel. Everything recorded in the Old Testament is Jehovah’s work in Israel, it is the work Jehovah did in the land in which He made Adam and Eve. From when God officially began to lead the people on earth after Noah, all that is recorded in the Old Testament is the work of Israel. And why is there not recorded any work beyond Israel? Because the land of Israel is the cradle of mankind. In the beginning, there were no other countries apart from Israel, and Jehovah did not work in any other place. In this way, what is recorded in the Old Testament of the Bible is

purely God's work in Israel at that time. The words spoken by the prophets, by Isaiah, Daniel, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel ... their words foretell His other work on earth, they foretell the work of Jehovah God Himself. All this came from God, it was the work of the Holy Spirit, and apart from these books of the prophets, everything else is a record of people's experiences of Jehovah's work at the time.

The work of creation happened before there was mankind, but the Book of Genesis only came after there was mankind; it was a book written by Moses during the Age of Law. It is like the things that happen among you today: After they happen, you write them down to show to people in the future, and for the people of the future, what you have recorded are things that happened in times past—they are nothing more than history. The things recorded in the Old Testament are Jehovah's work in Israel, and that which is recorded in the New Testament is the work of Jesus during the Age of Grace; they document the work done by God in two different ages. The Old Testament documents the work of God during the Age of Law, and thus the Old Testament is a historical book, while the New Testament is the product of the work of the Age of Grace. When the new work began, the New Testament also became out of date—and thus, the New Testament is also a historical book. Of course, the New Testament is not as systematic as the Old Testament, nor does it record as many things. All of the many words spoken by Jehovah are recorded in the Old Testament of the Bible, whereas only some of the words of Jesus are recorded in the Four Gospels. Of course, Jesus also did a lot of work, but it was not recorded in detail. There is less recorded in the New Testament because of how much work Jesus did; the amount of work He did during three-and-a-half years on earth and the work of the apostles was far less than the work of Jehovah. And thus, there are fewer books in the New Testament than the Old Testament.

Excerpted from "Concerning the Bible (1)" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The Bible is also called the Old and New Testament. Do you know what "testament" refers to? The "testament" in the Old Testament comes from Jehovah's covenant with the people of Israel when He killed the Egyptians and saved the Israelites from the Pharaoh. Of course, the proof of this covenant was the lamb's blood daubed on lintels, through which God established a covenant with man, one in which it was said that all those who had lamb's blood on the top and sides of the doorframe were Israelites, they were God's chosen people, and they would all

be spared by Jehovah (for Jehovah was then about to kill all the firstborn sons of Egypt and firstborn sheep and cattle). This covenant has two levels of meaning. None of the people or livestock of Egypt would be delivered by Jehovah; He would kill all of their firstborn sons and firstborn sheep and cattle. Thus, in many books of prophecy it was foretold that the Egyptians would be severely chastised as a result of the covenant of Jehovah. This is the covenant's first level of meaning. Jehovah killed the firstborn sons of Egypt and all its firstborn livestock, and He spared all the Israelites, which meant that all those who were of the land of Israel were cherished by Jehovah, and would all be spared; He wished to do long-term work in them, and established the covenant with them using lamb's blood. From then onward, Jehovah would not kill the Israelites, and said that they would forever be His chosen ones. Among the twelve tribes of Israel, He would embark upon His work for the entire Age of Law, He would unveil all His laws to the Israelites, and choose among them prophets and judges, and they would be at the center of His work. Jehovah made a covenant with them: Unless the age changed, He would work only among the chosen ones. Jehovah's covenant was immutable, for it was made in blood, and was established with His chosen people. More importantly, He had chosen an appropriate scope and target through which to embark upon His work for the whole age, and so people saw the covenant as especially important. This is the covenant's second level of meaning. With the exception of Genesis, which was before the establishment of the covenant, all the other books in the Old Testament record God's work among the Israelites after the establishment of the covenant. Of course, there are occasional accounts of the Gentiles, but overall, the Old Testament documents God's work in Israel. Because of Jehovah's covenant with the Israelites, the books written during the Age of Law are called the Old Testament. They are named after Jehovah's covenant with the Israelites.

The New Testament is named after the blood shed by Jesus on the cross and His covenant with all those who believed in Him. Jesus' covenant was this: People had but to believe in Him for their sins to be forgiven because of the blood He shed, and thus they would be saved, and reborn through Him, and would no longer be sinners; people had but to believe in Him to receive His grace, and would not suffer in hell after they died. All of the books written during the Age of Grace came after this covenant, and they all document the work and utterances contained in it. They go no further than the salvation of the Lord Jesus' crucifixion or the covenant; they are all books written by the brothers in the Lord who had experiences. Thus,

these books are also named after a covenant: They are called the New Testament. These two testaments include only the Age of Law and the Age of Grace, and have no connection with the final age.

Excerpted from “Concerning the Bible (2)” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Many people believe that understanding and being able to interpret the Bible is the same as finding the true way—but in fact, are things really so simple? No one knows the reality of the Bible: that it is nothing more than a historical record of God’s work, and a testament to the previous two stages of God’s work, and that it offers you no understanding of the aims of God’s work. Everyone who has read the Bible knows that it documents the two stages of God’s work during the Age of Law and the Age of Grace. The Old Testament chronicles the history of Israel and Jehovah’s work from the time of creation until the end of the Age of Law. The New Testament records Jesus’ work on earth, which is in the Four Gospels, as well as the work of Paul—are these not historical records? Bringing up the things of the past today makes them history, and no matter how true or real they might be, they are still history—and history cannot address the present, for God does not look back on history! And so, if you only understand the Bible, and understand nothing of the work God intends to do today, and if you believe in God but do not seek the work of the Holy Spirit, then you do not understand what it means to seek God. If you read the Bible in order to study the history of Israel, to research the history of God’s creation of all the heavens and earth, then you do not believe in God. But today, since you believe in God, and pursue life, since you pursue the knowledge of God, and do not pursue dead letters and doctrines or an understanding of history, you must seek God’s will of today, and you must look for the direction of the Holy Spirit’s work. If you were an archeologist you could read the Bible—but you are not, you are one of those who believe in God, and you had best seek God’s will of today. By reading the Bible, at most you will understand a little of the history of Israel, you will learn about the lives of Abraham, David, and Moses, you will find out about how they revered Jehovah, how Jehovah burned those who opposed Him, and how He spoke to the people of that age. You will only find out about God’s work in the past. The records of the Bible relate to how the early people of Israel revered God and lived under the guidance of Jehovah. Because the Israelites were God’s chosen people, in the Old Testament you can see all the people of Israel’s loyalty to Jehovah, how all those who obeyed Jehovah were cared for and blessed by

Him; you can learn that when God worked in Israel He was full of mercy and love, as well as possessed of consuming flames, and that all the Israelites, from the lowly to the mighty, revered Jehovah, and so the whole country was blessed by God. Such is the history of Israel recorded in the Old Testament.

Excerpted from “Concerning the Bible (4)” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The things that are recorded in the Bible are limited; they cannot represent the work of God in its entirety. The Four Gospels have fewer than one hundred chapters altogether, in which are written a finite number of happenings, such as Jesus cursing the fig tree, Peter’s three denials of the Lord, Jesus appearing to the disciples following His crucifixion and resurrection, teaching about fasting, teaching about prayer, teaching about divorce, the birth and genealogy of Jesus, Jesus’ appointment of the disciples, and so forth. However, man values them as treasures, even comparing the work of today against them. They even believe that all the work Jesus did in His life amounted only to so much, as if God were only capable of doing this much and nothing further. Is this not absurd?

Excerpted from “The Mystery of the Incarnation (1)” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

If you wish to see the work of the Age of Law, and to see how the Israelites followed the way of Jehovah, then you must read the Old Testament; if you wish to understand the work of the Age of Grace, then you must read the New Testament. But how do you see the work of the last days? You must accept the leadership of the God of today, and enter into the work of today, for this is the new work, and no one has previously recorded it in the Bible. Today, God has become flesh and selected other chosen ones in China. God works in these people, He continues on from His work on earth, and continues on from the work of the Age of Grace. The work of today is a path that man has never walked, and a way that no one has ever seen. It is work that has never been done before—it is God’s latest work on earth. Thus, work that has never been done before is not history, because now is now, and has yet to become the past. People do not know that God has done greater, newer work on earth, and outside of Israel, that it has already gone beyond the scope of Israel, and beyond the foretelling of the prophets, that it is new and marvelous work outside of the prophecies, and newer work beyond Israel, and work that people can neither perceive nor imagine. How could the Bible contain explicit records of such work?

Who could have recorded every single bit of today's work, without omission, in advance? Who could have recorded this mightier, wiser work that defies convention, in that moldy old book? The work of today is not history, and as such, if you wish to walk the new path of today, then you must depart from the Bible, you must go beyond the books of prophecy or history in the Bible. Only then will you be able to walk the new path properly, and only then will you be able to enter into the new realm and the new work.

Excerpted from "Concerning the Bible (1)" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

2. The religious world believes that all scripture was inspired by God and is all His words; why this viewpoint is wrong

Relevant Words of God:

Not everything in the Bible is a record of the words personally spoken by God. The Bible simply documents the previous two stages of God's work, of which one part is a record of the foretelling of the prophets, and one part is the experiences and knowledge written by people used by God throughout the ages. Human experiences are tainted with human opinions and knowledge, and this is something which is unavoidable. In many of the books of the Bible are human notions, human biases, and humans' absurd comprehension. Of course, most of the words are the result of the enlightenment and illumination of the Holy Spirit, and they are correct understandings—yet it still cannot be said that they are entirely accurate expressions of the truth. Their views on certain things are nothing more than knowledge derived from personal experience, or the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit. The foretelling of the prophets was personally instructed by God: The prophecies of the like of Isaiah, Daniel, Ezra, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel came from the direct instruction of the Holy Spirit; these people were seers, they had received the Spirit of prophecy, and they were all prophets of the Old Testament. During the Age of Law, these people, who had received the inspirations of Jehovah, spoke many prophecies, which were directly instructed by Jehovah.

Excerpted from "Concerning the Bible (3)" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

During the Old Testament Age of Law, the great number of prophets raised up by Jehovah spoke prophecy for Him, they gave instructions to various tribes and nations, and foretold the work that Jehovah would do. These people who had been raised up had all been given the Spirit of prophecy by Jehovah: They were able to see the visions from Jehovah, and hear His voice, and thus they were inspired by Him and wrote prophecy. The work they did was the expression of the voice of Jehovah, the expression of the prophecy of Jehovah, and Jehovah's work at the time was simply to guide people using the Spirit; He did not become flesh, and people saw nothing of His face. Thus, He raised up many prophets to do His work, and gave them oracles that they passed on to every tribe and clan of Israel. Their work was to speak prophecy, and some of them wrote down Jehovah's instructions to them to show to others. Jehovah raised these people up to speak prophecy, to foretell the work of the future or the work still to be done during that time, so that people could behold the wondrousness and wisdom of Jehovah. These books of prophecy were quite different from the other books of the Bible; they were words spoken or written by those who had been given the Spirit of prophecy—by those who had gained the visions or voice from Jehovah. Apart from the books of prophecy, everything else in the Old Testament is made up of records made by people after Jehovah had finished His work. These books cannot stand in for the foretelling spoken by the prophets raised up by Jehovah, just as Genesis and Exodus cannot be compared to the Book of Isaiah and the Book of Daniel. The prophecies were spoken before the work had been carried out; the other books, meanwhile, were written after the work had been finished, which was what people were capable of. The prophets of that time were inspired by Jehovah and spoke some prophecy, they spoke many words, and they prophesied the things of the Age of Grace, as well as the destruction of the world in the last days—the work that Jehovah planned to do. The remaining books all record the work done by Jehovah in Israel. Thus, when you read the Bible, you are mainly reading about what Jehovah did in Israel; the Bible's Old Testament primarily records Jehovah's work of guiding Israel, His use of Moses to guide the Israelites out of Egypt, who rid them of the Pharaoh's shackles, and took them out into the wilderness, after which they entered Canaan and everything following this was their life in Canaan. All apart from this is made up of records of Jehovah's work throughout Israel. Everything recorded in the Old Testament is Jehovah's work in Israel, it is the work Jehovah did in the land in which He made Adam and Eve. From when God officially began to lead the people on earth after Noah, all that is recorded in the Old

Testament is the work of Israel. And why is there not recorded any work beyond Israel? Because the land of Israel is the cradle of mankind. In the beginning, there were no other countries apart from Israel, and Jehovah did not work in any other place. In this way, what is recorded in the Old Testament of the Bible is purely God's work in Israel at that time. The words spoken by the prophets, by Isaiah, Daniel, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel ... their words foretell His other work on earth, they foretell the work of Jehovah God Himself. All this came from God, it was the work of the Holy Spirit, and apart from these books of the prophets, everything else is a record of people's experiences of Jehovah's work at the time.

Excerpted from "Concerning the Bible (1)" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Today, people believe the Bible is God, and that God is the Bible. So, too, do they believe that all the words of the Bible were the only words God spoke, and that they were all said by God. Those who believe in God even think that, although all of the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testament were written by people, they were all given by inspiration of God, and a record of the utterances of the Holy Spirit. This is the erroneous comprehension of man, and it does not completely accord with the facts. In fact, apart from the books of prophecy, most of the Old Testament is a historical record. Some of the epistles of the New Testament come from people's experiences, and some come from the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit; the Pauline epistles, for example, arose from the work of a man, they were all the result of the Holy Spirit's enlightenment, and they were written for the churches, and were words of exhortation and encouragement for the brothers and sisters of the churches. They were not words spoken by the Holy Spirit—Paul could not speak on behalf of the Holy Spirit, and neither was he a prophet, much less did he see the visions that John beheld. His epistles were written for the churches of Ephesus, Philadelphia, Galatia, and other churches. And thus, the Pauline epistles of the New Testament are epistles that Paul wrote for the churches, and not inspirations from the Holy Spirit, nor are they the direct utterances of the Holy Spirit. They are merely words of exhortation, comfort, and encouragement that he wrote for the churches during the course of his work. So, too, are they a record of much of Paul's work at the time. They were written for all who are brothers and sisters in the Lord, so that the brothers and sisters of the churches at that time would follow his advice and abide by the way of repentance of the Lord Jesus. By no means did Paul say that, be they the churches of that time or of the future, all must eat and drink the things

he wrote, nor did he say that his words all came from God. According to the circumstances of the church at that time, he simply communed with the brothers and sisters, and exhorted them, and inspired belief in them, and he simply preached or reminded people and exhorted them. His words were based upon his own burden, and he supported the people through these words. He did the work of an apostle of the churches of that time, he was a worker who was used by the Lord Jesus, and thus he must take on the responsibility for the churches, and must undertake the work of the churches, he had to learn about the states of the brothers and sisters—and because of this, he wrote epistles for all of the brothers and sisters in the Lord. All he said that was edifying and positive to people was right, but it did not represent the utterances of the Holy Spirit, and it could not represent God. It is an egregious understanding, and a tremendous blasphemy, for people to treat the records of a man's experiences and a man's epistles as the words spoken by the Holy Spirit to the churches! That is particularly true when it comes to the epistles that Paul wrote for the churches, for his epistles were written for the brothers and sisters based on the circumstances and situation of each church at the time, and were in order to exhort the brothers and sisters in the Lord, so that they could receive the grace of the Lord Jesus. His epistles were in order to rouse the brothers and sisters of that time. It can be said that this was his own burden, and was also the burden given to him by the Holy Spirit; after all, he was an apostle who led the churches of the time, who wrote epistles for the churches and exhorted them—that was his responsibility. His identity was merely that of a working apostle, and he was merely an apostle who was sent by God; he was not a prophet, nor a foreteller. To him, his own work and the lives of the brothers and sisters were of the utmost importance. Thus, he could not speak on behalf of the Holy Spirit. His words were not the words of the Holy Spirit, much less could they be said to be the words of God, for Paul was nothing more than a creature of God, and was certainly not the incarnation of God. His identity was not the same as that of Jesus. The words of Jesus were the words of the Holy Spirit, they were the words of God, for His identity was that of Christ—the Son of God. How could Paul be His equal? If people see the epistles or words like Paul's as the utterances of the Holy Spirit, and worship them as God, then it can only be said that they are too indiscriminating. To speak more harshly, is this not simply blasphemy? How could a man talk on behalf of God? And how could people bow down before the records of his epistles and of the words he spoke as if they were a holy book, or a heavenly book? Could the words of God be casually uttered by a man? How could a man talk on behalf of

God? And so, what say you—could the epistles that he wrote for the churches not be tainted with his own ideas? How could they not be tainted with human ideas? He wrote epistles for the churches based on his personal experiences and his own knowledge. For instance, Paul wrote an epistle to the Galatian churches which contained a certain opinion, and Peter wrote another, which had another view. Which of them came from the Holy Spirit? No one can say for sure. Thus, it can only be said that they both bore a burden for the churches, yet their letters represent their stature, they represent their provision and support for the brothers and sisters, and their burden toward the churches, and they only represent human work—they were not entirely of the Holy Spirit. If you say that his epistles are the words of the Holy Spirit, then you are absurd, and you are committing blasphemy! The Pauline epistles and the other epistles of the New Testament are equivalent to the memoirs of the more recent spiritual figures: They are on a par with the books of Watchman Nee or the experiences of Lawrence, and so on. It is simply that the books of recent spiritual figures are not compiled into the New Testament, yet the essence of these people was the same: They were people who were used by the Holy Spirit during a certain period, and they could not directly represent God.

Excerpted from “Concerning the Bible (3)” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

3. The religious world thinks belief in God is belief in the Bible, and departure from the Bible is not belief in God; why this understanding is wrong

Bible Verses for Reference:

“Search the scriptures; for in them you think you have eternal life: and they are they which testify of Me. And you will not come to Me, that you might have life” (Jhn 5:39–40).

“Jesus said to him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man comes to the Father, but by Me” (Jhn 14:6).

Relevant Words of God:

For many years, people’s traditional means of belief (that of Christianity, one of the world’s three major religions) has been to read the Bible; departure from the Bible is not a belief in the Lord, departure from the Bible is heterodoxy and heresy, and even when people read other

books, the foundation of these books must be the explanation of the Bible. Which is to say, if you believe in the Lord, then you must read the Bible, and outside the Bible you must not worship any book that does not involve the Bible. If you do, then you are betraying God. From the time when there was the Bible, people's belief in the Lord has been the belief in the Bible. Instead of saying people believe in the Lord, it is better to say they believe in the Bible; rather than saying they have begun reading the Bible, it is better to say they have begun believing in the Bible; and rather than saying they have returned before the Lord, it would be better to say they have returned before the Bible. In this way, people worship the Bible as if it were God, as if it were their lifeblood, and losing it would be the same as losing their life. People see the Bible as being as high as God, and there are even those who see it as higher than God. If people are without the work of the Holy Spirit, if they cannot feel God, they can carry on living—but as soon as they lose the Bible, or lose the famous chapters and sayings from the Bible, then it is as if they have lost their life. And so, as soon as people believe in the Lord they begin reading the Bible, and memorizing the Bible, and the more of the Bible they are able to memorize, the more this proves that they love the Lord and are of great faith. Those who have read the Bible and can speak of it to others are all good brothers and sisters. For all these years, people's faith and loyalty to the Lord has been measured according to the extent of their understanding of the Bible. Most people simply do not understand why they should believe in God, nor how to believe in God, and do nothing but search blindly for clues to decipher the chapters of the Bible. People have never pursued the direction of the work of the Holy Spirit; all along, they have done nothing but desperately study and investigate the Bible, and no one has ever found newer work of the Holy Spirit outside of the Bible. No one has ever departed from the Bible, nor have they ever dared to do so. People have studied the Bible for all these years, they have come up with so many explanations, and put in so much work; they also have many differences of opinion about the Bible, which they debate endlessly, such that over two thousand different denominations have been formed today. They all want to find some special explanations, or more profound mysteries in the Bible, they want to explore it, and to find in it the background to Jehovah's work in Israel, or the background to Jesus' work in Judea, or more mysteries that no one else knows. People's approach to the Bible is one of obsession and faith, and no one can be entirely clear about the inside story or essence of the Bible. So, today people still have an indescribable sense of wonder when it comes to the Bible, and they are even more obsessed with it, and have

even more faith in it. Today, everyone wants to find the prophecies of the work of the last days in the Bible, they want to discover what work God does during the last days, and what signs there are for the last days. In this way, their worship of the Bible becomes more fervent, and the closer it gets to the last days, the more blind credence they give to the prophecies of the Bible, particularly those about the last days. With such blind faith in the Bible, with such trust in the Bible, they have no desire to seek the work of the Holy Spirit. In people's notions, they think that only the Bible can bring the work of the Holy Spirit; only in the Bible can they find the footsteps of God; only in the Bible are hidden the mysteries of God's work; only the Bible—not other books or people—can clarify God's everything and the entirety of His work; the Bible can bring the work of heaven to earth; and the Bible can both begin and conclude the ages. With these notions, people have no inclination to search for the work of the Holy Spirit. So, regardless of how much of a help the Bible was to people in the past, it has become an obstacle to God's latest work. Without the Bible, people can search for the footsteps of God elsewhere, yet today, His footsteps have been contained by the Bible, and extending His latest work has become doubly difficult, and an uphill struggle. This is all because of the famous chapters and sayings from the Bible, as well as the various prophecies of the Bible. The Bible has become an idol in people's minds, it has become a puzzle in their brains, and they are simply incapable of believing that God can work outside of the Bible, they are incapable of believing that people can find God outside of the Bible, much less are they able to believe that God could depart from the Bible during the final work and start anew. This is unthinkable to people; they cannot believe it, and neither can they imagine it. The Bible has become a great obstacle to people's acceptance of God's new work, and a difficulty to God's broadening this new work.

Excerpted from "Concerning the Bible (1)" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The Bible is a historical book, and if you had eaten and drunk the Old Testament during the Age of Grace—if you had put into practice what was required in the time of the Old Testament during the Age of Grace—Jesus would have rejected you, and condemned you; if you had applied the Old Testament to the work of Jesus, you would have been a Pharisee. If, today, you put the Old and New Testament together to eat and drink, and practice, then the God of today will condemn you; you will have fallen behind the Holy Spirit's work of today! If you eat and drink the Old Testament and the New Testament, then you are outside the stream of the

Holy Spirit! During the time of Jesus, Jesus led the Jews and all those who followed Him according to the Holy Spirit's work in Him at the time. He did not take the Bible as the basis of what He did, but spoke according to His work; He paid no heed to what the Bible said, nor did He search in the Bible for a path to lead His followers. Right from when He began to work, He spread the way of repentance—a word of which there was absolutely no mention in the prophecies of the Old Testament. Not only did He not act according to the Bible, but He also led a new path, and did new work. Never did He refer to the Bible when He preached. During the Age of Law, no one had ever been able to perform His miracles of healing the sick and casting out demons. So, too, were His work, His teachings, and the authority and power of His words beyond any man in the Age of Law. Jesus simply did His newer work, and even though many people condemned Him using the Bible—and even used the Old Testament to crucify Him—His work surpassed the Old Testament; if this were not so, why did people nail Him to the cross? Was it not because it said nothing in the Old Testament of His teaching, and His ability to heal the sick and cast out demons? His work was done to lead a new path, it was not to deliberately pick a fight against the Bible, or to deliberately dispense with the Old Testament. He simply came to perform His ministry, to bring the new work to those who yearned for and sought Him. He did not come to explain the Old Testament or uphold its work. His work was not in order to allow the Age of Law to continue developing, for His work gave no consideration to whether it had the Bible as its base; Jesus simply came to do the work that He ought to do. Thus, He did not explain the prophecies of the Old Testament, nor did He work according to the words of the Old Testament Age of Law. He ignored what the Old Testament said, He cared not whether it agreed with His work or not, and cared not what others knew of His work, or how they condemned it. He simply kept doing the work that He ought to do, even though many people used the foretelling of the prophets of the Old Testament to condemn Him. To people, it appeared as if His work had no basis, and there was much of it that was at odds with the records of the Old Testament. Was this not man's error? Does doctrine need to be applied to the work of God? And must God work according to the foretelling of prophets? After all, which is greater: God or the Bible? Why must God work according to the Bible? Could it be that God has no right to exceed the Bible? Can God not depart from the Bible and do other work? Why did Jesus and His disciples not keep the Sabbath? If He were to keep the Sabbath and practice according to the commandments of the Old Testament, why did Jesus not keep the Sabbath after He came,

but instead washed feet, covered head, broke bread, and drank wine? Is this not all absent from the commandments of the Old Testament? If Jesus honored the Old Testament, why did He break with these doctrines? You should know which came first, God or the Bible! Being the Lord of the Sabbath, could He not also be the Lord of the Bible?

Excerpted from “Concerning the Bible (1)” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Before, the people of Israel only read the Old Testament. That is to say, at the beginning of the Age of Grace people read the Old Testament. The New Testament only appeared during the Age of Grace. The New Testament did not exist when Jesus worked; the people after He was resurrected and ascended to heaven recorded His work. Only then were there the Four Gospels, in addition to which were also the epistles of Paul and Peter, as well as the Book of Revelation. More than three hundred years after Jesus ascended to heaven, subsequent generations collated these documents selectively, and only then was there the New Testament of the Bible. Only after this work had been completed was there the New Testament; it did not exist previously. God had done all that work, and Paul and the other apostles had written so many epistles to the churches at various locations. People after them combined their epistles, and appended the greatest vision recorded by John on the island of Patmos, in which was prophesied God’s work of the last days. People made this sequence, which is different from the utterances of today. What is recorded today is according to the steps of God’s work; what people engage with today is the work personally done by God, and the words personally uttered by Him. You—mankind—do not need to interfere; the words, which come directly from the Spirit, have been arranged step by step, and are different from the arrangement of man’s records. What they recorded, it can be said, was according to their level of education and human caliber. What they recorded was the experiences of men, and each had their own means of recording and knowing, and each record was different. Thus, if you worship the Bible as God you are extremely ignorant and stupid! Why do you not seek the work of the God of today? Only the work of God can save man. The Bible cannot save man, people could read it for several thousand years and still there would not be the slightest change in them, and if you worship the Bible you will never gain the work of the Holy Spirit.

Excerpted from “Concerning the Bible (3)” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

No one knows the reality of the Bible: that it is nothing more than a historical record of God's work, and a testament to the previous two stages of God's work, and that it offers you no understanding of the aims of God's work. Everyone who has read the Bible knows that it documents the two stages of God's work during the Age of Law and the Age of Grace. The Old Testament chronicles the history of Israel and Jehovah's work from the time of creation until the end of the Age of Law. The New Testament records Jesus' work on earth, which is in the Four Gospels, as well as the work of Paul—are these not historical records? Bringing up the things of the past today makes them history, and no matter how true or real they might be, they are still history—and history cannot address the present, for God does not look back on history! And so, if you only understand the Bible, and understand nothing of the work God intends to do today, and if you believe in God but do not seek the work of the Holy Spirit, then you do not understand what it means to seek God. If you read the Bible in order to study the history of Israel, to research the history of God's creation of all the heavens and earth, then you do not believe in God. But today, since you believe in God, and pursue life, since you pursue the knowledge of God, and do not pursue dead letters and doctrines or an understanding of history, you must seek God's will of today, and you must look for the direction of the Holy Spirit's work. If you were an archeologist you could read the Bible—but you are not, you are one of those who believe in God, and you had best seek God's will of today.

Excerpted from “Concerning the Bible (4)” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Man has been corrupted and lives in Satan's trap. All people live in the flesh, live in selfish desires, and there is not a single one among them who is compatible with Me. There are those who say that they are compatible with Me, but such people all worship vague idols. Although they acknowledge My name as holy, they tread a path that runs contrary to Me, and their words are full of arrogance and self-confidence. This is because, at root, they are all against Me and incompatible with Me. Every day, they seek traces of Me in the Bible and find “suitable” passages at random which they read endlessly and recite as scriptures. They do not know how to be compatible with Me nor what it means to be against Me. They merely read scriptures blindly. Within the Bible, they constrain a vague God that they have never seen, and are incapable of seeing, and take it out to look at at their leisure. They believe in My existence only within the scope of the Bible, and they equate Me with the Bible; without the Bible there is no

Me, and without Me there is no Bible. They pay no heed to My existence or actions, but instead devote extreme and special attention to each and every word of Scripture. Many more even believe that I should not do anything I wish to do unless it is foretold by Scripture. They attach too much importance to Scripture. It can be said that they see words and expressions as too important, to the extent that they use verses from the Bible to measure every word I say and to condemn Me. What they seek is not the way of compatibility with Me or the way of compatibility with the truth, but the way of compatibility with the words of the Bible, and they believe that anything that does not conform to the Bible is, without exception, not My work. Are such people not the dutiful descendants of the Pharisees? The Jewish Pharisees used the law of Moses to condemn Jesus. They did not seek compatibility with the Jesus of that time, but diligently followed the law to the letter, to the extent that—after having charged Him with not following the law of the Old Testament and not being the Messiah—they ultimately nailed the innocent Jesus to the cross. What was their substance? Was it not that they didn't seek the way of compatibility with the truth? They obsessed over each and every word of Scripture while paying heed neither to My will nor to the steps and methods of My work. They were not people who sought the truth, but people who rigidly clung to words; they were not people who believed in God, but people who believed in the Bible. Essentially, they were watchdogs of the Bible. In order to safeguard the interests of the Bible, to uphold the dignity of the Bible, and to protect the reputation of the Bible, they went so far as to nail the merciful Jesus to the cross. This they did merely for the sake of defending the Bible, and for the sake of maintaining the status of each and every word of the Bible in people's hearts. So they preferred to forsake their future and the sin offering to condemn Jesus, who did not conform to the doctrine of Scripture, to death. Were they not all lackeys to each and every word of Scripture?

And what of people today? Christ has come to release the truth, yet they would rather expel Him from this world so that they may gain entry into heaven and receive grace. They would rather completely deny the coming of the truth in order to safeguard the interests of the Bible, and they would rather nail the Christ returned to flesh to the cross again in order to ensure the everlasting existence of the Bible. How can man receive My salvation when his heart is so malicious and his nature so antagonistic toward Me? I live among man, yet man does not know of My existence. When I shine My light upon man, he still remains ignorant of My existence. When I unleash My wrath upon man, he denies My existence with even greater vigor. Man

searches for compatibility with words and compatibility with the Bible, yet not a single person comes before Me to seek the way of compatibility with the truth. Man looks up to Me in heaven and devotes particular concern to My existence in heaven, yet no one cares about Me in the flesh, for I who live among man am simply too insignificant. Those who only seek compatibility with the words of the Bible and who only seek compatibility with a vague God are a wretched sight to Me. That is because what they worship are dead words, and a God that is capable of giving them untold treasures; what they worship is a God that would lay Himself at the mercy of man—a God who does not exist. What, then, can such people gain from Me? Man is simply too lowly for words. Those who are against Me, who make limitless demands of Me, who have no love of the truth, who are rebellious toward Me—how could they be compatible with Me?

Excerpted from “You Should Seek the Way of Compatibility With Christ” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The Bible has been a part of human history for several thousand years. People, furthermore, treat it like God, to the extent that in the last days, it has taken the place of God, which disgusts God. Thus, when time permitted, God felt obliged to clarify the inside story and origins of the Bible; were He not to do this, the Bible would continue to hold the place of God in people’s hearts, and people would use the words of the Bible to measure and condemn the deeds of God. By explaining the essence, the structuring, and the flaws of the Bible, God was by no means denying the existence of the Bible, nor was He condemning it; rather, He was providing an appropriate, fitting description that restored the original image of the Bible, addressed the misunderstandings that people had toward the Bible, and gave them the correct view of the Bible, so that they no longer worshiped the Bible, and were no longer lost; which is to say, so that they would no longer mistake their blind faith in the Bible as faith in God and the worship of God, afraid even to confront its true background and failings. Once people have an unadulterated understanding of the Bible, they are able to cast it aside without compunction and bravely accept the new words of God. This is God’s goal in these several chapters. The truth that God wishes to tell people here is that no theory or fact can take the place of God’s work and words of today, and that nothing can stand in God’s stead. If people cannot escape the trap of the Bible, they will never be able to come before God. If they wish to come before God, they must first cleanse their hearts of anything that could replace Him; then they will be satisfactory to God.

4. Why one will fail to obtain eternal life if they uphold and worship the Bible

Bible Verses for Reference:

“Search the scriptures; for in them you think you have eternal life: and they are they which testify of Me. And you will not come to Me, that you might have life” (Jhn 5:39–40).

“Jesus said to him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man comes to the Father, but by Me” (Jhn 14:6).

Relevant Words of God:

Many people believe that understanding and being able to interpret the Bible is the same as finding the true way—but in fact, are things really so simple? No one knows the reality of the Bible: that it is nothing more than a historical record of God’s work, and a testament to the previous two stages of God’s work, and that it offers you no understanding of the aims of God’s work. Everyone who has read the Bible knows that it documents the two stages of God’s work during the Age of Law and the Age of Grace. The Old Testament chronicles the history of Israel and Jehovah’s work from the time of creation until the end of the Age of Law. The New Testament records Jesus’ work on earth, which is in the Four Gospels, as well as the work of Paul—are these not historical records? Bringing up the things of the past today makes them history, and no matter how true or real they might be, they are still history—and history cannot address the present, for God does not look back on history! And so, if you only understand the Bible, and understand nothing of the work God intends to do today, and if you believe in God but do not seek the work of the Holy Spirit, then you do not understand what it means to seek God. If you read the Bible in order to study the history of Israel, to research the history of God’s creation of all the heavens and earth, then you do not believe in God. But today, since you believe in God, and pursue life, since you pursue the knowledge of God, and do not pursue dead letters and doctrines or an understanding of history, you must seek God’s will of today, and you must look for the direction of the Holy Spirit’s work. If you were an archeologist you could read

the Bible—but you are not, you are one of those who believe in God, and you had best seek God’s will of today.

Excerpted from “Concerning the Bible (4)” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

In reading the Bible people can also gain many ways of life that cannot be found in other books. These ways are the ways of life of the work of the Holy Spirit experienced by prophets and apostles in ages past, and many of the words are precious, and can provide what people need. Thus, people all like to read the Bible. Because there is so much hidden in the Bible, people’s views toward it are unlike those toward the writings of great spiritual figures. The Bible is a record and collection of the experiences and knowledge of people who served Jehovah and Jesus in the old and new age, and so later generations have been able to gain much enlightenment, illumination, and paths to practice from it. The reason why the Bible is higher than the writings of any great spiritual figure is because all of their writings are drawn from the Bible, their experiences all come from the Bible, and they all explain the Bible. And so, although people can gain provision from the books of any great spiritual figure, they still worship the Bible, for it seems so high and profound to them! Although the Bible brings together some of the books of the words of life, such as the Pauline epistles and Petrine epistles, and although people can be provided for and assisted by these books, these books are still out of date, they still belong to the old age, and no matter how good they are, they are only suitable for one period, and are not everlasting. For God’s work is always developing, and it cannot simply stop at the time of Paul and Peter, or always remain in the Age of Grace in which Jesus was crucified. And so, these books are only suitable for the Age of Grace, not for the Age of Kingdom of the last days. They can only provide for the believers of the Age of Grace, not for the saints of the Age of Kingdom, and no matter how good they are, they are still obsolete. It is the same with Jehovah’s work of creation or His work in Israel: No matter how great this work was, it would still become outdated, and the time would still come when it passed. God’s work is also the same: It is great, but there will come a time when it ends; it cannot always remain amidst the work of the creation, nor among that of the crucifixion. No matter how convincing the work of the crucifixion, no matter how effective it was in defeating Satan, work is, after all, still work, and the ages are, after all, still ages; work cannot always stay on the same foundation, nor can times never change, because there was the creation and there must be the last days. This is inevitable! Thus, today

the words of life in the New Testament—the epistles of the apostles, and the Four Gospels—have become historical books, they have become old almanacs, and how could the old almanacs take people into the new age? No matter how capable these almanacs are of providing people with life, no matter how able they are to lead people to the cross, are they not outdated? Are they not bereft of value? Thus, I say you should not blindly believe in these almanacs. They are too old, they cannot bring you into the new work, and they can only burden you. Not only can they not bring you into the new work, and into new entry, but they take you into old religious churches—and if that were the case, would you not be regressing in your belief in God?

Excerpted from “Concerning the Bible (4)” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Perhaps what you now desire is to gain life, or perhaps you desire to gain the truth. Whatever the case, you wish to find God, to find the God that you can rely on, and who can provide you with eternal life. If you wish to gain eternal life, you must first understand the source of eternal life and must first know where God is. I have already said that only God is immutable life, and only God possesses the way of life. Since His life is immutable, it is thus eternal; since only God is the way of life, God Himself is thus the way of eternal life. As such, you should first understand where God is, and how to gain this way of eternal life. Let us now engage in fellowship on these two issues separately.

If you truly wish to gain the way of eternal life, and if you are voracious in your search for it, then first answer this question: Where is God today? Perhaps you would reply, “God lives in heaven, of course—He wouldn’t be living in your home, would He?” Perhaps you might say that God obviously lives among all things. Or you might say that God lives in each person’s heart, or that God is in the spiritual world. I don’t deny any of this, but I must clarify the issue. It isn’t totally correct to say that God lives in the heart of man, but neither is it entirely wrong. That is because, among believers in God, there are those whose belief is true and those whose belief is false, there are those of whom God approves and those of whom He disapproves, there are those who please Him and those whom He detests, and there are those whom He makes perfect and those whom He eliminates. And so I say that God lives in but a few people’s hearts, and these people are undoubtedly those who truly believe in God, those of whom God approves, those who please Him, and those whom He makes perfect. They are the ones who are led by God. Since they are led by God, they are the people who have already heard and seen God’s way of

eternal life. Those whose belief in God is false, those who are not approved by God, those who are despised by God, those who are eliminated by God—they are bound to be rejected by God, are bound to remain without the way of life, and are bound to remain ignorant of where God is. In contrast, those who have God living in their hearts know where He is. They are the people unto whom God bestows the way of eternal life, and they are the ones who follow God. Now do you know where God is? God is both in the heart of man and at man's side. He is not only in the spiritual world, and above all things, but even more on the earth upon which man exists. And so the arrival of the last days has taken the steps of God's work into new territory. God holds sovereignty over all things in the universe, and He is the mainstay of man in his heart, and moreover, He exists among man. Only in this way can He bring the way of life to mankind, and bring man into the way of life. God has come to earth, and lives among man, so that man may gain the way of life, and so that man may exist. At the same time, God also commands all things in the universe, so that they might cooperate with His management among man. And so, if you only acknowledge the doctrine that God is in heaven and in the heart of man, yet do not acknowledge the truth of God's existence among man, then you shall never gain life, and shall never gain the way of truth.

God Himself is life, and the truth, and His life and truth coexist. Those who are incapable of gaining the truth shall never gain life. Without the guidance, support, and provision of the truth, you shall only gain letters, doctrines, and, above all, death. God's life is ever-present, and His truth and life coexist. If you cannot find the source of truth, then you will not gain the nourishment of life; if you cannot gain the provision of life, then you will surely have no truth, and so apart from imaginations and notions, the entirety of your body shall be nothing but your flesh—your stench-ridden flesh. Know that the words of books do not count as life, the records of history cannot be feted as the truth, and the regulations of the past cannot serve as an account of words presently spoken by God. Only that which is expressed by God when He comes to earth and lives among man is the truth, life, God's will, and His current way of working. If you apply the records of words spoken by God during ages past to today, that makes you an archaeologist, and the best way of describing you is as an expert on historical heritage. That is because you always believe in traces of the work that God did in times past, only believe in the shadow of God left from when He previously worked among man, and only believe in the way that God gave to His followers in former times. You do not believe in the direction of God's work today,

do not believe in the glorious countenance of God today, and do not believe in the way of truth presently expressed by God. And so you are undeniably a daydreamer who is completely out of touch with reality. If now you still cling to words that are incapable of bringing life to man, then you are a hopeless piece of deadwood,^[a] for you are too conservative, too intractable, too impervious to reason!

Excerpted from “Only Christ of the Last Days Can Give Man the Way of Eternal Life” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Christ of the last days brings life, and brings the enduring and everlasting way of truth. This truth is the path by which man gains life, and it is the only path by which man shall know God and be approved by God. If you do not seek the way of life provided by Christ of the last days, then you shall never gain the approval of Jesus, and shall never be qualified to enter the gate of the kingdom of heaven, for you are both a puppet and prisoner of history. Those who are controlled by regulations, by letters, and shackled by history will never be able to gain life nor gain the perpetual way of life. This is because all they have is turbid water which has been clung to for thousands of years instead of the water of life that flows from the throne. Those who are not supplied with the water of life will forever remain corpses, playthings of Satan, and sons of hell. How, then, can they behold God? If you only try to hold on to the past, only try to keep things as they are by standing still, and do not try to change the status quo and discard history, then will you not always be against God? The steps of God’s work are vast and mighty, like surging waves and rolling thunders—yet you sit passively awaiting destruction, clinging to your folly and doing nothing. In this way, how can you be considered someone who follows the footsteps of the Lamb? How can you justify the God that you hold on to as a God who is always new and never old? And how can the words of your yellowed books carry you across into a new age? How can they lead you to seek the steps of God’s work? And how can they take you up to heaven? What you hold in your hands are letters that can provide but temporary solace, not truths that are capable of giving life. The scriptures you read can only enrich your tongue and are not words of wisdom that can help you know human life, much less the paths that can lead you to perfection. Does this discrepancy not give you cause for reflection? Does it not make you realize the mysteries contained within? Are you capable of delivering yourself to heaven to meet God on your own? Without the coming of God, can you take yourself into heaven to enjoy family

happiness with God? Are you still dreaming now? I suggest, then, that you stop dreaming and look at who is working now—look to see who is now carrying out the work of saving man during the last days. If you do not, you shall never gain the truth, and shall never gain life.

Excerpted from “Only Christ of the Last Days Can Give Man the Way of Eternal Life” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Footnotes:

a. A piece of deadwood: a Chinese idiom, meaning “beyond help.”

5. The Bible’s inherent value and how one approaches and uses the Bible in a way that conforms to God’s will

Bible Verses for Reference:

“Search the scriptures; for in them you think you have eternal life: and they are they which testify of Me. And you will not come to Me, that you might have life” (Jhn 5:39–40).

Relevant Words of God:

Today, I am dissecting the Bible in this way and it does not mean that I hate it, or that I deny its value for reference. I am explaining and clarifying the inherent value and origins of the Bible to you to stop you being kept in the dark. For people have so many views about the Bible, and most of them are wrong; reading the Bible in this way not only prevents them from gaining what they ought to, but, more important, it hinders the work I intend to do. It interferes tremendously with the work of the future, and offers only drawbacks, not advantages. Thus, what I am teaching you is simply the essence and inside story of the Bible. I am not asking that you do not read the Bible, or that you go around proclaiming that it is devoid of value, only that you have the correct knowledge and view of the Bible. Do not be too one-sided! Although the Bible is a history book that was written by men, it also documents many of the principles by which the ancient saints and prophets served God, as well as the recent apostles’ experiences in serving God—all of which were really seen and known by these people, and can serve as reference for the people of this age in pursuing the true way. Thus, in reading the Bible people can also gain many ways of life that cannot be found in other books. These ways are the ways of

life of the work of the Holy Spirit experienced by prophets and apostles in ages past, and many of the words are precious, and can provide what people need. Thus, people all like to read the Bible. Because there is so much hidden in the Bible, people's views toward it are unlike those toward the writings of great spiritual figures. The Bible is a record and collection of the experiences and knowledge of people who served Jehovah and Jesus in the old and new age, and so later generations have been able to gain much enlightenment, illumination, and paths to practice from it. The reason why the Bible is higher than the writings of any great spiritual figure is because all of their writings are drawn from the Bible, their experiences all come from the Bible, and they all explain the Bible. And so, although people can gain provision from the books of any great spiritual figure, they still worship the Bible, for it seems so high and profound to them! Although the Bible brings together some of the books of the words of life, such as the Pauline epistles and Petrine epistles, and although people can be provided for and assisted by these books, these books are still out of date, they still belong to the old age, and no matter how good they are, they are only suitable for one period, and are not everlasting. For God's work is always developing, and it cannot simply stop at the time of Paul and Peter, or always remain in the Age of Grace in which Jesus was crucified. And so, these books are only suitable for the Age of Grace, not for the Age of Kingdom of the last days. They can only provide for the believers of the Age of Grace, not for the saints of the Age of Kingdom, and no matter how good they are, they are still obsolete. It is the same with Jehovah's work of creation or His work in Israel: No matter how great this work was, it would still become outdated, and the time would still come when it passed. God's work is also the same: It is great, but there will come a time when it ends; it cannot always remain amidst the work of the creation, nor among that of the crucifixion. No matter how convincing the work of the crucifixion, no matter how effective it was in defeating Satan, work is, after all, still work, and the ages are, after all, still ages; work cannot always stay on the same foundation, nor can times never change, because there was the creation and there must be the last days. This is inevitable! Thus, today the words of life in the New Testament—the epistles of the apostles, and the Four Gospels—have become historical books, they have become old almanacs, and how could the old almanacs take people into the new age? No matter how capable these almanacs are of providing people with life, no matter how able they are to lead people to the cross, are they not outdated? Are they not bereft of value? Thus, I say you should not blindly believe in these almanacs. They are too old, they cannot bring you into the

new work, and they can only burden you. Not only can they not bring you into the new work, and into new entry, but they take you into old religious churches—and if that were the case, would you not be regressing in your belief in God?

Excerpted from “Concerning the Bible (4)” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The Bible has been a part of human history for several thousand years. People, furthermore, treat it like God, to the extent that in the last days, it has taken the place of God, which disgusts God. Thus, when time permitted, God felt obliged to clarify the inside story and origins of the Bible; were He not to do this, the Bible would continue to hold the place of God in people’s hearts, and people would use the words of the Bible to measure and condemn the deeds of God. By explaining the essence, the structuring, and the flaws of the Bible, God was by no means denying the existence of the Bible, nor was He condemning it; rather, He was providing an appropriate, fitting description that restored the original image of the Bible, addressed the misunderstandings that people had toward the Bible, and gave them the correct view of the Bible, so that they no longer worshiped the Bible, and were no longer lost; which is to say, so that they would no longer mistake their blind faith in the Bible as faith in God and the worship of God, afraid even to confront its true background and failings. Once people have an unadulterated understanding of the Bible, they are able to cast it aside without compunction and bravely accept the new words of God. This is God’s goal in these several chapters. The truth that God wishes to tell people here is that no theory or fact can take the place of God’s work and words of today, and that nothing can stand in God’s stead. If people cannot escape the trap of the Bible, they will never be able to come before God. If they wish to come before God, they must first cleanse their hearts of anything that could replace Him; then they will be satisfactory to God.

Excerpted from *Introduction to The Words of Christ As He Walked in the Churches in The Word Appears in the Flesh*

If you wish to see the work of the Age of Law, and to see how the Israelites followed the way of Jehovah, then you must read the Old Testament; if you wish to understand the work of the Age of Grace, then you must read the New Testament. But how do you see the work of the last days? You must accept the leadership of the God of today, and enter into the work of today, for

this is the new work, and no one has previously recorded it in the Bible. Today, God has become flesh and selected other chosen ones in China. God works in these people, He continues on from His work on earth, and continues on from the work of the Age of Grace. The work of today is a path that man has never walked, and a way that no one has ever seen. It is work that has never been done before—it is God’s latest work on earth. Thus, work that has never been done before is not history, because now is now, and has yet to become the past. People do not know that God has done greater, newer work on earth, and outside of Israel, that it has already gone beyond the scope of Israel, and beyond the foretelling of the prophets, that it is new and marvelous work outside of the prophecies, and newer work beyond Israel, and work that people can neither perceive nor imagine. How could the Bible contain explicit records of such work? Who could have recorded every single bit of today’s work, without omission, in advance? Who could have recorded this mightier, wiser work that defies convention, in that moldy old book? The work of today is not history, and as such, if you wish to walk the new path of today, then you must depart from the Bible, you must go beyond the books of prophecy or history in the Bible. Only then will you be able to walk the new path properly, and only then will you be able to enter into the new realm and the new work. You must understand why, today, you are asked not to read the Bible, why there is another work that is separate from the Bible, why God does not look for newer, more detailed practice in the Bible, and why there is instead mightier work outside of the Bible. This is all what you should understand. You must know the difference between the old and new work, and even though you do not read the Bible, you must be able to dissect it; if not, you will still worship the Bible, and it will be difficult for you to enter into the new work and undergo new changes. Since there is a higher way, why study that low, outdated way? Since there are newer utterances, and newer work, why live amid old historical records? The new utterances can provide for you, which proves that this is the new work; the old records cannot sate you, or satisfy your current needs, which proves that they are history, and not the work of the here and now. The highest way is the newest work, and with the new work, no matter how high the way of the past, it is still the history of people’s reflections, and no matter its value as reference, it is still the old way. Even though it is recorded in the “holy book,” the old way is history; even though there is no record of it in the “holy book,” the new way is of the here and now. This way can save you, and this way can change you, for this is the work of the Holy Spirit.

Excerpted from “Concerning the Bible (1)” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

XII. Words on the Wise Virgins Hearing God's Voice

1. God's sheep hear His voice, and only by hearing God's voice can one meet the Lord returned

Bible Verses for Reference:

“Jesus said to him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man comes to the Father, but by Me” (Jhn 14:6).

“I have yet many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. However, when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will show you things to come” (Jhn 16:12–13).

“My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me” (Jhn 10:27).

“He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches” (Rev 2:7).

Relevant Words of God:

Since we are searching for the footprints of God, it behooves us to search for God's will, for the words of God, for His utterances—because wherever there are new words spoken by God, the voice of God is there, and wherever there are the footsteps of God, God's deeds are there. Wherever there is the expression of God, there God appears, and wherever God appears, there the truth, the way, and the life exist. In seeking God's footprints, you have ignored the words “God is the truth, the way, and the life.” And so, many people, even when they receive the truth, do not believe that they have found God's footprints, and still less do they acknowledge the appearance of God. What a grave mistake! The appearance of God cannot be reconciled with man's notions, still less can God appear at the behest of man. God makes His own choices and His own plans when He does His work; moreover, He has His own objectives and His own methods. Whatever work He does, He has no need to discuss it with man or seek his advice, much less to notify each and every person of His work. This is the disposition of God, which should, moreover, be recognized by everyone. If you desire to witness the appearance of God,

to follow God's footsteps, then you must first walk away from your own notions. You must not demand that God do this or that, much less should you place Him within your own confines and limit Him to your own notions. Instead, you should ask how you are to seek God's footprints, how you are to accept God's appearance, and how you are to submit to the new work of God: This is what man should do. Since man is not the truth, and is not possessed of the truth, he should seek, accept, and obey.

Excerpted from "The Appearance of God Has Ushered in a New Age" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The word of God cannot be made out to be the word of man, and still less can one make the word of man to be the word of God. A man used by God is not the incarnate God, and the incarnate God is not a man used by God. In this, there is an essential difference. Perhaps, after reading these words, you do not acknowledge them to be the words of God, but only as the enlightenment that man has gained. In that case, you are blinded by ignorance. How can the words of God be the same as the enlightenment that man has gained? The words of God incarnate open up a new age, guide all of mankind, reveal mysteries, and show man the direction he is to take in the new age. The enlightenment obtained by man is but simple instructions for practice or knowledge. It cannot guide all of mankind into a new age or reveal the mysteries of God Himself. When all is said and done, God is God, and man is man. God has the essence of God, and man has the essence of man. If man views the words spoken by God as simple enlightenment by the Holy Spirit, and takes the words of the apostles and prophets as words personally spoken by God, that would be man's mistake.

Excerpted from Preface to *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Knowing God must be achieved through reading and understanding God's words. Some say: "I haven't seen God incarnate, so how could I know God?" In fact, God's words are an expression of His disposition. From God's words, you can see His love and salvation for humans, as well as His method for saving them.... This is because His words are expressed by God Himself, not written by humans. They have been personally expressed by God; God Himself is expressing His own words and His inner voice. Why are they called words from the heart? It is because they are issued from deep down, and express His disposition, His will, His thoughts, His love for mankind, His salvation of mankind, and His expectations of mankind.... God's

utterances include harsh words, and gentle and considerate words, as well as some revelatory words that are not in line with human wishes. If you look only at the revelatory words, you might feel that God is rather stern. If you look only at the gentle words, you might feel that God is not very authoritative. You therefore should not take them out of context; rather, look at them from every angle. Sometimes God speaks from a gentle and compassionate perspective, and then people see His love for mankind; sometimes He speaks from a very strict perspective, and then people see the disposition of His that will tolerate no offense. Man is deplorably filthy, and is not worthy of seeing God's face or of coming before Him. That people are now allowed to come before Him is purely by His grace. God's wisdom can be seen from the way He works and in the significance of His work. People can still see these things in God's words, even without any direct contact from Him.

Excerpted from "How to Know God Incarnate" in Records of Christ's Talks

This time around, God comes to do work not in a spiritual body, but in a very ordinary one. Moreover, not only is it the body of God's second incarnation, it is also the body through which God returns to the flesh. It is a very ordinary flesh. You cannot see anything that makes Him stand out from others, but you can gain from Him previously unheard-of truths. This insignificant flesh is what embodies all the words of truth from God, undertakes God's work in the last days, and expresses the whole of God's disposition for man to understand. Do you not desire greatly to see the God in heaven? Do you not desire greatly to understand the God in heaven? Do you not desire greatly to see the destination of mankind? He will tell you all these secrets—secrets that no man has been able to tell you, and He will also tell you of the truths that you do not understand. He is your gate into the kingdom, and your guide into the new age. Such an ordinary flesh holds many unfathomable mysteries. His deeds may be inscrutable to you, but the entire goal of the work He does is sufficient enough to allow you to see that He is not, as people believe, a simple flesh. For He represents the will of God and the care shown by God toward mankind in the last days. Though you cannot hear His words that seem to shake the heavens and earth or see His eyes like blazing flames, and though you cannot feel the discipline of His iron rod, nevertheless you can hear from His words that God is wrathful and know that God is showing compassion for mankind; you can see the righteous disposition of God and His wisdom, and, moreover, realize God's solicitude for all mankind. The work of God in the last

days is to allow man to see the God in heaven living among men on earth, and to enable man to know, obey, revere, and love God. This is why He has returned to the flesh for a second time.

Excerpted from “Did You Know? God Has Done a Great Thing Among Men” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

When God comes to earth to do His work, all man sees is supernatural events. What they behold with their eyes and what they hear with their ears are all supernatural, for His work and His words are incomprehensible and unattainable to them. If something of heaven is brought to earth, how can it be anything but supernatural? When the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven are brought to earth, mysteries that are incomprehensible and unfathomable to man, that are too wondrous and wise—are they not all supernatural? ... Consider the work done by the incarnate God in the present day: What aspect of it is not supernatural? His words are incomprehensible and unattainable to you, and the work He does can be done by no man. What He understands man has no way of understanding, and as for His knowledge, man knows not whence it comes. There are some who say, “I too am normal in the same way as You are, but how is it that I do not know what You know? I am older and richer in experience, yet how can You know of that which I do not?” All of this, as far as man is concerned, is something that man has no way of attaining. Then there are those who say, “No one knows of the work that was carried out in Israel, and even expositors of the Bible can offer no explanation; how come You know?” Are these not all matters of the supernatural? He has no experience of wonders, yet He knows all; He speaks and expresses the truth with the greatest of ease. Is this not supernatural? His work transcends that which flesh can attain to. It is unattainable to the thought of any man with a body of flesh and utterly inconceivable to the reasoning of the mind of man. Though He has never read the Bible, He understands the work of God in Israel. And though He stands on earth as He speaks, He speaks of the mysteries of the third heaven. When man reads these words, this feeling will overcome him: “Is this not the language of the third heaven?” Are these not all matters that exceed what a normal man is capable of achieving?

Excerpted from “The Mystery of the Incarnation (1)” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

He is well aware of the substance of man and can reveal all kinds of practices pertaining to all kinds of people. He is even better at revealing the corrupt dispositions and the rebellious

behavior of humans. He does not live among worldly people, but He is aware of the nature of mortals and all the corruptions of worldly people. This is His being. Though He does not deal with the world, He knows the rules of dealing with the world, because He understands human nature fully. He knows about the Spirit's work that man's eyes cannot see and man's ears cannot hear, both of today and of the past. This includes wisdom that is not a philosophy for living and wonders that are hard for people to fathom. This is His being, open to people and also hidden from people. What He expresses is not the being of an extraordinary person, but the inherent attributes and being of the Spirit. He does not travel the world but knows everything of it. He contacts the "anthropoids" who have no knowledge or insight, but He expresses words that are higher than knowledge and above great men. He lives within a group of obtuse and numb people who are without humanity and who do not understand the conventions and life of humanity, but He can ask mankind to live out normal humanity, at the same time revealing the base and low humanity of mankind. All this is His being, higher than the being of any flesh-and-blood person. For Him, it is unnecessary to experience a complicated, cumbersome, and sordid social life to do the work He needs to do and reveal the substance of corrupt mankind thoroughly. A sordid social life does not edify His flesh. His work and words only reveal man's disobedience and do not provide man with experience and lessons for dealing with the world. He does not need to investigate society or man's family when He supplies man with life. Exposing and judging man is not an expression of the experiences of His flesh; it is His revelation of man's unrighteousness after having known man's disobedience for a long time and abhorring mankind's corruption. The work He does is all meant to reveal His disposition to man and to express His being. Only He can do this work; it is not something a flesh-and-blood person could achieve.

Excerpted from "God's Work and Man's Work" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

God continues His utterances, employing various methods and perspectives to admonish us about what we should do while, at the same time, giving voice to His heart. His words carry life power, show us the way we should walk, and enable us to understand what the truth is. We begin to be drawn by His words, we begin to focus on the tone and manner of His speaking, and subconsciously we begin to take an interest in the innermost feelings of this unremarkable person. He spits up His heart's blood in working on our behalf, loses sleep and appetite on our

account, weeps for us, sighs for us, groans in sickness for us, suffers humiliation for the sake of our destination and salvation, and our numbness and rebelliousness draw tears and blood from His heart. This way of being and of having belongs to no ordinary person, nor can it be possessed or attained by any corrupted human being. He shows tolerance and patience possessed by no ordinary person, and His love is not something with which any created being is endowed. No one apart from Him can know all of our thoughts, or have such a clear and complete grasp of our nature and essence, or judge the rebelliousness and corruption of mankind, or speak to us and work among us like this on behalf of God in heaven. No one apart from Him is endowed with the authority, wisdom, and dignity of God; the disposition of God and what God has and is are brought forth, in their entirety, in Him. No one apart from Him can show us the way and bring us light. No one apart from Him can reveal the mysteries that God has not disclosed since creation until today. No one apart from Him can save us from Satan's bondage and our own corrupt disposition. He represents God. He expresses the inmost heart of God, the exhortations of God, and God's words of judgment toward all mankind. He has begun a new age, a new era, and ushered in a new heaven and earth and new work, and He has brought us hope, ending the life we led in vagueness and enabling our whole being to behold, in total clarity, the path to salvation. He has conquered our whole being and gained our hearts. From that moment onward, our minds have become conscious, and our spirits seem to be revived: This ordinary, insignificant person, who lives among us and has long been rejected by us—is this not the Lord Jesus, who is ever in our thoughts, waking or dreaming, and for whom we long night and day? It is He! It really is He! He is our God! He is the truth, the way, and the life!

Excerpted from "Beholding the Appearance of God in His Judgment and Chastisement" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

2. The differences between words of people used by God that conform to the truth and the words of God Himself

Relevant Words of God:

The word of God cannot be made out to be the word of man, and still less can one make the word of man to be the word of God. A man used by God is not the incarnate God, and the

incarnate God is not a man used by God. In this, there is an essential difference. Perhaps, after reading these words, you do not acknowledge them to be the words of God, but only as the enlightenment that man has gained. In that case, you are blinded by ignorance. How can the words of God be the same as the enlightenment that man has gained? The words of God incarnate open up a new age, guide all of mankind, reveal mysteries, and show man the direction he is to take in the new age. The enlightenment obtained by man is but simple instructions for practice or knowledge. It cannot guide all of mankind into a new age or reveal the mysteries of God Himself. When all is said and done, God is God, and man is man. God has the essence of God, and man has the essence of man. If man views the words spoken by God as simple enlightenment by the Holy Spirit, and takes the words of the apostles and prophets as words personally spoken by God, that would be man's mistake. No matter what, you should never mix up right and wrong, or make high out to be low, or mistake the profound for the shallow; no matter what, you should never deliberately refute what you know to be the truth. Everyone who believes there is a God should inquire into problems from the correct standpoint, and accept God's new work and His new words from the perspective of His created being; otherwise, they will be eliminated by God.

Excerpted from Preface to *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The truth is the most real of life's aphorisms, and the highest of such aphorisms among all mankind. Because it is the requirement that God makes of man, and is the work personally done by God, thus it is called "life's aphorism." It is not an aphorism summed up from something, nor is it a famous quote from a great figure. Instead, it is the utterance to mankind from the Master of the heavens and earth and all things; it is not some words summed up by man, but the inherent life of God. And so it is called "the highest of all life's aphorisms."

Excerpted from "Only Those Who Know God and His Work Can Satisfy God" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

That which is directly expressed by God is truth. Anything that arises from the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit merely conforms to the truth, for the Holy Spirit enlightens people based on their stature and cannot express the truth directly to man. This is something you must understand. And when, based upon the words of the truth, people gain insights, and

knowledge from experiencing, do such insights and knowledge count as the truth? At most, this is a little knowledge of the truth. Words enlightened by the Holy Spirit do not represent the words of God, they do not represent the truth, they do not belong to the truth; they are merely a little knowledge of the truth, a little of the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit. If people gain some knowledge of the truth and then supply it to others, then this, too, is the supply of personal knowledge and experiences. They are not supplying people with the truth. It can be said that this is fellowshiping the truth—this is a suitable way of putting it. Because this is not a simple matter and most people are unable to penetrate it completely, you must understand it clearly; it is not just a matter of accurate wording, or that you just need to understand some interpretation, and nothing more. You may have gained certain things from the truth, things that ought to be possessed by man, but this does not mean you have gained the truth. And you may have gained yet other things from the truth, but this does not mean you now possess the life of the truth, much less can it be said that you are of the truth—that is absolutely not the case. You have simply acquired something nutritious from the truth to nourish your life, so that there is something in you, something you should possess, that believes in God and satisfies God. God uses the truth to provide for people, allowing them, through the truth, to satisfy Him and be after His heart. Ultimately, even when people have entirely satisfied the will of God, they still cannot be said to be of the truth, much less can it be said that there is the life of the truth within them. ... Everyone experiences the truth, but each does so under different circumstances, and everyone gains something different. Yet even if their knowledge were combined, they would still be incapable of fully articulating a single truth. That is how profound the truth is! Why is it said that the things you have gained and your knowledge cannot stand for the truth? You fellowship your knowledge with others, and it only takes two or three days of contemplation before they have fully experienced it. But people can spend a whole lifetime and still not fully experience the truth; even if what each person experienced were combined, the truth would still not be fully experienced. It can therefore be seen that the truth is extraordinarily profound. The truth cannot be fully articulated with words. In the language of man, the truth is the true essence of mankind. Man will never be able to fully experience the truth. Man should live by the truth. One truth can sustain the whole of mankind's existence for several thousand years.

Excerpted from "Do You Know What the Truth Really Is?" in Records of Christ's Talks

The truth is the life of God Himself; it represents His disposition, His essence, and everything in Him. If you say that having a bit of experience means possessing the truth, then can you represent God's disposition? You may have some experience or light regarding a certain aspect or side of a truth, but you cannot supply others with it forever, so this light you have gained is not truth; it is merely a certain point that people can reach. It is simply the proper experience and the proper understanding a person should possess: some actual experience and knowledge of the truth. This light, enlightenment, and experiential understanding can never substitute for the truth; even if all people had completely experienced this truth, and pooled together all of their experiential understanding, it still would not be able to take the place of that one truth. As has been said in the past, "I sum this up with a maxim for the human world: Among men, there is no one who loves Me." This is a statement of truth; it is the true essence of life. This is the most profound of things; this is an expression of God Himself. You can keep on experiencing it, and if you experience it for three years you will have a superficial understanding of it; if you experience it for seven or eight years you will gain even more understanding of it—but any understanding you gain will never be able to substitute for that one statement of truth. Another person, after experiencing it for a couple of years, might gain a little understanding, and then a slightly more profound understanding after experiencing it for ten years, and then some further understanding after experiencing it for a lifetime—but if you both combine what understanding you have gained, even then—no matter how much understanding, how much experience, how many insights, how much light, or how many examples you both possess—all of that still cannot substitute for that one statement of truth. What do I mean by this? I mean that the life of man will always be the life of man, and no matter how much your understanding might accord with the truth, God's intentions, and His requirements, it will never be able to be a substitute for the truth. To say that people have gained the truth means that they possess some reality, that they have gained some understanding of the truth, that they have attained some real entry to God's words, that they have had some real experience with them, and that they are on the right track in their faith in God. Just one statement from God is enough for a person to experience for an entire lifetime; even if people were to experience it for several lifetimes or even several millennia, they still would not be able to completely and thoroughly experience a single truth. ...

... If you have some experience with an aspect of the truth, can this in itself represent the truth? It absolutely cannot. Can you thoroughly explain the truth? Can you discover God's disposition, and His essence, from the truth? You cannot. Everyone has experience with only one aspect and scope of the truth; by experiencing it within your limited scope, you cannot touch upon all of the truth's myriad aspects. Can people live out the original meaning of the truth? How much does your little bit of experience amount to? A single grain of sand on a beach; a lone drop of water in the ocean. Therefore, no matter how precious that knowledge and those feelings you have gained from your experiences might be, they still cannot be counted as the truth. The source of truth and the meaning of truth cover a very broad area. Nothing can contradict it. Some people say, "Will my knowledge of experience never be contradicted?" Of course not. The true understanding that comes from your experience of the words of God is in accord with the truth—how could it be contradicted? The truth can be your life in any environment. It can give you a path, and it can allow you to survive. However, the things people have and the light they have obtained are only suitable for themselves or some others within a certain scope, but would not be suitable within a different scope. No matter how profound a person's experience, it is still so limited, and their experience will never reach the scope of the truth. A person's light and a person's understanding can never be compared to the truth.

Excerpted from "Do You Know What the Truth Really Is?" in Records of Christ's Talks

The Pauline epistles of the New Testament are epistles that Paul wrote for the churches, and not inspirations from the Holy Spirit, nor are they the direct utterances of the Holy Spirit. They are merely words of exhortation, comfort, and encouragement that he wrote for the churches during the course of his work. So, too, are they a record of much of Paul's work at the time. They were written for all who are brothers and sisters in the Lord, so that the brothers and sisters of the churches at that time would follow his advice and abide by the way of repentance of the Lord Jesus. By no means did Paul say that, be they the churches of that time or of the future, all must eat and drink the things he wrote, nor did he say that his words all came from God. According to the circumstances of the church at that time, he simply communed with the brothers and sisters, and exhorted them, and inspired belief in them, and he simply preached or reminded people and exhorted them. His words were based upon his own burden, and he supported the people through these words. He did the work of an apostle

of the churches of that time, he was a worker who was used by the Lord Jesus, and thus he must take on the responsibility for the churches, and must undertake the work of the churches, he had to learn about the states of the brothers and sisters—and because of this, he wrote epistles for all of the brothers and sisters in the Lord. All he said that was edifying and positive to people was right, but it did not represent the utterances of the Holy Spirit, and it could not represent God. It is an egregious understanding, and a tremendous blasphemy, for people to treat the records of a man's experiences and a man's epistles as the words spoken by the Holy Spirit to the churches! That is particularly true when it comes to the epistles that Paul wrote for the churches, for his epistles were written for the brothers and sisters based on the circumstances and situation of each church at the time, and were in order to exhort the brothers and sisters in the Lord, so that they could receive the grace of the Lord Jesus. His epistles were in order to rouse the brothers and sisters of that time. It can be said that this was his own burden, and was also the burden given to him by the Holy Spirit; after all, he was an apostle who led the churches of the time, who wrote epistles for the churches and exhorted them—that was his responsibility. His identity was merely that of a working apostle, and he was merely an apostle who was sent by God; he was not a prophet, nor a foreteller. To him, his own work and the lives of the brothers and sisters were of the utmost importance. Thus, he could not speak on behalf of the Holy Spirit. His words were not the words of the Holy Spirit, much less could they be said to be the words of God, for Paul was nothing more than a creature of God, and was certainly not the incarnation of God. His identity was not the same as that of Jesus. The words of Jesus were the words of the Holy Spirit, they were the words of God, for His identity was that of Christ—the Son of God. How could Paul be His equal? If people see the epistles or words like Paul's as the utterances of the Holy Spirit, and worship them as God, then it can only be said that they are too indiscriminating. To speak more harshly, is this not simply blasphemy? How could a man talk on behalf of God? And how could people bow down before the records of his epistles and of the words he spoke as if they were a holy book, or a heavenly book? Could the words of God be casually uttered by a man? How could a man talk on behalf of God? And so, what say you—could the epistles that he wrote for the churches not be tainted with his own ideas? How could they not be tainted with human ideas? He wrote epistles for the churches based on his personal experiences and his own knowledge. For instance, Paul wrote an epistle to the Galatian churches which contained a certain opinion, and Peter wrote another, which had another view.

Which of them came from the Holy Spirit? No one can say for sure. Thus, it can only be said that they both bore a burden for the churches, yet their letters represent their stature, they represent their provision and support for the brothers and sisters, and their burden toward the churches, and they only represent human work—they were not entirely of the Holy Spirit. If you say that his epistles are the words of the Holy Spirit, then you are absurd, and you are committing blasphemy! The Pauline epistles and the other epistles of the New Testament are equivalent to the memoirs of the more recent spiritual figures: They are on a par with the books of Watchman Nee or the experiences of Lawrence, and so on. It is simply that the books of recent spiritual figures are not compiled into the New Testament, yet the essence of these people was the same: They were people who were used by the Holy Spirit during a certain period, and they could not directly represent God.

Excerpted from “Concerning the Bible (3)” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Man’s ways of practice and his knowledge of the truth are all applicable to a particular scope. You cannot say that the path man treads is completely the will of the Holy Spirit, because man can only be enlightened by the Holy Spirit, and cannot be completely filled with the Holy Spirit. The things man can experience are all within the scope of normal humanity and cannot exceed the range of thoughts in the normal human mind. All those who can live out truth reality experience within this range. When they experience the truth, it is always an experience of normal human life enlightened by the Holy Spirit; it is not a way of experiencing that deviates from normal human life. They experience the truth enlightened by the Holy Spirit on the foundation of living their human lives. Moreover, this truth varies from person to person, and its depth is related to the state of the person. One can only say that the path they walk is the normal human life of someone pursuing the truth, and it may be called the path walked by a normal person enlightened by the Holy Spirit. One cannot say that the path they walk is the path the Holy Spirit takes. In normal human experience, because people who pursue are not the same, the work of the Holy Spirit is also not the same. In addition, because the environments people experience and the ranges of their experience are not the same, and because of the admixture of their mind and thoughts, their experience is mixed to different degrees. Each person understands a truth according to their different, individual conditions. Their understanding of the real meaning of the truth is not complete and is only one or several aspects

of it. The scope of the truth man experiences differs from person to person in line with each person's conditions. In this way, the knowledge of the same truth, as expressed by different people, is not the same. This is to say, man's experience always has limitations and cannot completely represent the will of the Holy Spirit, nor can the work of man be perceived as the work of God, even if what is expressed by man corresponds very closely to God's will, and even if the experience of man is very close to the perfecting work that the Holy Spirit performs. Man can only be God's servant, doing the work that God entrusts to him. Man can only express knowledge enlightened by the Holy Spirit and truths obtained from his personal experiences. Man is unqualified and does not meet the conditions to be the outlet of the Holy Spirit. He is not entitled to say that his work is the work of God.

Excerpted from "God's Work and Man's Work" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Man's fellowship differs from the word of God. What people fellowship conveys their individual insights and experience, expressing their insights and experience on the basis of God's work. Their responsibility is to find out, after God works or speaks, what of it they ought to practice or enter into, and then to deliver it to followers. Therefore, man's work represents his entry and practice. Of course, such work is mixed with human lessons and experience or some human thoughts. However the Holy Spirit works, whether on man or in God incarnate, the workers always express what they are. Though it is the Holy Spirit who works, the work is founded on what man inherently is, because the Holy Spirit does not work without foundation. In other words, the work does not come from nothing, but is always done in accord with actual circumstances and real conditions. Only in this way can man's disposition be transformed and his old notions and old thoughts be changed. What man expresses is what he sees, experiences, and can imagine, and it is attainable by man's thinking, even if it is doctrine or notions. Man's work cannot exceed the scope of man's experience, nor what man sees, nor what man can imagine or conceive, regardless of the size of that work. All God expresses is what He Himself is, and this is unattainable by man—that is, beyond the reach of man's thinking. He expresses His work of leading all mankind, and this is unrelated to the details of human experience, but is concerned instead with His own management. What man expresses is his experience, while what God expresses is His being, which is His inherent disposition, beyond the reach of man. Man's experience is his insight and knowledge acquired on the basis of God's expression of His

being. Such insight and knowledge are called man's being, and the basis of their expression is man's inherent disposition and caliber—this is why they are also called man's being. Man is able to fellowship what he experiences and sees. No one can fellowship that which they have not experienced, have not seen, or their thinking cannot reach, those being things they do not have inside of them. If what man expresses is not from his experience, it is then his imagination or doctrine. Simply put, there is no reality in his words. Were you never to come into contact with the things of society, you would not be able to fellowship clearly the complex relationships of society. If you had no family, were others to talk about family issues, you would not understand most of what they said. So, what man fellowships and the work he does represent his inner being.

Excerpted from "God's Work and Man's Work" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

3. The differences between the words of God as told by prophets and the words expressed by God incarnate

Relevant Words of God:

In the Age of Grace, Jesus also spoke many words and did much work. How was He different from Isaiah? How was He different from Daniel? Was He a prophet? Why is it said that He is Christ? What are the differences between them? They were all men who spoke words, and their words appeared more or less the same to man. They all spoke words and did work. The prophets of the Old Testament spoke prophecies, and similarly, so could Jesus. Why is this so? The distinction here is based on the nature of the work. To discern this matter, you must not consider the nature of the flesh, nor should you consider the depth or superficiality of their words. Always you must first consider their work and the effects their work achieves in man. The prophecies spoken by the prophets at the time did not supply the life of man, and the inspirations received by those such as Isaiah and Daniel were merely prophecies, and not the way of life. If not for the direct revelation of Jehovah, none could have done that work, which is not possible for mortals. Jesus, too, spoke many words, but such words were the way of life from which man could find a path to practice. That is to say, first, He could supply the life of man, for Jesus is life; second, He could reverse the deviations of man; third, His work could

succeed that of Jehovah in order to carry on the age; fourth, He could grasp the needs within man and understand what man lacks; fifth, He could usher in a new age and conclude the old. That is why He is called God and Christ; not only is He different from Isaiah but also from all other prophets. Take Isaiah as a comparison for the work of the prophets. First, he could not supply the life of man; second, he could not usher in a new age. He was working under the leadership of Jehovah and not to usher in a new age. Third, the words he spoke were beyond him. He was receiving revelations directly from the Spirit of God, and others would not understand, even having listened to them. These few things alone are sufficient to prove that his words were no more than prophecies, no more than an aspect of work done in Jehovah's stead. He could not, however, completely represent Jehovah. He was Jehovah's servant, an instrument in Jehovah's work. He was only doing work within the Age of Law and within the scope of the work of Jehovah; he did not work beyond the Age of Law. On the contrary, the work of Jesus differed. He surpassed the scope of Jehovah's work; He worked as God incarnate and underwent crucifixion in order to redeem all mankind. That is to say, He carried out new work outside of the work done by Jehovah. This was the ushering in of a new age. In addition, He was able to speak of that which man could not achieve. His work was work within the management of God and involved the whole of mankind. He did not work in just a few men, nor was His work meant to lead a limited number of men. As for how God was incarnated as a man, how the Spirit gave revelations at that time, and how the Spirit descended upon a man to do work—these are matters that man cannot see or touch. It is utterly impossible for these truths to serve as proof that He is God incarnate. As such, distinction can only be made among the words and work of God, which are tangible to man. Only this is real. This is because matters of the Spirit are not visible to you and are known clearly only by God Himself, and not even God's incarnate flesh knows all; you can only verify whether He is God from the work He has done. From His work, it can be seen that, first, He is able to open up a new age; second, He is able to supply the life of man and show man the way to follow. This is sufficient to establish that He is God Himself. At the very least, the work He does can fully represent the Spirit of God, and from such work it can be seen that the Spirit of God is within Him. As the work done by God incarnate was mainly to usher in a new age, lead new work, and open up a new realm, these alone are sufficient to establish that He is God Himself. This thus differentiates Him from Isaiah, Daniel, and the other great prophets.

Excerpted from “The Difference Between the Ministry of God Incarnate and the Duty of Man” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The foretelling of the prophets was personally instructed by God: The prophecies of the like of Isaiah, Daniel, Ezra, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel came from the direct instruction of the Holy Spirit; these people were seers, they had received the Spirit of prophecy, and they were all prophets of the Old Testament. During the Age of Law, these people, who had received the inspirations of Jehovah, spoke many prophecies, which were directly instructed by Jehovah. And why did Jehovah work in them? Because the people of Israel were God’s chosen people, and the work of prophets had to be done among them; that is why the prophets were able to receive such revelations. In fact, they themselves did not understand God’s revelations to them. The Holy Spirit spoke those words through their mouths so that the people of the future could comprehend those things, and see that they really were the work of the Spirit of God, of the Holy Spirit, and did not come from man, and to give them confirmation of the Holy Spirit’s work. During the Age of Grace, Jesus Himself did all this work in their stead, and so people no longer spoke prophecy. So was Jesus a prophet? Jesus was, of course, a prophet, but He was also able to do the work of the apostles—He could both speak prophecy and preach and teach people across the land. Yet the work He did and the identity He represented were not the same. He came to redeem all mankind, to redeem man from sin; He was a prophet, and an apostle, but more than that He was Christ. A prophet may speak prophecy, but it cannot be said that such a prophet is Christ. At that time, Jesus spoke much prophecy, and so it can be said that He was a prophet, but it cannot be said that He was a prophet and so not Christ. That is because He represented God Himself in carrying out a stage of work, and His identity was different from that of Isaiah: He came to complete the work of redemption, and He also provided for the life of man, and the Spirit of God came unto Him directly. In the work He did, there were no inspirations from the Spirit of God or instructions from Jehovah. Instead, the Spirit worked directly—which is enough to prove that Jesus was not the same as a prophet. The work He did was the work of redemption, second to which came the speaking of prophecy. He was a prophet, an apostle, but more than that He was the Redeemer. The foretellers, meanwhile, could only speak prophecy, and were incapable of representing God’s Spirit in doing any other work.

Because Jesus did much work that had never before been done by man, and did the work of redeeming mankind, He was thus different from the likes of Isaiah.

Excerpted from “Concerning the Bible (3)” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

In this final stage of work, results are achieved through the agency of the word. Through the word, man comes to understand many mysteries and the work that God has done through generations past; through the word, man is enlightened by the Holy Spirit; through the word, man comes to understand the mysteries never before unraveled by past generations, as well as the work of prophets and apostles of times past, and the principles by which they worked; through the word, man also comes to understand the disposition of God Himself, as well as the rebelliousness and resistance of man, and he comes to know his own essence. Through these steps of work and through all the words spoken, man comes to know the work of the Spirit, the work God’s incarnate flesh does, and even more, His entire disposition. Your knowledge of God’s work of management over six thousand years was also gained through the word. Was not the knowledge of your former notions and your success in putting them aside also attained through the word? In the previous stage, Jesus worked signs and wonders, but there are no signs and wonders in this stage. Was not your understanding of why God does not reveal signs and wonders also achieved through the word? Therefore, the words spoken in this stage surpass the work done by the apostles and prophets of generations past. Even the prophecies told by the prophets could not have achieved this result. The prophets spoke only prophecies, they spoke of what would happen in the future, but not of the work God wished to do at the time. Nor did they speak to guide mankind in their lives, or to bestow truths upon mankind, or to reveal mysteries to them, much less to bestow life. Of the words spoken in this stage, there is prophecy and truth, but mainly these words serve to bestow life upon man. The words at present are unlike the prophecies of the prophets. This is a stage of work for the life of man, to change man’s life disposition, and not for the sake of speaking prophecy.

Excerpted from “The Mystery of the Incarnation (4)” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

XIII. Words on Being Caught Up and Raised Before God’s Throne

1. Whether “being caught up” really means being taken into the air or heaven, and whether the heavenly kingdom is on earth or in heaven

Bible Verses for Reference:

“Our Father which are in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come, Your will be done in earth, as it is in heaven” (Mat 6:9–10).

“And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God” (Rev 21:2–3).

“The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever” (Rev 11:15).

Relevant Words of God:

“Being caught up” does not mean being taken from a low place to a high place, as people might imagine; that is a huge misconception. “Being caught up” refers to My predestining and then selecting. It is directed at all those I have predestined and chosen. All those who are caught up are people who have gained the status of firstborn sons or sons, or who are God’s people. This is most incompatible with people’s notions. Those who will have a share in My house in the future are all ones who have been caught up before Me. This is absolutely true, never-changing, and irrefutable. It is a counterattack against Satan. Anyone I predestined shall be caught up before Me.

Excerpted from “Chapter 104” of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh

God created humans and placed them upon earth, and He has led them ever since. He then saved them and served as a sin offering for humanity. At the end, He still must conquer humanity, save humans entirely, and restore them to their original likeness. This is the work that He has been engaged in ever since the beginning—restoring humanity to their original image and likeness. God will establish His kingdom and restore the original likeness of human beings, which means that God will restore His authority upon earth and among all creation. Humanity lost their God-fearing heart as well as the function incumbent upon God’s creatures

after being corrupted by Satan, thereby becoming an enemy disobedient to God. Humanity then lived under Satan's domain and followed Satan's orders; thus, God had no way to work among His creatures, and became all the more unable to win their fearful reverence. Humans were created by God, and ought to worship God, but they actually turned their backs on Him and worshiped Satan instead. Satan became the idol in their hearts. Thus, God lost His standing in their hearts, which is to say that He lost the meaning behind His creation of humanity. Therefore, to restore the meaning behind His creation of humanity, He must restore their original likeness and rid humanity of their corrupt dispositions. To reclaim humans from Satan, He must save them from sin. Only in this way can God gradually restore their original likeness and function, and finally, restore His kingdom. The ultimate destruction of those sons of disobedience will also be carried out in order to allow humans to better worship God and better live upon the earth. Because God created humans, He will make them worship Him; because He wishes to restore humanity's original function, He will restore it completely and without any adulteration. Restoring His authority means making humans worship Him and submit to Him; it means that God will make humans live because of Him and cause His enemies to perish as a result of His authority. It means that God will cause everything about Him to persist among humans without resistance from anybody. The kingdom God wishes to establish is His own kingdom. The humanity He desires is one that will worship Him, one that will submit to Him completely and manifest His glory. If God does not save corrupt humanity, then the meaning behind His creation of humanity will be lost; He will have no more authority among humans, and His kingdom will no longer be able to exist upon the earth. If God does not destroy those enemies who are disobedient to Him, He will be unable to obtain His complete glory, nor will He be able to establish His kingdom upon the earth. These will be marks of the completion of His work and of His great accomplishment: to utterly destroy those among humanity who are disobedient to Him, and to bring into rest those who have been made complete. When humans have been restored to their original likeness, and when they can fulfill their respective duties, keep to their own proper places and submit to all of God's arrangements, God will have obtained a group of people upon the earth who worship Him, and He will also have established a kingdom upon the earth that worships Him. He will have eternal victory upon the earth, and all those who are opposed to Him will perish for all eternity. This will restore His original intention in creating humanity; it will restore His intention in creating all things, and it will also restore His

authority upon earth, among all things, and among His enemies. These will be the symbols of His total victory. Thenceforth, humanity will enter into rest and begin a life that is on the right track. God will also enter into eternal rest with humanity, and commence an eternal life shared by both Himself and humans. The filth and disobedience upon the earth will have disappeared, and all the wailing will have dissipated, and everything in this world that opposes God will have ceased to exist. Only God and those people to whom He has brought salvation will remain; only His creation will remain.

Excerpted from “God and Man Will Enter Into Rest Together” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

When God and humanity enter into rest together, it means that humanity has been saved and that Satan has been destroyed, that God’s work in humans is entirely complete. God will no longer continue to work in humans, and they will no longer live under Satan’s domain. As such, God will no longer be busy, and humans will no longer be constantly on the move; God and humanity will enter into rest simultaneously. God will return to His original place, and each person will return to their respective place. These are the destinations in which God and humans will reside once God’s entire management is finished. God has God’s destination, and humanity has humanity’s destination. While resting, God will continue to guide all humans in their lives upon earth, and while in His light, they will worship the one true God in heaven. God will no longer live among humanity, nor will humans be able to live with God in His destination. God and humans cannot live within the same realm; rather, both have their own respective manners of living. God is the One who guides all of humanity, and all of humanity is the crystallization of God’s management work. Humans are the ones who are led, and are not of the same substance as God. To “rest” means to return to one’s original place. Therefore, when God enters into rest, it means He has returned to His original place. He will no longer live upon the earth or be among humanity to share in their joy and suffering. When humans enter into rest, it means that they have become true objects of creation; they will worship God from upon the earth, and live normal human lives. People will no longer be disobedient to God or resist Him, and will return to the original life of Adam and Eve. These will be the respective lives and destinations of God and humans after they enter into rest. Satan’s defeat is an inevitable trend in the war between it and God. As such, God’s entering into rest after the completion of His management work and humanity’s complete salvation and entrance into rest have likewise

become inevitable trends. Humanity's place of rest is on earth, and God's place of rest is in heaven. While humans worship God in rest, they will live upon the earth, and while God leads the rest of humanity in rest, He will lead them from heaven, not from earth.

Excerpted from "God and Man Will Enter Into Rest Together" in The Word Appears in the Flesh

Once the work of conquest has been completed, man will be brought into a beautiful world. This life will, of course, still be on earth, but it will be totally unlike man's life today. It is the life that mankind will have after the whole of mankind has been conquered, it will be a new beginning for man on earth, and for mankind to have such a life will be proof that mankind has entered a new and beautiful realm. It will be the beginning of the life of man and God on earth. The premise of such a beautiful life must be that, after man has been purified and conquered, he submits before the Creator. And so, the work of conquest is the last stage of God's work before mankind enters the wonderful destination. Such a life is man's future life on earth, the most beautiful life on earth, the kind of life that man longs for, the kind that man has never before achieved in the history of the world. It is the final outcome of the 6,000 years of work of management; it is what mankind yearns for most, and it is also God's promise to man.

Excerpted from "Restoring the Normal Life of Man and Taking Him to a Wonderful Destination" in The
Word Appears in the Flesh

2. What it truly is to be caught up, and how one can be raised before God's throne

Bible Verses for Reference:

"And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom comes; go you out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said to the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out. But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go you rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut" (Mat 25:6–10).

"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me" (Rev 3:20).

“He that has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches” (Rev 2:7).

“My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me” (Jhn 10:27).

“These are they which follow the Lamb wherever He goes” (Rev 14:4).

Relevant Words of God:

“Being caught up” does not mean being taken from a low place to a high place, as people might imagine; that is a huge misconception. “Being caught up” refers to My predestining and then selecting. It is directed at all those I have predestined and chosen. All those who are caught up are people who have gained the status of firstborn sons or sons, or who are God’s people. This is most incompatible with people’s notions. Those who will have a share in My house in the future are all ones who have been caught up before Me. This is absolutely true, never-changing, and irrefutable. It is a counterattack against Satan. Anyone I predestined shall be caught up before Me.

Excerpted from “Chapter 104” of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh

Since we are searching for the footprints of God, it behooves us to search for God’s will, for the words of God, for His utterances—because wherever there are new words spoken by God, the voice of God is there, and wherever there are the footsteps of God, God’s deeds are there. Wherever there is the expression of God, there God appears, and wherever God appears, there the truth, the way, and the life exist. In seeking God’s footprints, you have ignored the words “God is the truth, the way, and the life.” And so, many people, even when they receive the truth, do not believe that they have found God’s footprints, and still less do they acknowledge the appearance of God. What a grave mistake! The appearance of God cannot be reconciled with man’s notions, still less can God appear at the behest of man. God makes His own choices and His own plans when He does His work; moreover, He has His own objectives and His own methods. Whatever work He does, He has no need to discuss it with man or seek his advice, much less to notify each and every person of His work. This is the disposition of God, which should, moreover, be recognized by everyone. If you desire to witness the appearance of God, to follow God’s footsteps, then you must first walk away from your own notions. You must not demand that God do this or that, much less should you place Him within your own confines and limit Him to your own notions. Instead, you should ask how you are to seek God’s footprints,

how you are to accept God's appearance, and how you are to submit to the new work of God: This is what man should do. Since man is not the truth, and is not possessed of the truth, he should seek, accept, and obey.

Excerpted from "The Appearance of God Has Ushered in a New Age" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Since man believes in God, he must closely follow the footsteps of God, step-by-step; he should "follow the Lamb wherever He goes." Only these are the people who seek the true way, only they are the ones who know the work of the Holy Spirit. People who slavishly follow letters and doctrines are those who have been eliminated by the work of the Holy Spirit. In each period of time, God will begin new work, and in each period, there will be a new beginning among man. If man only abides by the truths that "Jehovah is God" and "Jesus is Christ," which are truths that only apply to their respective ages, then man will never keep up with the work of the Holy Spirit, and will forever be incapable of gaining the work of the Holy Spirit. Regardless of how God works, man follows without the slightest doubt, and he follows closely. In this way, how could man be eliminated by the Holy Spirit? Regardless of what God does, as long as man is certain that it is the work of the Holy Spirit, and cooperates in the work of the Holy Spirit without any misgivings, and tries to meet the requirements of God, then how could he be punished? The work of God has never ceased, His footsteps have never halted, and prior to the completion of His management work, He has always been busy, and never stops.

Excerpted from "God's Work and Man's Practice" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Of principal importance in following God is that everything should be according to the words of God today: Whether you are pursuing entry into life or the fulfillment of God's will, everything should be centered around the words of God today. If what you commune and pursue are not centered around the words of God today, then you are a stranger to the words of God, and totally bereft of the work of the Holy Spirit. What God wants are people who follow His footsteps. No matter how wonderful and pure what you understood before is, God does not want it, and if you are unable to put aside such things, then they will be a tremendous obstacle to your entry in the future. All those who are able to follow the present light of the Holy Spirit are blessed. The people of ages past also followed the footsteps of God, yet they could not follow until today; this is the blessing of the people of the last days. Those who can follow the present

work of the Holy Spirit, and who are able to follow the footsteps of God, such that they follow God wherever He leads them—these are people who are blessed by God. Those who do not follow the present work of the Holy Spirit have not entered into the work of God’s words, and no matter how much they work, or how great their suffering, or how much they run about, none of it means anything to God, and He will not commend them. Today, all those who follow the present words of God are in the stream of the Holy Spirit; those who are strangers to the words of God today are outside of the stream of the Holy Spirit, and such people are not commended by God. Service that is divorced from the present utterances of the Holy Spirit is service that is of the flesh, and of notions, and it is impossible for it to be in accordance with God’s will. If people live among religious notions, then they are unable to do anything that is fit for God’s will, and even though they serve God, they serve in the midst of their imaginings and notions, and are totally incapable of serving in accordance with the will of God. Those who are unable to follow the work of the Holy Spirit do not understand the will of God, and those who do not understand the will of God cannot serve God. God wants service that is after His own heart; He does not want service that is of notions and the flesh. If people are incapable of following the steps of the Holy Spirit’s work, then they live amid notions. The service of such people interrupts and disturbs, and such service runs contrary to God. Thus those who are unable to follow the footsteps of God are incapable of serving God; those who are unable to follow the footsteps of God most certainly oppose God, and are incapable of being compatible with God. “Following the work of the Holy Spirit” means understanding the will of God today, being able to act in accordance with the present requirements of God, being able to obey and follow the God of today, and entering in accordance with the newest utterances of God. Only this is someone who follows the work of the Holy Spirit and is in the stream of the Holy Spirit. Such people are not only capable of receiving God’s praise and seeing God, but can also know God’s disposition from the latest work of God, and can know man’s notions and disobedience, and man’s nature and essence, from His latest work; furthermore, they are able to gradually achieve changes in their disposition during their service. Only people such as this are those who are able to gain God, and who have genuinely found the true way. Those who are eliminated by the work of the Holy Spirit are people who are incapable of following the latest work of God, and who rebel against the latest work of God. That such people openly oppose God is because God has done new work, and because the image of God is not the same as that in their notions—as a result of this, they

openly oppose God and pass judgment upon God, which results in God loathing and rejecting them. Possessing the knowledge of the latest work of God is no easy matter, but if people have a mind to obey the work of God and seek the work of God, then they will have the chance to see God, and will have the chance to gain the newest guidance of the Holy Spirit. Those who intentionally oppose the work of God cannot receive the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit or the guidance of God. Thus, whether or not people can receive the latest work of God depends on the grace of God, it depends on their pursuit, and it depends on their intentions.

All who are able to obey the present utterances of the Holy Spirit are blessed. It does not matter how they used to be, or how the Holy Spirit used to work within them—those who have gained the latest work of God are the most blessed, and those who are unable to follow the latest work today are eliminated. God wants those who are able to accept the new light, and He wants those who accept and know His latest work. Why is it said that you must be a chaste virgin? A chaste virgin is able to seek the work of the Holy Spirit and understand the new things, and moreover, able to put aside old notions, and obey the work of God today. This group of people, who accept the newest work of today, were predestined by God before the ages, and are the most blessed of people. You hear the voice of God directly, and behold the appearance of God, and so, throughout heaven and earth, and throughout the ages, none have been more blessed than you, this group of people.

Excerpted from “Know God’s Newest Work and Follow His Footsteps” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

XIV. The Significance of God Incarnating in China in the Last Days

1. The basis for God’s incarnation in China in the last days in the prophecies of the Bible and in God’s words

Bible Verses for Reference:

“For from the rising of the sun even to the going down of the same My name shall be great among the Gentiles; ... said Jehovah of hosts” (Mal 1:11).

“For as the lightning comes out of the east, and shines even to the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For wherever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together” (Mat 24:27–28).

Relevant Words of God:

Today, God has returned to the world to do His work. His first stop is the grand assemblage of dictatorial rulers: China, the staunch bastion of atheism. God has gained a group of people by His wisdom and power. During this period, He has been hunted by China’s ruling party by every means and subjected to great suffering, with no place to rest His head, unable to find shelter. Despite this, God still continues the work He intends to do: He utters His voice and spreads the gospel. None can fathom the almightiness of God. In China, a country that regards God as an enemy, God has never ceased His work. Instead, more people have accepted His work and word, for God does all He can to save each and every member of mankind.

Excerpted from “God Presides Over the Fate of All Mankind” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

In many places, God has prophesied that He will be gaining a group of overcomers in the land of Sinim. Since it is in the world’s East that overcomers are to be gained, so the place where God sets foot in His second incarnation is without a doubt the land of Sinim, the exact spot where the great red dragon lies coiled. There, God will gain the descendants of the great red dragon so that it is thoroughly defeated and shamed. God is going to awaken these people, heavily burdened with suffering, to rouse them till they are fully awake, and to make them walk out of the fog and reject the great red dragon. They will wake from their dream, recognize the substance of the great red dragon, become able to give their whole heart to God, rise up from the oppression of the dark forces, stand up in the East of the world, and become proof of God’s victory. Only in this way will God gain glory. For this reason alone, God brought the work that came to an end in Israel to the land where the great red dragon lies coiled and, nearly two thousand years after departing, has come once again into the flesh to continue the work of the Age of Grace. To man’s naked eye, God is launching new work in the flesh. But in God’s view, He is continuing the work of the Age of Grace, but only after an interregnum of a few thousand years, and only with a change in the location and the program of His work.

Excerpted from “Work and Entry (6)” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The prophecies said that Jehovah's name would be magnified among the Gentile nations, that it would spread to the Gentile nations. Why was this prophesied? If God were only the God of the Israelites, then He would only work in Israel. Moreover, He would not spread this work, and He would not make such a prophecy. Since He did make this prophecy, He will surely extend His work among the Gentile nations, among every nation and all lands. Since He said this, He must do it; this is His plan, for He is the Lord who created the heavens and earth and all things, and the God of all creation. Regardless of whether He works among the Israelites, or throughout the whole of Judea, the work He does is the work of the entire universe, and the work of all humanity. The work He does today in the nation of the great red dragon—in a Gentile nation—is still the work of all humanity. Israel could be the base for His work on earth; likewise, China can also be the base for His work among the Gentile nations. Has He not now fulfilled the prophecy that “the name of Jehovah shall be magnified among the Gentile nations”? The first step of His work among the Gentile nations is this work, the work He does in the nation of the great red dragon.

Excerpted from “God Is the Lord of All Creation” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Only when I pass into the new heaven and earth do I take the other part of My glory and reveal it first in the land of Canaan, causing a glimmer of light to shine forth in the whole earth, sunk in the pitchy darkness of night, to allow the whole earth to come to the light. Let men all over the earth come to draw strength from the power of the light, allowing My glory to increase and appear anew to every nation. Let all humanity realize that I have long ago come to the human world and long ago brought My glory from Israel to the East; for My glory shines from the East, where it was brought over from the Age of Grace to this day. But it was from Israel that I departed and from there that I arrived in the East. Only when the light of the East gradually turns white will the darkness across the earth begin to turn to light, and only then will man discover that I have long ago gone from Israel and am rising anew in the East. Having once descended into Israel and later departed from it, I cannot again be born into Israel, because My work leads all of the universe and, what is more, the lightning flashes straight from East to West. For this reason I have descended in the East and brought Canaan to the people of the East. I wish to bring people from all over the earth to the land of Canaan, and so I continue to issue

forth utterances in the land of Canaan to control the entire universe. At this time, there is no light in all the earth apart from Canaan, and all men are imperiled by hunger and cold. I gave My glory to Israel and then took it away, and afterward I brought the Israelites to the East, and all of humanity to the East. I have brought them all to the light so that they may be reunited with it, and be in association with it, and no longer have to search for it. I shall let all who are searching see the light again and see the glory I had in Israel; I shall let them see that I have long ago come down upon a white cloud into the midst of mankind, let them see the countless clouds of white and fruits in their abundant clusters, and, what is more, let them see Jehovah God of Israel. I shall let them look upon the Master of the Jews, the longed-for Messiah, and the full appearance of Me who have been persecuted by kings throughout the ages. I shall work upon the entire universe and I shall perform great work, revealing all My glory and all My deeds to man in the last days. I shall show My glorious countenance in its fullness to those who have waited many years for Me, to those who have longed for Me to come upon a white cloud, to Israel that has longed for Me to appear once again, and to all mankind who persecute Me, so that all will know that I have long ago taken away My glory and brought it to the East, so that it is no longer in Judea. For the last days have already come!

Throughout the universe I am doing My work, and in the East, thunderous crashes issue forth endlessly, shaking all nations and denominations. It is My voice that has led all men into the present. I shall cause all men to be conquered by My voice, to fall into this stream, and submit before Me, for I have long since reclaimed My glory from all the earth and issued it forth anew in the East. Who does not long to see My glory? Who does not anxiously await My return? Who does not thirst for My reappearance? Who does not pine for My loveliness? Who would not come to the light? Who would not look upon the richness of Canaan? Who does not long for the return of the Redeemer? Who does not adore the Great Almighty? My voice shall spread throughout the earth; I wish, facing My chosen people, to speak more words to them. Like the mighty thunders that shake the mountains and rivers, I speak My words to the whole universe and to mankind. Hence the words in My mouth have become man's treasure, and all men cherish My words. The lightning flashes from the East all the way to the West. My words are such that man is loath to give them up and at the same time finds them unfathomable, but rejoices in them all the more. All men are glad and joyful, celebrating My coming, as if an infant had just been born. By means of My voice, I shall bring all men before Me. Thenceforth, I shall

formally enter into the race of men so that they will come to worship Me. With the glory that I radiate and the words in My mouth, I shall make it such that all men come before Me and see that the lightning flashes from the East and that I have also descended unto the “Mount of Olives” of the East. They will see that I have already long been on earth, no longer as the Son of the Jews but as the Lightning of the East. For I have long since been resurrected, and have departed from mankind’s midst, and then reappeared with glory among men. I am He who was worshiped countless ages before now, and I am also the infant forsaken by the Israelites countless ages before now. Moreover, I am the all-glorious Almighty God of the present age! Let all come before My throne and see My glorious countenance, hear My voice, and look upon My deeds. This is the entirety of My will; it is the end and the climax of My plan, as well as the purpose of My management. Let every nation worship Me, every tongue acknowledge Me, every man repose his faith in Me, and every people be subject unto Me!

Excerpted from “The Seven Thunders Peal—Prophesying That the Gospel of the Kingdom Shall Spread Throughout the Universe” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

2. The aim and significance of God incarnating in China to do work in the last days

Relevant Words of God:

The work of Jehovah was the creation of the world, it was the beginning; this stage of work is the end of work, and it is the conclusion. At the start, God’s work was carried out among the chosen ones of Israel, and it was the dawn of a new epoch in the most holy of all places. The last stage of work is carried out in the most impure of all countries, to judge the world and bring the age to an end. In the first stage, God’s work was done in the brightest of all places, and the last stage is carried out in the darkest of all places, and this darkness will be driven out, the light brought forth, and all the people conquered. When the people of this most impure and darkest of all places have been conquered, and the entire population has acknowledged that there is a God, who is the true God, and every person has been utterly convinced, then this fact will be used to carry out the work of conquest throughout the entire universe. This stage of work is symbolic: Once the work of this age has been finished, the work of six thousand years of management will come to a complete end. Once those in the darkest of all places have been

conquered, it goes without saying that it will also be so everywhere else. As such, only the work of conquest in China carries meaningful symbolism. China embodies all forces of darkness, and the people of China represent all those who are of the flesh, of Satan, and of flesh and blood. It is the Chinese people who have been most corrupted by the great red dragon, who have the strongest opposition to God, whose humanity is most base and impure, and so they are the archetype of all corrupt humanity. This is not to say that other countries have no problems at all; the notions of man are all the same, and although the people of these countries may be of good caliber, if they do not know God, then it must be that they oppose Him. Why did the Jews also oppose and defy God? Why did the Pharisees also oppose Him? Why did Judas betray Jesus? At the time, many of the disciples did not know Jesus. Why, after Jesus was crucified and rose again, did people still not believe in Him? Is man's disobedience not all the same? It is merely that the people of China are made an example of, and when they are conquered they will become models and specimens, and will serve as references for others. Why have I always said that you are an adjunct to My management plan? It is in the people of China that corruption, impurity, unrighteousness, opposition, and rebelliousness are manifested most completely and revealed in all their varied forms. On the one hand, they are of poor caliber, and on the other, their lives and mindset are backward, and their habits, social environment, family of birth—all are poor and the most backward. Their status, too, is low. The work in this place is symbolic, and after this test work has been carried out in its entirety, God's subsequent work will go much better. If this step of work can be completed, then the subsequent work goes without saying. Once this step of work has been accomplished, great success will have been fully achieved, and the work of conquest throughout the entire universe will have come to a complete end. In fact, once the work among you has been successful, this will be equivalent to the success throughout the entire universe. This is the significance of why I have you act as a model and a specimen.

Excerpted from "The Vision of God's Work (2)" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

To work now on the descendants of Moab is to save those who have fallen into the greatest darkness. Although they were cursed, God is willing to gain glory from them, for they were at first all people whose hearts lacked God; only making those without God in their hearts obey and love Him is true conquest, and the fruit of such work is the most valuable and the most convincing. Only this is gaining glory—this is the glory that God wants to gain in the last days.

Although these people are of low position, that they are now able to gain such great salvation is truly an elevation by God. This work is very meaningful, and it is through judgment that He gains these people. It is not His intention to punish these people, but to save them. If, during the last days, He were still doing the work of conquest in Israel, it would be worthless; even if it bore fruit, it would not have value or any great significance, and He would not be able to gain all glory. He is working on you, those who have fallen into the darkest of places, those who are the most backward. These people do not acknowledge that there is a God and have never known that there is a God. These creatures have been so corrupted by Satan that they have forgotten God. They have been blinded by Satan and do not know at all that there is a God in heaven. In your hearts, you all worship idols and worship Satan—are you not the lowliest, the most backward of people? You are the lowliest of the flesh, without any personal freedom, and you suffer hardships as well. You are also the people at the lowest level of this society, without even freedom of belief. Herein lies the significance of working on you.

Excerpted from “The Significance of Saving the Descendants of Moab” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

When God came to the earth, He was not of the world, and He did not become flesh in order to enjoy the world. The place where working would reveal His disposition and be most meaningful is the place where He was born. Whether it is a holy or a filthy land, and no matter where He works, He is holy. Everything in the world was created by Him, though it has all been corrupted by Satan. However, all things still belong to Him; they are all in His hands. He comes to a filthy land and works there in order to reveal His holiness; He only does this for the sake of His work, which means He endures great humiliation to do such work in order to save the people of this filthy land. This is done so as to bear witness, for the sake of all of mankind. What such work shows people is God’s righteousness, and it is better able to display God’s supremacy. His greatness and uprightness are manifested in the salvation of a group of lowly people whom others scorn. Being born in a filthy land does not at all prove that He is lowly; it simply allows all of creation to see His greatness and His true love for mankind. The more He does so, the more it reveals His pure love, His flawless love for man.

Excerpted from “The Significance of Saving the Descendants of Moab” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

God has made this group of people the sole focus of His work throughout all the universe. He has sacrificed all His heart's blood for you; He has reclaimed and given to you all the work of the Spirit throughout the universe. That is why I say you are the fortunate ones. Moreover, He has shifted His glory from Israel, His chosen people, onto you, and He shall make the purpose of His plan fully manifest through this group. Therefore, you are the ones who will receive the inheritance of God, and even more than this, you are the heirs to God's glory. Perhaps you all remember these words: "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, works for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." You have all heard these words before, yet none of you understood their true meaning. Today, you are profoundly aware of their true significance. These words shall be fulfilled by God during the last days, and they shall be fulfilled in those who have been brutally persecuted by the great red dragon in the land where it lies coiled. The great red dragon persecutes God and is the enemy of God, and so, in this land, those who believe in God are thus subjected to humiliation and oppression, and these words are fulfilled in you, this group of people, as a result. Because it is embarked upon in a land that opposes God, all of God's work faces tremendous obstacles, and accomplishing many of His words takes time; thus, people are refined as a result of God's words, which is also part of suffering. It is tremendously difficult for God to carry out His work in the land of the great red dragon—but it is through this difficulty that God does one stage of His work, making manifest His wisdom and His wondrous deeds, and using this opportunity to make this group of people complete. It is through people's suffering, through their caliber, and through all the satanic dispositions of the people of this filthy land that God does His work of purification and conquest, so that, from this, He may gain glory, and so that He may gain those who will bear witness to His deeds. Such is the entire significance of all the sacrifices that God has made for this group of people. That is, it is through those who oppose Him that God does the work of conquest, and only thus can the great power of God be made manifest. In other words, only those in the unclean land are worthy of inheriting the glory of God, and only this can highlight the great power of God. That is why I say that it is from the unclean land, and from those who live in the unclean land, that the glory of God is gained. Such is the will of God. Jesus' stage of work was the same: He could only be glorified among those Pharisees who persecuted Him; if not for the persecution of the Pharisees and the betrayal of Judas, Jesus would not have been ridiculed or slandered, much less crucified, and thus could not have gained glory. Where God works in each

age, and where He does His work in the flesh, is where He gains glory and where He gains those He intends to gain. This is the plan of God's work, and this is His management.

In God's plan of several thousand years, two parts of work are done in the flesh: First is the work of the crucifixion, for which He is glorified; the other is the work of conquest and perfection in the last days, for which He is glorified. This is the management of God. So do not regard God's work, or God's commission to you, as a simple matter. You are all heirs to God's far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, and this was specially ordained by God. Of the two parts of His glory, one is manifest in you; the entirety of one part of God's glory has been bestowed upon you, that it may be your inheritance. This is God's exaltation of you, and it is also the plan that He predetermined long ago. Given the greatness of the work God has done in the land where the great red dragon resides, if this work were moved elsewhere, it would have long ago borne great fruit and been readily accepted by man. Moreover, this work would be far too easy to accept for those clergy of the West who believe in God, for the stage of work by Jesus serves as a precedent. This is why God is unable to achieve this stage of the work of glorification elsewhere; being supported by people and recognized by nations, it cannot take hold. This is precisely the extraordinary significance that this stage of work holds in this land.

Excerpted from "Is the Work of God As Simple As Man Imagines?" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

God Is the Lord of All Creation

(A Selected Chapter of God's Word)

One stage of the work of the two previous ages was carried out in Israel, and one was carried out in Judea. Generally speaking, neither stage of this work left Israel, and each was performed upon the first chosen people. As a result, the Israelites believe that Jehovah God is only the God of the Israelites. Because Jesus worked in Judea, where He carried out the work of the crucifixion, the Jews view Him as the Redeemer of the Jewish people. They think that He is solely the King of the Jews, not of any other people; that He is not the Lord who redeems the English, nor the Lord who redeems the Americans, but the Lord who redeems the Israelites; and that it was the Jews whom He redeemed in Israel. In actuality, God is the Master of all

things. He is the God of all creation. He is not only the God of the Israelites, nor of the Jews; He is the God of all creation. The previous two stages of His work took place in Israel, which has created certain notions in people. They believe that Jehovah did His work in Israel, that Jesus Himself carried out His work in Judea, and, furthermore, that He became flesh to work—and whatever the case, this work did not extend beyond Israel. God did not work in Egyptians or Indians; He only worked in the Israelites. Thus do people form various notions, and delineate God's work within a certain scope. They say that when God works, He must do so among the chosen people, and in Israel; save for the Israelites, God works upon no others, nor is there any greater scope to His work. They are especially strict when it comes to keeping God incarnate in line, and do not permit Him to move beyond the bounds of Israel. Are these not all just human notions? God made all of the heavens and earth and all things, He made all of creation, so how could He restrict His work to only Israel? If that were the case, what would be the point of Him making all creation? He created the whole world, and He has carried out His six-thousand-year management plan not only in Israel, but upon every person in the universe. Regardless of whether they live in China, the United States, the United Kingdom or Russia, every person is a descendant of Adam; they are all made by God. Not one of them can escape the bounds of creation, and not one of them can separate themselves from the label of "descendant of Adam." They are all God's creatures, they are all the offspring of Adam, and they are also all the corrupted descendants of Adam and Eve. It is not only the Israelites who are God's creation, but all people; it is just that some have been cursed, and some have been blessed. There are many agreeable things about the Israelites; God worked upon them in the beginning because they were the least corrupt. The Chinese do not bear comparison to them; they are far inferior. So, God initially worked among the people of Israel, and the second stage of His work was only carried out in Judea—which has led to a lot of notions and rules among man. In fact, if God were to act according to human notions, He would only be the God of the Israelites, and would thus be incapable of extending His work to the Gentile nations, for He would only be the God of the Israelites, and not the God of all creation. The prophecies said that Jehovah's name would be magnified among the Gentile nations, that it would spread to the Gentile nations. Why was this prophesied? If God were only the God of the Israelites, then He would only work in Israel. Moreover, He would not spread this work, and He would not make such a prophecy. Since He did make this prophecy, He will surely extend His work among the Gentile nations, among every

nation and all lands. Since He said this, He must do it; this is His plan, for He is the Lord who created the heavens and earth and all things, and the God of all creation. Regardless of whether He works among the Israelites, or throughout the whole of Judea, the work He does is the work of the entire universe, and the work of all humanity. The work He does today in the nation of the great red dragon—in a Gentile nation—is still the work of all humanity. Israel could be the base for His work on earth; likewise, China can also be the base for His work among the Gentile nations. Has He not now fulfilled the prophecy that “the name of Jehovah shall be magnified among the Gentile nations”? The first step of His work among the Gentile nations is this work, the work He does in the nation of the great red dragon. That God incarnate should work in this land, and work among these cursed people, is particularly at odds with human notions; these are the lowliest people of all, they have no worth, and they were initially forsaken by Jehovah. People can be abandoned by other people, but if they are abandoned by God, then no one is more devoid of status, no one is of lower worth. For a creature of God, being possessed by Satan or being abandoned by people is something that feels very painful—but for a creature to be forsaken by the Creator means that they could have no lower status. The descendants of Moab were cursed, and they were born in this backward country; without a doubt, of all the people under the influence of darkness, the descendants of Moab have the lowest status. Because these people have heretofore been of the lowest status, the work done upon them is best able to shatter human notions, and is also most beneficial to the whole of God’s six-thousand-year management plan. Doing such work among these people is the best way of shattering human notions, and with this God launches an era; with this He shatters all human notions; with this He ends the work of the entire Age of Grace. His first work was carried out in Judea, within the bounds of Israel; among the Gentile nations, He did not do any work to launch the new era. The final stage of work is not only carried out among the Gentiles, but even more so among those who have been cursed. This one point is the evidence most capable of humiliating Satan, and thus, God “becomes” the God of all creation in the universe, the Lord of all things, the object of worship for everything with life.

Today, there are those who still do not understand what new work God has begun. Among the Gentile nations, God has ushered in a new beginning. He has begun a new era, and initiated new work—and He performs this work upon the descendants of Moab. Is this not His newest work? No one throughout history has ever experienced this work before. No one has even heard

of it, much less appreciated it. God's wisdom, God's wonder, God's unfathomability, God's greatness, and God's holiness are all made manifest through this stage of work, the work of the last days. Is this not new work, work that shatters human notions? There are those who think thusly: "Since God cursed Moab and said that He would abandon Moab's descendants, how could He save them now?" These are the Gentiles who were cursed by God and driven out of Israel; the Israelites called them "Gentile dogs." In everyone's view, they are not only Gentile dogs, but even worse, the sons of destruction; which is to say, they are not God's chosen people. They may have been born within the bounds of Israel, but they do not belong to the people of Israel, and were expelled to Gentile nations. They are the lowliest of all people. It is precisely because they are the lowliest among humanity that God carries out His work of launching a new age among them, for they are representative of corrupt humanity. God's work is selective and targeted; the work He does in these people today is also work that is performed upon creation. Noah was a creature of God, as are his descendants. Anyone in the world who are of flesh and blood are creatures of God. God's work is directed at all of creation; it is not dependent on whether someone is cursed after they were created. His management work is directed at all of creation, not those chosen people who have not been cursed. Since God wishes to carry out His work among His creation, He will certainly carry it out to successful completion, and He will work among those people who are beneficial to His work. Therefore, He shatters all conventions when He works among people; to Him, the words "cursed," "chastised" and "blessed" are meaningless! The Jewish people are good, as are the chosen people of Israel; they are people of good caliber and humanity. In the beginning, it was among them that Jehovah launched His work, and performed His earliest work—but to perform the work of conquest on them today would be meaningless. They, too, may be part of creation, and there may be much that is positive about them, but to carry out this stage of work among them would be pointless; God would not be able to conquer people, nor would He be able to convince all of creation, which is precisely the point of switching His work to these people of the nation of the great red dragon. Of greatest significance here is His launching an era, His shattering of all rules and all human notions and His ending of the work of the entire Age of Grace. If His current work were carried out among the Israelites, by the time His six-thousand-year management plan comes to a close, everyone would believe that God is only the God of the Israelites, that only the Israelites are God's chosen people, that only the Israelites deserve to inherit God's blessing and promise.

God's incarnation during the last days in the Gentile nation of the country of the great red dragon accomplishes the work of God as the God of all creation; He completes the whole of His management work, and He ends the central part of His work in the nation of the great red dragon. The core of these three stages of work is the salvation of man—namely, making all of creation worship the Creator. Thus, there is great meaning to each stage of work; God does nothing that is without meaning or value. On one hand, this stage of work ushers in a new era and ends the previous two eras; on the other hand, it shatters all human notions and all the old ways of human belief and knowledge. The work of the previous two ages was carried out according to different human notions; this stage, however, completely eliminates human notions, thereby utterly conquering humanity. Through conquering the descendants of Moab, through the work carried out among the descendants of Moab, God shall conquer all people throughout the universe. This is the deepest significance of this stage of His work, and it is the most valuable aspect of this stage of His work. Even if you now know that your own status is lowly and that you are of low worth, you will still feel that you have met with the most joyous thing: You have inherited a great blessing, received a great promise, and you can help accomplish this great work of God. You have beheld God's true countenance, you know God's inherent disposition, and you do God's will. The previous two stages of God's work were carried out in Israel. If this stage of His work during the last days were also carried out among the Israelites, not only would all of creation believe that only the Israelites were God's chosen people, but God's entire management plan would fail to attain its desired effect. During the period in which the two stages of His work were carried out in Israel, no new work—nor any work of launching a new era—was carried out among the Gentile nations. Today's stage of work—the work of launching a new era—is first carried out among the Gentile nations, and is, furthermore, initially carried out among the descendants of Moab, thus launching the entire era. God has shattered any knowledge contained within human notions, permitting none of it to remain. In His work of conquest, He has shattered human notions, those old, earlier human ways of knowledge. He lets people see that with God there are no rules, that there is nothing old about God, that the work He does is entirely liberated, entirely free, and that He is right in all He does. You must fully submit to any work that He does among creation. All of the work He does has meaning, and is carried out according to His own will and wisdom, and not according to human choices and notions. If something is beneficial to His work, He does it; and if

something is not beneficial to His work, He does not, no matter how good it is! He works and selects the recipients and location of His work in accordance with the meaning and purpose of His work. He does not adhere to past rules when He works, nor does He follow old formulas. Instead, He plans His work according to the work's significance. Ultimately, He will attain a genuine effect and the anticipated goal. If you do not understand these things today, this work will have no effect in you.

from The Word Appears in the Flesh

XV. Differences Between God's Church and Religious Groups

1. What God's church and religious groups are

Bible Verses for Reference:

“And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves, And said to them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but you have made it a den of thieves” (Mat 21:12–13).

“And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things said the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot: I would you were cold or hot. So then because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew you out of My mouth. Because you say, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and know not that you are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked” (Rev 3:14–17).

“And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies” (Rev 18:2–3).

Relevant Words of God:

In each stage of God's work there are also corresponding requirements of man. All those who are within the stream of the Holy Spirit are possessed of the presence and discipline of the Holy Spirit, and those who are not within the stream of the Holy Spirit are under the command of Satan, and without any of the work of the Holy Spirit. People who are in the stream of the Holy Spirit are those who accept the new work of God, and who cooperate in the new work of God. If those who are within this stream are incapable of cooperating, and unable to put into practice the truth required by God during this time, then they will be disciplined, and at worst will be forsaken by the Holy Spirit. Those who accept the new work of the Holy Spirit, will live within the stream of the Holy Spirit, and they will receive the care and protection of the Holy Spirit. Those who are willing to put the truth into practice are enlightened by the Holy Spirit, and those who are unwilling to put the truth into practice are disciplined by the Holy Spirit, and may even be punished. Regardless of what kind of person they are, provided that they are within the stream of the Holy Spirit, God will take responsibility for all those who accept His new work for the sake of His name. Those who glorify His name and are willing to put His words into practice will receive His blessings; those who disobey Him and do not put His words into practice will receive His punishment. People who are in the stream of the Holy Spirit are those who accept the new work, and since they have accepted the new work, they should cooperate appropriately with God, and should not act as rebels who do not perform their duty. This is God's only requirement of man. Not so for the people who do not accept the new work: They are outside the stream of the Holy Spirit, and the discipline and reproach of the Holy Spirit do not apply to them. All day, these people live within the flesh, they live within their minds, and all that they do is according to the doctrine produced by the analysis and research of their own brains. This is not what is required by the Holy Spirit's new work, much less is it cooperation with God. Those who do not accept the new work of God are bereft of the presence of God, and, moreover, devoid of the blessings and protection of God. Most of their words and actions hold to the past requirements of the Holy Spirit's work; they are doctrine, not truth. Such doctrine and regulation are sufficient to prove that the gathering together of these people is nothing but religion; they are not the chosen ones, or the objects of God's work. The assembly of all those among them can only be called a grand congress of religion, and cannot be called a church. This is an unalterable fact. They do not have the Holy Spirit's new work; what they do seems redolent of religion, what they live out seems replete with religion; they do not possess the presence and

work of the Holy Spirit, much less are they eligible to receive the discipline or enlightenment of the Holy Spirit. These people are all lifeless corpses, and maggots that are devoid of spirituality. They have no knowledge of man's rebelliousness and opposition, have no knowledge of all of man's evildoing, much less do they know all of God's work and God's present will. They are all ignorant, base people, and they are scum that are unfit to be called believers! Nothing they do has any bearing on the management of God, much less can it impair God's plans. Their words and actions are too disgusting, too pathetic, and simply unworthy of mention. No thing done by those who are not within the stream of the Holy Spirit has anything to do with the new work of the Holy Spirit. Because of this, no matter what they do, they are without the discipline of the Holy Spirit, and, moreover, without the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit. For they are all people who have no love for the truth, and who have been detested and rejected by the Holy Spirit. They are called evildoers because they walk in the flesh and do whatever pleases them under the signboard of God. While God works, they are deliberately hostile to Him, and run in the opposite direction to Him. Man's failure to cooperate with God is supremely rebellious in itself, so will not those people who deliberately run counter to God particularly receive their just retribution?

Excerpted from "God's Work and Man's Practice" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

"But I say to you, That in this place is one greater than the temple. But if you had known what this means, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice, you would not have condemned the guiltless. For the Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath day" (Mat 12:6-8). What does the word "temple" refer to here? To put it simply, it refers to a magnificent, tall building, and in the Age of Law, the temple was a place for priests to worship God. When the Lord Jesus said "in this place is one greater than the temple," who did "one" refer to? Clearly, the "one" is the Lord Jesus in the flesh, because only He was greater than the temple. What did those words tell people? They told people to come out of the temple—God had already left the temple and was no longer working in it, so people should seek God's footsteps outside of the temple and follow His steps in His new work. When the Lord Jesus said this, there was a premise behind His words, which was that under the law, people had come to see the temple as something greater than God Himself. That is, people worshiped the temple rather than worshiping God, so the Lord Jesus warned them not to worship idols, but to instead worship God, for He is supreme. Thus, He

said: “I will have mercy, and not sacrifice.” It is evident that in the eyes of the Lord Jesus, most people living under the law no longer worshiped Jehovah, but were merely going through the motions of sacrificing, and the Lord Jesus determined that this constituted idol worship. These idol-worshippers saw the temple as something greater and higher than God. In their hearts there was only the temple, not God, and if they were to lose the temple, then they would lose their dwelling place. Without the temple they had nowhere to worship and could not carry out their sacrifices. Their so-called “dwelling place” is where they used the false pretense of worshiping Jehovah God in order to stay in the temple and carry out their own affairs. Their so-called “sacrificing” was just them carrying out their own personal shameful dealings under the guise of conducting their service in the temple. This was the reason people at that time saw the temple as greater than God. The Lord Jesus spoke these words as a warning to people, because they were using the temple as a front, and sacrifices as a cover for cheating people and cheating God. If you apply these words to the present, they are still equally valid and equally pertinent. Although people today have experienced different work of God than the people in the Age of Law experienced, their nature essence is the same.

Excerpted from “God’s Work, God’s Disposition, and God Himself III” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

If, in believing in God, people treat the truth as a set of regulations to be adhered to, then will their belief not be liable to turn into just a bunch of religious ceremonies? And what are the differences between such religious ceremonies and Christianity? These people may be deeper and more progressive in how they say things, but if their faith has merely come down to a set of regulations and a type of ceremony, then does that not mean that it has turned into Christianity? (Yes, it does.) There are differences between the old teachings and the new, but if teachings are nothing more than a kind of theory, and have merely become a form of ceremony or regulation for people—and, likewise, if people can neither gain the truth from it nor use it to enter the truth reality—then has their faith not become just the same as Christianity? In essence, is this not Christianity? (Yes, it is.) Then, in your behavior and when performing your duties, in which things do you have views and states that are the same as or similar to those of believers in Christianity? (In adhering to regulations, and in equipping ourselves with letters and doctrines.) (In focusing on the appearance of being spiritual and exhibiting good behavior, and on being devout and humble.) You seek to outwardly exhibit good behavior, doing your utmost to

package yourselves in a kind of spiritual appearance, and you do some things that are relatively approved of within human notions and imaginings, pretending to be virtuous. You stand in the high pulpit preaching letters and doctrines, teaching people to do good, be virtuous, and understand the truth; you preach spiritual doctrine, saying the right spiritual things; you put on airs of being spiritual and exude a superficial spirituality in everything you say and do, yet in practice and in performing your duty, you never seek the truth. As soon as you encounter a problem, you act entirely according to human will, tossing God aside. You have never acted according to the truth principle, nor do you have any idea what the truth even is, what God's intentions are, or what the standards that He requires of man are; you have never taken these matters seriously or even concerned yourselves with them. Do such external actions and internal states of people—that is, does this type of faith—comprise a fear for God and the shunning of evil? If there is no connection between people's faith and the pursuit of the truth, then do they or do they not believe in God? Regardless of how many years people who have no connection with pursuing the truth might believe in Him, can they or can they not truly fear God and shun evil? (They cannot.) What, then, is the outward behavior of such people? What kind of path can they walk? (The path of the Pharisees.) With what do they spend their days equipping themselves? Is it not with letters and doctrines? Do they not spend their days arming themselves, dressing themselves up with letters and doctrines to make themselves more like the Pharisees, more spiritual, and more like people who supposedly serve God? Just what is the nature of all these deeds? Is it worshipping God? Is it genuine faith in Him? (No, it isn't.) So, what are they doing? They are deceiving God; they are just going through the steps of a process, and engaging in religious ceremonies. They are waving the flag of faith and performing religious rites, attempting to deceive God in order to achieve their aim of being blessed. These people do not worship God at all. In the end, will such a group of people not end up just like those within the church who supposedly serve God, and who supposedly believe in and follow God?

Excerpted from "Only by Constantly Living Before God Can One Walk the Path to Salvation" in Records of
Christ's Talks

What name does God give to the religion of those who believed in Jehovah? Judaism. They became a kind of religious group. And how does God designate the religion of those who believe in Jesus? (Christianity.) In God's eyes, Judaism and Christianity represent religious groups.

Why does God define them as such? Among all those who are members of these religious bodies defined by God, are there any who fear Him and shun evil, do His will, and follow His way? (No.) This makes it clear. In God's eyes, can all those who nominally follow Him be ones whom He acknowledges to be believers? Do they all have a connection with God? Could they all be targets for His salvation? (No.) So, will a day come when you are reduced to what God views as a religious group? (It's possible.) Being reduced to a religious group—that seems inconceivable. If people become part of a religious group in God's eyes, will they be saved by Him? Are they of His house? (No, they aren't.) So, let us try to summarize: These people who nominally believe in the true God, but whom He believes to belong to religious groups—what path do they walk? Could it be said that such people walk the path of waving the flag of faith without ever following God's way, and of believing in Him yet never worshiping Him, instead forsaking Him? That is, they walk the path of believing in God but forsaking Him and not following His way; their way is one in which they believe in God but worship Satan, they worship the devil, they try to carry out their own management, and try to establish their own kingdom. Is this not the essence of it? Do people like this have any connection to God's management plan for the salvation of humanity? (No.) No matter how many people believe in God, as soon as their beliefs are defined by Him as being those of a religion or group, He has already determined that they cannot be saved. Why do I say this? In a gang or crowd of people who are without the work and guidance of God, and who do not worship Him at all, whom do they worship? Whom do they follow? In form and name, they follow a person, but whom do they essentially follow? Deep down, they acknowledge God, but in fact, they are subject to human manipulation, arrangements, and control. They follow Satan, the devil; they follow the forces that are hostile to God and that are His enemies. Would God save a pack of people such as this? (No.) Why not? Are they capable of repentance? (No.) They are incapable of repentance. They wave the flag of faith, carrying out human enterprises and conducting their own management, and they run counter to God's management plan for mankind's salvation. Their final outcome is one of being detested and rejected by God; He could not possibly save these people, they could not possibly repent, they have already been captured by Satan—they are entirely in Satan's hands. In your faith, does how many years you have believed in God matter to whether or not you are praised by Him? Do the rituals and regulations you abide by matter? Does God look at people's methods of practice? Does He look at how many people there are? He has selected one portion of mankind; how does

He measure whether they can and should be saved? He bases this decision on the paths these people walk. In the Age of Grace, although the truths that God told people were less numerous than today, and not as specific, He could still perfect people at the time, and salvation was still possible. Thus, as for the people of this age who have heard many truths and have come to understand God's will, if they are incapable of following His way and unable to walk the path of salvation, then what will their final outcome be? Their final outcome will be the same as that of believers in Christianity and Judaism; there will be no difference. This is God's righteous disposition! Regardless of how many sermons you have heard or how many truths you have understood, if, ultimately, you still follow humans and Satan, and in the end, if you are still incapable of following God's way and unable to fear Him and shun evil, then such people will be detested and rejected by God. To all appearances, such people who are detested and rejected by God can talk much about letters and doctrines, and may have come to understand many truths, yet they are incapable of worshiping God; they cannot fear God and shun evil, and are incapable of total submission to Him. In God's eyes, He defines them as part of a religion, as just a group of humans—a gang of humans—and as a lodging place for Satan. They are collectively referred to as Satan's gang, and these people are utterly despised by God.

Excerpted from "Only by Constantly Living Before God Can One Walk the Path to Salvation" in Records of Christ's Talks

2. Why God blesses only the church that accepts and obeys His work, and why the religious world is cursed by God

Relevant Words of God:

The work of the Holy Spirit is always moving forward, and all those who are in the stream of the Holy Spirit should also be progressing deeper and changing, step-by-step. They should not stop at a single stage. Only those who do not know the work of the Holy Spirit would remain amongst His original work, and not accept the new work of the Holy Spirit. Only those who are disobedient would be incapable of gaining the Holy Spirit's work. If the practice of man does not keep pace with the new work of the Holy Spirit, then the practice of man is surely severed from the work of today and is surely incompatible with the work of today. Such outdated people

as these are simply incapable of accomplishing God's will, much less could they become people who will ultimately stand testimony to God. The entire management work, furthermore, could not be concluded amongst such a group of people. For those who once held to the law of Jehovah, and those who once suffered for the cross, if they cannot accept the stage of work of the last days, then all that they did will have been in vain, and useless. The clearest expression of the Holy Spirit's work is in embracing the here and now, not clinging to the past. Those who have not kept up with the work of today, and who have become separated from the practice of today, are those who oppose and do not accept the work of the Holy Spirit. Such people defy the present work of God. Though they hold onto the light of the past, it cannot be denied that they do not know the work of the Holy Spirit. Why has there been all this talk of the changes in the practice of man, of the differences in the practice between the past and today, of how the practice was carried out during the previous age, and of how it is done today? Such divisions in the practice of man are always spoken of because the work of the Holy Spirit is constantly moving forward, and thus the practice of man is required to constantly change. If man remains stuck in one stage, then this proves that he is incapable of keeping up with God's new work and new light; it does not prove that God's plan of management has not changed. Those who are outside the stream of the Holy Spirit always think they are right, but in fact, God's work in them ceased long ago, and the work of the Holy Spirit is absent from them. The work of God was long since transferred to another group of people, a group on whom He intends to complete His new work. Because those in religion are incapable of accepting God's new work, and hold only to the old work of the past, thus God has forsaken these people, and does His new work on the people who accept this new work. These are people who cooperate in His new work, and only in this way can His management be accomplished.

Excerpted from "God's Work and Man's Practice" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Of principal importance in following God is that everything should be according to the words of God today: Whether you are pursuing entry into life or the fulfillment of God's will, everything should be centered around the words of God today. If what you commune and pursue are not centered around the words of God today, then you are a stranger to the words of God, and totally bereft of the work of the Holy Spirit. What God wants are people who follow His footsteps. No matter how wonderful and pure what you understood before is, God does not

want it, and if you are unable to put aside such things, then they will be a tremendous obstacle to your entry in the future. All those who are able to follow the present light of the Holy Spirit are blessed. The people of ages past also followed the footsteps of God, yet they could not follow until today; this is the blessing of the people of the last days. Those who can follow the present work of the Holy Spirit, and who are able to follow the footsteps of God, such that they follow God wherever He leads them—these are people who are blessed by God. Those who do not follow the present work of the Holy Spirit have not entered into the work of God’s words, and no matter how much they work, or how great their suffering, or how much they run about, none of it means anything to God, and He will not commend them. Today, all those who follow the present words of God are in the stream of the Holy Spirit; those who are strangers to the words of God today are outside of the stream of the Holy Spirit, and such people are not commended by God. Service that is divorced from the present utterances of the Holy Spirit is service that is of the flesh, and of notions, and it is impossible for it to be in accordance with God’s will. If people live among religious notions, then they are unable to do anything that is fit for God’s will, and even though they serve God, they serve in the midst of their imaginings and notions, and are totally incapable of serving in accordance with the will of God. Those who are unable to follow the work of the Holy Spirit do not understand the will of God, and those who do not understand the will of God cannot serve God. God wants service that is after His own heart; He does not want service that is of notions and the flesh. If people are incapable of following the steps of the Holy Spirit’s work, then they live amid notions. The service of such people interrupts and disturbs, and such service runs contrary to God. Thus those who are unable to follow the footsteps of God are incapable of serving God; those who are unable to follow the footsteps of God most certainly oppose God, and are incapable of being compatible with God. “Following the work of the Holy Spirit” means understanding the will of God today, being able to act in accordance with the present requirements of God, being able to obey and follow the God of today, and entering in accordance with the newest utterances of God. Only this is someone who follows the work of the Holy Spirit and is in the stream of the Holy Spirit. Such people are not only capable of receiving God’s praise and seeing God, but can also know God’s disposition from the latest work of God, and can know man’s notions and disobedience, and man’s nature and essence, from His latest work; furthermore, they are able to gradually achieve changes in their disposition during their service. Only people such as this are those who are able to gain God,

and who have genuinely found the true way. Those who are eliminated by the work of the Holy Spirit are people who are incapable of following the latest work of God, and who rebel against the latest work of God. That such people openly oppose God is because God has done new work, and because the image of God is not the same as that in their notions—as a result of this, they openly oppose God and pass judgment upon God, which results in God loathing and rejecting them. Possessing the knowledge of the latest work of God is no easy matter, but if people have a mind to obey the work of God and seek the work of God, then they will have the chance to see God, and will have the chance to gain the newest guidance of the Holy Spirit. Those who intentionally oppose the work of God cannot receive the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit or the guidance of God. Thus, whether or not people can receive the latest work of God depends on the grace of God, it depends on their pursuit, and it depends on their intentions.

All who are able to obey the present utterances of the Holy Spirit are blessed. It does not matter how they used to be, or how the Holy Spirit used to work within them—those who have gained the latest work of God are the most blessed, and those who are unable to follow the latest work today are eliminated. God wants those who are able to accept the new light, and He wants those who accept and know His latest work. Why is it said that you must be a chaste virgin? A chaste virgin is able to seek the work of the Holy Spirit and understand the new things, and moreover, able to put aside old notions, and obey the work of God today. This group of people, who accept the newest work of today, were predestined by God before the ages, and are the most blessed of people. You hear the voice of God directly, and behold the appearance of God, and so, throughout heaven and earth, and throughout the ages, none have been more blessed than you, this group of people.

Excerpted from “Know God’s Newest Work and Follow His Footsteps” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Since man believes in God, he must closely follow the footsteps of God, step-by-step; he should “follow the Lamb wherever He goes.” Only these are the people who seek the true way, only they are the ones who know the work of the Holy Spirit. People who slavishly follow letters and doctrines are those who have been eliminated by the work of the Holy Spirit. In each period of time, God will begin new work, and in each period, there will be a new beginning among man. If man only abides by the truths that “Jehovah is God” and “Jesus is Christ,” which are truths that only apply to their respective ages, then man will never keep up with the work of the Holy

Spirit, and will forever be incapable of gaining the work of the Holy Spirit. Regardless of how God works, man follows without the slightest doubt, and he follows closely. In this way, how could man be eliminated by the Holy Spirit? Regardless of what God does, as long as man is certain that it is the work of the Holy Spirit, and cooperates in the work of the Holy Spirit without any misgivings, and tries to meet the requirements of God, then how could he be punished? The work of God has never ceased, His footsteps have never halted, and prior to the completion of His management work, He has always been busy, and never stops. But man is different: Having gained but a modicum of the Holy Spirit's work, he treats it as if it will never change; having gained a little knowledge, he does not go forth to follow the footsteps of God's newer work; having seen but a little of God's work, he immediately prescribes God as a particular wooden figure, and believes that God will always remain in this form that he sees before him, that it was like this in the past and will always be thus in the future; having gained but a superficial knowledge, man is so proud that he forgets himself and begins to wantonly proclaim a disposition and a being of God that simply do not exist; and having become certain about one stage of the Holy Spirit's work, no matter what kind of person it is that proclaims the new work of God, man does not accept it. These are people who cannot accept the new work of the Holy Spirit; they are too conservative, and incapable of accepting new things. Such people are those who believe in God but also reject God. Man believes that the Israelites were wrong to "only believe in Jehovah and not believe in Jesus," yet the majority of people act out a role in which they "only believe in Jehovah and reject Jesus" and "long for the return of the Messiah, but oppose the Messiah who is called Jesus." No wonder, then, that people still live under the domain of Satan after accepting one stage of the work of the Holy Spirit, and still do not receive God's blessings. Is this not the result of man's rebelliousness? Christians across the world who have not kept up with the new work of today all cling to the hope that they will get lucky, assuming that God will fulfill each of their wishes. Yet they cannot say for sure why God will take them up to the third heaven, nor are they certain about how Jesus will come to receive them riding upon a white cloud, much less can they say with absolute certainty whether Jesus will truly arrive upon a white cloud on the day that they imagine. They are all anxious, and at a loss; they themselves do not even know whether God will take up each of them, the varied small handfuls of people, who hail from every denomination. The work that God does now, the present age, God's will—they have no grasp of any of these things, and they can do nothing but

count down the days on their fingers. Only those who follow the footsteps of the Lamb to the very end can gain the final blessing, whereas those “clever people,” who are unable to follow to the very end yet believe they have gained all, are incapable of witnessing the appearance of God. They each believe they are the smartest person on earth, and they cut short the continued development of God’s work for no reason at all, and seem to believe with absolute certainty that God will take them up to heaven, they who “have the utmost loyalty to God, follow God, and abide by the words of God.” Even though they have the “utmost loyalty” toward the words spoken by God, their words and actions are still so disgusting because they oppose the work of the Holy Spirit, and commit deceit and evil. Those who do not follow to the very end, who do not keep up with the work of the Holy Spirit, and who only cleave to the old work have not only failed to achieve loyalty to God, but on the contrary, have become those who oppose God, have become those who are rejected by the new age, and who will be punished. Are there any more pitiable than them? Many even believe that all those who reject the old law and accept the new work are without conscience. These people, who only talk of “conscience,” and do not know the work of the Holy Spirit, will ultimately have their prospects cut short by their own consciences. God’s work does not abide by doctrine, and though it may be His own work, still God does not cling to it. That which should be denied is denied, that which should be eliminated is eliminated. Yet man places himself in enmity to God by holding onto but one small part of the work of God’s management. Is this not the absurdity of man? Is this not the ignorance of man? The more people are timid and overcautious because they are afraid of not gaining God’s blessings, the more they are incapable of gaining greater blessings, and of receiving the final blessing. Those people who slavishly abide by the law all display the utmost loyalty toward the law, and the more they display such loyalty toward the law, the more they are rebels who oppose God. For now is the Age of Kingdom and not the Age of Law, and the work of today and the work of the past cannot be mentioned in the same breath, nor can the work of the past be compared to the work of today. The work of God has changed, and the practice of man has also changed; it is not to hold onto the law or bear the cross, therefore people’s loyalty toward the law and the cross will not gain God’s approval.

Excerpted from “God’s Work and Man’s Practice” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Every day, they seek traces of Me in the Bible and find “suitable” passages at random which they read endlessly and recite as scriptures. They do not know how to be compatible with Me nor what it means to be against Me. They merely read scriptures blindly. Within the Bible, they constrain a vague God that they have never seen, and are incapable of seeing, and take it out to look at at their leisure. They believe in My existence only within the scope of the Bible, and they equate Me with the Bible; without the Bible there is no Me, and without Me there is no Bible. They pay no heed to My existence or actions, but instead devote extreme and special attention to each and every word of Scripture. Many more even believe that I should not do anything I wish to do unless it is foretold by Scripture. They attach too much importance to Scripture. It can be said that they see words and expressions as too important, to the extent that they use verses from the Bible to measure every word I say and to condemn Me. What they seek is not the way of compatibility with Me or the way of compatibility with the truth, but the way of compatibility with the words of the Bible, and they believe that anything that does not conform to the Bible is, without exception, not My work. Are such people not the dutiful descendants of the Pharisees? The Jewish Pharisees used the law of Moses to condemn Jesus. They did not seek compatibility with the Jesus of that time, but diligently followed the law to the letter, to the extent that—after having charged Him with not following the law of the Old Testament and not being the Messiah—they ultimately nailed the innocent Jesus to the cross. What was their substance? Was it not that they didn’t seek the way of compatibility with the truth? They obsessed over each and every word of Scripture while paying heed neither to My will nor to the steps and methods of My work. They were not people who sought the truth, but people who rigidly clung to words; they were not people who believed in God, but people who believed in the Bible. Essentially, they were watchdogs of the Bible. In order to safeguard the interests of the Bible, to uphold the dignity of the Bible, and to protect the reputation of the Bible, they went so far as to nail the merciful Jesus to the cross. This they did merely for the sake of defending the Bible, and for the sake of maintaining the status of each and every word of the Bible in people’s hearts. So they preferred to forsake their future and the sin offering to condemn Jesus, who did not conform to the doctrine of Scripture, to death. Were they not all lackeys to each and every word of Scripture?

And what of people today? Christ has come to release the truth, yet they would rather expel Him from this world so that they may gain entry into heaven and receive grace. They would

rather completely deny the coming of the truth in order to safeguard the interests of the Bible, and they would rather nail the Christ returned to flesh to the cross again in order to ensure the everlasting existence of the Bible. How can man receive My salvation when his heart is so malicious and his nature so antagonistic toward Me? I live among man, yet man does not know of My existence. When I shine My light upon man, he still remains ignorant of My existence. When I unleash My wrath upon man, he denies My existence with even greater vigor. Man searches for compatibility with words and compatibility with the Bible, yet not a single person comes before Me to seek the way of compatibility with the truth. Man looks up to Me in heaven and devotes particular concern to My existence in heaven, yet no one cares about Me in the flesh, for I who live among man am simply too insignificant. Those who only seek compatibility with the words of the Bible and who only seek compatibility with a vague God are a wretched sight to Me. That is because what they worship are dead words, and a God that is capable of giving them untold treasures; what they worship is a God that would lay Himself at the mercy of man—a God who does not exist. What, then, can such people gain from Me? Man is simply too lowly for words. Those who are against Me, who make limitless demands of Me, who have no love of the truth, who are rebellious toward Me—how could they be compatible with Me?

Excerpted from “You Should Seek the Way of Compatibility With Christ” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Demons and evil spirits have been running amok on earth for a time, and have sealed off both the will and the painstaking effort of God so tightly that they are impenetrable. Truly, this is a mortal sin! How can God not feel anxious? How can God not feel wrathful? They have gravely hindered and opposed the work of God: How rebellious! Even those demons, big and small, behave like jackals at the heels of the lion, and follow the evil current, contriving disturbances as they go. Knowing the truth, they deliberately oppose it, these sons of rebellion! It is as if, now that their king of hell has ascended to the kingly throne, they have become smug and complacent, treating all others with contempt. How many among them seek the truth and follow righteousness? They are all beasts, no better than pigs and dogs, at the head of a gang of stinking flies, wagging their heads in smug self-congratulation and stirring up all kinds of trouble,^[1] in the middle of a dung heap. They believe that their king of hell is the greatest king of all, little knowing that they themselves are no more than stinking flies. And yet, they take advantage of the power of the pigs and dogs they have for parents to malign the existence of

God. As diminutive flies, they believe their parents to be as large as toothed whales.^[2] Little do they know that, while they themselves are tiny, their parents are unclean pigs and dogs hundreds of millions of times larger than they. Unaware of their own lowliness, they rely on the stench of putrefaction exuded by those pigs and dogs to run amok, vainly thinking to procreate future generations, oblivious to shame! With green wings upon their backs (this refers to their claiming to believe in God), they are full of themselves and boast everywhere of their own beauty and allure, while they secretly fling the impurities on their own bodies onto man. Furthermore, they are exceedingly pleased with themselves, as if they can use a pair of rainbow-colored wings to conceal their own impurities, and by these means they bring their oppression to bear on the existence of the true God (this refers to what goes on behind the scenes in the religious world). How would man know that, as enchantingly beautiful as the wings of a fly may be, the fly itself is after all no more than a tiny creature, with a belly full of filth and a body covered with germs? On the strength of the pigs and dogs they have for parents, they run amok across the land (this refers to the way in which the religious officials who persecute God rely on the strong backing of the government of the nation to rebel against the true God and the truth), unrestrained in their savagery. It is as if the ghosts of the Jewish Pharisees have returned along with God to the nation of the great red dragon, back to their old nest. They have begun yet another round of persecution, picking up their work of several thousand years ago. This group of degenerates is sure to perish on earth in the end! It would appear that, after several millennia, the unclean spirits have become even more crafty and sly. They are constantly thinking of ways to undermine the work of God in secret. With tricks and wiles galore, they wish to reenact in their homeland the tragedy of several thousand years ago, goading God nearly to the point of crying out. He can hardly keep Himself from returning to the third heaven to annihilate them.

Excerpted from "Work and Entry (7)" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

What name does God give to the religion of those who believed in Jehovah? Judaism. They became a kind of religious group. And how does God designate the religion of those who believe in Jesus? (Christianity.) In God's eyes, Judaism and Christianity represent religious groups. Why does God define them as such? Among all those who are members of these religious bodies defined by God, are there any who fear Him and shun evil, do His will, and follow His way? (No.) This makes it clear. In God's eyes, can all those who nominally follow Him be ones whom He

acknowledges to be believers? Do they all have a connection with God? Could they all be targets for His salvation? (No.) So, will a day come when you are reduced to what God views as a religious group? (It's possible.) Being reduced to a religious group—that seems inconceivable. If people become part of a religious group in God's eyes, will they be saved by Him? Are they of His house? (No, they aren't.) So, let us try to summarize: These people who nominally believe in the true God, but whom He believes to belong to religious groups—what path do they walk? Could it be said that such people walk the path of waving the flag of faith without ever following God's way, and of believing in Him yet never worshiping Him, instead forsaking Him? That is, they walk the path of believing in God but forsaking Him and not following His way; their way is one in which they believe in God but worship Satan, they worship the devil, they try to carry out their own management, and try to establish their own kingdom. Is this not the essence of it? Do people like this have any connection to God's management plan for the salvation of humanity? (No.) No matter how many people believe in God, as soon as their beliefs are defined by Him as being those of a religion or group, He has already determined that they cannot be saved. Why do I say this? In a gang or crowd of people who are without the work and guidance of God, and who do not worship Him at all, whom do they worship? Whom do they follow? In form and name, they follow a person, but whom do they essentially follow? Deep down, they acknowledge God, but in fact, they are subject to human manipulation, arrangements, and control. They follow Satan, the devil; they follow the forces that are hostile to God and that are His enemies. Would God save a pack of people such as this? (No.) Why not? Are they capable of repentance? (No.) They are incapable of repentance. They wave the flag of faith, carrying out human enterprises and conducting their own management, and they run counter to God's management plan for mankind's salvation. Their final outcome is one of being detested and rejected by God; He could not possibly save these people, they could not possibly repent, they have already been captured by Satan—they are entirely in Satan's hands. In your faith, does how many years you have believed in God matter to whether or not you are praised by Him? Do the rituals and regulations you abide by matter? Does God look at people's methods of practice? Does He look at how many people there are? He has selected one portion of mankind; how does He measure whether they can and should be saved? He bases this decision on the paths these people walk. ... Regardless of how many sermons you have heard or how many truths you have understood, if, ultimately, you still follow humans and Satan, and in the end, if you are still

incapable of following God's way and unable to fear Him and shun evil, then such people will be detested and rejected by God. To all appearances, such people who are detested and rejected by God can talk much about letters and doctrines, and may have come to understand many truths, yet they are incapable of worshipping God; they cannot fear God and shun evil, and are incapable of total submission to Him. In God's eyes, He defines them as part of a religion, as just a group of humans—a gang of humans—and as a lodging place for Satan. They are collectively referred to as Satan's gang, and these people are utterly despised by God.

Excerpted from "Only by Constantly Living Before God Can One Walk the Path to Salvation" in Records of Christ's Talks

Footnotes:

1. "Stirring up all kinds of trouble" refers to how people who are demonic run riot, obstructing and opposing the work of God.
2. "Toothed whales" is used mockingly. It is a metaphor for how flies are so small that pigs and dogs appear as big as whales to them.

XVI. How to Discern the Essence of the Religious World That Defies God

1. Why the Lord Jesus cursed the Pharisees, and what the essence of the Pharisees was

Bible Verses for Reference:

"Why do you also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? For God commanded, saying, Honor your father and mother: and, He that curses father or mother, let him die the death. But you say, Whoever shall say to his father or his mother, It is a gift, by whatever you might be profited by me; And honor not his father or his mother, he shall be free. Thus have you made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition. You hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draws near to Me with their mouth, and honors Me with their lips; but their heart is far from Me. But in vain they do worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Mat 15:3–9).

“But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for you shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for you neither go in yourselves, neither suffer you them that are entering to go in. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for you devour widows’ houses, and for a pretense make long prayer: therefore you shall receive the greater damnation.

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for you compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, you make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves.

“Woe to you, you blind guides, which say, Whoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor! You fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifies the gold? And, Whoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing; but whoever swears by the gift that is on it, he is guilty. You fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gift, or the altar that sanctifies the gift? Whoever therefore shall swear by the altar, swears by it, and by all things thereon. And whoever shall swear by the temple, swears by it, and by Him that dwells therein. And he that shall swear by heaven, swears by the throne of God, and by Him that sits thereon.

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for you pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought you to have done, and not to leave the other undone. You blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel.

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for you make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. You blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also.

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for you are like to white washed sepulchers, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men’s bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but within you are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because you build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchers of the righteous, And say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets. Why you be witnesses to yourselves, that you are the children of them which killed the prophets. Fill you up then the measure of your fathers. You serpents, you generation of vipers, how can you escape the damnation of hell? Why, behold, I send to you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and

some of them you shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall you whip in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city: That on you may come all the righteous blood shed on the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom you slew between the temple and the altar. Truly I say to you, All these things shall come on this generation” (Mat 23:13–36).

Relevant Words of God:

Do you wish to know the root of why the Pharisees opposed Jesus? Do you wish to know the essence of the Pharisees? They were full of fantasies about the Messiah. What is more, they believed only that the Messiah would come, yet did not seek the life truth. And so, even today they still await the Messiah, for they have no knowledge of the way of life, and do not know what the way of truth is. How, say you, could such foolish, stubborn and ignorant people gain God’s blessing? How could they behold the Messiah? They opposed Jesus because they did not know the direction of the Holy Spirit’s work, because they did not know the way of truth spoken by Jesus, and, furthermore, because they did not understand the Messiah. And since they had never seen the Messiah and had never been in the company of the Messiah, they made the mistake of clinging in vain to the name of the Messiah while opposing the essence of the Messiah by any means possible. These Pharisees in essence were stubborn, arrogant, and did not obey the truth. The principle of their belief in God was: No matter how profound Your preaching, no matter how high Your authority, You are not Christ unless You are called the Messiah. Are these views not preposterous and ridiculous?

Excerpted from “By the Time You Behold the Spiritual Body of Jesus, God Will Have Made Heaven and Earth Anew” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The Jewish Pharisees used the law of Moses to condemn Jesus. They did not seek compatibility with the Jesus of that time, but diligently followed the law to the letter, to the extent that—after having charged Him with not following the law of the Old Testament and not being the Messiah—they ultimately nailed the innocent Jesus to the cross. What was their substance? Was it not that they didn’t seek the way of compatibility with the truth? They obsessed over each and every word of Scripture while paying heed neither to My will nor to the steps and methods of My work. They were not people who sought the truth, but people who

rigidly clung to words; they were not people who believed in God, but people who believed in the Bible. Essentially, they were watchdogs of the Bible. In order to safeguard the interests of the Bible, to uphold the dignity of the Bible, and to protect the reputation of the Bible, they went so far as to nail the merciful Jesus to the cross. This they did merely for the sake of defending the Bible, and for the sake of maintaining the status of each and every word of the Bible in people's hearts. So they preferred to forsake their future and the sin offering to condemn Jesus, who did not conform to the doctrine of Scripture, to death. Were they not all lackeys to each and every word of Scripture?

Excerpted from "You Should Seek the Way of Compatibility With Christ" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The Pharisees' Judgment on Jesus

Mak 3:21–22 And when His friends heard of it, they went out to lay hold on Him: for they said, He is beside Himself. And the scribes which came down from Jerusalem said, He has Beelzebub, and by the prince of the devils casts He out devils.

Jesus' Rebuke to the Pharisees

Mat 12:31–32 Why I say to you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven to men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit shall not be forgiven to men. And whoever speaks a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.

.....

In the Bible, the Pharisees' appraisal of Jesus Himself and the things that He did was: "... they said, He is beside Himself. ... He has Beelzebub, and by the prince of the devils casts He out devils" (Mak 3:21–22). The scribes' and Pharisees' judgment of the Lord Jesus was not them merely imitating other people's words, and neither was it baseless conjecture—it was the conclusion that they drew about the Lord Jesus from what they saw and heard of His actions. Although their conclusion was ostensibly made in the name of justice and appeared to people as if it were well-founded, the arrogance with which they judged the Lord Jesus was difficult for even them to contain. The frenzied energy of their hatred for the Lord Jesus exposed their own wild ambitions and their evil satanic countenances, as well as their malevolent nature with which they resisted God. These things that they said in their judgment of the Lord Jesus were driven by their wild ambitions, jealousy, and the ugly and malevolent nature of their hostility

toward God and the truth. They did not investigate the source of the Lord Jesus' actions, nor did they investigate the essence of what He said or did. Rather, blindly, in a state of crazed agitation, and with deliberate malice, they attacked and discredited what He had done. They went so far as to willfully discredit His Spirit, that is, the Holy Spirit which is God's Spirit. This is what they meant when they said, "He is beside Himself," "Beelzebub," and "the prince of the devils." That is to say, they said that the Spirit of God was Beelzebub and the prince of the devils. They characterized as madness the work of God's Spirit incarnate, which had clothed Himself in flesh. They not only blasphemed God's Spirit as Beelzebub and the prince of the devils, but also condemned God's work and condemned and blasphemed the Lord Jesus Christ. The essence of their resistance and blasphemy of God was entirely the same as the essence of the resistance and blasphemy of God given by Satan and the demons. They did not just represent corrupt humans, but more so they were the embodiment of Satan. They were a channel for Satan amongst mankind, and they were the accomplices and lackeys of Satan. The essence of their blasphemy and their denigration of the Lord Jesus Christ was their struggle with God for status, their contest with God, and their unending testing of God. The essence of their resistance to God and their attitude of hostility toward Him, as well as their words and their thoughts, directly blasphemed and angered God's Spirit. Thus, God determined a reasonable judgment based on what they said and did, and God determined their deeds to be the sin of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. This sin is unforgivable in both this world and the world to come, as is borne out in the following passage of scripture: "The blasphemy against the Holy Spirit shall not be forgiven to men," and, "whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come."

Excerpted from "God's Work, God's Disposition, and God Himself III" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

In Israel, "Pharisee" used to be a sort of title. Why is it now a label instead? This is because the Pharisees have become representatives of a type of person. What are the characteristics of this type of person? They chant slogans, they are skilled at pretending, at ornament, at hiding their true selves, and they affect great nobility, great holiness and uprightness, great fair-handedness and honor. As a result, they do not practice the truth in the least. How do they act? They read scripture, they preach, they teach others to do good, not to do evil, not to resist God; they say pleasant-sounding things and behave well in front of others, yet, when others' backs

are turned, they steal offerings. The Lord Jesus said they “strain out a gnat but swallow a camel.” This means that all their behavior seems good on its surface—they chant slogans ostentatiously, they speak lofty theories, and their words sound pleasant, yet their deeds are a disordered mess, entirely resistant of God. Their behaviors and outward appearances are all pretense, all fraud; in their hearts, they have not the slightest love for the truth, nor for positive things. They detest truth, detest all that comes from God, and detest positive things. What do they love? Do they love fairness and righteousness? (No.) How can you tell they do not love these things? (The Lord Jesus came to do work and spread the gospel of the kingdom of heaven, yet they condemned Him.) Had they not condemned Him, would you be able to tell? Before the Lord Jesus came to do work, what might have told you that they did not love fairness and righteousness? You would not have been able to tell, would you? All their behavior is pretense, and they use this pretense of good behavior to defraud others of their trust. Is this not hypocrisy and deceit? Can such deceivers love the truth? What is the hidden purpose of this good behavior of theirs? One part of their purpose is to cheat others; the other part is to deceive others, to win them over and be worshiped by them, and, in the end, to receive rewards. How clever must their techniques be, to pull off such a large swindle? Do such people love fairness and righteousness, then? Of course not. They love status, they love fame and fortune, and they wish to receive rewards. Do they put God’s words of guidance for people into practice? Not at all. They do not live out a bit of them; they just use ornament and disguise to trick people and win them over, to shore up their own status, to shore up their own reputation. Once these things are secure, they use them to procure capital and a source of income. Is this not contemptible? It can be seen in all these behaviors of theirs that it is their essence not to love the truth, for they never put the truth into practice. What is the sign that they do not put the truth into practice? This was the biggest sign: The Lord Jesus came to do work and everything He said was right, everything He said was the truth. How did they treat that? (They did not accept it.) Did they not accept the Lord Jesus’ words because they believed them to be wrong, or did they not accept them despite knowing they were right? (They did not accept them despite knowing they were right.) And what could cause this? They do not love the truth, and they abhor positive things. All the Lord Jesus said was correct, without any error, and though they could not find any fault in the Lord Jesus’ words to use against Him, they said, “Isn’t this the carpenter’s son?” They set out to find faults in the Lord Jesus’ words to use against Him, and, unable to find any, they condemned

Him, and then they conspired: “Have Him crucified. It’s either Him or us.” In this way, they pit themselves against the Lord Jesus. Though they did not believe that Lord Jesus was the Lord, He was a good person who broke neither secular law nor the law of Moses; why would they condemn the Lord Jesus? Why did they treat the Lord Jesus so? It can be seen in how wicked and malicious these people are—they are evil in the extreme! The evil countenance the Pharisees expose could not be more different from their camouflage of kindness. There are many who cannot discern which is their true countenance and which is the falsehood, yet the Lord Jesus’ appearance and work revealed them all. How well Pharisees disguise themselves, how kind they seem on the outside—had the facts not been revealed, no one would be able to see them for what they are.

Excerpted from “The Most Important Part of Believing in God Is Putting the Truth Into Practice” in
Records of Christ’s Talks

2. Why it is said that religious pastors and elders are all walking the path of the Pharisees, and what their essence is

Bible Verses for Reference:

“For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist” (2Jn 1:7).

“Hereby know you the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesses not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof you have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world” (1Jn 4:2–3).

Relevant Words of God:

Look at the leaders of each denomination—they are all arrogant and self-righteous, and their interpretations of the Bible lack context and are guided by their own imaginings. They all rely on gifts and erudition to do their work. If they could not preach at all, would people follow them? They do, after all, possess some knowledge and can preach on some doctrine, or they know how to win others over and make use of some artifice. They use these to bring people

before themselves and deceive them. Nominally, those people believe in God, but in reality, they follow their leaders. When they encounter someone preaching the true way, some of them say, “We have to consult our leader about our faith.” A human is the medium of their faith in God; is that not a problem? What have those leaders become, then? Have they not become Pharisees, false shepherds, antichrists, and stumbling blocks to people’s acceptance of the true way?

Excerpted from “Only to Pursue the Truth Is Truly to Believe in God” in Records of Christ’s Talks

There are those who read the Bible in grand churches and recite it all day long, yet not one among them understands the purpose of God’s work. Not one among them is able to know God; still less can any one among them accord with God’s will. They are all worthless, vile people, each standing on high to lecture God. They willfully oppose God even as they carry His banner. Claiming faith in God, still they eat the flesh and drink the blood of man. All such people are devils that devour the soul of man, head demons that deliberately get in the way of those trying to step onto the right path, and stumbling blocks impeding those who seek God. They may appear of “sound constitution,” but how are their followers to know that they are none other than antichrists who lead people to stand against God? How are their followers to know that they are living devils dedicated to the devouring of human souls?

Excerpted from “All People Who Do Not Know God Are People Who Oppose God” in The Word Appears in
the Flesh

Do many people not oppose God and obstruct the work of the Holy Spirit because they do not know the varied and diverse work of God, and, furthermore, because they possess but a smidgeon of knowledge and doctrine with which to measure the work of the Holy Spirit? Though the experiences of such people are superficial, they are arrogant and indulgent in nature and they regard the work of the Holy Spirit with contempt, ignore the disciplines of the Holy Spirit and, moreover, use their trivial old arguments to “confirm” the work of the Holy Spirit. They also put on an act, and are wholly convinced of their own learning and erudition, and convinced that they are able to travel across the world. Are such people not those who are despised and rejected by the Holy Spirit, and will they not be eliminated by the new age? Are not those who come before God and openly oppose Him ignorant and under-informed little people, who are merely trying to show how brilliant they are? With but a meager knowledge of

the Bible, they try to straddle the world's "academia"; with but a superficial doctrine to teach people, they try to reverse the work of the Holy Spirit and attempt to make it revolve around their own thought process. Short-sighted as they are, they try to behold in one glance 6,000 years of God's work. These people do not have any sense worth mentioning! In fact, the greater people's knowledge of God, the slower they are to judge His work. Furthermore, they only talk a little of their knowledge of God's work today, but they are not rash in their judgments. The less people know of God, the more arrogant and overconfident they are and the more wantonly they proclaim God's being—yet they only talk of theory, and offer no real evidence. Such people are of no value whatsoever. Those who see the work of the Holy Spirit as a game are frivolous! Those who are not cautious when they encounter the new work of the Holy Spirit, who run their mouths off, are quick to judge, who give free rein to their natural instinct to deny the rightness of the Holy Spirit's work, and who also insult and blaspheme it—are such disrespectful people not ignorant of the Holy Spirit's work? Are they not, furthermore, people of great arrogance, people who are inherently proud and ungovernable? Even if a day comes when such people accept the new work of the Holy Spirit, still God will not tolerate them. Not only do they look down upon those who work for God, but they also blaspheme against God Himself. Such foolhardy people will not be forgiven, either in this age or the age to come, and they shall forever perish in hell! Such disrespectful, indulgent people are pretending to believe in God, and the more people are like this, the more liable they are to offend God's administrative decrees. Do not all those arrogant ones who are innately unbridled, and who have never obeyed anyone, all walk upon this path? Do they not oppose God day after day, God who is always new and never old?

Excerpted from "Knowing the Three Stages of God's Work Is the Path to Knowing God" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Since you believe in God, you must put faith in all of the words of God and in all of His work. Which is to say, since you believe in God, you must obey Him. If you are unable to do this, then it does not matter whether you believe in God or not. If you have believed in God for many years, and yet have never obeyed Him, and do not accept the entirety of His words, and instead ask that God submit to you and act according to your notions, then you are the most rebellious of all, you are a nonbeliever. How could such people be able to obey the work and words of God

that do not conform to the notions of man? Most rebellious of all are those who intentionally defy and resist God. They are the enemies of God, the antichrists. Theirs is always an attitude of hostility toward the new work of God; they never have the slightest inclination to submit, nor have they ever gladly submitted or humbled themselves. They exalt themselves before others and never submit to anyone. Before God, they consider themselves the best at preaching the word, and the most skillful in working on others. Never do they discard the “treasures” in their possession, but treat them as family heirlooms for worship, for preaching about to others, and they use them to lecture those fools who idolize them. There are indeed a certain number of people like this in the church. It can be said that they are “indomitable heroes,” generation after generation sojourning in the house of God. They take preaching the word (doctrine) to be their highest duty. Year after year, generation after generation, they go about vigorously enforcing their “sacred and inviolable” duty. None dare touch them; not a single person dares openly reproach them. They become “kings” in the house of God, running rampant as they tyrannize others from age to age. This pack of demons seeks to join hands and demolish My work; how can I allow these living devils to exist before My eyes?

Excerpted from “Those Who Obey God With a True Heart Shall Surely Be Gained by God” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Serving God is no simple task. Those whose corrupt disposition remains unchanged can never serve God. If your disposition has not been judged and chastised by God’s words, then your disposition still represents Satan, which proves that you serve God out of your own good intentions, that your service is based on your satanic nature. You serve God with your natural character, and according to your personal preferences. What’s more, you always think that the things you are willing to do are what are delightful to God, and that the things you do not wish to do are what are hateful to God; you work entirely according to your own preferences. Can this be called serving God? Ultimately, there will not be the slightest change in your life disposition; instead, your service will make you even more stubborn, thus deeply ingraining your corrupt disposition, and as such, there will be formed within you rules about service to God that are primarily based on your own character, and experiences derived from your service according to your own disposition. These are the experiences and lessons of man. It is man’s philosophy of living in the world. People like this can be classed as Pharisees and religious

officials. If they never wake up and repent, then they will surely turn into the false Christs and the antichrists who deceive people in the last days. The false Christs and the antichrists that were spoken of will arise from among such people. If those who serve God follow their own character and act according to their own will, they run the risk of being cast out at any time. Those who apply their many years of experience acquired to serving God in order to win the hearts of others, to lecture them and control them, and to stand on high—and who never repent, never confess their sins, never renounce the benefits of position—these people shall fall before God. They are of the same kind as Paul, presuming upon their seniority and flaunting their qualifications. God will not bring people like this to perfection. Such service interferes with the work of God. People always cling to the old. They cling to the notions of the past, to everything from times gone by. This is a great obstacle to their service. If you cannot throw them off, these things will throttle your whole life. God will not commend you, not in the slightest, not even if you break your legs running or your back with labor, not even if you are martyred in your service of God. Quite the contrary: He will say that you are an evildoer.

Excerpted from “Religious Service Must Be Purged” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Do you wish to know the root of why the Pharisees opposed Jesus? Do you wish to know the essence of the Pharisees? They were full of fantasies about the Messiah. What is more, they believed only that the Messiah would come, yet did not seek the life truth. And so, even today they still await the Messiah, for they have no knowledge of the way of life, and do not know what the way of truth is. How, say you, could such foolish, stubborn and ignorant people gain God’s blessing? How could they behold the Messiah? They opposed Jesus because they did not know the direction of the Holy Spirit’s work, because they did not know the way of truth spoken by Jesus, and, furthermore, because they did not understand the Messiah. And since they had never seen the Messiah and had never been in the company of the Messiah, they made the mistake of clinging in vain to the name of the Messiah while opposing the essence of the Messiah by any means possible. These Pharisees in essence were stubborn, arrogant, and did not obey the truth. The principle of their belief in God was: No matter how profound Your preaching, no matter how high Your authority, You are not Christ unless You are called the Messiah. Are these views not preposterous and ridiculous? I will ask you further: Is it not extremely easy for you to commit the mistakes of the earliest Pharisees, given that you have not the slightest

understanding of Jesus? Are you able to discern the way of truth? Can you truly guarantee that you will not oppose Christ? Are you able to follow the work of the Holy Spirit? If you do not know whether you will oppose Christ, then I say that you are already living on the brink of death. Those who did not know the Messiah were all capable of opposing Jesus, of rejecting Jesus, of slandering Him. People who do not understand Jesus are all capable of rejecting Him and reviling Him. Moreover, they are capable of seeing the return of Jesus as the deceit of Satan, and more people shall condemn Jesus returned to flesh. Does not all of this make you afraid? What you face shall be blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, the ruination of the words of the Holy Spirit to the churches, and the spurning of all that is expressed by Jesus. What can you gain from Jesus if you are so befuddled? How can you understand the work of Jesus when He returns to flesh on a white cloud, if you obstinately refuse to realize your errors? I tell you this: People who do not receive the truth, yet blindly await the arrival of Jesus upon white clouds, will surely blaspheme against the Holy Spirit, and they are the category that shall be destroyed. You merely wish for the grace of Jesus, and merely want to enjoy the blissful realm of heaven, yet you have never obeyed the words spoken by Jesus, and have never received the truth expressed by Jesus when He returns to flesh. What will you hold up in exchange for the fact of Jesus' return upon a white cloud? Is it the sincerity in which you repeatedly commit sins, and then speak your confession, over and over? What will you offer in sacrifice to Jesus who returns upon a white cloud? Is it the years of work with which you exalt yourselves? What will you hold up to make the returned Jesus trust you? Is it that arrogant nature of yours, which does not obey any truth?

Excerpted from "By the Time You Behold the Spiritual Body of Jesus, God Will Have Made Heaven and Earth Anew" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

3. Why every new stage of God's work encounters the wild defiance and condemnation of the religious world, and what the root of this is

Relevant Words of God:

Why do I say that those in the religious world are not believers in God but are evildoers, of the same ilk as the devil? When I say they are evildoers, it is because they do not understand the will of God and are unable to see His wisdom. God at no time reveals His work to them.

They are blind; they cannot see the deeds of God, they have been forsaken by God, and they completely lack the care and protection of God, not to mention the work of the Holy Spirit. Those without the work of God are all evildoers and opponents of God. The opposition to God of which I speak refers to those who do not know God, those who acknowledge God with their lips and yet do not know Him, those who follow God and yet do not obey Him, and those who revel in the grace of God and yet are unable to stand witness to Him. Without an understanding of the purpose of God's work or an understanding of the work that God does in man, he cannot be in accord with the will of God, nor can he stand witness to God. The reason why man opposes God stems, on the one hand, from his corrupt disposition, and on the other hand, from ignorance of God and lack of understanding of the principles by which God works and of His will for man. These two aspects, taken together, constitute a history of man's resistance to God. Novices in the faith oppose God because such opposition lies within their nature, while the opposition to God of those with many years in the faith results from their ignorance of Him, in addition to their corrupt disposition.

Excerpted from "All People Who Do Not Know God Are People Who Oppose God" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

In the time when God had not yet become flesh, the measure of whether man opposed God was based on whether man worshiped and looked up to the invisible God in heaven. The way in which opposition to God was defined at that time was not all that practical, for man could not see God, nor did he know what the image of God was like, or how He worked and spoke. Man had no notions about God whatsoever, and he believed in God vaguely, because God had not yet appeared to man. Therefore, no matter how man believed in God in his imagination, God did not condemn man or make too many demands of him, because man was completely unable to see God. When God becomes flesh and comes to work among men, all behold Him and hear His words, and all see the deeds that God works from within His body of flesh. At that moment, all man's notions become foam. As for those who have seen God appearing in the flesh, they shall not be condemned if they willingly obey Him, whereas those who purposefully stand against Him shall be deemed an opponent of God. Such people are antichrists, enemies who willfully stand against God. Those who harbor notions regarding God but are still ready and willing to obey Him will not be condemned. God condemns man on the basis of man's intentions

and actions, never for his thoughts and ideas. If He were to condemn man on the basis of his thoughts and ideas, then not a single person would be able to escape from the wrathful hands of God. Those who willfully stand against the incarnate God shall be punished for their disobedience. With regard to these people that willfully stand against God, their opposition stems from the fact that they harbor notions about God, which leads them in turn into actions that disrupt God's work. These people intentionally resist and destroy the work of God. They do not merely have notions about God, but they also engage in activities that disrupt His work, and for this reason people of this kind shall be condemned. Those who do not willfully disrupt God's work shall not be condemned as sinners, because they are able to willingly obey and not engage in activities that cause disruption and disturbance. People like this shall not be condemned.

Excerpted from "All People Who Do Not Know God Are People Who Oppose God" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The work of God is always moving forward, and though the purpose of His work does not change, the method by which He works constantly changes, which means that those who follow God are constantly changing, too. The more work God does, the more thorough man's knowledge of God is. Corresponding changes occur, too, in man's disposition in the wake of God's work. However, it is because the work of God is ever-changing that those who do not know the work of the Holy Spirit and those absurd people who do not know the truth start to resist God. Not ever does the work of God conform to the notions of man, for His work is always new and never old, and never does He repeat old work, but rather forges ahead with work never done before. As God does not repeat His work, and man invariably judges God's current work by the work He did in the past, it has become exceedingly difficult for God to carry out each stage of work of the new age. Man has far too many difficulties! He is too conservative in his thinking! No one knows the work of God, yet everyone delimits it. When he leaves God, man loses life, truth, and God's blessings, yet neither does he accept life nor truth, much less the greater blessings God bestows upon mankind. All men wish to gain God, yet are unable to tolerate any changes in God's work. Those who do not accept God's new work believe that the work of God is immutable, that it forever remains at a standstill. In their belief, all that is needed to gain eternal salvation from God is to observe the law, and as long as they repent and confess their sins, the will of God will always be satisfied. They are of the opinion that God can only be

the God under the law and the God who was nailed to the cross for man; it is their opinion, too, that God should not and cannot exceed the Bible. It is precisely these opinions that have shackled them firmly to the laws of old and nailed them to dead rules. There are even more who believe that whatever the new work of God might be, it has to be substantiated by prophecies, and that in each stage of such work, all those who follow Him with a “true” heart must also be shown revelations; if not, such work could not be the work of God. It is already no easy task for man to come to know God. Taken in addition to man’s absurd heart and his rebellious nature of self-importance and self-conceit, it becomes all the more difficult for him to accept God’s new work. Man neither gives careful consideration to the new work of God, nor accepts it with humility; instead, he adopts an attitude of contempt as he awaits revelations and guidance from God. Is this not the behavior of those who rebel against and resist God? How can such people gain God’s approval?

Excerpted from “How Can Man Who Has Delimited God in His Notions Receive the Revelations of God?” in
The Word Appears in the Flesh

Because there are always new developments in God’s work, there is work that becomes obsolete and old as new work arises. These different types of work, old and new, are not contradictory, but complementary; each step follows from the last. Because there is new work, the old things must, of course, be eliminated. For example, some of the long-established practices and habitual sayings of man, coupled with man’s many years of experience and teachings, have formed all manner and form of notions in the mind of man. That God has yet fully to reveal His true face and inherent disposition to man, along with the spread, over many years, of traditional theories from ancient times have been yet more propitious to man’s formation of such notions. It may be said that, over the course of man’s belief in God, the influence of various notions has led to the continual formation and evolution of all sorts of notional understandings of God in people, which has caused many religious people who serve God to become His enemies. So, the stronger people’s religious notions are, the more they oppose God, and the more they are the enemies of God. The work of God is always new and never old; it never forms doctrine, instead changing continually and being renewed to a greater or lesser extent. Working in this way is an expression of the inherent disposition of God Himself. It is also the inherent principle of God’s work, and one of the means by which God accomplishes

His management. If God did not work in this way, man would not change or be able to know God, and Satan would not be defeated. Thus, in His work, changes continually occur that appear erratic, but which are actually periodic. The way in which man believes in God, however, is quite different. He clings to old, familiar doctrines and systems, and the older they are, the more palatable they are to him. How could the foolish mind of man, a mind that is as intransigent as stone, accept so much unfathomable new work and words of God? Man abhors the God who is always new and never old; he likes only the old God, who is long of tooth, white of hair, and stuck in place. Thus, because God and man each have their own likes, man has become the enemy of God. Many of these contradictions still exist even today, at a time when God has been doing new work for almost six thousand years. They are, then, beyond remedy.

Excerpted from "Only Those Who Know the Work of God Today May Serve God" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Do many people not oppose God and obstruct the work of the Holy Spirit because they do not know the varied and diverse work of God, and, furthermore, because they possess but a smidgeon of knowledge and doctrine with which to measure the work of the Holy Spirit? Though the experiences of such people are superficial, they are arrogant and indulgent in nature and they regard the work of the Holy Spirit with contempt, ignore the disciplines of the Holy Spirit and, moreover, use their trivial old arguments to "confirm" the work of the Holy Spirit. They also put on an act, and are wholly convinced of their own learning and erudition, and convinced that they are able to travel across the world. Are such people not those who are despised and rejected by the Holy Spirit, and will they not be eliminated by the new age? Are not those who come before God and openly oppose Him ignorant and under-informed little people, who are merely trying to show how brilliant they are? With but a meager knowledge of the Bible, they try to straddle the world's "academia"; with but a superficial doctrine to teach people, they try to reverse the work of the Holy Spirit and attempt to make it revolve around their own thought process. Short-sighted as they are, they try to behold in one glance 6,000 years of God's work. These people do not have any sense worth mentioning! In fact, the greater people's knowledge of God, the slower they are to judge His work. Furthermore, they only talk a little of their knowledge of God's work today, but they are not rash in their judgments. The less people know of God, the more arrogant and overconfident they are and the more wantonly

they proclaim God's being—yet they only talk of theory, and offer no real evidence. Such people are of no value whatsoever. Those who see the work of the Holy Spirit as a game are frivolous! Those who are not cautious when they encounter the new work of the Holy Spirit, who run their mouths off, are quick to judge, who give free rein to their natural instinct to deny the rightness of the Holy Spirit's work, and who also insult and blaspheme it—are such disrespectful people not ignorant of the Holy Spirit's work? Are they not, furthermore, people of great arrogance, people who are inherently proud and ungovernable? Even if a day comes when such people accept the new work of the Holy Spirit, still God will not tolerate them. Not only do they look down upon those who work for God, but they also blaspheme against God Himself. Such foolhardy people will not be forgiven, either in this age or the age to come, and they shall forever perish in hell! Such disrespectful, indulgent people are pretending to believe in God, and the more people are like this, the more liable they are to offend God's administrative decrees. Do not all those arrogant ones who are innately unbridled, and who have never obeyed anyone, all walk upon this path? Do they not oppose God day after day, God who is always new and never old?

Excerpted from "Knowing the Three Stages of God's Work Is the Path to Knowing God" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Each of the three stages of work is carried out upon the foundation of the previous stage; it is not carried out independently, separate from the work of salvation. Though there are great differences in the age and type of work that is carried out, at its core is still the salvation of mankind, and each stage of the work of salvation is deeper than the last. Each stage of work continues on from the foundation of the last, which is not abolished. In this way, in His work that is always new and never old, God is constantly expressing aspects of His disposition that have never before been expressed to man, and is always revealing to man His new work and His new being, and even though the religious old guard does its utmost to resist this, and openly opposes it, God always does the new work that He intends to do. His work is always changing, and because of this, it is always encountering the opposition of man. So, too, is His disposition always changing, as are the age and recipients of His work. Furthermore, He is always doing work that has never been done before, even carrying out work that appears to man to be in contradiction to the work done before, to run counter to it. Man is only able to accept one kind

of work, or one way of practice, and it is difficult for man to accept work, or ways of practice, that are at odds with, or higher than, them. But the Holy Spirit is always doing new work, and so there appear group after group of religious experts that oppose the new work of God. These people have become experts precisely because man has no knowledge of how God is always new and never old, and has no knowledge of the principles of God's work, and, furthermore, has no knowledge of the many ways in which God saves man. As such, man is utterly unable to tell if it is work that comes from the Holy Spirit, and if it is the work of God Himself. Many people cling to an attitude in which, if something corresponds with the words that came before, then they accept it, and if there are differences with the work of before, then they oppose and reject it. Today, do you all not abide by such principles? ... Know that you oppose God's work, or use your own notions to measure the work of today, because you do not know the principles of God's work, and because you do not take the work of the Holy Spirit seriously enough. Your opposition to God and obstruction of the work of the Holy Spirit is caused by your notions and inherent arrogance. It is not because God's work is wrong, but because you are naturally too disobedient. After finding their belief in God, some people cannot even say with certainty where man came from, yet they dare to make public speeches appraising the rights and wrongs of the Holy Spirit's work. They even lecture the apostles who have the Holy Spirit's new work, passing comment and speaking out of turn; their humanity is too low, and there is not the slightest sense in them. Will the day not come when such people are rejected by the work of the Holy Spirit, and burned by the fires of hell? They do not know the work of God, but instead criticize His work, and also try to instruct God how to work. How can such unreasonable people know God? Man comes to know God during the process of seeking and experiencing; it is not through criticizing at whom that man comes to know God through the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit. The more accurate people's knowledge of God becomes, the less they oppose Him. In contrast, the less people know of God, the more likely they are to oppose Him. Your notions, your old nature, and your humanity, character and moral outlook are the "capital" with which you resist God, and the more corrupt, degraded and low you become, the more you are the enemy of God. Those who are possessed of strong notions and who have a self-righteous disposition are even more in enmity of God incarnate; such people are the antichrists. If your notions are not rectified, then they will always be against God; you will never be compatible with God, and will always be apart from Him.

Excerpted from “Knowing the Three Stages of God’s Work Is the Path to Knowing God” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Man has been corrupted and lives in Satan’s trap. All people live in the flesh, live in selfish desires, and there is not a single one among them who is compatible with Me. There are those who say that they are compatible with Me, but such people all worship vague idols. Although they acknowledge My name as holy, they tread a path that runs contrary to Me, and their words are full of arrogance and self-confidence. This is because, at root, they are all against Me and incompatible with Me. Every day, they seek traces of Me in the Bible and find “suitable” passages at random which they read endlessly and recite as scriptures. They do not know how to be compatible with Me nor what it means to be against Me. They merely read scriptures blindly. Within the Bible, they constrain a vague God that they have never seen, and are incapable of seeing, and take it out to look at at their leisure. They believe in My existence only within the scope of the Bible, and they equate Me with the Bible; without the Bible there is no Me, and without Me there is no Bible. They pay no heed to My existence or actions, but instead devote extreme and special attention to each and every word of Scripture. Many more even believe that I should not do anything I wish to do unless it is foretold by Scripture. They attach too much importance to Scripture. It can be said that they see words and expressions as too important, to the extent that they use verses from the Bible to measure every word I say and to condemn Me. What they seek is not the way of compatibility with Me or the way of compatibility with the truth, but the way of compatibility with the words of the Bible, and they believe that anything that does not conform to the Bible is, without exception, not My work. Are such people not the dutiful descendants of the Pharisees? The Jewish Pharisees used the law of Moses to condemn Jesus. They did not seek compatibility with the Jesus of that time, but diligently followed the law to the letter, to the extent that—after having charged Him with not following the law of the Old Testament and not being the Messiah—they ultimately nailed the innocent Jesus to the cross. What was their substance? Was it not that they didn’t seek the way of compatibility with the truth? They obsessed over each and every word of Scripture while paying heed neither to My will nor to the steps and methods of My work. They were not people who sought the truth, but people who rigidly clung to words; they were not people who believed in God, but people who believed in the Bible. Essentially, they were watchdogs of the Bible. In

order to safeguard the interests of the Bible, to uphold the dignity of the Bible, and to protect the reputation of the Bible, they went so far as to nail the merciful Jesus to the cross. This they did merely for the sake of defending the Bible, and for the sake of maintaining the status of each and every word of the Bible in people's hearts. So they preferred to forsake their future and the sin offering to condemn Jesus, who did not conform to the doctrine of Scripture, to death. Were they not all lackeys to each and every word of Scripture?

And what of people today? Christ has come to release the truth, yet they would rather expel Him from this world so that they may gain entry into heaven and receive grace. They would rather completely deny the coming of the truth in order to safeguard the interests of the Bible, and they would rather nail the Christ returned to flesh to the cross again in order to ensure the everlasting existence of the Bible. How can man receive My salvation when his heart is so malicious and his nature so antagonistic toward Me? I live among man, yet man does not know of My existence. When I shine My light upon man, he still remains ignorant of My existence. When I unleash My wrath upon man, he denies My existence with even greater vigor. Man searches for compatibility with words and compatibility with the Bible, yet not a single person comes before Me to seek the way of compatibility with the truth. Man looks up to Me in heaven and devotes particular concern to My existence in heaven, yet no one cares about Me in the flesh, for I who live among man am simply too insignificant. Those who only seek compatibility with the words of the Bible and who only seek compatibility with a vague God are a wretched sight to Me. That is because what they worship are dead words, and a God that is capable of giving them untold treasures; what they worship is a God that would lay Himself at the mercy of man—a God who does not exist. What, then, can such people gain from Me? Man is simply too lowly for words. Those who are against Me, who make limitless demands of Me, who have no love of the truth, who are rebellious toward Me—how could they be compatible with Me?

Excerpted from "You Should Seek the Way of Compatibility With Christ" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Do you wish to know the root of why the Pharisees opposed Jesus? Do you wish to know the essence of the Pharisees? They were full of fantasies about the Messiah. What is more, they believed only that the Messiah would come, yet did not seek the life truth. And so, even today they still await the Messiah, for they have no knowledge of the way of life, and do not know what the way of truth is. How, say you, could such foolish, stubborn and ignorant people gain God's

blessing? How could they behold the Messiah? They opposed Jesus because they did not know the direction of the Holy Spirit's work, because they did not know the way of truth spoken by Jesus, and, furthermore, because they did not understand the Messiah. And since they had never seen the Messiah and had never been in the company of the Messiah, they made the mistake of clinging in vain to the name of the Messiah while opposing the essence of the Messiah by any means possible. These Pharisees in essence were stubborn, arrogant, and did not obey the truth. The principle of their belief in God was: No matter how profound Your preaching, no matter how high Your authority, You are not Christ unless You are called the Messiah. Are these views not preposterous and ridiculous? I will ask you further: Is it not extremely easy for you to commit the mistakes of the earliest Pharisees, given that you have not the slightest understanding of Jesus? Are you able to discern the way of truth? Can you truly guarantee that you will not oppose Christ? Are you able to follow the work of the Holy Spirit? If you do not know whether you will oppose Christ, then I say that you are already living on the brink of death. Those who did not know the Messiah were all capable of opposing Jesus, of rejecting Jesus, of slandering Him. People who do not understand Jesus are all capable of rejecting Him and reviling Him. Moreover, they are capable of seeing the return of Jesus as the deceit of Satan, and more people shall condemn Jesus returned to flesh. Does not all of this make you afraid? What you face shall be blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, the ruination of the words of the Holy Spirit to the churches, and the spurning of all that is expressed by Jesus. What can you gain from Jesus if you are so befuddled? How can you understand the work of Jesus when He returns to flesh on a white cloud, if you obstinately refuse to realize your errors? I tell you this: People who do not receive the truth, yet blindly await the arrival of Jesus upon white clouds, will surely blaspheme against the Holy Spirit, and they are the category that shall be destroyed. You merely wish for the grace of Jesus, and merely want to enjoy the blissful realm of heaven, yet you have never obeyed the words spoken by Jesus, and have never received the truth expressed by Jesus when He returns to flesh. What will you hold up in exchange for the fact of Jesus' return upon a white cloud? Is it the sincerity in which you repeatedly commit sins, and then speak your confession, over and over? What will you offer in sacrifice to Jesus who returns upon a white cloud? Is it the years of work with which you exalt yourselves? What will you hold up to make the returned Jesus trust you? Is it that arrogant nature of yours, which does not obey any truth?

Excerpted from “By the Time You Behold the Spiritual Body of Jesus, God Will Have Made Heaven and Earth Anew” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

4. Whether religious pastors and elders are really put in place by God, and whether obeying pastors and elders is obeying and following God

Bible Verses for Reference:

“We ought to obey God rather than men” (Act 5:29).

Relevant Words of God:

There are those who read the Bible in grand churches and recite it all day long, yet not one among them understands the purpose of God’s work. Not one among them is able to know God; still less can any one among them accord with God’s will. They are all worthless, vile people, each standing on high to lecture God. They willfully oppose God even as they carry His banner. Claiming faith in God, still they eat the flesh and drink the blood of man. All such people are devils that devour the soul of man, head demons that deliberately get in the way of those trying to step onto the right path, and stumbling blocks impeding those who seek God. They may appear of “sound constitution,” but how are their followers to know that they are none other than antichrists who lead people to stand against God? How are their followers to know that they are living devils dedicated to the devouring of human souls?

Excerpted from “All People Who Do Not Know God Are People Who Oppose God” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

Look at the leaders of each denomination—they are all arrogant and self-righteous, and their interpretations of the Bible lack context and are guided by their own imaginings. They all rely on gifts and erudition to do their work. If they could not preach at all, would people follow them? They do, after all, possess some knowledge and can preach on some doctrine, or they know how to win others over and make use of some artifice. They use these to bring people before themselves and deceive them. Nominally, those people believe in God, but in reality, they follow their leaders. When they encounter someone preaching the true way, some of them say,

“We have to consult our leader about our faith.” A human is the medium of their faith in God; is that not a problem? What have those leaders become, then? Have they not become Pharisees, false shepherds, antichrists, and stumbling blocks to people’s acceptance of the true way? ...

Previously, believers in God might have followed a person, or they might not have satisfied God’s will; in this final stage, they will have to come before God. If your foundation is your experience of this stage of work, yet you continue to follow a person, then you are unforgivable, and will end up as Paul did.

Excerpted from “Only to Pursue the Truth Is Truly to Believe in God” in Records of Christ’s Talks

Of principal importance in following God is that everything should be according to the words of God today: Whether you are pursuing entry into life or the fulfillment of God’s will, everything should be centered around the words of God today. If what you commune and pursue are not centered around the words of God today, then you are a stranger to the words of God, and totally bereft of the work of the Holy Spirit. What God wants are people who follow His footsteps. No matter how wonderful and pure what you understood before is, God does not want it, and if you are unable to put aside such things, then they will be a tremendous obstacle to your entry in the future. All those who are able to follow the present light of the Holy Spirit are blessed. The people of ages past also followed the footsteps of God, yet they could not follow until today; this is the blessing of the people of the last days. Those who can follow the present work of the Holy Spirit, and who are able to follow the footsteps of God, such that they follow God wherever He leads them—these are people who are blessed by God. Those who do not follow the present work of the Holy Spirit have not entered into the work of God’s words, and no matter how much they work, or how great their suffering, or how much they run about, none of it means anything to God, and He will not commend them. Today, all those who follow the present words of God are in the stream of the Holy Spirit; those who are strangers to the words of God today are outside of the stream of the Holy Spirit, and such people are not commended by God. Service that is divorced from the present utterances of the Holy Spirit is service that is of the flesh, and of notions, and it is impossible for it to be in accordance with God’s will. If people live among religious notions, then they are unable to do anything that is fit for God’s will, and even though they serve God, they serve in the midst of their imaginings and notions, and are totally incapable of serving in accordance with the will of God. Those who are unable to

follow the work of the Holy Spirit do not understand the will of God, and those who do not understand the will of God cannot serve God. God wants service that is after His own heart; He does not want service that is of notions and the flesh. If people are incapable of following the steps of the Holy Spirit's work, then they live amid notions. The service of such people interrupts and disturbs, and such service runs contrary to God. Thus those who are unable to follow the footsteps of God are incapable of serving God; those who are unable to follow the footsteps of God most certainly oppose God, and are incapable of being compatible with God. "Following the work of the Holy Spirit" means understanding the will of God today, being able to act in accordance with the present requirements of God, being able to obey and follow the God of today, and entering in accordance with the newest utterances of God. Only this is someone who follows the work of the Holy Spirit and is in the stream of the Holy Spirit. Such people are not only capable of receiving God's praise and seeing God, but can also know God's disposition from the latest work of God, and can know man's notions and disobedience, and man's nature and essence, from His latest work; furthermore, they are able to gradually achieve changes in their disposition during their service. Only people such as this are those who are able to gain God, and who have genuinely found the true way.

Excerpted from "Know God's Newest Work and Follow His Footsteps" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

People who believe in God should obey God and worship Him. Do not exalt or look up to any person; do not put God first, the people you look up to second, and yourself third. No person should hold a place in your heart, and you should not consider people—particularly those you venerate—to be on a par with God or to be His equal. This is intolerable to God.

Excerpted from "The Ten Administrative Decrees That Must Be Obeyed by God's Chosen People in the Age of Kingdom" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Some people do not rejoice in the truth, much less judgment. Instead, they rejoice in power and riches; such people are called power seekers. They search only for those denominations in the world with influence, and they search only for pastors and teachers that come from seminaries. Though they have accepted the way of truth, they are only half-believing; they are incapable of giving all of their hearts and minds, their mouths speak of expending themselves for God, but their eyes are focused on the great pastors and teachers, and they do not spare

Christ a second glance. Their hearts are fixated upon fame, fortune, and glory. They think it out of the question that such a meager person could be capable of conquering so many, that one so unremarkable could perfect man. They think it out of the question that these nobodies among the dust and dunghills are the people chosen by God. They believe that if such people were the objects of God's salvation, then heaven and earth would be turned upside down, and all people would laugh themselves silly. They believe that if God chose such nobodies to be perfected, then those great men would become God Himself. Their perspectives are tainted with unbelief; more than not believing, they are simply preposterous beasts. For they value only status, prestige, and power, and they esteem only large groups and denominations. They have not the slightest regard for those led by Christ; they are simply traitors who have turned their backs on Christ, on truth, and on life.

What you admire is not the humility of Christ, but those false shepherds of prominent standing. You do not adore the loveliness or wisdom of Christ, but those libertines who wallow in the filth of the world. You laugh at the pain of Christ who has no place to lay His head, but you admire those corpses that hunt for offerings and live in debauchery. You are not willing to suffer alongside Christ, but you gladly throw yourself into the arms of those reckless antichrists, though they only supply you with flesh, words, and control. Even now, your heart still turns toward them, toward their reputation, toward their status, toward their influence. And yet you continue to hold an attitude whereby you find the work of Christ hard to swallow and you are unwilling to accept it. This is why I say that you lack the faith to acknowledge Christ. The reason you have followed Him to this day is only because you had no other option. A series of lofty images are forever towering in your heart; you cannot forget their every word and deed, nor their influential words and hands. They are, in your heart, forever supreme and forever heroes. But this is not so for the Christ of today. He is forever insignificant in your heart, and forever undeserving of reverence. For He is far too ordinary, has far too little influence, and is far from lofty.

In any case, I say that all those who do not value the truth are nonbelievers and traitors to the truth. Such men shall never receive the approval of Christ. Have you now identified how much unbelief is within you, and how much betrayal of Christ you have? I exhort you thus: Since you have chosen the way of truth, then you should devote yourself wholeheartedly; do not be ambivalent or half-hearted. You should understand that God does not belong to the world nor

any one person, but to all those who truly believe in Him, all those who worship Him, and all those who are devoted and faithful to Him.

Excerpted from “Are You a True Believer in God?” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

It would be best for those people who claim to follow God to open their eyes and take a good look to see exactly who they believe in: Is it really God that you believe in, or Satan? If you know that what you believe in is not God, but your own idols, then it would be best if you did not claim to be a believer. If you really do not know who you believe in, then, again, it would be best if you did not claim to be a believer. To say so would be blasphemy! No one is forcing you to believe in God. Do not say you believe in Me; I have had enough of such talk, and do not wish to hear it again, because what you believe in are the idols in your hearts and the local bullies among you. Those who shake their heads when they hear the truth, who grin when they hear talk of death, are all the spawn of Satan, and they are the ones who will be eliminated. Many in the church have no discernment. When something deceptive occurs, they unexpectedly stand on the side of Satan; they even take offense at being called Satan's lackeys. Though people might say they have no discernment, they always stand on the side without truth, they never stand on the side of the truth at the critical time, they never stand up and argue for the truth. Do they truly lack discernment? Why do they unexpectedly take the side of Satan? Why do they never say one word that is fair and reasonable in support of the truth? Has this situation genuinely arisen as a result of their momentary confusion? The less discernment people have, the less able they are to stand on the side of truth. What does this show? Does it not show that people without discernment love evil? Does it not show that they are the loyal spawn of Satan? Why is it that they are always able to stand on the side of Satan and speak its language? Their every word and deed, the expressions on their faces, are all sufficient to prove that they are not any kind of lovers of the truth; rather, they are people who detest the truth. That they can stand on the side of Satan is enough to prove that Satan really loves these petty devils who spend their lives fighting for Satan's sake. Are all these facts not abundantly clear? If you truly are a person who loves the truth, then why have you no regard for those who practice the truth, and why do you immediately follow those who do not practice the truth at the slightest look from them? What kind of problem is this? I do not care whether you have discernment or not. I do not care how great a price you have paid. I do not care how great your forces are, and I do not care whether

you are a local bully or a flag-bearing leader. If your forces are great, then that is only with the help of Satan's strength. If your prestige is high, then that is merely because there are too many around you who do not practice the truth. If you have not been expelled, then that is because now is not the time for the work of expelling; rather, it is time for the work of elimination. There is no rush to expel you now. I am simply waiting for the day when I will punish you after you have been eliminated. Whoever does not practice the truth will be eliminated!

Excerpted from "A Warning to Those Who Do Not Practice the Truth" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

5. The consequences of someone's subjection to the deceit and control of the Pharisees and antichrists of the religious world, and whether they can be saved by God

Bible Verses for Reference:

"They be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch" (Mat 15:14).

"For the leaders of this people cause them to err; and they that are led of them are destroyed" (Isa 9:16).

"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge" (Hos 4:6).

Relevant Words of God:

What are the conditions a person must meet in order to receive salvation? First of all, they must possess the ability to identify satanic antichrists; they must have this aspect of the truth. It is only by possessing this aspect of the truth that they can genuinely believe in God and refrain from worshiping or following man; only people who can identify antichrists have the ability to truly believe in God and follow and bear witness to Him. In order to identify antichrists, people must first learn to see people and things with complete clarity and understanding; they must be able to perceive the essence of antichrists, and they must see through all of their conspiracies, tricks, inner motivations, and objectives. If you can do this, then you can stand firm. If you want to obtain salvation, then the first test you must pass is to learn how to defeat Satan and how to overcome and triumph over hostile forces and interference from the outside world. Once you

possess stature and sufficient truth to persevere to the end in a battle against Satan's forces, and have defeated them, then—and only then—can you seek the truth steadily, and only then can you step steadfastly and without mishap upon the path of seeking the truth and being granted salvation. If you cannot pass this test, then it can be said that you are in great danger, and you are liable to be captured by an antichrist and come to live under Satan's influence. ... So, if you want to get to where you can be granted salvation, the first test you must pass is one of being able to see through Satan, and you must also have the courage to stand up and expose and forsake Satan. Where, then, is Satan? Satan is at your side and all around you; it might even be living inside your heart. If you are living within Satan's disposition, it can be said that you belong to Satan. You cannot see or touch the Satan of the spiritual realm, but the Satan that exists in practical life is everywhere. Any person who detests the truth is evil, and any leader or worker who does not accept the truth is an antichrist and an evil person. Are such people not living Satans? These people might be the very ones you worship and look up to; they could be the people who lead you or the people you have long hoped for, admired, trusted and relied upon in your hearts. In fact, however, they are roadblocks standing in your way and hindering you from obtaining salvation; they are antichrists. They can take control of your life and the path you walk, and they can ruin your chance to be granted salvation. If you fail to identify them and see through them, then at any moment, you could plummet into their traps or be captured and taken away by them. Thus, you are in great danger. Are there many who can escape this danger? Have you escaped it? There are some who call themselves pursuers of the truth and say they do not fear the antichrists—is this not mere bluster? When you encounter an antichrist baring their fangs and brandishing their claws, poor of humanity and doing evil, you are certain to recognize them. Yet if there is an antichrist who appears fairly devout and is agreeable to people's notions, whose humanity is excellent, whose speech and action are very tactful, gentle, and considerate, you will not be able to see through them—but their behavior, thoughts, and views, as well as their ways of doing things and even their ways of understanding the truth, will all be able to affect you. What is the extent of their effect? They can affect the way you act, the path you walk, and your attitude toward God; in the end, they will become your idol and will hold a place in your heart, and you will be unable to rid yourself of them. When you are influenced to this extent, your hope of salvation may become quite slim. Were you worked by God and the truth to such an extent, that would be welcome and a good thing, but to be

controlled to such an extent by a person corrupted by Satan or Satan's ilk—would that be a disaster or a blessing for you? It would be a disaster for you and in no way a blessing. Though they may be able to give you a temporary path or temporarily provide for you, help you, edify you, and so on, and though this would seem of great benefit to you, as soon as they hold a certain place in your heart and can control and orchestrate your thoughts and views, such that they can even orchestrate your direction forward, then you are in trouble—you will then be under Satan's control. There are those who say of an antichrist, "He's not Satan! He's a spiritual person who pursues the truth!" Is that a valid statement? The guidance, help, and provision that any person who truly pursues the truth gives you—the influence or benefit they bring to you—brings you before God so that you may seek His words and the truth, and you come before God and learn to rely on Him and seek Him, and your relationship with Him grows closer and closer. By contrast, if it is your relationship with that person that grows closer and closer, what is happening? The path you are walking is now reversed, and you are heading the wrong way. What consequences does this lead to? Having been brought before man, you will be far away from God, and, as soon as God does something that does not benefit the idol whom you worship, you will revolt straight away. This is a common occurrence. When some leaders are replaced or, in some cases, expelled, their followers leave with them and stop believing. Is this not a common occurrence? How come they have stopped believing? They say, "If my leader can't be saved, what hope do I have?" Is this not muddled talk? How could they say such a thing? Their leader has deceived them. What is the consequence of being deceived? It is that they are already under their leader's control. Their leader's every word and action, every deed and movement, and any views their leader holds, they accept wholesale, and use them as benchmarks and examples, and regard them as the supreme truth. They therefore do not tolerate anyone saying their leader's words, actions, or views are wrong, or saying anything negative about them, or condemning and forming conclusions about them. As soon as the leader is expelled or dismissed, those whom they control leave with them, unshakeable in their conviction, and no amount of persuasion can bring them back. Are they not under their leader's control? Only under their control would you fight for justice on their behalf, or share their anxieties, their thoughts, their tears, and their grievances, going so far as no longer to acknowledge God. Their goal is to be your Lord, your God, the thing you depend on, so that you obey and follow them with docility at the pit of your heart, and you adopt an attitude of rejection toward God. You

will regard the antichrist as God, and you will have made them your Lord and God. To you, God will be nothing—that is the outcome. It is no use saying you are not worried about being deceived by an antichrist and that you do not fear following one, for if the path you walk is wrong, then this is the inevitable outcome. You cannot escape it and you cannot change this fact. As you walk along the path you have chosen, this outcome, bit by bit, floats to the surface and presents itself. By then, there is no room for any ambiguity—the outcome is inevitable.

Excerpted from “For Leaders and Workers, Choosing a Path Is of Utmost Importance (1)” in Records of Christ’s Talks

If a church contains several local bullies, and they are followed by “little flies” that entirely lack discernment, and if the congregants, even after having seen the truth, are still incapable of rejecting the binds and manipulation of these bullies, then all those fools will be eliminated in the end. These little flies might not have done anything terrible, but they are even more deceitful, even more slick and evasive, and everyone like this will be eliminated. Not a single one shall remain! Those who belong to Satan will be returned to Satan, while those who belong to God will surely go in search of the truth; this is decided by their natures. Let all those who follow Satan perish! No pity will be shown to such people. Let those who search for the truth be provided for, and may they take pleasure in God’s word to their hearts’ content. God is righteous; He would not show favoritism to anyone. If you are a devil, then you are incapable of practicing the truth; if you are someone who searches for the truth, then it is certain that you will not be taken captive by Satan. This is beyond all doubt.

Excerpted from “A Warning to Those Who Do Not Practice the Truth” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

The petty tricks of those without discernment will lead to their destruction at the hands of the wicked, they will be lured away by them, never to return. And such treatment is what they deserve, because they do not love the truth, because they are incapable of standing on the side of the truth, because they follow evil people and stand on the side of evil people, and because they collude with evil people and defy God. They know perfectly well that what those evil people radiate is evil, yet they harden their hearts and turn their backs on the truth to follow them. Are these people who do not practice the truth but who do destructive and abominable things not all committing evil? Although there are those among them who style themselves as kings and

others who follow them, are their God-defying natures not all the same? What excuse can they have to claim that God does not save them? What excuse can they have to claim that God is not righteous? Is it not their own evil that is destroying them? Is it not their own rebelliousness that is dragging them down into hell? People who practice the truth will, in the end, be saved and made perfect because of the truth. Those who do not practice the truth will, in the end, bring destruction upon themselves because of the truth. These are the ends that await those who practice the truth and those who do not.

Excerpted from “A Warning to Those Who Do Not Practice the Truth” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

No matter how many people believe in God, as soon as their beliefs are defined by Him as being those of a religion or group, He has already determined that they cannot be saved. Why do I say this? In a gang or crowd of people who are without the work and guidance of God, and who do not worship Him at all, whom do they worship? Whom do they follow? In form and name, they follow a person, but whom do they essentially follow? Deep down, they acknowledge God, but in fact, they are subject to human manipulation, arrangements, and control. They follow Satan, the devil; they follow the forces that are hostile to God and that are His enemies. Would God save a pack of people such as this? (No.) Why not? Are they capable of repentance? (No.) They are incapable of repentance. They wave the flag of faith, carrying out human enterprises and conducting their own management, and they run counter to God’s management plan for mankind’s salvation. Their final outcome is one of being detested and rejected by God; He could not possibly save these people, they could not possibly repent, they have already been captured by Satan—they are entirely in Satan’s hands. In your faith, does how many years you have believed in God matter to whether or not you are praised by Him? Do the rituals and regulations you abide by matter? Does God look at people’s methods of practice? Does He look at how many people there are? He has selected one portion of mankind; how does He measure whether they can and should be saved? He bases this decision on the paths these people walk. ... Regardless of how many sermons you have heard or how many truths you have understood, if, ultimately, you still follow humans and Satan, and in the end, if you are still incapable of following God’s way and unable to fear Him and shun evil, then such people will be detested and rejected by God. To all appearances, such people who are detested and rejected by God can talk much about letters and doctrines, and may have come to understand many truths, yet they

are incapable of worshiping God; they cannot fear God and shun evil, and are incapable of total submission to Him. In God's eyes, He defines them as part of a religion, as just a group of humans—a gang of humans—and as a lodging place for Satan. They are collectively referred to as Satan's gang, and these people are utterly despised by God.

Excerpted from "Only by Constantly Living Before God Can One Walk the Path to Salvation" in Records of Christ's Talks

It would be best for those people who claim to follow God to open their eyes and take a good look to see exactly who they believe in: Is it really God that you believe in, or Satan? If you know that what you believe in is not God, but your own idols, then it would be best if you did not claim to be a believer. If you really do not know who you believe in, then, again, it would be best if you did not claim to be a believer. To say so would be blasphemy! No one is forcing you to believe in God. Do not say you believe in Me; I have had enough of such talk, and do not wish to hear it again, because what you believe in are the idols in your hearts and the local bullies among you. Those who shake their heads when they hear the truth, who grin when they hear talk of death, are all the spawn of Satan, and they are the ones who will be eliminated. Many in the church have no discernment. When something deceptive occurs, they unexpectedly stand on the side of Satan; they even take offense at being called Satan's lackeys. Though people might say they have no discernment, they always stand on the side without truth, they never stand on the side of the truth at the critical time, they never stand up and argue for the truth. Do they truly lack discernment? Why do they unexpectedly take the side of Satan? Why do they never say one word that is fair and reasonable in support of the truth? Has this situation genuinely arisen as a result of their momentary confusion? The less discernment people have, the less able they are to stand on the side of truth. What does this show? Does it not show that people without discernment love evil? Does it not show that they are the loyal spawn of Satan? Why is it that they are always able to stand on the side of Satan and speak its language? Their every word and deed, the expressions on their faces, are all sufficient to prove that they are not any kind of lovers of the truth; rather, they are people who detest the truth. That they can stand on the side of Satan is enough to prove that Satan really loves these petty devils who spend their lives fighting for Satan's sake. Are all these facts not abundantly clear? If you truly are a person who loves the truth, then why have you no regard for those who practice the truth, and why do you

immediately follow those who do not practice the truth at the slightest look from them? What kind of problem is this? I do not care whether you have discernment or not. I do not care how great a price you have paid. I do not care how great your forces are, and I do not care whether you are a local bully or a flag-bearing leader. If your forces are great, then that is only with the help of Satan's strength. If your prestige is high, then that is merely because there are too many around you who do not practice the truth. If you have not been expelled, then that is because now is not the time for the work of expelling; rather, it is time for the work of elimination. There is no rush to expel you now. I am simply waiting for the day when I will punish you after you have been eliminated. Whoever does not practice the truth will be eliminated!

Excerpted from "A Warning to Those Who Do Not Practice the Truth" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

XVII. Why the True Way Has Suffered Persecution Since Ancient Times

1. Why the CCP government wildly suppresses and persecutes Almighty God and The Church of Almighty God

Bible Verses for Reference:

"This is an evil generation" (Luk 11:29).

"The whole world lies in wickedness" (1Jn 5:19).

"And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that does evil hates the light, neither comes to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved" (Jhn 3:19–20).

"And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceives the whole world" (Rev 12:9).

Relevant Words of God:

The manifestations of the great red dragon are resistance to Me, lack of understanding and comprehension of the meanings of My words, frequent persecution of Me, and seeking to use schemes to interrupt My management. Satan is manifested as follows: struggling with Me for

power, wanting to possess My chosen people, and releasing negative words to deceive My people. The manifestations of the devil (those who do not accept My name, who do not believe, are all devils) are as follows: coveting the pleasures of the flesh, indulging in evil lusts, living in bondage to Satan, some resisting Me and some supporting Me (but not proving they are My beloved sons). The manifestations of the archangel are as follows: speaking insolently, being ungodly, often adopting My tone to lecture people, focusing only on outwardly imitating Me, eating what I eat and using what I use; in short, wanting to be on equal footing with Me, being ambitious but lacking My caliber and not having My life, and being a piece of waste. Satan, the devil, and the archangel are all typical demonstrations of the great red dragon, so those who are not predestined and chosen by Me are all the offspring of the great red dragon: This is absolutely how it is! These are all My enemies. (However, Satan's disruptions are excluded. If your nature is My quality, no one can change it. Because now you still live in the flesh, occasionally you will be faced with Satan's temptations—this is inevitable—but you must always be careful.) Therefore, I will abandon all the offspring of the great red dragon outside of My firstborn sons. Their nature can never change—it is the quality of Satan. It is the devil that they manifest, and it is the archangel that they live out. This is completely true. The great red dragon I speak of is not a big red dragon; rather it is the evil spirit in opposition to Me, for which the “great red dragon” is a synonym. So, all the spirits other than the Holy Spirit are evil spirits, and can also be said to be the offspring of the great red dragon. This should all be crystal clear to everyone.

Excerpted from “Chapter 96” of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh

For thousands of years this has been the land of filth. It is unbearably dirty, misery abounds, ghosts run rampant everywhere, tricking and deceiving, making groundless accusations,^[1] being ruthless and vicious, trampling this ghost town and leaving it littered with dead bodies; the stench of decay covers the land and pervades the air, and it is heavily guarded.^[2] Who can see the world beyond the skies? The devil tightly trusses all of man's body, it puts out both his eyes, and seals his lips firmly shut. The king of devils has rampaged for several thousand years, right up until today, when it still keeps a close watch on the ghost town, as if it were an impenetrable palace of demons; this pack of watchdogs, meanwhile, stare with glaring eyes, deeply fearful that God will catch them unawares and wipe them all out, leaving them without a place of peace and happiness. How could the people of a ghost town such as this ever have

seen God? Have they ever enjoyed the dearness and loveliness of God? What appreciation have they of the matters of the human world? Who of them can understand God's eager will? Small wonder, then, that God incarnate remains completely hidden: In a dark society such as this, where the demons are merciless and inhumane, how could the king of devils, who kills people without batting an eye, tolerate the existence of a God who is lovely, kind, and also holy? How could it applaud and cheer the arrival of God? These lackeys! They repay kindness with hate, they have long since disdained God, they abuse God, they are savage in the extreme, they have not the slightest regard for God, they plunder and pillage, they have lost all conscience, they go against all conscience, and they tempt the innocent into senselessness. Forefathers of the ancient? Beloved leaders? They all oppose God! Their meddling has left all beneath heaven in a state of darkness and chaos! Religious freedom? The legitimate rights and interests of citizens? They are all tricks for covering up sin! Who has embraced the work of God? Who has laid down their life or shed blood for the work of God? For generation after generation, from parents to children, enslaved man has unceremoniously enslaved God—how could this not incite fury? Thousands of years of hate are concentrated in the heart, millennia of sinfulness are inscribed upon the heart—how could this not inspire loathing? Avenge God, completely snuff out His enemy, do not allow it to run rampant any longer, and do not permit it to kick up as much trouble as it wishes anymore! Now is the time: Man has long since gathered all his strength, he has devoted all his efforts and paid every price for this, to tear off the hideous face of this demon and allow people, who have been blinded, and who have endured every manner of suffering and hardship, to rise up from their pain and turn their backs on this evil old devil. Why put up such an impenetrable obstacle to the work of God? Why employ various tricks to deceive God's folk? Where is the true freedom and the legitimate rights and interests? Where is the fairness? Where is the comfort? Where is the warmth? Why use deceitful schemes to trick God's people? Why use force to suppress the coming of God? Why not allow God to freely roam upon the earth that He created? Why hound God until He has nowhere to rest His head? Where is the warmth among men? Where is the welcome among people? Why cause such desperate yearning in God? Why make God call out again and again? Why force God to worry for His beloved Son? In this dark society, why do its sorry guard dogs not allow God to freely come and go among the world which He created?

Excerpted from "Work and Entry (8)" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Knowledge of ancient culture has surreptitiously stolen man from the presence of God and turned him over to the king of devils and its progeny. The Four Books and Five Classics^[a] have taken man's thinking and notions into another age of rebellion, causing him to give even greater adulation than before to those who compiled the Book/Classic of Documents, and as a result to further exacerbate his notions about God. Unbeknownst to man, the king of devils heartlessly cast God out from his heart and then occupied it itself with triumphant glee. Since that time, man became possessed of an ugly and wicked soul and of the countenance of the king of devils. A hatred of God filled his chest, and the spiteful malice of the king of devils spread within man day after day until he was utterly consumed. Man no longer had the least bit of freedom and had no way of breaking free from the toils of the king of devils. He had no choice but to be taken captive on the spot, to surrender and fall down in submission in its presence. Long ago, when man's heart and soul was still in its infancy, the king of devils planted in it the seed of the tumor of atheism, teaching him such fallacies as "study science and technology; realize the Four Modernizations; and there is no such thing as God in the world." Not only that, it shouts out at every opportunity: "Let us rely on our industrious labor to build a beautiful homeland," asking each and every person to be prepared from childhood to render faithful service to their country. Man, unwitting, was brought into its presence, where it unhesitatingly arrogated all the credit (meaning the credit belonging to God for holding all of mankind in His hands) unto itself. Never did it have any sense of shame. Moreover, it shamelessly seized God's people and dragged them back into its house, where it leaped like a mouse onto the table and had man worship it as God. What a desperado! It cries out scandalous, shocking things, such as: "There is no such thing as God in the world. The wind comes from transformations according to natural laws; rain comes when water vapor, meeting with cold temperatures, condenses into drops that fall to earth; an earthquake is the shaking of the surface of the earth due to geological changes; drought is due to dryness in the air caused by nucleonic disruption on the sun's surface. These are natural phenomena. Where, in all this, is there an act of God?" There are even those who shout out statements like the following, statements that should not be given voice: "Man evolved from apes in the ancient past, and the world today comes from a succession of primitive societies starting from approximately an eon ago. Whether a country flourishes or declines rests entirely in the hands of its people." In the background, it makes man hang it on the wall or place it on

the table to pay homage and make offerings to it. At the same time that it cries out, “There is no God,” it sets itself up as God, with summary roughness pushing God out of the bounds of the earth, while standing in God’s place and taking up the role of the king of devils. How utterly lost to reason! It makes one hate it to the very bone. It seems that God and it are sworn enemies, and the two cannot coexist. It schemes to chase God away while it roams free, outside the reach of law.^[3] Such a king of devils it is! How can its existence be tolerated? It will not rest until it has made a mess of God’s work and left it all in a complete shambles,^[4] as if it wants to oppose God to the bitter end, until either the fish dies or the net breaks, deliberately setting itself against God and pressing in ever closer. Its hideous face having long since been completely unmasked, it is now bruised and battered^[5] and in a sorry condition, yet still it will not relent in its hatred of God, as if only by devouring God in one mouthful will it be able to relieve the hatred pent up in its heart. How can we tolerate it, this enemy of God! Only its eradication and complete extermination will bring our life’s wish to fruition. How can it be allowed to continue running rampant? It has corrupted man to such a degree that man does not know the heavensun, and has become deadened and devoid of feeling. Man has lost normal human reason. Why not offer up our whole being to destroy it and burn it up to eliminate all worries for the future and allow the work of God to sooner reach unprecedented splendor? This gang of scoundrels has come into the world of men and reduced it to turmoil. They have brought all of humanity to the edge of a precipice, secretly planning to push them over to be dashed to pieces so that they may then devour their corpses. They vainly hope to break up God’s plan and enter into a match with Him, staking everything on a single throw of the dice.^[6] That is by no means easy! The cross has been prepared, after all, for the king of devils, who is guilty of the most heinous crimes. God does not belong to the cross. He has already tossed it aside for the devil. God has long before now emerged victorious and no longer feels sorrow over the sins of mankind, but will bring salvation to all mankind.

Excerpted from “Work and Entry (7)” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

From top to bottom and from beginning to end, Satan has been disrupting the work of God and acting in opposition to Him. All this talk of “ancient cultural heritage,” valuable “knowledge of ancient culture,” “teachings of Taoism and Confucianism,” and “Confucian classics and feudal rites” has taken man into hell. Advanced modern-day science and technology, as well as highly

developed industry, agriculture, and business are nowhere to be seen. Rather, all it does is emphasize the feudal rites propagated by the “apes” of ancient times in order to deliberately disrupt, oppose, and dismantle the work of God. Not only has it continued to afflict man until this day, but it even wants to swallow^[7] man whole. The transmission of the moral and ethical teachings of feudalism and the passing down of the knowledge of ancient culture have long infected humanity, turning them into devils big and small. Few are those who would gladly receive God, few who would jubilantly welcome His coming. The face of all humanity is filled with murderous intent, and in every place, a killing breath pervades the air. They seek to cast God out from this land; with knives and swords in hand, they arrange themselves in battle formation to “annihilate” God. All across this land of the devil, where man is constantly taught there is no God, idols are spread, and the air above is permeated by a nauseating odor of burning paper and incense, so thick as to be suffocating. It is like the stench of sludge that wafts up with the writhing of the poisonous serpent, so much so that one cannot keep from vomiting. Besides this, there can faintly be heard the sound of evil demons chanting scriptures, a sound which seems to be coming from faraway in hell, so much so that one cannot keep from shivering. Everywhere in this land are placed idols of all colors of the rainbow, turning the land into a world of sensual delights, while the king of devils keeps laughing wickedly, as if its dastardly plot has succeeded. Meanwhile, man remains completely oblivious, and nor has he any inkling that the devil has already corrupted him to the point where he has become senseless and hangs his head in defeat. It wishes, in one fell swoop, to wipe out everything about God, and once again to defile and assassinate Him; it is intent upon tearing down and disrupting His work. How can it allow God to be of equal status? How can it tolerate God “interfering” with its work among men on earth? How can it allow God to unmask its hideous face? How can it allow God to put its work in disarray? How can this devil, apoplectic with rage, allow God to have control over its imperial court on the earth? How can it willingly bow down to His superior might? Its hideous countenance has been revealed for what it is, so that one knows not whether to laugh or cry, and it is truly difficult to speak of. Is this not its substance? With an ugly soul, it still believes that it is beautiful beyond belief. This gang of accomplices in crime!^[8] They come down into the mortal realm to indulge in pleasures and cause a commotion, stirring things up so much that the world becomes a fickle and inconstant place and the heart of man is filled with panic and unease, and they have toyed with man so much that his appearance has become that of an

inhuman beast of the field, supremely ugly, and from which the last trace of the original holy man has been lost. Furthermore, they even wish to assume sovereign power on earth. They impede the work of God so much that it can barely inch forward, and they close man off as tightly as walls of copper and steel. Having committed so many grievous sins and caused so many disasters, are they still expecting something other than chastisement? Demons and evil spirits have been running amok on earth for a time, and have sealed off both the will and the painstaking effort of God so tightly that they are impenetrable. Truly, this is a mortal sin! How can God not feel anxious? How can God not feel wrathful? They have gravely hindered and opposed the work of God: How rebellious!

Excerpted from “Work and Entry (7)” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Satan builds its reputation through deceiving people, and often establishes itself as a vanguard and role model of righteousness. Under false pretenses of safeguarding righteousness, it harms people, devours their souls, and uses all sorts of means to benumb, deceive and incite man. Its goal is to make man approve of and go along with its evil conduct, to make man join it in opposing God’s authority and sovereignty. However, when one sees through its schemes and plots and sees through to its vile features, and when one does not wish to continue to be trampled upon and fooled by it or to continue slaving away for it, or to be punished and destroyed alongside it, then Satan changes its previously saintly features and tears off its false mask to reveal its true face, which is evil, vicious, ugly and savage. It would love nothing more than to exterminate all those who refuse to follow it and who oppose its evil forces. At this point Satan can no longer assume a trustworthy, gentlemanly appearance; instead, its true ugly and devilish features are revealed under sheep’s clothing. Once Satan’s schemes are brought to light and its true features exposed, it will fly into a rage and expose its barbarity. After this, its desire to harm and devour people will only be intensified. This is because it is enraged when man awakens to the truth, and it develops a powerful vindictiveness toward man for their aspiration to yearn for freedom and light and to break free of its prison. Its rage is intended to defend and uphold its evil, and it is also a true revelation of its savage nature.

In every matter, Satan’s behavior exposes its evil nature. Out of all the evil acts that Satan has carried out upon man—from its early efforts to delude man into following it, to its exploitation of man, in which it drags man into its evil deeds, to its vindictiveness toward man

after its true features have been exposed and man has recognized and forsaken it—not one of these acts fails to expose Satan’s evil essence, nor to prove the fact that Satan has no relation to positive things and that Satan is the source of all evil things. Every single one of its actions safeguards its evil, maintains the continuation of its evil acts, goes against just and positive things, and ruins the laws and order of humanity’s normal existence. These acts of Satan are hostile to God, and they will be destroyed by God’s wrath. Although Satan has its own rage, its rage is just a means of venting its evil nature. The reason why Satan is exasperated and furious is this: Its unspeakable schemes have been exposed; its plots are not easily gotten away with; its wild ambition and desire to replace God and act as God have been struck down and blocked; and its goal of controlling all of humanity has now come to nothing and can never be achieved.

Excerpted from “God Himself, the Unique II” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Footnotes:

1. “Making groundless accusations” refers to the methods by which the devil harms people.
2. “Heavily guarded” indicates that the methods by which the devil afflicts people are especially vicious, and control people so much that they have no room to move.
3. “Roams free, outside the reach of law” indicates that the devil goes berserk and runs amok.
4. “A complete shambles” refers to how the devil’s violent behavior is unbearable to see.
5. “Bruised and battered” refers to the ugly face of the king of devils.
6. “Staking everything on a single throw of the dice” means placing all one’s money on a single bet in hopes of winning in the end. This is a metaphor for the devil’s sinister and nefarious schemes. The expression is used mockingly.
7. “Swallow” refers to the vicious behavior of the king of devils, which ravishes people in their entirety.
8. “Accomplices in crime” are of the same ilk as “a band of hoodlums.”
 - a. The Four Books and Five Classics are the authoritative books of Confucianism in China.

2. Why the religious world has always denied, rejected, and condemned Christ
Bible Verses for Reference:

“Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man does many miracles. If we let Him thus alone, all men will believe on Him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation. ... Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put Him to death” (Jhn 11:47–53).

“For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist” (2Jn 1:7).

“Hereby know you the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesses not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof you have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world” (1Jn 4:2–3).

Relevant Words of God:

Do you wish to know the root of why the Pharisees opposed Jesus? Do you wish to know the essence of the Pharisees? They were full of fantasies about the Messiah. What is more, they believed only that the Messiah would come, yet did not seek the life truth. And so, even today they still await the Messiah, for they have no knowledge of the way of life, and do not know what the way of truth is. How, say you, could such foolish, stubborn and ignorant people gain God’s blessing? How could they behold the Messiah? They opposed Jesus because they did not know the direction of the Holy Spirit’s work, because they did not know the way of truth spoken by Jesus, and, furthermore, because they did not understand the Messiah. And since they had never seen the Messiah and had never been in the company of the Messiah, they made the mistake of clinging in vain to the name of the Messiah while opposing the essence of the Messiah by any means possible. These Pharisees in essence were stubborn, arrogant, and did not obey the truth. The principle of their belief in God was: No matter how profound Your preaching, no matter how high Your authority, You are not Christ unless You are called the Messiah. Are these views not preposterous and ridiculous? I will ask you further: Is it not extremely easy for you to commit the mistakes of the earliest Pharisees, given that you have not the slightest understanding of Jesus? Are you able to discern the way of truth? Can you truly guarantee that you will not oppose Christ? Are you able to follow the work of the Holy Spirit? If you do not know whether you will oppose Christ, then I say that you are already living on the brink of death. Those who did not know the Messiah were all capable of opposing Jesus, of rejecting Jesus, of

slandering Him. People who do not understand Jesus are all capable of rejecting Him and reviling Him. Moreover, they are capable of seeing the return of Jesus as the deceit of Satan, and more people shall condemn Jesus returned to flesh. Does not all of this make you afraid? What you face shall be blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, the ruination of the words of the Holy Spirit to the churches, and the spurning of all that is expressed by Jesus. What can you gain from Jesus if you are so befuddled? How can you understand the work of Jesus when He returns to flesh on a white cloud, if you obstinately refuse to realize your errors? I tell you this: People who do not receive the truth, yet blindly await the arrival of Jesus upon white clouds, will surely blaspheme against the Holy Spirit, and they are the category that shall be destroyed. You merely wish for the grace of Jesus, and merely want to enjoy the blissful realm of heaven, yet you have never obeyed the words spoken by Jesus, and have never received the truth expressed by Jesus when He returns to flesh. What will you hold up in exchange for the fact of Jesus' return upon a white cloud? Is it the sincerity in which you repeatedly commit sins, and then speak your confession, over and over? What will you offer in sacrifice to Jesus who returns upon a white cloud? Is it the years of work with which you exalt yourselves? What will you hold up to make the returned Jesus trust you? Is it that arrogant nature of yours, which does not obey any truth?

Excerpted from "By the Time You Behold the Spiritual Body of Jesus, God Will Have Made Heaven and Earth Anew" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Man has been corrupted and lives in Satan's trap. All people live in the flesh, live in selfish desires, and there is not a single one among them who is compatible with Me. There are those who say that they are compatible with Me, but such people all worship vague idols. Although they acknowledge My name as holy, they tread a path that runs contrary to Me, and their words are full of arrogance and self-confidence. This is because, at root, they are all against Me and incompatible with Me. Every day, they seek traces of Me in the Bible and find "suitable" passages at random which they read endlessly and recite as scriptures. They do not know how to be compatible with Me nor what it means to be against Me. They merely read scriptures blindly. Within the Bible, they constrain a vague God that they have never seen, and are incapable of seeing, and take it out to look at at their leisure. They believe in My existence only within the scope of the Bible, and they equate Me with the Bible; without the Bible there is no Me, and without Me there is no Bible. They pay no heed to My existence or actions, but instead

devote extreme and special attention to each and every word of Scripture. Many more even believe that I should not do anything I wish to do unless it is foretold by Scripture. They attach too much importance to Scripture. It can be said that they see words and expressions as too important, to the extent that they use verses from the Bible to measure every word I say and to condemn Me. What they seek is not the way of compatibility with Me or the way of compatibility with the truth, but the way of compatibility with the words of the Bible, and they believe that anything that does not conform to the Bible is, without exception, not My work. Are such people not the dutiful descendants of the Pharisees? The Jewish Pharisees used the law of Moses to condemn Jesus. They did not seek compatibility with the Jesus of that time, but diligently followed the law to the letter, to the extent that—after having charged Him with not following the law of the Old Testament and not being the Messiah—they ultimately nailed the innocent Jesus to the cross. What was their substance? Was it not that they didn't seek the way of compatibility with the truth? They obsessed over each and every word of Scripture while paying heed neither to My will nor to the steps and methods of My work. They were not people who sought the truth, but people who rigidly clung to words; they were not people who believed in God, but people who believed in the Bible. Essentially, they were watchdogs of the Bible. In order to safeguard the interests of the Bible, to uphold the dignity of the Bible, and to protect the reputation of the Bible, they went so far as to nail the merciful Jesus to the cross. This they did merely for the sake of defending the Bible, and for the sake of maintaining the status of each and every word of the Bible in people's hearts. So they preferred to forsake their future and the sin offering to condemn Jesus, who did not conform to the doctrine of Scripture, to death. Were they not all lackeys to each and every word of Scripture?

And what of people today? Christ has come to release the truth, yet they would rather expel Him from this world so that they may gain entry into heaven and receive grace. They would rather completely deny the coming of the truth in order to safeguard the interests of the Bible, and they would rather nail the Christ returned to flesh to the cross again in order to ensure the everlasting existence of the Bible. How can man receive My salvation when his heart is so malicious and his nature so antagonistic toward Me? I live among man, yet man does not know of My existence. When I shine My light upon man, he still remains ignorant of My existence. When I unleash My wrath upon man, he denies My existence with even greater vigor. Man searches for compatibility with words and compatibility with the Bible, yet not a single person

comes before Me to seek the way of compatibility with the truth. Man looks up to Me in heaven and devotes particular concern to My existence in heaven, yet no one cares about Me in the flesh, for I who live among man am simply too insignificant. Those who only seek compatibility with the words of the Bible and who only seek compatibility with a vague God are a wretched sight to Me. That is because what they worship are dead words, and a God that is capable of giving them untold treasures; what they worship is a God that would lay Himself at the mercy of man—a God who does not exist. What, then, can such people gain from Me? Man is simply too lowly for words. Those who are against Me, who make limitless demands of Me, who have no love of the truth, who are rebellious toward Me—how could they be compatible with Me?

Excerpted from “You Should Seek the Way of Compatibility With Christ” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Why do I say that those in the religious world are not believers in God but are evildoers, of the same ilk as the devil? When I say they are evildoers, it is because they do not understand the will of God and are unable to see His wisdom. God at no time reveals His work to them. They are blind; they cannot see the deeds of God, they have been forsaken by God, and they completely lack the care and protection of God, not to mention the work of the Holy Spirit. Those without the work of God are all evildoers and opponents of God. The opposition to God of which I speak refers to those who do not know God, those who acknowledge God with their lips and yet do not know Him, those who follow God and yet do not obey Him, and those who revel in the grace of God and yet are unable to stand witness to Him. Without an understanding of the purpose of God’s work or an understanding of the work that God does in man, he cannot be in accord with the will of God, nor can he stand witness to God. The reason why man opposes God stems, on the one hand, from his corrupt disposition, and on the other hand, from ignorance of God and lack of understanding of the principles by which God works and of His will for man. These two aspects, taken together, constitute a history of man’s resistance to God. Novices in the faith oppose God because such opposition lies within their nature, while the opposition to God of those with many years in the faith results from their ignorance of Him, in addition to their corrupt disposition. In the time before God became flesh, the measure of whether a man opposed God was based on whether he kept the decrees set forth by God in heaven. For instance, in the Age of Law, whoever did not keep the laws of Jehovah was regarded as one who opposed God; whoever stole the offerings to Jehovah, or whoever stood against

those favored by Jehovah, was regarded as one who opposed God and would be stoned to death; whoever did not respect his father and mother, and whoever struck or cursed another, was regarded as one who did not keep the laws. And all who did not keep the laws of Jehovah were regarded as standing against Him. This was no longer so in the Age of Grace, when whoever stood against Jesus was regarded as one who stood against God, and whoever did not obey the words uttered by Jesus was regarded as one who stood against God. At this time, the way in which opposition to God was defined became both more accurate and more practical. In the time when God had not yet become flesh, the measure of whether man opposed God was based on whether man worshiped and looked up to the invisible God in heaven. The way in which opposition to God was defined at that time was not all that practical, for man could not see God, nor did he know what the image of God was like, or how He worked and spoke. Man had no notions about God whatsoever, and he believed in God vaguely, because God had not yet appeared to man. Therefore, no matter how man believed in God in his imagination, God did not condemn man or make too many demands of him, because man was completely unable to see God. When God becomes flesh and comes to work among men, all behold Him and hear His words, and all see the deeds that God works from within His body of flesh. At that moment, all man's notions become foam. As for those who have seen God appearing in the flesh, they shall not be condemned if they willingly obey Him, whereas those who purposefully stand against Him shall be deemed an opponent of God. Such people are antichrists, enemies who willfully stand against God. Those who harbor notions regarding God but are still ready and willing to obey Him will not be condemned. God condemns man on the basis of man's intentions and actions, never for his thoughts and ideas. If He were to condemn man on the basis of his thoughts and ideas, then not a single person would be able to escape from the wrathful hands of God. Those who willfully stand against the incarnate God shall be punished for their disobedience. With regard to these people that willfully stand against God, their opposition stems from the fact that they harbor notions about God, which leads them in turn into actions that disrupt God's work. These people intentionally resist and destroy the work of God. They do not merely have notions about God, but they also engage in activities that disrupt His work, and for this reason people of this kind shall be condemned. Those who do not willfully disrupt God's work shall not be condemned as sinners, because they are able to willingly obey and not engage in activities that cause disruption and disturbance. People like this shall not be condemned.

Excerpted from “All People Who Do Not Know God Are People Who Oppose God” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Anyone who does not understand the purpose of God’s work is one who opposes Him, and one who has come to understand the purpose of God’s work but still does not seek to satisfy God is even more to be deemed an opponent of God. There are those who read the Bible in grand churches and recite it all day long, yet not one among them understands the purpose of God’s work. Not one among them is able to know God; still less can any one among them accord with God’s will. They are all worthless, vile people, each standing on high to lecture God. They willfully oppose God even as they carry His banner. Claiming faith in God, still they eat the flesh and drink the blood of man. All such people are devils that devour the soul of man, head demons that deliberately get in the way of those trying to step onto the right path, and stumbling blocks impeding those who seek God. They may appear of “sound constitution,” but how are their followers to know that they are none other than antichrists who lead people to stand against God? How are their followers to know that they are living devils dedicated to the devouring of human souls? Those who hold themselves in high esteem in God’s presence are the most abject of men, while those who humble themselves are the most honored. And those who think they know the work of God and who are, moreover, capable of proclaiming the work of God to others with great fanfare even as they look directly at Him—these are the most ignorant of men. Such people are without the testimony of God, arrogant and full of conceit. Those who believe that they have too little knowledge of God, despite having actual experience and practical knowledge of Him, are those most beloved by Him. Only such people truly have testimony and are truly capable of being perfected by God.

Excerpted from “All People Who Do Not Know God Are People Who Oppose God” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Demons and evil spirits have been running amok on earth for a time, and have sealed off both the will and the painstaking effort of God so tightly that they are impenetrable. Truly, this is a mortal sin! How can God not feel anxious? How can God not feel wrathful? They have gravely hindered and opposed the work of God: How rebellious! Even those demons, big and small, behave like jackals at the heels of the lion, and follow the evil current, contriving

disturbances as they go. Knowing the truth, they deliberately oppose it, these sons of rebellion! It is as if, now that their king of hell has ascended to the kingly throne, they have become smug and complacent, treating all others with contempt. How many among them seek the truth and follow righteousness? They are all beasts, no better than pigs and dogs, at the head of a gang of stinking flies, wagging their heads in smug self-congratulation and stirring up all kinds of trouble,^[1] in the middle of a dung heap. They believe that their king of hell is the greatest king of all, little knowing that they themselves are no more than stinking flies. And yet, they take advantage of the power of the pigs and dogs they have for parents to malign the existence of God. As diminutive flies, they believe their parents to be as large as toothed whales.^[2] Little do they know that, while they themselves are tiny, their parents are unclean pigs and dogs hundreds of millions of times larger than they. Unaware of their own lowliness, they rely on the stench of putrefaction exuded by those pigs and dogs to run amok, vainly thinking to procreate future generations, oblivious to shame! With green wings upon their backs (this refers to their claiming to believe in God), they are full of themselves and boast everywhere of their own beauty and allure, while they secretly fling the impurities on their own bodies onto man. Furthermore, they are exceedingly pleased with themselves, as if they can use a pair of rainbow-colored wings to conceal their own impurities, and by these means they bring their oppression to bear on the existence of the true God (this refers to what goes on behind the scenes in the religious world). How would man know that, as enchantingly beautiful as the wings of a fly may be, the fly itself is after all no more than a tiny creature, with a belly full of filth and a body covered with germs? On the strength of the pigs and dogs they have for parents, they run amok across the land (this refers to the way in which the religious officials who persecute God rely on the strong backing of the government of the nation to rebel against the true God and the truth), unrestrained in their savagery. It is as if the ghosts of the Jewish Pharisees have returned along with God to the nation of the great red dragon, back to their old nest. They have begun yet another round of persecution, picking up their work of several thousand years ago. This group of degenerates is sure to perish on earth in the end! It would appear that, after several millennia, the unclean spirits have become even more crafty and sly. They are constantly thinking of ways to undermine the work of God in secret. With tricks and wiles galore, they wish to reenact in their homeland the tragedy of several thousand years ago, goading God nearly to the point of crying out. He can hardly keep Himself from returning to the third heaven to annihilate them.

Footnotes:

1. “Stirring up all kinds of trouble” refers to how people who are demonic run riot, obstructing and opposing the work of God.
2. “Toothed whales” is used mockingly. It is a metaphor for how flies are so small that pigs and dogs appear as big as whales to them.

XVIII. Whether God Is the Triune God or the One True God

1. Whether the true God who created the heavens and earth and all things is one or three

Bible Verses for Reference:

“Hear, O Israel: Jehovah our God is one LORD” (Deu 6:4).

“Jesus said to him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man comes to the Father, but by Me. If you had known Me, you should have known My Father also: and from now on you know Him, and have seen Him. Philip said to Him, Lord, show us the Father, and it suffices us. Jesus said to him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet have you not known Me, Philip? he that has seen Me has seen the Father; and how say you then, Show us the Father? Believe you not that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? the words that I speak to you I speak not of Myself: but the Father that dwells in Me, He does the works. Believe Me that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me: or else believe Me for the very works’ sake” (Jhn 14:6–11).

“I and My Father are one” (Jhn 10:30).

Relevant Words of God:

God is the One who rules over all things and administers all things. He created all that there is, He administers all that there is, He rules over all that there is, and He provides for all that there is. This is the status of God, and it is His identity. For all things and all that there is, God’s true identity is the Creator and the Ruler of all of creation. Such is the identity possessed by God, and He is unique among all things. None of God’s creatures—whether they be among

mankind or in the spiritual world—can use any means or excuse to impersonate or replace God’s identity and status, for there is only One, among all things, who is possessed of this identity, power, authority, and ability to rule over creation: our unique God Himself. He lives and moves among all things; He can rise to the highest place, above all things. He can humble Himself by becoming human, becoming one among those of flesh and blood, coming face-to-face with people and sharing weal and woe with them, while at the same time, He commands all that there is, deciding the fate of all that there is and in what direction it all moves. Moreover, He guides the fate of all mankind, and steers the direction of mankind. A God such as this should be worshiped, obeyed, and known by all living beings. Thus, regardless of which group or type among mankind you belong to, believing in God, following God, revering God, accepting His rule, and accepting His arrangements for your fate is the only choice—the necessary choice—for any person and for any living being. In God’s uniqueness, people see that His authority, His righteous disposition, His essence, and the means by which He provides to all things are all completely unique; this uniqueness determines the true identity of God Himself, and it also determines His status. Therefore, among all creatures, if any living being in the spiritual world or among mankind wished to stand in God’s stead, success would be impossible, as would be that of any attempt to impersonate God. This is fact.

Excerpted from “God Himself, the Unique X” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

There is only one God, only one person in this God, and only one Spirit of God, much as it is written down in the Bible that “There is only one Holy Spirit and only one God.” Regardless of whether the Father and the Son of which you speak exist, there is only one God after all, and the essence of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit you believe in is the essence of the Holy Spirit. In other words, God is a Spirit, but He is able to become flesh and live among men, as well as to be above all things. His Spirit is all-inclusive and omnipresent. He can simultaneously be in the flesh and in and above the universe. Since all people say that God is the only one true God, then there is a single God, divisible at will by none! God is only one Spirit, and only one person; and that is the Spirit of God.

Excerpted from “Does the Trinity Exist?” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

This may call to mind for most people the words of God from Genesis: “Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness.” Given that God says let “Us” make man in “Our” image, then “Us” indicates two or more; since He stated “Us,” then there is not just one God. In this way, man began to think in the abstract of distinct persons, and from these words arose the idea of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. What then is the Father like? What is the Son like? And what is the Holy Spirit like? Could it possibly be that the mankind of today was made in the image of one joined together from three? Then is the image of man like that of the Father, the Son, or the Holy Spirit? Which of the persons of God is man in the image of? This idea of man’s is simply incorrect and nonsensical! It can only split one God into several Gods. At the time that Moses wrote Genesis, it was after mankind was created following the creation of the world. In the very beginning, when the world began, Moses did not exist. And it was not until much later that Moses wrote the Bible, so how could he have possibly known what it was that God in heaven spoke? He had not an inkling of how God created the world. In the Old Testament of the Bible, there is no mention of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, only of the one true God, Jehovah, carrying out His work in Israel. He is called by different names as the age changes, but this cannot prove that each name refers to a different person. If this were so, then would there not be innumerable persons in God? What is written in the Old Testament is the work of Jehovah, a stage of work of God Himself for commencement in the Age of Law. It was the work of God, and as He spoke, it was, and as He commanded, it stood. At no time did Jehovah say that He was the Father come to carry out work, nor did He ever prophesy the Son coming to redeem mankind. When it came to the time of Jesus, it was only said that God had become flesh to redeem all mankind, not that it was the Son who had come. Because the ages are not alike and the work that God Himself does also differs, He needs to carry out His work within different realms. In this way, the identity He represents also differs. Man believes that Jehovah is the Father of Jesus, but this was actually not acknowledged by Jesus, who said: “We were never distinguished as Father and Son; I and the Father in heaven are one. The Father is in Me and I am in the Father; when man sees the Son, they are seeing the heavenly Father.” When all has been said, be it the Father or the Son, They are one Spirit, not divided into separate persons. Once man attempts to explain, matters are complicated with the idea of distinct persons, as well as the relationship between Father, Son, and Spirit. When man speaks of separate persons, does this not materialize God? Man even ranks the persons as first, second, and third; these are all

but the imaginings of man, not worthy of reference, and utterly unrealistic! If you asked him: "How many Gods are there?" he would say that God is the Trinity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit: the one true God. If you asked again: "Who is the Father?" he would say: "The Father is the Spirit of God in heaven; He is in charge of all, and is the Master of heaven." "Then is Jehovah the Spirit?" He would say: "Yes!" If you then asked him, "Who is the Son?" he would say that Jesus is the Son, of course. "Then what is the story of Jesus? From whence did He come?" He would say: "Jesus was born to Mary through the conception of the Holy Spirit." Then is His essence not the Spirit as well? Is not His work also representative of the Holy Spirit? Jehovah is the Spirit, and so too is the essence of Jesus. Now in the last days, needless to say it is still the Spirit at work; how could They be different persons? Is it not simply the Spirit of God carrying out the work of the Spirit from different perspectives? As such, there is no distinction between persons. Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit, and indubitably, His work was precisely that of the Holy Spirit. In the first stage of work carried out by Jehovah, He neither became flesh nor appeared to man. So man never saw His appearance. No matter how great and how tall He was, He was still the Spirit, God Himself who first created man. That is, He was the Spirit of God. When He spoke to man from among the clouds, He was merely a Spirit. None witnessed His appearance; only in the Age of Grace when the Spirit of God came into the flesh and was incarnated in Judea did man see for the first time the image of the incarnation as a Jew. The feeling of Jehovah could not be sensed. However, He was conceived by the Holy Spirit, that is, conceived by the Spirit of Jehovah Himself, and Jesus was still born as the embodiment of the Spirit of God. What man first saw was the Holy Spirit descending like a dove upon Jesus; it was not the Spirit exclusive to Jesus, but rather the Holy Spirit. Then can the Spirit of Jesus be separated from the Holy Spirit? If Jesus is Jesus, the Son, and the Holy Spirit is the Holy Spirit, then how could They be one? The work could not be carried out if so. The Spirit within Jesus, the Spirit in heaven, and the Spirit of Jehovah are all one. It can be called the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of God, the sevenfold intensified Spirit, and the all-inclusive Spirit. The Spirit of God can carry out much work. He is able to create the world and destroy it by flooding the earth; He can redeem all mankind, and moreover, He can conquer and destroy all mankind. This work is all carried out by God Himself and cannot have been done by any other of the persons of God in His stead. His Spirit can be called by the name of Jehovah and Jesus, as well as the Almighty. He is the Lord, and Christ. He can also become the Son of man. He is in the heavens and also

on the earth; He is on high above the universes and among the multitude. He is the only Master of the heavens and earth! From the time of creation until now, this work has been carried out by the Spirit of God Himself. Be it the work in the heavens or in the flesh, all is carried out by His own Spirit. All creatures, whether in heaven or on earth, are in the palm of His almighty hand; all of this is the work of God Himself and can be done by no other in His stead. In the heavens, He is the Spirit but also God Himself; among men, He is flesh but remains God Himself. Though He may be called by hundreds of thousands of names, He is still Himself, and all the work is the direct expression of His Spirit. The redemption of all mankind through His crucifixion was the direct work of His Spirit, and so too is the proclamation unto all nations and all lands during the last days. At all times, God can only be called the almighty and one true God, the all-inclusive God Himself. The distinct persons do not exist, much less this idea of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. There is only one God in heaven and on earth!

Excerpted from "Does the Trinity Exist?" in The Word Appears in the Flesh

2. Why it is said that "the triune God" is the most absurd phrase

Relevant Words of God:

After the truth of Jesus become flesh came to be, man believed this: Not only the Father is in heaven, but also the Son, and even the Spirit. This is the conventional notion man holds, that there is a God such as this in heaven: a triune God who is the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. All mankind has these notions: God is one God, but comprises three parts, what all those grievously entrenched in conventional notions deem to be the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Only those three parts made one is all of God. Without the Holy Father, God would not be whole. Similarly, neither would God be whole without the Son or the Holy Spirit. In their notions, they believe that neither the Father alone nor the Son alone can be deemed God. Only the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit together can be deemed God Himself. Now, all religious believers, and even each follower among you, hold this belief. Yet, as for whether this belief is correct, none can explain, for you are always in a fog of confusion about the matters of God Himself. Though these are notions, you do not know whether they are right or wrong, for you have become too grievously infected by religious notions. You have accepted too deeply these

conventional notions of religion, and this poison has seeped too deep within you. Therefore, so too in this matter have you succumbed to this pernicious influence, for the triune God simply does not exist. That is, the Trinity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit simply does not exist. These are all conventional notions of man, and the fallacious beliefs of man. Throughout many centuries, man has believed in this Trinity, conjured up by notions in the mind of man, fabricated by man, and never before seen by man. Throughout these many years, there have been many Bible expositors who have explained the “true meaning” of the Trinity, but such explanations of the triune God as three distinct consubstantial persons have been vague and unclear, and people are all befuddled by the “construct” of God. No great man has ever been able to offer a thorough explanation; most explanations pass muster in terms of reasoning and on paper, but not a single man has a fully clear understanding of its meaning. This is because this great Trinity man holds in the heart simply does not exist.

Excerpted from “Does the Trinity Exist?” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

If the three stages of work are assessed in accordance with this concept of the Trinity, then there must be three Gods as the work carried out by each is not the same. If any among you says that the Trinity indeed exists, then explain what exactly this one God in three persons is. What is the Holy Father? What is the Son? What is the Holy Spirit? Is Jehovah the Holy Father? Is Jesus the Son? Then what of the Holy Spirit? Is not the Father a Spirit? Is not the essence of the Son also a Spirit? Was not the work of Jesus the work of the Holy Spirit? Was not the work of Jehovah at the time carried out by a Spirit the same as Jesus’? How many Spirits can God have? According to your explanation, the three persons of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are one; if this be so, then there are three Spirits, but to have three Spirits means there are three Gods. This means that there is no one true God; how can this kind of God still have the inherent essence of God? If you accept that there is only one God, then how can He have a son and be a father? Are these not all simply your notions? There is only one God, only one person in this God, and only one Spirit of God, much as it is written down in the Bible that “There is only one Holy Spirit and only one God.” Regardless of whether the Father and the Son of which you speak exist, there is only one God after all, and the essence of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit you believe in is the essence of the Holy Spirit. In other words, God is a Spirit, but He is able to become flesh and live among men, as well as to be above all things. His Spirit is all-inclusive

and omnipresent. He can simultaneously be in the flesh and in and above the universe. Since all people say that God is the only one true God, then there is a single God, divisible at will by none! God is only one Spirit, and only one person; and that is the Spirit of God. If it is as you say, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, then are They not three Gods? The Holy Spirit is one matter, the Son another, and the Father yet another. Their persons are different and Their essences are different, so how then can They each be part of a single God? The Holy Spirit is a Spirit; this is easy for man to understand. If this be so, then the Father is even more so a Spirit. He has never descended onto earth and has never become flesh; He is Jehovah God in the heart of man, and He is certainly a Spirit as well. Then what is the relationship between Him and the Holy Spirit? Is it the relationship between Father and Son? Or is it the relationship between the Holy Spirit and the Spirit of the Father? Is the essence of each Spirit the same? Or is the Holy Spirit an instrument of the Father? How can this be explained? And then what is the relationship between the Son and the Holy Spirit? Is it a relationship between two Spirits or the relationship between a man and a Spirit? These are all matters that can have no explanation! If They are all one Spirit, then there can be no talk of three persons, for They are possessed of a single Spirit. If They were distinct persons, then Their Spirits would vary in strength, and They simply could not be one single Spirit. This concept of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit is most absurd! This segments God and splits Him into three persons, each with a status and Spirit; how then can He still be one Spirit and one God? Tell Me, were the heavens and earth, and all things within created by the Father, the Son, or the Holy Spirit? Some say that They created it all together. Then who redeemed mankind? Was it the Holy Spirit, the Son, or the Father? Some say it was the Son who redeemed mankind. Then who is the Son in essence? Is He not the incarnation of the Spirit of God? The incarnation calls God in heaven by the name of Father from the perspective of a created man. Are you not aware that Jesus was born through the conception of the Holy Spirit? Within Him is the Holy Spirit; whatever you say, He is still one with God in heaven, for He is the incarnation of the Spirit of God. This idea of the Son is simply untrue. It is one Spirit who carries out all of the work; only God Himself, that is, the Spirit of God carries out His work. Who is the Spirit of God? Is it not the Holy Spirit? Is it not the Holy Spirit who works in Jesus? If the work had not been carried out by the Holy Spirit (that is, the Spirit of God), then could His work have represented God Himself? When Jesus called God in heaven by the name of Father as He prayed, this was done only from the perspective of a created

man, only because the Spirit of God had put on an ordinary and normal flesh and had the exterior cover of a created being. Even if within Him was the Spirit of God, His exterior appearance was still that of a normal man; in other words, He had become the “Son of man” of which all men, including Jesus Himself, spoke. Given that He is called the Son of man, He is a person (whether man or woman, in any case one with the exterior shell of a human being) born into a normal family of ordinary people. Therefore, Jesus calling God in heaven by the name of Father was the same as how you at first called Him Father; He did so from the perspective of a created man. Do you still remember the Lord’s Prayer that Jesus taught you to memorize? “Our Father in heaven...” He asked all man to call God in heaven by the name of Father. And since He too called Him Father, He did so from the perspective of one who stands on an equal footing with you all. Since you called God in heaven by the name of Father, this shows that Jesus saw Himself to be on equal footing with you, and as a man on earth chosen by God (that is, the Son of God). If you call God Father, is this not because you are a created being? However great the authority of Jesus on earth, prior to the crucifixion, He was merely a Son of man, governed by the Holy Spirit (that is, God), and one of the earth’s created beings, for He had yet to complete His work. Therefore, His calling God in heaven Father was solely His humility and obedience. His addressing God (that is, the Spirit in heaven) in such a manner, however, does not prove that He was the Son of the Spirit of God in heaven. Rather, it was simply that His perspective was different, not that He was a different person. The existence of distinct persons is a fallacy! Prior to His crucifixion, Jesus was a Son of man bound by the limitations of the flesh, and He did not fully possess the authority of the Spirit. That is why He could only seek the will of God the Father from the perspective of a created being. It is as He thrice prayed in Gethsemane: “Not as I will, but as You will.” Before He was laid on the cross, He was but the King of the Jews; He was Christ, the Son of man, and not a body of glory. That is why, from the standpoint of a created being, He called God Father. Now, you cannot say that all who call God Father are the Son. If this were so, then would you not have all become the Son once Jesus taught you the Lord’s Prayer? If you are still not convinced, then tell Me, who is the one that you call Father? If you are referring to Jesus, then who is the Father of Jesus to you? After Jesus went away, this idea of the Father and the Son was no more. This idea was only appropriate for the years when Jesus became flesh; under all other circumstances, the relationship is one between the Lord of creation and a created being when you call God Father. There is no time at which this idea of

the Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit can stand; it is a fallacy rarely seen through the ages and it does not exist!

Excerpted from “Does the Trinity Exist?” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Still some may say: “The Father is the Father; the Son is the Son; the Holy Spirit is the Holy Spirit, and in the end, They will be made one.” Then how should you make Them one? How can the Father and the Holy Spirit be made one? If They were inherently two, then no matter how They are joined together, would They not remain two parts? When you talk about making Them one, is that not simply joining two separate parts to make one whole? But were They not two parts before being made whole? Each Spirit has a distinct essence, and two Spirits cannot be made into a single one. The Spirit is not a material object and is unlike anything else in the material world. As man sees it, the Father is one Spirit, the Son another, and the Holy Spirit yet another, then the three Spirits mix like three glasses of water into one whole. Is not that then the three made one? This is purely an erroneous explanation! Is this not splitting up God? How can the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit all be made one? Are They not three parts each of different natures? There are still those who say, “Did not God expressly state that Jesus was His beloved Son?” Jesus is the beloved Son of God, in whom He is well pleased—this was certainly spoken by God Himself. That was God bearing witness to Himself, but merely from a different perspective, that of the Spirit in heaven bearing witness to His own incarnation. Jesus is His incarnation, not His Son in heaven. Do you understand? Do not the words of Jesus, “I am in the Father, and the Father in Me,” indicate that They are one Spirit? And is it not because of the incarnation that They were separated between heaven and earth? In reality, They are still one; no matter what, it is simply God bearing witness to Himself. Owing to the change in ages, the requirements of the work, and the differing stages of His management plan, the name by which man calls Him also differs. When He came to carry out the first stage of work, He could only be called Jehovah, shepherd of the Israelites. In the second stage, the incarnate God could only be called Lord, and Christ. But at that time, the Spirit in heaven stated only that He was the beloved Son of God and made no mention of His being the only Son of God. This simply did not happen. How could God have an only child? Then would God not have become man? Because He was the incarnation, He was called the beloved Son of God, and, from this, came the relationship between Father and Son. It was simply because of the separation between heaven and earth.

Jesus prayed from the perspective of the flesh. Since He had put on a flesh of such normal humanity, it is from the perspective of the flesh that He said: “My outer shell is that of a created being. Since I put on a flesh to come to this earth, I am now a long, long way from heaven.” For this reason, He could only pray to God the Father from the perspective of the flesh. This was His duty, and it was that which the incarnate Spirit of God should be furnished with. It cannot be said that He was not God simply because He prayed to the Father from the perspective of the flesh. Though He was called the beloved Son of God, He was still God Himself, for He was but the incarnation of the Spirit, and His essence was still the Spirit.

Excerpted from “Does the Trinity Exist?” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

There are many contradictions in the explanations of man. Indeed, these are all the notions of man; without further scrutiny, you would all believe they are correct. Do you not know that this idea of God as a Trinity is but the notion of man? No knowledge of man is full and thorough. There are always impurities, and man has too many ideas; this demonstrates that a created being simply cannot explain the work of God. There is too much in the mind of man, all coming from logic and thought, that conflicts with the truth. Can your logic thoroughly dissect the work of God? Can you gain an insight into all the work of Jehovah? Is it you as a man who can see through to it all, or is it God Himself who is able to see from everlasting to everlasting? Is it you who can see from everlasting long ago to the everlasting to come, or is it God who can do so? What do you say? How are you worthy to explain God? On what basis is your explanation? Are you God? The heavens and earth, and all things in it were created by God Himself. It was not you who did this, so why are you giving incorrect explanations? Now, do you continue to believe in the triune God? Do you not think it is too burdensome this way? It would be best for you to believe in one God, not in three. It is best to be light, for the burden of the Lord is light.

Excerpted from “Does the Trinity Exist?” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

3. To define the one true God as the triune God is to defy and blaspheme God

Relevant Words of God:

Let Me tell you that the triune God does not exist anywhere in this universe. God has no Father and no Son, and much less is there a concept that the Father and Son jointly use the Holy Spirit as an instrument. All of this is the greatest fallacy and simply does not exist in this world! Yet even such a fallacy has its origin and is not entirely without basis, for your minds are not so simple, and your thoughts are not without reason. Rather, they are quite appropriate and ingenious, so much so that they are impregnable even to any Satan. The pity is that these thoughts are all fallacies and simply do not exist! You have not seen the real truth at all; you are merely making conjectures and imaginings, then fabricating it all into a story to deceitfully gain others' trust and to gain dominance over those most foolish of people without wit or reason, so that they believe in your great and renowned "expert teachings." Is this truth? Is this the way of life that man should receive? It is all nonsense! Not a single word is appropriate! Throughout these many years, God has been split by you in this way, being split finer and finer with each generation, to the extent that one God has been openly split into three Gods. And now it is simply impossible for man to rejoin God as one, for you have split Him up too finely! If not for My prompt work before it was too late, it is hard to say how long you would have brazenly continued this way! To continue splitting God in this way, how can He still be your God? Would you still recognize God? Would you still acknowledge Him as your father and return to Him? If I had arrived any later, it is likely that you would have sent the "Father and Son," Jehovah and Jesus, back to Israel and claimed that you yourselves are a part of God. Fortunately, it is now the last days. Finally, this day I have long awaited has come, and only after I carried out this stage of work by My own hand has your splitting of God Himself been halted. If not for this, you would have escalated, even placing all the Satans among you onto your tables for worship. This is your artifice! This is your means of splitting God! Will you continue to do so now? Let Me ask you: How many Gods are there? Which God will bring you salvation? Is it the first God, the second, or the third that you always pray to? Which of Them do you always believe in? Is it the Father? Or the Son? Or is it the Spirit? Tell Me who it is that you believe in. Though with every word you say you believe in God, what you actually believe is your own brain! You simply do not have God in your hearts! And yet in your minds are a number of such "Trinities"! Do you not agree?

Excerpted from "Does the Trinity Exist?" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

In the Old Testament of the Bible, there is no mention of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, only of the one true God, Jehovah, carrying out His work in Israel. He is called by different names as the age changes, but this cannot prove that each name refers to a different person. If this were so, then would there not be innumerable persons in God? What is written in the Old Testament is the work of Jehovah, a stage of work of God Himself for commencement in the Age of Law. It was the work of God, and as He spoke, it was, and as He commanded, it stood. At no time did Jehovah say that He was the Father come to carry out work, nor did He ever prophesy the Son coming to redeem mankind. When it came to the time of Jesus, it was only said that God had become flesh to redeem all mankind, not that it was the Son who had come. Because the ages are not alike and the work that God Himself does also differs, He needs to carry out His work within different realms. In this way, the identity He represents also differs. Man believes that Jehovah is the Father of Jesus, but this was actually not acknowledged by Jesus, who said: "We were never distinguished as Father and Son; I and the Father in heaven are one. The Father is in Me and I am in the Father; when man sees the Son, they are seeing the heavenly Father." When all has been said, be it the Father or the Son, They are one Spirit, not divided into separate persons. Once man attempts to explain, matters are complicated with the idea of distinct persons, as well as the relationship between Father, Son, and Spirit. When man speaks of separate persons, does this not materialize God? Man even ranks the persons as first, second, and third; these are all but the imaginings of man, not worthy of reference, and utterly unrealistic!

Excerpted from "Does the Trinity Exist?" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Knowledge of God is the area in which people are most lacking. They often impose upon God sayings, utterances, and words that are unrelated to Him, believing that such words are the most accurate definition of the knowledge of God. Little do they know that these sayings, which come from the human imagination, their own reasoning, and their own knowledge, bear not the slightest relation to God's essence. Thus, I want to tell you that, when it comes to the knowledge God desires for people to have, He does not merely ask that you recognize Him and His words, but also that your knowledge of Him is correct. Even if you can only say one sentence, or are only aware of a tiny bit, this tiny bit of awareness is correct and true, and is compatible with the essence of God Himself. This is because God detests any praise or commendation of

Him that is unrealistic or ill-considered. More than that, He hates it when people treat Him like air. He hates it when, during discussion of topics about God, people speak with no regard for the facts, talking at will and without hesitation, speaking however they see fit; moreover, He hates those who believe they know God and are boastful about their knowledge of Him, discussing topics related to Him with neither constraint nor reservation.

Excerpted from “God Himself, the Unique X” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The three stages of work are the entirety of God’s work in saving mankind. Man must know God’s work and God’s disposition in the work of salvation; without this fact, your knowledge of God consists of nothing but hollow words, nothing more than armchair pontification. Such knowledge can neither convince nor conquer man; it is at odds with reality, and it is not the truth. It may be very plentiful and pleasing to the ear, but if it is at odds with God’s inherent disposition, then God will not spare you. Not only will He not commend your knowledge, but He will also take retribution on you for being a sinner who has blasphemed Him. The words of knowing God are not spoken lightly. Though you may be glib and silver-tongued, and though your words are so clever that you can argue black into being white and white into being black, still you are out of your depth when it comes to speaking of the knowledge of God. God is not someone that you can judge rashly or casually praise, or nonchalantly denigrate. You praise anyone and everyone, yet you struggle to find the right words to describe the great virtuousness and graciousness of God—this is what every loser comes to realize.

Excerpted from “Knowing the Three Stages of God’s Work Is the Path to Knowing God” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

XIX. How to Discern Truth Reality and Theological Knowledge

1. What the truth is

Bible Verses for Reference:

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God” (Jhn 1:1).

“And the Word was made flesh, and dwelled among us ... full of grace and truth” (Jhn 1:14).

“I am the way, the truth, and the life” (Jhn 14:6).

“Sanctify them through Your truth: Your word is truth” (Jhn 17:17).

Relevant Words of God:

God Himself is life, and the truth, and His life and truth coexist. Those who are incapable of gaining the truth shall never gain life. Without the guidance, support, and provision of the truth, you shall only gain letters, doctrines, and, above all, death. God’s life is ever-present, and His truth and life coexist. If you cannot find the source of truth, then you will not gain the nourishment of life; if you cannot gain the provision of life, then you will surely have no truth, and so apart from imaginations and notions, the entirety of your body shall be nothing but your flesh—your stench-ridden flesh. Know that the words of books do not count as life, the records of history cannot be feted as the truth, and the regulations of the past cannot serve as an account of words presently spoken by God. Only that which is expressed by God when He comes to earth and lives among man is the truth, life, God’s will, and His current way of working.

Excerpted from “Only Christ of the Last Days Can Give Man the Way of Eternal Life” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The truth is the most real of life’s aphorisms, and the highest of such aphorisms among all mankind. Because it is the requirement that God makes of man, and is the work personally done by God, thus it is called “life’s aphorism.” It is not an aphorism summed up from something, nor is it a famous quote from a great figure. Instead, it is the utterance to mankind from the Master of the heavens and earth and all things; it is not some words summed up by man, but the inherent life of God. And so it is called “the highest of all life’s aphorisms.”

Excerpted from “Only Those Who Know God and His Work Can Satisfy God” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Everything that God does is truth and life. The truth is something that people cannot lack in their lives, and it is something they can never do without; you could also say that it is the greatest thing. Although you cannot look at it or touch it, its importance to you cannot be ignored; it is the only thing that can bring rest to your heart.

Excerpted from “God’s Work, God’s Disposition, and God Himself III” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

Whether the words spoken by God be plain or profound in outward appearance, they are all truths indispensable to man as he enters into life; they are the fount of living waters that enables man to survive in both spirit and flesh. They provide what man needs to stay alive; the principles and creed for conducting his daily life; the path, goal, and direction through which he must pass in order to receive salvation; every truth that he should possess as a created being before God; and every truth about how man obeys and worships God. They are the guarantee that ensures man’s survival, they are man’s daily bread, and they are also the sturdy support that enables man to be strong and stand up. They are rich in the truth reality of normal humanity as it is lived out by created mankind, rich in the truth by which mankind breaks free from corruption and eludes Satan’s snares, rich in the tireless teaching, exhortation, encouragement, and solace that the Creator gives to created humanity. They are the beacon that guides and enlightens men to understand all that is positive, the guarantee which ensures that men will live out and come into possession of all that is righteous and good, the criterion by which all people, events, and objects are measured, and also the navigation marker that leads men toward salvation and the path of light.

Excerpted from “Knowing God Is the Path to Fearing God and Shunning Evil” in The Word Appears in the
Flesh

The truth is not formulaic, neither is it a law. It is not dead—it is life itself, it is a living thing, and it is the rule that a created being must follow in life and the rule a human must have in life. This is something that you must, as much as possible, understand through experience. No matter what stage you have arrived at in your experience, you are inseparable from God’s word or the truth, and what you understand of God’s disposition and what you know of what God has and is are all expressed in God’s words; they are inextricably linked with the truth. God’s disposition and what He has and is are, in themselves, the truth; the truth is an authentic manifestation of God’s disposition and what He has and is. It makes what He has and is concrete, and it makes a clear statement of what He has and is; it tells you more straightforwardly what God likes, what He does not like, what He wants you to do and what He does not permit you to do, which people He despises and which people He delights in. Behind the truths that God

expresses, people can see His pleasure, anger, sorrow, and happiness, as well as His essence—this is the revealing of His disposition.

Excerpted from “God’s Work, God’s Disposition, and God Himself III” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The truth is the life of God Himself; it represents His disposition, His essence, and everything in Him. If you say that having a bit of experience means possessing the truth, then can you represent God’s disposition? You may have some experience or light regarding a certain aspect or side of a truth, but you cannot supply others with it forever, so this light you have gained is not truth; it is merely a certain point that people can reach. It is simply the proper experience and the proper understanding a person should possess: some actual experience and knowledge of the truth. This light, enlightenment, and experiential understanding can never substitute for the truth; even if all people had completely experienced this truth, and pooled together all of their experiential understanding, it still would not be able to take the place of that one truth. As has been said in the past, “I sum this up with a maxim for the human world: Among men, there is no one who loves Me.” This is a statement of truth; it is the true essence of life. This is the most profound of things; this is an expression of God Himself. You can keep on experiencing it, and if you experience it for three years you will have a superficial understanding of it; if you experience it for seven or eight years you will gain even more understanding of it—but any understanding you gain will never be able to substitute for that one statement of truth. Another person, after experiencing it for a couple of years, might gain a little understanding, and then a slightly more profound understanding after experiencing it for ten years, and then some further understanding after experiencing it for a lifetime—but if you both combine what understanding you have gained, even then—no matter how much understanding, how much experience, how many insights, how much light, or how many examples you both possess—all of that still cannot substitute for that one statement of truth. What do I mean by this? I mean that the life of man will always be the life of man, and no matter how much your understanding might accord with the truth, God’s intentions, and His requirements, it will never be able to be a substitute for the truth. To say that people have gained the truth means that they possess some reality, that they have gained some understanding of the truth, that they have attained some real entry to God’s words, that they have had some real experience with them, and that they are on the right track in their faith in God. Just one

statement from God is enough for a person to experience for an entire lifetime; even if people were to experience it for several lifetimes or even several millennia, they still would not be able to completely and thoroughly experience a single truth. If people have merely understood a few superficial words, yet they claim to have gained the truth, would that not be complete and utter nonsense?

Excerpted from “Do You Know What the Truth Really Is?” in Records of Christ’s Talks

In His expression of the truth, God expresses His disposition and essence; His expression of the truth is not based on mankind’s summaries of the various positive things and statements that mankind recognizes. God’s words are God’s words; God’s words are truth. They are the foundation and the law by which mankind should exist, and those so-called tenets that originate with humanity are condemned by God. They do not meet with His approval, and less still are they the origin or basis of His utterances. God expresses His disposition and His essence through His words. All the words brought forth by God’s expression are truth, for He has the essence of God, and He is the reality of all positive things. The fact that God’s words are truth never alters, no matter how this corrupt mankind positions them or defines them, nor how it views them or understands them. No matter how many words of God have been spoken, and no matter how much this corrupt, sinful mankind condemns them, even unto not disseminating them, and even to the point of their meeting with the contempt of corrupt mankind—even in these circumstances, there remains a fact that cannot be changed: The so-called culture and traditions that mankind values, even given the reasons listed above, cannot become positive things, and cannot become the truth. This is unalterable.

Excerpted from “On What the Truth Is” in Records of Christ’s Talks

Mankind’s traditional culture and way of existence will not become truth because of the changes or passage of time, and neither will the words of God become the words of man due to mankind’s condemnation or forgetfulness. This essence will never change; truth is always truth. What fact exists herein? All those sayings that are summarized by mankind originate in Satan—they are human imaginings and notions, even arising from human hot-bloodedness, and have nothing at all to do with positive things. The words of God, on the other hand, are expressions of God’s essence and status. For what reason does He express these words? Why do I say they

are truth? The reason is that God rules over all the laws, principles, roots, essences, actualities, and mysteries of all things, and they are grasped in His hand, and God alone knows all the principles, actualities, facts, and mysteries of all things; He knows their origins and what their roots really are. Therefore, only the definitions of all things mentioned in the words of God are most accurate, and the requirements for mankind within God's words are the only standard for mankind—the only criteria by which mankind should exist.

Excerpted from "On What the Truth Is" in Records of Christ's Talks

2. What truth reality is, and what Biblical knowledge and doctrine are Relevant Words of God:

Holding up God's words and being able to explain them unabashedly does not mean you are in possession of reality; things are not as simple as you imagine. Whether you are in possession of reality is not based on what you say; rather, it is based on what you live out. Only when God's words become your life and your natural expression can you be said to have reality, and only then can you be counted as having gained true understanding and actual stature. You must be able to withstand examination over long periods of time, and you must be able to live out the likeness that is required by God. This must not be mere posturing; it must flow from you naturally. Only then will you truly possess reality, and only then will you have gained life. Let Me use the example of the trial of the service-doers with which everyone is familiar: Anyone can offer the loftiest theories regarding service-doers, and everyone has a decent understanding of the subject; they speak on it and each speech surpasses the last, as if it were a competition. However, if man has not undergone a major trial, then it is very difficult to say that he has good testimony to bear. In short, man's living out is still very lacking, entirely contrary to his understanding. Therefore, it has yet to become man's actual stature, and it is not yet man's life. Because man's understanding has not been brought into reality, his stature is still like a castle built on sand, teetering and on the verge of collapse. Man possesses far too little of reality; it is almost impossible to find any reality in man. There is too little reality naturally flowing from man, and all the reality they live out has been forced. This is the reason I say man possesses no reality. Although people claim their love of God never changes, this is merely what they say

before they have faced any trials. When they are suddenly faced with trials one day, the things that they speak of will once again fall out of step with reality, and this will again prove that man possesses no reality. It can be said that whenever you encounter things that do not fit with your notions and that require you to put yourself aside, those things are your trials. Before God's will is revealed, everyone goes through a rigorous test and an immense trial. Can you fathom this? When God wants to try people, He always allows them to make their choices before the actual truth has been revealed. This means that when God is subjecting man to trials, He will never tell you the truth; this is the manner in which people are exposed. This is one way that God carries out His work, to see whether you know the God of today, as well as whether you possess any reality. Are you truly free of doubts regarding God's work? Will you be able truly to stand firm when a major trial comes upon you? Who dares to say, "I guarantee that there will be no problems"? Who dares to assert, "Others might have doubts, but I never will"? It is just as when Peter was subjected to trials: He always boasted before the truth had been revealed. This is not a personal flaw unique to Peter; this is the greatest difficulty currently facing every man. If I were to visit a few places or pay a visit to a few brothers and sisters to see what your understanding is of God's work of today, you would certainly be able to say much about your knowledge, and you would seem not to have any doubts whatsoever. If I were to ask you, "Can you really determine that the work of today is performed by God Himself? Without any doubt?" you would certainly answer, "Without any doubt whatsoever, it is the work performed by the Spirit of God." Once you had answered in such a way, you surely would not feel a shred of doubt, and you would even feel quite pleased, thinking you had gained a bit of reality. Those who tend to understand things in this way are people who possess less reality; the more one thinks one has gained it, the less one will be able to stand firm when faced with trials. Woe to those who are arrogant and haughty, and woe to those who have no knowledge of themselves; such people are adept at talking, yet fare the worst when putting their words into action. At the smallest sign of trouble, these people begin to have doubts, and the thought of quitting steals into their minds. They do not possess any reality; they merely have theories that are above religion, without any of the reality required now by God. I am most disgusted by those who only speak of theories without possessing any reality. They shout the loudest when carrying out their work, but as soon as they are faced with reality, they fall apart. Does this not show that these people have no reality? No matter how ferocious the wind and waves, if you can remain standing without allowing a

shred of doubt to enter your mind, and can stand firm and remain free from denial, even when there is no one else left, then you will be counted as having true understanding and genuinely in possession of reality.

Excerpted from “Only Putting the Truth Into Practice Is Possessing Reality” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

God does not require of people the mere ability to talk about reality; that would be too easy, would it not? Why, then, does God speak of entry into life? Why does He talk about transformation? If people are capable only of empty talk about reality, then can they achieve a transformation in their disposition? The good soldiers of the kingdom are not trained to be a group of people who can only talk about reality or boast; rather, they are trained to live out God’s words at all times, to remain unyielding no matter what setbacks they face, and to live constantly in accordance with God’s words and not to return to the world. This is the reality of which God speaks; this is God’s requirement of man. Thus, do not regard the reality spoken of by God as being overly simple. Mere enlightenment from the Holy Spirit does not equal the possession of reality. Such is not the stature of man—it is the grace of God, to which man contributes nothing. Each person must endure Peter’s sufferings, and, even more, possess Peter’s glory, which they live out after they have gained the work of God. Only this can be called reality. Do not think that you possess reality just because you can talk about it; that is a fallacy. Such thoughts do not accord with God’s will and have no actual significance. Do not say such things in the future—extinguish such sayings! All those with a false understanding of God’s words are unbelievers. They do not have any real knowledge, much less any real stature; they are ignorant people who lack reality. In other words, all those who live outside of the essence of God’s words are unbelievers. Those deemed unbelievers by people are beasts in the eyes of God, and those deemed unbelievers by God are people who do not have God’s words as their life. It can therefore be said that those who do not possess the reality of God’s words and who fail to live His words out are unbelievers. God’s intention is to cause everyone to live out the reality of His words—not merely to have everyone talk about reality, but, more than that, to enable everyone to live out the reality of His words.

Excerpted from “Only Putting the Truth Into Practice Is Possessing Reality” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

How does reality come about? It happens during the process of practicing the truth, as people have all sorts of experiences, and give rise to all sorts of states. There is a process of transformation in how people approach their various states, what thoughts and views they have, and how they seek the truth to resolve them. This process is reality. If you do not go through the process of practicing and experiencing God's words, but merely know and understand them on a literal and doctrinal level, then all you have is doctrine, as there is a discrepancy between your literal understanding and your direct experience. How does doctrine arise? When one does not practice, but merely understands, analyzes, and explains the literal meaning of God's words, and moreover preaches them, then doctrine arises. Can doctrine become reality? If you do not practice the truth, you will never understand it. Mere literal explanation will forever be doctrine. If, however, you practice, experience, feel, and learn, the knowledge, thoughts, ideas, and experience thus produced will be practical. Reality is achieved through practice; without practice, reality is forever absent. Has anyone said, "I don't practice the truth, but I can still preach practical sermons"? What you preach may sound correct and quite practical to others in the moment, but they will still have no path of practice afterward. Everything you understand is thus still doctrine. If you do not put God's words into practice and have no practical experience or understanding of the truth, when a state you have never considered before arises in someone else, you will not know how to resolve it. When one seldom practices the truth, they will never truly understand it. Only by increasing their practice of the truth can they understand it truly, and only then can they grasp the principles of practicing the truth. If you have no experience of the truth, you will naturally only be able to preach doctrine. You will tell others to adhere to rules just as you do. Without the reality of practice and experience, you will never be able to preach reality.

Excerpted from "The Path to Resolving a Corrupt Disposition" in Records of Christ's Talks

If you have read a lot of God's word but only understand the meaning of the text and lack direct knowledge of God's word through your practical experiences, then you will not know God's word. As far as you are concerned, God's word is not life, but just lifeless letters. And if you only live in observance of lifeless letters, then you cannot grasp the essence of God's word, nor will you understand His will. Only when you experience His word in your actual experiences

will the spiritual meaning of God's word open itself to you, and it is only through experience that you can grasp the spiritual meaning of many truths and unlock the mysteries of God's word. If you do not put it into practice, then no matter how clear His word, all that you have grasped are empty letters and doctrines, which have become religious regulations to you. Is this not what the Pharisees did? If you practice and experience God's word, it becomes practical to you; if you do not seek to practice it, then God's word to you is little more than the legend of the third heaven.

Excerpted from "Once You Understand the Truth, You Should Put It Into Practice" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

You are able to speak as much knowledge as there is sand on a beach, yet none of it contains any real path. Are you not trying to fool people by doing this? Are you not making an empty show, with no substance to back it up? All such behavior is harmful to people! The higher the theory and the more it is devoid of reality, the more it is incapable of taking people into reality; the higher the theory, the more it makes you defy and oppose God. Do not treat the loftiest theories like precious treasure; they are pernicious and serve no purpose! Perhaps some people are able to talk of the loftiest theories—but these contain nothing of reality, for these people have not personally experienced them, and therefore have no path to practice. Such people are incapable of taking others onto the right track and will only lead them astray. Is this not harmful to people? At the very least, you must be able to solve people's present troubles and allow them to achieve entry; only this counts as dedication, and only then will you be qualified to work for God. Do not always speak grandiose, fanciful words, and do not use a bunch of unsuitable practices to bind others into obeying you. Doing so will have no effect and can only increase their confusion. Carrying on like this will produce much doctrine, which will make people loathe you. Such is the shortcoming of man, and it truly is mortifying.

Excerpted from "Focus More on Reality" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

If a person does not pursue the truth, he will never understand it. You can say the letters and doctrines ten thousand times, but they will still just be letters and doctrines. Some people just say, "Christ is the truth, the way, and the life." Even if you repeat these words ten thousand times, it will still be useless; you have no understanding of its meaning. Why is it said that Christ

is the truth, the way, and the life? Can you articulate the knowledge you have gained about this from experience? Have you entered the reality of the truth, the way, and the life? God has uttered His words so that you can experience them and gain knowledge; merely voicing letters and doctrines is useless. You can only know yourself once you have understood and entered God's words. If you do not understand God's words, then you cannot know yourself. You can only discern when you have the truth; without the truth, you cannot discern. You can only fully understand a matter when you have the truth; without the truth, you cannot understand a matter. You can only know yourself when you have the truth; without the truth, you cannot know yourself. Your disposition can only change when you have the truth; without the truth, your disposition cannot change. Only after you have the truth can you serve in accordance with God's will; without the truth, you cannot serve in accordance with God's will. Only after you have the truth can you worship God; without the truth, your worship will be nothing more than a performance of religious rites. All of these things hinge on gaining the truth from God's words.

Excerpted from "How to Know Man's Nature" in Records of Christ's Talks

Some people work and preach and, despite superficially appearing to be fellowshipping on God's utterances, they are only discussing the literal meaning of His words, and nothing essential is mentioned. Their sermons are like teachings from a language textbook—arranged item by item and aspect by aspect, and when they are done, everyone sings praises, saying, "This person possesses reality. He preached so well and in such detail." After such people are done preaching, they tell others to compile their sermons and send them out to everybody. In doing this, they have gotten to where they are deceiving others and all that they preach are fallacies. On the surface, it looks as though they are preaching only God's words and their sermons conform to the truth. However, with more careful discernment, you will see that they are nothing but letters and doctrines and false reasoning along with some human imaginings and notions, as well as some things that delimit God. Does this kind of preaching not amount to an interruption of God's work? This is service that resists God.

Excerpted from "Only by Pursuing the Truth Can One Achieve a Change in Disposition" in Records of
Christ's Talks

You have deviated in your summing up the truth; after you do all this summing up, it has yielded only rules. Your “summing up the truth” is not done so that people gain life or attain changes in their dispositions from the truth. Instead, it causes people to master some knowledge and doctrines from within the truth. They appear to have understood the purpose behind God’s work, when actually they have only mastered some words and doctrines. They do not understand the intended meaning of the truth; it is no different from studying theology or reading the Bible. You compile these books or those materials, and so people become in possession of this aspect of doctrine and that aspect of knowledge. They are first rate speakers of doctrines—but what happens when they are done speaking? They are incapable of experiencing, they have no understanding of God’s work, nor do they have any understanding of themselves. Ultimately, all they will have gained are formulas and rules, and they can talk about those few things but nothing else. If God did something new, would you be able to match up all the doctrines that you know with that? Those things of yours are just rules and you are just having people study theology, not allowing them to experience the word of God or the truth. Therefore, those books that you compile can bring others only into theology and knowledge, into new formulas, and into rules and conventions. They cannot bring people before God or allow them to understand the truth or God’s will. You are thinking that by raising those questions one after another, which you then answer and for which you write down outlines and summaries, brothers and sisters will find it easy to understand, and you think that apart from being easy to remember, these issues are clear at a glance, and that this is a great way of doing things. But what people are understanding is not the real intended meaning of the truth and does not match up with reality—it is just words and doctrines. So it would be better if you did not do these things at all. Doing this is leading people to understand and master knowledge. You bring others into the doctrines, into religion, and have them follow and believe in God within religious doctrines. Isn’t that being just like Paul? You think that mastering knowledge of the truth is particularly important, and so is learning by heart many passages of God’s words. But how people understand the word of God is not important at all. You think it is extremely important for people to be able to memorize many of God’s words, to be able to speak much doctrine and to discover many formulas within God’s words. Therefore, you always want to systematize these things so that everyone is singing from the same hymn sheet, saying the same things, and talking about the same doctrines, so they have the same knowledge and keep the

same rules—this is your objective. Your doing this appears to be for the sake of people gaining understanding, when on the contrary you have no idea that this is bringing people into the midst of rules that are outside of God’s word the truth. To allow people to have a real understanding of the truth, you must link it up with reality and with the work, and solve practical problems according to God’s word the truth. Only in this way can people understand the truth and enter into reality, and only achieving such a result is really bringing people before God. If all you talk about are spiritual theories, doctrines, and rules, if you only put effort into the literal words, all you can achieve is getting people to say the same things and follow rules, but you will not be able to guide people to understand the truth. You will be particularly unable to have people better understand themselves, and achieve repentance and transformation. If being able to talk about spiritual theories could substitute for people’s entering the truth reality, then you would not be needed to lead the churches.

Excerpted from “Without the Truth, One Is Liable to Offend God” in Records of Christ’s Talks

3. The consequences of relying on Biblical knowledge and theological theory in one’s faith

Relevant Words of God:

Man has been corrupted and lives in Satan’s trap. All people live in the flesh, live in selfish desires, and there is not a single one among them who is compatible with Me. There are those who say that they are compatible with Me, but such people all worship vague idols. Although they acknowledge My name as holy, they tread a path that runs contrary to Me, and their words are full of arrogance and self-confidence. This is because, at root, they are all against Me and incompatible with Me. Every day, they seek traces of Me in the Bible and find “suitable” passages at random which they read endlessly and recite as scriptures. They do not know how to be compatible with Me nor what it means to be against Me. They merely read scriptures blindly. Within the Bible, they constrain a vague God that they have never seen, and are incapable of seeing, and take it out to look at at their leisure. They believe in My existence only within the scope of the Bible, and they equate Me with the Bible; without the Bible there is no Me, and without Me there is no Bible. They pay no heed to My existence or actions, but instead

devote extreme and special attention to each and every word of Scripture. Many more even believe that I should not do anything I wish to do unless it is foretold by Scripture. They attach too much importance to Scripture. It can be said that they see words and expressions as too important, to the extent that they use verses from the Bible to measure every word I say and to condemn Me. What they seek is not the way of compatibility with Me or the way of compatibility with the truth, but the way of compatibility with the words of the Bible, and they believe that anything that does not conform to the Bible is, without exception, not My work. Are such people not the dutiful descendants of the Pharisees? The Jewish Pharisees used the law of Moses to condemn Jesus. They did not seek compatibility with the Jesus of that time, but diligently followed the law to the letter, to the extent that—after having charged Him with not following the law of the Old Testament and not being the Messiah—they ultimately nailed the innocent Jesus to the cross. What was their substance? Was it not that they didn't seek the way of compatibility with the truth? They obsessed over each and every word of Scripture while paying heed neither to My will nor to the steps and methods of My work. They were not people who sought the truth, but people who rigidly clung to words; they were not people who believed in God, but people who believed in the Bible. Essentially, they were watchdogs of the Bible. In order to safeguard the interests of the Bible, to uphold the dignity of the Bible, and to protect the reputation of the Bible, they went so far as to nail the merciful Jesus to the cross. This they did merely for the sake of defending the Bible, and for the sake of maintaining the status of each and every word of the Bible in people's hearts. So they preferred to forsake their future and the sin offering to condemn Jesus, who did not conform to the doctrine of Scripture, to death. Were they not all lackeys to each and every word of Scripture?

And what of people today? Christ has come to release the truth, yet they would rather expel Him from this world so that they may gain entry into heaven and receive grace. They would rather completely deny the coming of the truth in order to safeguard the interests of the Bible, and they would rather nail the Christ returned to flesh to the cross again in order to ensure the everlasting existence of the Bible. How can man receive My salvation when his heart is so malicious and his nature so antagonistic toward Me? I live among man, yet man does not know of My existence. When I shine My light upon man, he still remains ignorant of My existence. When I unleash My wrath upon man, he denies My existence with even greater vigor. Man searches for compatibility with words and compatibility with the Bible, yet not a single person

comes before Me to seek the way of compatibility with the truth. Man looks up to Me in heaven and devotes particular concern to My existence in heaven, yet no one cares about Me in the flesh, for I who live among man am simply too insignificant. Those who only seek compatibility with the words of the Bible and who only seek compatibility with a vague God are a wretched sight to Me. That is because what they worship are dead words, and a God that is capable of giving them untold treasures; what they worship is a God that would lay Himself at the mercy of man—a God who does not exist. What, then, can such people gain from Me? Man is simply too lowly for words. Those who are against Me, who make limitless demands of Me, who have no love of the truth, who are rebellious toward Me—how could they be compatible with Me?

Those who are against Me are those who are not compatible with Me. Such is also the case among those who do not love the truth. Those who rebel against Me are even more against Me and incompatible with Me. I deliver into the hands of the evil one all those who are not compatible with Me, and I relinquish them to the corruption of the evil one, give them free rein to reveal their maleficence, and ultimately hand them over to the evil one to be devoured. I care not how many worship Me, which is to say, I care not how many people believe in Me. All that concerns Me is how many are compatible with Me. That is because all those who are not compatible with Me are evil ones who betray Me; they are My enemies, and I shall not “enshrine” My enemies in My home. Those who are compatible with Me shall forever serve Me in My home, and those who go against Me shall forever suffer My punishment. Those who only care about the words of the Bible and are concerned neither with the truth nor with seeking My footsteps—they are against Me, for they limit Me according to the Bible, constrain Me within the Bible, and so are blasphemous in the extreme toward Me. How could such people come before Me? They pay no heed to My deeds, or My will, or the truth, but instead obsess over words—words that kill. How could such people be compatible with Me?

Excerpted from “You Should Seek the Way of Compatibility With Christ” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Christ of the last days brings life, and brings the enduring and everlasting way of truth. This truth is the path by which man gains life, and it is the only path by which man shall know God and be approved by God. If you do not seek the way of life provided by Christ of the last days, then you shall never gain the approval of Jesus, and shall never be qualified to enter the gate of the kingdom of heaven, for you are both a puppet and prisoner of history. Those who are

controlled by regulations, by letters, and shackled by history will never be able to gain life nor gain the perpetual way of life. This is because all they have is turbid water which has been clung to for thousands of years instead of the water of life that flows from the throne. Those who are not supplied with the water of life will forever remain corpses, playthings of Satan, and sons of hell. How, then, can they behold God? If you only try to hold on to the past, only try to keep things as they are by standing still, and do not try to change the status quo and discard history, then will you not always be against God? The steps of God's work are vast and mighty, like surging waves and rolling thunders—yet you sit passively awaiting destruction, clinging to your folly and doing nothing. In this way, how can you be considered someone who follows the footsteps of the Lamb? How can you justify the God that you hold on to as a God who is always new and never old? And how can the words of your yellowed books carry you across into a new age? How can they lead you to seek the steps of God's work? And how can they take you up to heaven? What you hold in your hands are letters that can provide but temporary solace, not truths that are capable of giving life. The scriptures you read can only enrich your tongue and are not words of wisdom that can help you know human life, much less the paths that can lead you to perfection. Does this discrepancy not give you cause for reflection? Does it not make you realize the mysteries contained within? Are you capable of delivering yourself to heaven to meet God on your own? Without the coming of God, can you take yourself into heaven to enjoy family happiness with God? Are you still dreaming now? I suggest, then, that you stop dreaming and look at who is working now—look to see who is now carrying out the work of saving man during the last days. If you do not, you shall never gain the truth, and shall never gain life.

Excerpted from “Only Christ of the Last Days Can Give Man the Way of Eternal Life” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Do many people not oppose God and obstruct the work of the Holy Spirit because they do not know the varied and diverse work of God, and, furthermore, because they possess but a smidgeon of knowledge and doctrine with which to measure the work of the Holy Spirit? Though the experiences of such people are superficial, they are arrogant and indulgent in nature and they regard the work of the Holy Spirit with contempt, ignore the disciplines of the Holy Spirit and, moreover, use their trivial old arguments to “confirm” the work of the Holy Spirit. They also put on an act, and are wholly convinced of their own learning and erudition, and

convinced that they are able to travel across the world. Are such people not those who are despised and rejected by the Holy Spirit, and will they not be eliminated by the new age? Are not those who come before God and openly oppose Him ignorant and under-informed little people, who are merely trying to show how brilliant they are? With but a meager knowledge of the Bible, they try to straddle the world's "academia"; with but a superficial doctrine to teach people, they try to reverse the work of the Holy Spirit and attempt to make it revolve around their own thought process. Short-sighted as they are, they try to behold in one glance 6,000 years of God's work. These people do not have any sense worth mentioning! In fact, the greater people's knowledge of God, the slower they are to judge His work. Furthermore, they only talk a little of their knowledge of God's work today, but they are not rash in their judgments. The less people know of God, the more arrogant and overconfident they are and the more wantonly they proclaim God's being—yet they only talk of theory, and offer no real evidence. Such people are of no value whatsoever. Those who see the work of the Holy Spirit as a game are frivolous! Those who are not cautious when they encounter the new work of the Holy Spirit, who run their mouths off, are quick to judge, who give free rein to their natural instinct to deny the rightness of the Holy Spirit's work, and who also insult and blaspheme it—are such disrespectful people not ignorant of the Holy Spirit's work? Are they not, furthermore, people of great arrogance, people who are inherently proud and ungovernable? Even if a day comes when such people accept the new work of the Holy Spirit, still God will not tolerate them. Not only do they look down upon those who work for God, but they also blaspheme against God Himself. Such foolhardy people will not be forgiven, either in this age or the age to come, and they shall forever perish in hell! Such disrespectful, indulgent people are pretending to believe in God, and the more people are like this, the more liable they are to offend God's administrative decrees. Do not all those arrogant ones who are innately unbridled, and who have never obeyed anyone, all walk upon this path? Do they not oppose God day after day, God who is always new and never old?

Excerpted from "Knowing the Three Stages of God's Work Is the Path to Knowing God" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Your knowledge can only provide for people for a certain period of time. As time goes on, if you keep saying the same things, some people will discern that; they'll say you're too

superficial, too lacking in depth. You'll have no option but to try and deceive people by preaching on doctrines. If you always carry on like this, those below you will follow your methods, steps, and model of faith and of experiencing and putting into practice those words and doctrines. Ultimately, as you keep on preaching and preaching, they'll all come to use you as an exemplar. In your leadership of others you speak of doctrines, so those below you will learn doctrines from you, and as things progress you will have taken the wrong path. Those below you will take whatever path you do; they will all learn from you and follow you, so you will feel: "I am powerful now; so many people listen to me, and the church is at my beck and call." This nature of betrayal within man unconsciously makes you turn God into a mere figurehead, and you yourself then form some sort of denomination. How do various denominations arise? They arise in this way. Look at the leaders of each denomination—they are all arrogant and self-righteous, and their interpretations of the Bible lack context and are guided by their own imaginings. They all rely on gifts and erudition to do their work. If they could not preach at all, would people follow them? They do, after all, possess some knowledge and can preach on some doctrine, or they know how to win others over and make use of some artifice. They use these to bring people before themselves and deceive them. Nominally, those people believe in God, but in reality, they follow their leaders. When they encounter someone preaching the true way, some of them say, "We have to consult our leader about our faith." A human is the medium of their faith in God; is that not a problem? What have those leaders become, then? Have they not become Pharisees, false shepherds, antichrists, and stumbling blocks to people's acceptance of the true way?

Excerpted from "Only to Pursue the Truth Is Truly to Believe in God" in Records of Christ's Talks

All those in Christianity who study theology, Scripture, and even the history of God's work—are they true believers? Are they any different from the believers and followers of God that God speaks of? In the eyes of God, do they believe in God? (No.) They study theology, they study God. Is there a difference between them who study God and those who study other things? There is no difference. They are just the same as people who study history, who study philosophy, who study law, who study biology, who study astronomy—they just do not like science, or biology, or any other subjects; they just like theology. These people study God by searching for clues and giveaways in the work of God—and what comes out of their research?

Are they able to determine whether God exists? They never will. Are they able to determine the will of God? (No.) Why? Because they live amid words and phrases, they live amid knowledge, they live amid philosophy, they live amid the minds and thoughts of humans. They will never be able to see God, they will never gain the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit. What does God define them as? As nonbelievers, as unbelievers. These nonbelievers and unbelievers mingle with the so-called Christian community, acting like people who believe in God, acting like Christians—but do they, in fact, truly worship God? Do they truly obey Him? No. Why? One thing is certain: It is because, in their hearts, they do not believe that God created the world, that He rules all things, that He can become flesh, much less do they believe that God exists. What does this unbelief indicate? Doubt, denial, and even an attitude of hoping the prophecies spoken by God—particularly those about the disasters—do not come true and are not fulfilled. This is the attitude with which they treat belief in God, and it is also the essence and real face of their so-called faith. These people study God because they have an especial interest in the scholarship and knowledge of theology, and are interested in the historical facts of God’s work. They are nothing more than a bunch of intellectuals studying theology. These “intellectuals” do not believe in the existence of God, so what do they do when God comes to work and His words are fulfilled? What is their first reaction when they hear that God has become flesh, and is performing new work? “Impossible!” They condemn whoever preaches the new work of God, and even want to kill them. What is this a manifestation of? Is this not the manifestation of them being bona fide antichrists? They are hostile toward the work of God and the fulfillment of His words, to say nothing of His incarnate flesh: “If You were not incarnated and Your words have not been fulfilled then You are God. If Your words have been fulfilled and You were incarnated, then You are not.” What is the subtext to this? It is that they do not permit the incarnation of God so long as they exist. Is this not a bona fide antichrist? This is a genuine antichrist. Do such assertions exist in the religious community? Such assertions are made very loudly, and also very forcefully: “It’s wrong that God has incarnated, it’s impossible! Any incarnation is a sham!” Some ask, “Have these people been misled?” Absolutely not. They just do not have true faith in God. They do not believe in the existence of God, they do not believe in the incarnation of God, they do not believe in God’s work of creating the world, much less do they believe in God’s work of being crucified and redeeming all mankind. To them, the theology they study is a series of historical events, it is a kind of doctrine or theory.

What was the chief manifestation of the hypocrisy of the Pharisees? They only pored over Scripture and did not seek the truth. When they read God’s words, they did not pray or seek; instead, they studied the words of God, they studied what God said and did, and so turned His words into a kind of theory, into a doctrine that they taught to others. This is what poring over God’s words is. So why did they do that? What was it they pored over? In their eyes, these were not the words of God, they were not the expressions of God, much less were they the truth, but rather a form of scholarship. Such scholarship, in their eyes, should be passed on, it should be spread, and only this would have been spreading the way of God and the gospel. This is what they called “preaching,” and the sermon they preached was theology.

... The Pharisees treated the theology and theory they had mastered as a kind of knowledge, as a tool for condemning people and measuring whether they were right or wrong. They even used it on the Lord Jesus—that was how the Lord Jesus was condemned. Their appraisal of people, and the way they treated them, was never based on their essence, or on whether what they said was right or wrong, much less on the source or provenance of their words. They just condemned and measured people based on unyielding words and doctrines that they had mastered. And so, even though these Pharisees knew that what the Lord Jesus did was not a sin, and did not contravene the law, they still condemned Him, because what the Lord Jesus said appeared to be at odds with the knowledge and scholarship they had mastered and the theological theory they expounded. And the Pharisees just would not loosen their grip on these words and phrases, they clung onto this knowledge and would not let it go. What was the only possible outcome in the end? They would not acknowledge that the Lord Jesus was the Messiah who would come, or that there was truth in what the Lord Jesus said, much less that what the Lord Jesus did was in keeping with the truth. They found some unsubstantiated charges to condemn the Lord Jesus with—but in fact, in their hearts, did they know whether these sins they condemned Him with were valid? They did. So why did they still condemn Him thus? (They did not want to believe that the high and mighty God in their minds could have been the Lord Jesus, this image of an ordinary Son of man.) They did not want to accept this fact. And what was the nature of their refusal to accept this? Was there not something of trying to reason with

God in this? What they meant was, “Could God do that? If God were incarnated, He must surely be born of distinguished lineage. What’s more, He must accept the tutelage of scribes and Pharisees, learn this knowledge, and read much Scripture. Only after He possesses this knowledge can He take on the title of ‘incarnation’.” They believed that, firstly, You are not thus qualified, so You are not God; secondly, without this knowledge You cannot do the work of God, much less can You be God; thirdly, You cannot work outside the temple—You are not in the temple now, You are always among the sinners, so the work You do is beyond the scope of God’s work. Where did the basis of their condemnation come from? From Scripture, from the mind of man, and from the theological education they had received. Because they were swollen with notions, imaginings, and knowledge, they believed this knowledge to be right, to be the truth, to be the basis, and at no time could God contravene these things. Did they seek the truth? They did not. What they sought were their own notions and imaginings, and their own experiences, and they tried to use these to define God and determine whether He was right or wrong. What was the ultimate outcome of this? They condemned the work of God and nailed Him to the cross.

Excerpted from “For Leaders and Workers, Choosing a Path Is of Utmost Importance (7)” in Records of Christ’s Talks

XX. What Following God’s Will and True Testimony Are

1. What following God’s will is, and whether following God’s will is merely preaching and working for the Lord

Bible Verses for Reference:

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like to it, You shall love your neighbor as yourself” (Mat 22:37–39).

“If a man love Me, he will keep My words: and My Father will love him, and We will come to him, and make Our stayed with him. He that loves Me not keeps not My sayings” (Jhn 14:23–24).

“If you continue in My word, then are you My disciples indeed” (Jhn 8:31).

“Not every one that said to Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that does the will of My Father which is in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name? and in Your name have cast out devils? and in Your name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess to them, I never knew you: depart from Me, you that work iniquity” (Mat 7:21–23).

Relevant Words of God:

In every age, while working among humans, God bestows some words upon them and tells them of some truths. These truths serve as the way people should adhere to, the way they should walk in, the way that enables them to fear God and shun evil, and the way that people should put into practice and adhere to in their lives and over the course of their life journeys. It is for these reasons that God expresses these utterances to humanity. These words that come from God should be adhered to by people, and to adhere to them is to receive life. If a person does not adhere to them, does not put them into practice, and does not live out God’s words in their life, then this person is not putting the truth into practice. Furthermore, if people are not putting the truth into practice, then they are not fearing God and shunning evil, nor can they satisfy God. People who are incapable of satisfying God cannot receive His praise, and such people have no outcome.

Excerpted from “How to Know God’s Disposition and the Results His Work Shall Achieve” in The Word
Appears in the Flesh

Walking in God’s way is not about observing superficial rules; rather, it means that when you are faced with a problem, you view it first and foremost as a situation that has been arranged by God, a responsibility He has bestowed upon you, or a task that He has entrusted to you. When facing this problem, you should even see it as a trial God has put to you. When you encounter this problem, you must have a standard in your heart, and you must think that this matter has come from God. You must think about how to deal with it in such a way that you can fulfill your responsibility while remaining loyal to God, as well as how to do it without infuriating Him or offending His disposition.

Excerpted from “How to Know God’s Disposition and the Results His Work Shall Achieve” in The Word
Appears in the Flesh

Though a person may have done a great number of good works since coming to faith in God, many matters may yet be opaque to them, and less still may they have come to an understanding of the truth—yet, because of their many good works, they feel they have already come to live in God’s words, and have submitted to Him, and have quite satisfied His will. This is because when no adverse circumstances arise, you do whatever you are told; you have no qualms about performing any duty, and you do not resist. When you are told to spread the gospel, it is a hardship you can bear, and you offer no complaint, and when you are told to run here and there, or to do manual labor, you do so. Because of these displays, you feel you are one who submits to God and a true pursuer of the truth. Yet were one to question you more deeply and ask, “Are you an honest person? Are you a person who genuinely submits to God? A person with a changed disposition?” then, thus questioned, thus held up against the truth for scrutiny, you—and, it may be said, anyone at all—would be found wanting, and neither is any person able truly to practice according to the truth. Therefore, when the root of all man’s acts and deeds, as well as the essence and nature of his actions, are held up against the truth, all are condemned. What is the reason for this? It is that man does not know himself; he always believes in God in his own way, performs his duty in his own way, and serves God in his own way. What is more, he feels he is full of faith and reason, and, in the end, he feels he has gained much. Without his knowing it, he comes to feel he is already acting in line with God’s will and has satisfied it completely, and that he has already met God’s requirements and is following His will. If this is how you feel, or if, in your several years of belief in God, you feel you have reaped some gains, then all the more should you come back before God to reflect on yourself. You should look at the path you have walked over your years of faith and see whether all your actions and behavior before God have been entirely after His heart, what you do that resists God, what you do that is able to satisfy God, and whether what you do meets God’s requirements and can be entirely in accord with His will—you should be clear on all these things.

Excerpted from “Only by Recognizing Your Misguided Views Can You Know Yourself” in Records of Christ’s

Talks

Regarding work, man believes that work is to run around for God, preach everywhere, and expend for His sake. Though this belief is correct, it is too one-sided; what God asks of man is

not solely to run around for Him; beyond just this, this work is concerned with ministry and provision within the spirit. Many brothers and sisters, even after all these years of experience, have never thought about working for God, because work as conceived by man is incongruous with what God asks. Therefore, man has no interest whatsoever in the matter of work, and this is precisely the reason why the entry of man is also quite one-sided. All of you should begin your entry with working for God, so that you may better undergo every aspect of experience. This is what you should enter into. Work refers not to running around for God, but to whether the life of man and what man lives out are able to give God enjoyment. Work refers to people using their devotion to God and their knowledge of God to testify about God, and also to minister to man. This is man's responsibility and this is what all man should understand. One could say that your entry is your work, and that you are seeking to enter during the course of working for God. Experiencing God's work does not merely mean that you know how to eat and drink of His word; more importantly, you must know how to testify about God and be able to serve God and be able to minister to and provide for man. This is work, and it is also your entry; this is what every person should accomplish. There are many who only focus on running around for God and preaching everywhere, yet overlook their individual experience and neglect their entry into the spiritual life. This is what has led those who serve God to become those who resist God.

Excerpted from "Work and Entry (2)" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

In his belief in God, Peter sought to satisfy God in everything, and sought to obey all that came from God. Without the slightest complaint, he was able to accept chastisement and judgment, as well as refinement, tribulation and going without in his life, none of which could alter his love for God. Was this not the ultimate love for God? Was this not the fulfillment of the duty of a creature of God? Whether in chastisement, judgment, or tribulation, you are always capable of achieving obedience unto death, and this is what should be achieved by a creature of God, this is the purity of the love for God. If man can achieve this much, then he is a qualified creature of God, and there is nothing which better satisfies the desire of the Creator. Imagine that you are able to work for God, yet you do not obey God, and are incapable of truly loving God. In this way, not only will you not have fulfilled the duty of a creature of God, but you will also be condemned by God, for you are someone who does not possess the truth, who is incapable of obeying God, and who is disobedient to God. You only care about working for God,

and do not care about putting the truth into practice or knowing yourself. You do not understand or know the Creator, and do not obey or love the Creator. You are someone who is innately disobedient to God, and so such people are not beloved by the Creator.

Excerpted from “Success or Failure Depends on the Path That Man Walks” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Many who follow God are only concerned with how to gain blessings or stave off disaster. As soon as God’s work and management are mentioned, they fall silent and lose all interest. They think that understanding such tedious issues will not help their lives to grow or provide any benefit. Consequently, although they have heard about God’s management, they pay it little heed. They do not see it as something precious to be accepted, much less do they receive it as part of their lives. Such people only have one simple aim in following God, and that aim is to receive blessings. Such people cannot be bothered to pay heed to anything else that does not directly involve this aim. To them, there is no goal more legitimate than believing in God to receive blessings—it is the very value of their faith. If something does not contribute to this aim, they remain completely unmoved by it. This is the case with most people who believe in God today. Their aim and intention seem legitimate, because as they believe in God, they also expend for God, dedicate themselves to God, and perform their duty. They give up their youth, forsake family and career, and even spend years away from home busying themselves. For the sake of their ultimate goal, they change their own interests, their outlook on life, and even the direction they seek; yet they cannot change the aim of their belief in God. They run about for the management of their own ideals; no matter how far the road is, and no matter how many hardships and obstacles there are along the way, they remain persistent and unafraid of death. What power compels them to continue dedicating themselves in this way? Is it their conscience? Is it their great and noble character? Is it their determination to battle the forces of evil to the very end? Is it their faith to bear witness to God without seeking reward? Is it their loyalty in being willing to give up everything to achieve God’s will? Or is it their spirit of devotion to always forgo extravagant personal demands? For someone who has never understood the work of God’s management to still give so much is, quite simply, a miracle! For the moment, let us not discuss how much these people have given. Their behavior, however, is highly worthy of our analysis. Apart from the benefits that are so closely associated with them, could there be any

other reasons why people who never understand God would give so much for Him? In this, we discover a previously unidentified problem: Man's relationship with God is merely one of naked self-interest. It is a relationship between a receiver and a giver of blessings. To put it plainly, it is akin to the relationship between employee and employer. The employee works only to receive the rewards bestowed by the employer. There is no affection in such a relationship, only transaction. There is no loving or being loved, only charity and mercy. There is no understanding, only suppressed indignation and deception. There is no intimacy, only an uncrossable chasm. Now that things have gotten to this point, who can reverse such a course? And how many people are capable of truly understanding how dire this relationship has become? I believe that when people immerse themselves in the joy of being blessed, none can imagine how embarrassing and unsightly such a relationship with God is.

Excerpted from "Man Can Only Be Saved Amidst God's Management" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

People say that God is a righteous God, and that as long as man follows Him to the very end, He will surely be impartial toward man, for He is most righteous. If man follows Him to the very end, could He cast man aside? I am impartial toward all men, and judge all men with My righteous disposition, yet there are suitable conditions to the requirements I make of man, and that which I require must be accomplished by all men, regardless of who they are. I care not how your qualifications are, or how long you have held them; I care only whether you walk in My way, and whether or not you love and thirst for the truth. If you lack the truth, and instead bring shame upon My name, and do not act according to My way, merely following without care or concern, then at that time I will strike you down and punish you for your evil, and what will you have to say then? Will you be able to say that God is not righteous? Today, if you have complied with the words I have spoken, then you are the kind of person whom I approve. You say you have always suffered whilst following God, that you have followed Him through thick and thin, and have shared with Him the good times and the bad, but you have not lived out the words spoken by God; you wish only to run about for God and expend yourself for God each day, and have never thought to live out a life of meaning. You also say, "In any case, I believe God is righteous. I have suffered for Him, run around for Him, and devoted myself for Him, and I have worked hard despite not receiving any recognition; He is sure to remember me." It is true that God is righteous, yet this righteousness is untainted by any impurities: It contains

no human will, and it is not tainted by the flesh, or by human transactions. All who are rebellious and in opposition, all who are not in compliance with His way, will be punished; none is forgiven, and none is spared! Some people say, “Today I run around for You; when the end comes, can You give me a little blessing?” So I ask you, “Have you complied with My words?” The righteousness that you speak of is based on a transaction. You think only that I am righteous and impartial toward all men, and that all those who follow Me to the very end are sure to be saved and gain My blessings. There is inner meaning to My words that “all those who follow Me to the very end are sure to be saved”: Those who follow Me to the very end are the ones who will be fully gained by Me, they are those who, after being conquered by Me, seek the truth and are made perfect. What conditions have you achieved? You have only achieved following Me to the very end, but what else? Have you complied with My words? You have accomplished one of My five requirements, yet you have no intention of accomplishing the remaining four. You have simply found the simplest, easiest path, and pursued it with an attitude of just hoping to get lucky. Toward such a person as you My righteous disposition is one of chastisement and judgment, it is one of righteous retribution, and it is the righteous punishment of all evildoers; all those who do not walk in My way will surely be punished, even if they follow to the very end. This is the righteousness of God.

Excerpted from “The Experiences of Peter: His Knowledge of Chastisement and Judgment” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

You might imagine that, having been a follower for so many years, you have put in hard work no matter what, and you should be granted a bowl of rice in God’s house just for being a service-doer. I would say that the majority of you think this way, for you have always pursued the principle of how to take advantage of things and not be taken advantage of. Thus, I am telling you now in all seriousness: I do not care how meritorious your hard work is, how impressive your qualifications, how closely you follow Me, how renowned you are, or how much you have improved your attitude; as long as you have not met My demands, you will never be able to win My praise. Write off all those ideas and calculations of yours as soon as possible, and start treating My requirements seriously; otherwise, I will turn everyone to ash in order to bring an end to My work and, at best turn My years of work and suffering into nothing, for I

cannot bring My enemies and those people who reek of evil and have Satan's appearance into My kingdom or take them into the next age.

Excerpted from "Transgressions Will Lead Man to Hell" in The Word Appears in the Flesh

Some people will end up saying, "I've done so much work for You, and though I may not have made any celebrated achievements, still I have been diligent in my efforts. Can't You just let me into heaven to eat the fruit of life?" You must know what kind of people I desire; those who are impure are not permitted to enter into the kingdom, those who are impure are not permitted to besmirch the holy ground. Though you may have done much work, and worked for many years, in the end if you are still deplorably filthy, then it will be intolerable to the law of Heaven that you wish to enter My kingdom! From the foundation of the world until today, never have I offered easy access to My kingdom to those who curry favor with Me. This is a heavenly rule, and no one can break it! You must seek life. Today, those who will be made perfect are the same kind as Peter: They are those who seek changes in their own disposition, and who are willing to bear testimony to God and perform their duty as a creature of God. Only people such as this will be made perfect. If you only look to rewards, and do not seek to change your own life disposition, then all your efforts will be in vain—this is an unalterable truth!

Excerpted from "Success or Failure Depends on the Path That Man Walks" in The Word Appears in the
Flesh

2. Whether one's testimony is true if they believe in God only to enjoy His grace

Relevant Words of God:

Today man sees that with the grace, love, and mercy of God alone, he is incapable of truly knowing himself, and much less is he able to know the substance of man. Only through both the refinement and judgment of God, and during the process of refinement itself, can man know his deficiencies, and know that he has nothing. Thus, man's love of God is built upon the foundation of the refinement and judgment of God. If you only enjoy the grace of God, having a peaceful family life or material blessings, then you have not gained God, and your belief in God cannot be considered successful. God has already carried out one stage of the work of grace

in the flesh, and has already bestowed material blessings upon man, but man cannot be made perfect with grace, love, and mercy alone. In man's experiences, he encounters some of God's love and sees the love and mercy of God, yet having experienced for a period of time, he sees that God's grace and His love and mercy are incapable of making man perfect, incapable of revealing that which is corrupt within man, and incapable of ridding man of his corrupt disposition, or making perfect his love and faith. God's work of grace was the work of one period, and man cannot rely on enjoying the grace of God in order to know God.

Excerpted from "Only by Experiencing Painful Trials Can You Know the Loveliness of God" in The Word
Appears in the Flesh

What is the path through which God perfects man? What aspects does it include? Are you willing to be perfected by God? Are you willing to accept His judgment and chastisement? What do you know of these questions? If you have no knowledge to speak of, then this is proof that you still do not know God's work, that you have not been enlightened by the Holy Spirit at all. It is impossible for such people to be perfected. They are only given a small amount of grace to enjoy briefly, and it will not last long. People cannot be perfected by God if they only enjoy His grace. Some are satisfied when their flesh has peace and enjoyment, when their life is easy and without adversity or misfortune, when their whole family lives in harmony, without contention or dispute—and they may even believe this to be the blessing of God. In truth, it is merely God's grace. You must not be satisfied with merely enjoying the grace of God. Such thinking is so vulgar. Even if you read the words of God every day, and pray every day, and your spirit feels great enjoyment and is especially at peace, if you ultimately have nothing to say of your knowledge of God and His work, and have experienced nothing, and no matter how much of God's word you have eaten and drunk, if all you feel is spiritual peace and enjoyment, and that the word of God is sweet beyond compare, as though you cannot enjoy it enough, but you have no practical experience whatsoever of the words of God and are utterly devoid of the reality of His words, then what can you gain from such faith in God? If you cannot live out the essence of God's words, then your eating and drinking of these words and your prayers are nothing but religious belief. Such people cannot be perfected by God and cannot be gained by Him.

Excerpted from "Promises to Those Who Have Been Perfected" in The Word Appears in the Flesh

God makes people perfect through their obedience, through their eating, drinking, and enjoying of God's words, and through the suffering and refinement in their lives. Only through faith such as this can people's dispositions change, and only then can they possess the true knowledge of God. Not being satisfied with living amid God's grace, actively yearning and searching for the truth, and seeking to be gained by God—this is what it means to consciously obey God and this is precisely the kind of faith that He wants. People who do nothing more than enjoy God's grace cannot be made perfect or changed; and their obedience, piety, love, and patience are all superficial. Those who only enjoy God's grace cannot truly know God, and even when they do know God, their knowledge is superficial, and they say things like "God loves man," or "God is compassionate toward man." This does not represent the life of man, and does not show that people truly know God. If, when God's words refine them, or when His trials come upon them, people are unable to obey God—if, instead, they become doubtful, and fall down—then they are not in the least bit obedient.

Excerpted from "In Your Faith in God You Should Obey God" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Are you content to live under the influence of Satan, with peace and joy, and a little fleshly comfort? Are you not the lowliest of all people? None are more foolish than those who have beheld salvation but do not pursue to gain it; these are people who gorge themselves on the flesh and enjoy Satan. You hope that your faith in God will not entail any challenges or tribulations, or the slightest hardship. You always pursue those things that are worthless, and you attach no value to life, instead putting your own extravagant thoughts before the truth. You are so worthless! You live like a pig—what difference is there between you, and pigs and dogs? Are those who do not pursue the truth, and instead love the flesh, not all beasts? Are those dead ones without spirits not all walking corpses? How many words have been spoken among you? Has only a little work been done among you? How much have I provided among you? So why have you not gained it? What do you have to complain of? Is it not the case that you have gained nothing because you are too in love with the flesh? And is it not because your thoughts are too extravagant? Is it not because you are too stupid? If you are incapable of gaining these blessings, can you blame God for not saving you? What you pursue is to be able to gain peace after believing in God, for your children to be free from illness, for your husband to have a good job, for your son to find a good wife, for your daughter to find a decent husband, for your oxen and

horses to plow the land well, for a year of good weather for your crops. This is what you seek. Your pursuit is only to live in comfort, for no accidents to befall your family, for the winds to pass you by, for your face to be untouched by grit, for your family's crops to not be flooded, for you to be unaffected by any disaster, to live in God's embrace, to live in a cozy nest. A coward such as you, who always pursues the flesh—do you have a heart, do you have a spirit? Are you not a beast? I give you the true way without asking for anything in return, yet you do not pursue. Are you one of those who believe in God? I bestow real human life upon you, yet you do not pursue. Are you no different from a pig or a dog? Pigs do not pursue the life of man, they do not pursue being cleansed, and they do not understand what life is. Each day, after eating their fill, they simply sleep. I have given you the true way, yet you have not gained it: You are empty-handed. Are you willing to continue in this life, the life of a pig? What is the significance of such people being alive? Your life is contemptible and ignoble, you live amid filth and licentiousness, and you do not pursue any goals; is your life not the most ignoble of all? Do you have the gall to look upon God? If you continue to experience in this way, will you not acquire nothing? The true way has been given to you, but whether or not you can ultimately gain it depends on your own personal pursuit.

Excerpted from "The Experiences of Peter: His Knowledge of Chastisement and Judgment" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Now do you understand what belief in God is? Does belief in God mean beholding signs and wonders? Does it mean ascending to heaven? Believing in God is not easy in the slightest. Those religious practices should be purged; pursuing the healing of the sick and the casting out of demons, focusing on signs and wonders, coveting more of God's grace, peace and joy, pursuing the prospects and comforts of the flesh—these are religious practices, and such religious practices are a vague kind of belief. What is real belief in God today? It is the acceptance of God's word as your life reality and the knowing of God from His word in order to achieve a true love of Him. To be clear: Belief in God is so that you may obey God, love God, and perform the duty that should be performed by a creature of God. This is the aim of believing in God. You must achieve a knowledge of the loveliness of God, of how worthy God is of reverence, of how, in His creatures, God does the work of salvation and making them perfect—these are the bare essentials of your belief in God. Belief in God is principally the switch from a

life of the flesh to a life of loving God; from living within corruption to living within the life of God's words; it is coming out from under the domain of Satan and living under the care and protection of God; it is being able to achieve obedience to God and not obedience to the flesh; it is allowing God to gain your entire heart, allowing God to make you perfect, and freeing yourself from the corrupt satanic disposition. Belief in God is principally so that the power and glory of God may be manifested in you, so that you may do God's will, and accomplish God's plan, and be able to bear testimony to God before Satan. Belief in God should not revolve around the desire to behold signs and wonders, nor should it be for the sake of your personal flesh. It should be about the pursuit of knowing God, and being able to obey God, and, like Peter, obeying Him until one's death. These are the main aims of believing in God. One eats and drinks the word of God in order to know God and satisfy Him. Eating and drinking the word of God gives you a greater knowledge of God, only after which can you obey Him. Only with knowledge of God can you love Him, and this is the goal man should have in his belief in God. If, in your belief in God, you are always trying to behold signs and wonders, then the viewpoint of this belief in God is wrong. Belief in God is principally the acceptance of the word of God as life reality. The aim of God is only attained by putting into practice the words of God from His mouth and carrying them out within yourself. In believing in God, man should strive to be made perfect by God, to be able to submit to God, and for complete obedience to God. If you can obey God without complaint, be mindful of God's desires, achieve the stature of Peter, and possess the style of Peter spoken of by God, then that will be when you have achieved success in belief in God, and it will signify that you have been gained by God.

Excerpted from "All Is Achieved by the Word of God" in The Word Appears in the Flesh

3. What a person who follows God's will is, and what true testimony of belief in God is

Bible Verses for Reference:

"Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God. And Noah begat three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. And God looked on the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all

flesh had corrupted his way on the earth. And God said to Noah, The end of all flesh is come before Me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth. Make you an ark of gopher wood; rooms shall you make in the ark, and shall pitch it within and without with pitch. ... And of every living thing of all flesh, two of every sort shall you bring into the ark, to keep them alive with you; they shall be male and female. Of fowls after their kind, and of cattle after their kind, of every creeping thing of the earth after his kind, two of every sort shall come to you, to keep them alive. And take you to you of all food that is eaten, and you shall gather it to you; and it shall be for food for you, and for them. Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he” (Gen 6:9–22).

“God did tempt Abraham, and said to him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am. And He said, Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and get you into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering on one of the mountains which I will tell you of. And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and split the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went to the place of which God had told him. ... And they came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar on the wood. And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son” (Gen 22:1–10).

“There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil” (Job 1:1).

“And there was a day when his sons and his daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house: And there came a messenger to Job, and said, The oxen were plowing, and the asses feeding beside them: And the Sabeans fell on them, and took them away; yes, they have slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell you. While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The fire of God is fallen from heaven, and has burned up the sheep, and the servants, and consumed them; and I only am escaped alone to tell you. While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The Chaldeans made out three bands, and fell on the camels, and have carried them away, yes, and slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell you. While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, Your sons and your daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother's house: And, behold, there came a great wind from

the wilderness, and smote the four corners of the house, and it fell on the young men, and they are dead; and I only am escaped alone to tell you. Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down on the ground, and worshipped, And said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: Jehovah gave, and Jehovah has taken away; blessed be the name of Jehovah” (Job 1:13–21).

Relevant Words of God:

Today, God has officially begun the perfection of man. To be made perfect, people must undergo the revelation, judgment, and chastisement of His words, they must experience the trials and refinement of His words (such as the trial of the service-doers), and they must be able to withstand the trial of death. What this means is that amidst the judgment, chastisement, and trials of God, those who truly abide by God’s will are able to praise God from deep within their hearts, and to utterly obey God and forsake themselves, thus loving God with a heart that is sincere, undivided, and pure; such is a perfect person, and it is precisely the work that God intends to do, and the work that He shall accomplish.

Excerpted from “On the Steps of God’s Work” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Jesus was able to complete God’s commission—the work of all mankind’s redemption—because He gave every care to God’s will, without making any plans or arrangements for Himself. So, too, was He the intimate of God—God Himself—which is something you all understand very well. (Actually, He was the God Himself who was testified to by God. I mention this here to use the fact of Jesus to illustrate the issue.) He was able to place God’s management plan at the very center, and always prayed to the heavenly Father and sought the will of the heavenly Father. He prayed and said: “God the Father! Accomplish that which is Your will, and act not according to My desires but according to Your plan. Man may be weak, but why should You care for him? How could man be worthy of Your concern, man who is like an ant in Your hand? In My heart, I wish only to accomplish Your will, and I would that You can do what You would do in Me according to Your own desires.” On the road to Jerusalem, Jesus was in agony, as if a knife were being twisted in His heart, yet He had not the slightest intention of going back on His word; always there was a powerful force compelling Him onward to where He would be crucified. Ultimately, He was nailed to the cross and became the likeness of sinful flesh,

completing the work of the redemption of mankind. He broke free of the shackles of death and Hades. Before Him, mortality, hell, and Hades lost their power, and were vanquished by Him. He lived for thirty-three years, throughout which He always did His utmost to meet God's will according to God's work at the time, never considering His own personal gain or loss, and always thinking of the will of God the Father. Thus, after He was baptized, God said: "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Because of His service before God that was in harmony with God's will, God placed the heavy burden of redeeming all mankind upon His shoulders and made Him accomplish it, and He was qualified and entitled to complete this important task. Throughout His life, He endured immeasurable suffering for God, and He was tempted by Satan countless times, but He was never disheartened. God gave Him such an enormous task because He trusted Him, and loved Him, and thus God personally said: "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

Excerpted from "How to Serve in Harmony With God's Will" in The Word Appears in the Flesh

Those who serve God should be God's intimates, they should be pleasing to God, and capable of the utmost loyalty to God. Whether you act in private or in public, you are able to gain the joy of God before God, you are able to stand firm before God, and regardless of how other people treat you, you always walk the path you should walk, and give every care to God's burden. Only people like this are intimates of God. That God's intimates are able to serve Him directly is because they have been given God's great commission and God's burden, they are able to make God's heart their own, and take God's burden as their own, and they give no consideration to their future prospects: Even when they have no prospects, and they stand to gain nothing, they will always believe in God with a loving heart. And so, this kind of person is God's intimate. God's intimates are also His confidants; only God's confidants could share His restlessness, and His thoughts, and although their flesh is painful and weak, they are able to endure pain and forsake that which they love to satisfy God. God gives more burdens to such people, and that which God desires to do is borne out in such people's testimony. Thus, these people are pleasing to God, they are servants of God who are after His own heart, and only people such as this can rule together with God.

Excerpted from "How to Serve in Harmony With God's Will" in The Word Appears in the Flesh

To God, no matter whether a person is great or insignificant, as long as they can listen to Him, obey His instructions and what He entrusts, and can cooperate with His work, His will, and His plan, so that His will and His plan can be accomplished smoothly, then that conduct is worthy of His remembrance and of receiving His blessing. God treasures such people, and He cherishes their actions and their love and affection for Him. This is God's attitude.

Excerpted from "God's Work, God's Disposition, and God Himself I" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

When Job first underwent his trials, he was stripped of all his property and all of his children, but he did not fall down or say anything that was a sin against God as a result. He had overcome the temptations of Satan, and he had overcome his material assets, his offspring and the trial of losing all his worldly possessions, which is to say he was able to obey God as He took things away from him and he was also able to offer thanks and praise to God because of what God did. Such was Job's conduct during Satan's first temptation, and such was also Job's testimony during the first trial of God. In the second trial, Satan stretched forth its hand to afflict Job, and although Job experienced pain greater than he had ever felt before, still his testimony was enough to leave people astounded. He used his fortitude, conviction, and obedience to God, as well as his fear of God, to once more defeat Satan, and his conduct and his testimony were once more approved of and favored by God. During this temptation, Job used his actual conduct to proclaim to Satan that the pain of the flesh could not alter his faith and obedience to God or take away his devotion to God and fear of God; he would not renounce God or give up his own perfection and uprightness because he faced death. Job's determination made a coward of Satan, his faith left Satan timorous and trembling, the intensity with which he fought against Satan during their life-and-death battle bred in Satan a deep hatred and resentment; his perfection and uprightness left Satan with nothing more it could do to him, such that Satan abandoned its attacks on him and gave up its accusations against Job that it had laid before Jehovah God. This meant that Job had overcome the world, he had overcome the flesh, he had overcome Satan, and he had overcome death; he was completely and utterly a man who belonged to God. During these two trials, Job stood firm in his testimony, actually lived out his perfection and uprightness, and broadened the scope of his living principles of fearing God and shunning evil. Having undergone these two trials, there was born in Job a richer experience, and this experience made him more mature and seasoned, it made him

stronger, and of greater conviction, and it made him more confident of the rightness and worthiness of the integrity to which he held firm. Jehovah God's trials of Job gave him a deep understanding and sense of God's concern for man, and allowed him to sense the preciousness of God's love, from which point consideration toward and love for God were added into his fear of God. The trials of Jehovah God not only did not alienate Job from Him, but brought his heart closer to God. When the fleshly pain endured by Job reached its peak, the concern that he felt from Jehovah God gave him no choice but to curse the day of his birth. Such conduct was not long-planned, but a natural revelation of the consideration for and love for God from within his heart, it was a natural revelation that came from his consideration for and love for God. This is to say, because he loathed himself, and he was unwilling to, and could not stand to torment God, thus his consideration and love reached the point of selflessness. At this time, Job elevated his long-standing adoration and yearning for God and devotion to God to the level of consideration and loving. At the same time, he also elevated his faith and obedience to God and fear of God to the level of consideration and loving. He did not allow himself to do anything that would cause harm to God, he did not permit himself any conduct that would hurt God, and did not allow himself to bring any sorrow, grief, or even unhappiness upon God for his own reasons. In God's eyes, although Job was still the same Job as before, Job's faith, obedience, and fear of God had brought God complete satisfaction and enjoyment. At this time, Job had attained the perfection that God had expected him to attain; he had become someone truly worthy of being called "perfect and upright" in God's eyes. His righteous deeds allowed him to overcome Satan and to stand fast in his testimony to God. So, too, his righteous deeds made him perfect, and allowed the value of his life to be elevated and transcend more than ever, and they also made him the first person to no longer be attacked and tempted by Satan. Because Job was righteous, he was accused and tempted by Satan; because Job was righteous, he was handed over to Satan; and because Job was righteous, he overcame and defeated Satan, and stood firm in his testimony. Henceforth Job became the first man who would never again be handed over to Satan, he truly came before the throne of God and lived in the light, under the blessings of God without the spying or ruination of Satan.... He had become a true man in the eyes of God; he had been set free ...

Excerpted from "God's Work, God's Disposition, and God Himself II" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Anything in Peter's life that did not satisfy God's desire made him feel uneasy. If it did not satisfy God's desire, then he would feel remorseful, and would look for a suitable way by which he could strive to satisfy God's heart. In even the smallest and most inconsequential aspects of his life, still he required himself to satisfy God's desire. He was no less exacting when it came to his old disposition, ever rigorous in his requirements of himself to progress deeper into the truth. ... In his belief in God, Peter sought to satisfy God in everything, and sought to obey all that came from God. Without the slightest complaint, he was able to accept chastisement and judgment, as well as refinement, tribulation and going without in his life, none of which could alter his love for God. Was this not the ultimate love for God? Was this not the fulfillment of the duty of a creature of God? Whether in chastisement, judgment, or tribulation, you are always capable of achieving obedience unto death, and this is what should be achieved by a creature of God, this is the purity of the love for God. If man can achieve this much, then he is a qualified creature of God, and there is nothing which better satisfies the desire of the Creator.

Excerpted from "Success or Failure Depends on the Path That Man Walks" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

At the mention of Peter, people have no end of good things to say about him. They immediately recall the three times that he disowned God, how he tested God by giving service to Satan, and how he was ultimately crucified upside down for God, and so on. Now I am going to focus on describing to you how Peter knew Me and what his final end was. Peter was of good caliber, but his circumstances were not like those of Paul: His parents persecuted Me, they were demons that had been possessed by Satan and, as a result, they taught nothing of God to Peter. Peter was clever, gifted, and doted on by his parents from a young age. Yet as an adult, he became their enemy because he never stopped pursuing the knowledge of Me, and subsequently turned his back on them. This was because, above all else, he believed that heaven and earth and all things are in the hands of the Almighty and that all positive things come from God and are directly issued from Him without being processed by Satan. The contradistinction of Peter's parents gave him a greater knowledge of My lovingkindness and mercy, thus heightening his desire to seek Me. He focused not just on eating and drinking My words, but, moreover, on grasping My will, and was ever vigilant in his heart. As a result, he was always sensitive in his spirit, and hence he was after My own heart in all he did. He maintained a constant focus on

the failures of people in the past to spur himself on, profoundly fearful of becoming ensnared in failure. So, too, did he concentrate on assimilating the faith and love of all those who had loved God throughout the ages. In this way—not only in negative aspects, but much more importantly, in positive aspects—he grew more quickly, such that his knowledge became the greatest of all in My presence. It is not difficult to imagine, then, how he put everything he had in My hands, how he even surrendered making decisions about food, clothing, sleeping and where he lived, and instead enjoyed My riches upon the basis of satisfying Me in all things. I subjected him to countless trials—trials, naturally, that left him half-dead—but amidst these hundreds of trials, he never once lost faith in Me or felt disappointed in Me. Even when I said I had forsaken him, still he was not discouraged, and continued to love Me in a practical way and in accordance with past principles of practice. I told him that I would not praise him even though he loved Me, that I would ultimately cast him into Satan’s hands. But amid such trials, trials that did not come upon his flesh, but were of words, he still prayed to Me and said, “O God! Among heaven and earth and all things, is there any human, any creature, or any thing that is not in the hands of You, the Almighty? When You are merciful toward me, my heart greatly rejoices with Your mercy. When You judge me, unworthy though I may be, I gain a greater sense of the unfathomableness of Your deeds, because You are filled with authority and wisdom. Though my flesh suffers hardship, my spirit is comforted. How could I not give praise to Your wisdom and deeds? Even if I were to die after knowing You, how could I not do so gladly and happily? Almighty One! Do You really not wish to let me see You? Am I really unfit to receive Your judgment? Could it be that there is something in me You do not wish to see?” During such trials, even though Peter was not able to accurately grasp My will, it was evident that he was proud and honored to be used by Me (even though he received My judgment so that humanity might see My majesty and wrath), and that he was not distressed by these trials. Because of his loyalty before Me, and because of My blessing of him, he has been an exemplar and model to man for thousands of years.

Excerpted from “Chapter 6” of God’s Words to the Entire Universe in The Word Appears in the Flesh

When he was being chastised by God, Peter prayed, “O God! My flesh is disobedient, and You chastise me and judge me. I rejoice in Your chastisement and judgment, and even if You do not want me, in Your judgment I behold Your holy and righteous disposition. When You

judge me, so that others may behold Your righteous disposition in Your judgment, I feel content. If it can express Your disposition and allow Your righteous disposition to be seen by all creatures, and if it can make my love for You more pure, that I can attain the likeness of one who is righteous, then Your judgment is good, for such is Your gracious will. I know that there is still much in me that is rebellious, and that I am still not fit to come before You. I wish for You to judge me even more, whether through a hostile environment or great tribulations; no matter what You do, to me it is precious. Your love is so profound, and I am willing to lay myself at Your mercy without the slightest complaint.” This is Peter’s knowledge after he experienced the work of God, and it is also a testimony to his love of God. ... Near the end of his life, after he had been made perfect, Peter said, “O God! If I were to live a few more years, I would wish to achieve a purer and deeper love of You.” When he was about to be nailed to the cross, in his heart he prayed, “O God! Your time has now arrived; the time You prepared for me has arrived. I must be crucified for You, I must bear this testimony to You, and I hope that my love can satisfy Your requirements, and that it can become purer. Today, to be able to die for You, and be nailed to the cross for You, is comforting and reassuring to me, for nothing is more gratifying to me than to be able to be crucified for You and satisfy Your wishes, and to be able to give myself to You, to offer up my life to You. O God! You are so lovely! Were You to allow me to live, I would be even more willing to love You. As long as I am alive, I will love You. I wish to love You more deeply. You judge me, and chastise me, and try me because I am not righteous, because I have sinned. And Your righteous disposition becomes more apparent to me. This is a blessing to me, for I am able to love You more deeply, and I am willing to love You in this way even if You do not love me. I am willing to behold Your righteous disposition, for this makes me more able to live out a life of meaning. I feel that my life now is more meaningful, for I am crucified for Your sake, and it is meaningful to die for You. Yet still I do not feel satisfied, for I know too little of You, I know that I cannot completely fulfill Your wishes, and have repaid You too little. In my life, I have been incapable of returning my entirety to You; I am far from that. As I look back at this moment, I feel so indebted to You, and I have but this moment to make up for all of my mistakes and all the love that I have not repaid You.”

Excerpted from “The Experiences of Peter: His Knowledge of Chastisement and Judgment” in *The Word*

Appears in the *Flesh*

Today, you should be aware of how to be conquered, and of how people conduct themselves after they have been conquered. You may say you have been conquered, but can you obey unto death? You must be able to follow to the very end regardless of whether there are any prospects, and you must not lose faith in God regardless of the environment. Ultimately, you must achieve two aspects of testimony: the testimony of Job—obedience unto death; and the testimony of Peter—the supreme love of God. In one respect, you must be like Job: He lost all material possessions, and was beset by the pain of the flesh, yet he did not forsake the name of Jehovah. This was Job’s testimony. Peter was able to love God unto death. When he was put on the cross and faced his death, he still loved God; he did not think of his own prospects or pursue beautiful hopes or extravagant thoughts, and he sought only to love God and to obey all of God’s arrangements. Such is the standard you must achieve before you can be considered to have borne testimony, before you become someone who has been made perfect after having been conquered.

Excerpted from “The Inside Truth of the Work of Conquest (2)” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

What is exactly true testimony? The testimony spoken of here has two parts: One is testimony of having been conquered, and the other is testimony of having been made perfect (which, naturally, will be the testimony following the greater trials and the tribulations of the future). In other words, if you are able to stand firm during tribulations and trials, then you will have borne the second step of testimony. What is crucial today is the first step of testimony: being able to stand firm during every instance of the trials of chastisement and judgment. This is testimony of being conquered. That is because now is the time of conquest. (You should know that now is the time of God’s work on earth; the incarnate God’s main work on earth is conquering this group of people on earth who follow Him through judgment and chastisement.) Whether or not you are capable of bearing testimony of being conquered not only depends on whether you are able to follow to the very end, but, more importantly, on whether, as you experience each step of God’s work, you are capable of the true understanding of God’s chastisement and judgment, and on whether you truly perceive all of this work. You will not be able to slip through by merely following to the very end. You must be able to willingly surrender during every instance of chastisement and judgment, must be capable of truly understanding each step of work you experience, and must be able to attain knowledge of, and obedience to

God's disposition. This is the ultimate testimony of being conquered, which you are required to bear. Testimony of being conquered primarily refers to your knowledge of the incarnation of God. Crucially, this step of testimony is to the incarnation of God. It matters not what you do or say before the people of the world or those who wield power; what matters above all is whether you are able to obey all of the words from God's mouth and all of His work. Therefore, this step of testimony is directed at Satan and all enemies of God—the demons and hostiles who do not believe that God will become flesh a second time and come to do even greater work, and furthermore, do not believe in the fact of God's return to the flesh. In other words, it is directed at all the antichrists—all the enemies who do not believe in the incarnation of God.

.....

The last step of testimony is testimony of whether or not you are able to be made perfect—which is to say, having understood all of the words spoken from the mouth of God incarnate, you come to possess knowledge of God and become certain about Him, you live out all the words from God's mouth, and achieve the conditions God asks of you—the style of Peter and faith of Job—such that you can obey unto death, give yourself over entirely to Him, and ultimately achieve an image of a person that is up to standard, which means the image of someone who has been conquered and made perfect after experiencing God's judgment and chastisement. This is the ultimate testimony—it is the testimony that ought to be borne by one who is ultimately made perfect. These are the two steps of testimony you should bear, and they are interrelated, each indispensable. But there is one thing you must know: The testimony I require of you today is not directed at the people of the world, nor any single individual, but at that which I ask of you. It is measured by whether you are able to satisfy Me, and whether you are able to completely meet the standards of My requirements of each one of you. This is what you should understand.

Excerpted from "Practice (4)" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Belief in God requires obedience to Him and experience of His work. God has done so much work—it could be said that for people it is all perfection, refinement, and even more, chastisement. There has not been a single step of God's work that has been in line with human notions; what people have enjoyed is God's stern words. When God comes, people should enjoy His majesty and His wrath. However, no matter how stern His words may be, He comes to save

and perfect mankind. As creatures, people should fulfill the duties that they ought to, and stand witness for God in the midst of refinement. In every trial they should uphold the witness that they should bear, and do so resoundingly for the sake of God. A person who does this is an overcomer. No matter how God refines you, you remain full of confidence and never lose confidence in Him. You do what man should do. This is what God requires of man, and man's heart should be able to fully return to Him and turn toward Him in every passing moment. This is an overcomer. Those whom God refers to as "overcomers" are those who are still able to stand witness and maintain their confidence and devotion to God when under the influence of Satan and while being laid siege to by Satan, that is, when they find themselves amidst the forces of darkness. If you are still able to keep a pure heart before God and maintain your genuine love for God no matter what, then you are standing witness in front of God, and this is what God refers to as being an "overcomer." If your pursuit is excellent when God blesses you, but you retreat without His blessings, is this purity? Since you are certain that this way is true, you must follow it until the end; you must maintain your devotion to God. Since you have seen that God Himself has come to the earth to perfect you, you should give your heart entirely to Him. If you can still follow Him no matter what He does, even if He determines an unfavorable outcome for you at the very end, this is maintaining your purity in front of God. Offering a holy spiritual body and a pure virgin to God means keeping a sincere heart in front of God. For mankind, sincerity is purity, and the ability to be sincere toward God is maintaining purity. This is what you should put into practice. When you ought to pray, you pray; when you ought to gather together in fellowship, you do so; when you ought to sing hymns, you sing hymns; and when you ought to forsake the flesh, you forsake the flesh. When you perform your duty, you do not muddle through it; when you are faced with trials you stand firm. This is devotion to God.

Excerpted from "You Should Maintain Your Devotion to God" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Bearing a resounding witness for God primarily relates to whether or not you have an understanding of the practical God, and to whether or not you are able to submit before this person who is not only ordinary, but normal, and submit even unto death. If, by way of this submission, you truly bear witness for God, that means you have been obtained by God. If you can submit unto death and, before Him, be free of complaints, not make judgments, not slander, not have any notions, and not have any ulterior motives, then in this way God will gain glory.

Submission before a regular person who is looked down upon by man, and being able to submit unto death without any notions—this is true testimony. The reality that God requires people to enter into is that you are able to obey His words, put them into practice, bow down in front of the practical God and know your own corruption, open up your heart in front of Him, and, ultimately, be gained by Him through these words of His. God gains glory when these utterances conquer you and make you fully obedient to Him; through this, He shames Satan and completes His work. When you do not have any notions about the practicality of God incarnate—that is, when you have stood firm in this trial—then you have borne this witness well. If there comes a day when you have a full understanding of the practical God and can submit unto death like Peter did, then you will be gained and perfected by God. Anything God does that is not in line with your notions is a trial for you. If God’s work were in line with your notions, it would not require you to suffer or be refined. It is because His work is so practical and not in line with your notions that it requires you to let go of such notions. This is why it is a trial for you. It is because of God’s practicality that all people are in the midst of trials; His work is practical, not supernatural. By fully understanding His practical words and His practical utterances without any notions, and being able to genuinely love Him as His work grows ever more practical, you will be gained by Him. The group of people whom God will gain are those who know God; that is, those who know His practicality. Furthermore, they are those who are able to submit to God’s practical work.

Excerpted from “Those Who Truly Love God Are Those Who Can Submit Absolutely to His Practicality” in
The Word Appears in the Flesh

Part Two: Questions and Answers About Entering Truth Reality

I. Truths of Belief in God

1. Why should mankind believe in God?

Relevant Words of God:

God is the One who rules over all things and administers all things. He created all that there is, He administers all that there is, He rules over all that there is, and He provides for all that there is. This is the status of God, and it is His identity. For all things and all that there is, God's true identity is the Creator and the Ruler of all of creation. Such is the identity possessed by God, and He is unique among all things. None of God's creatures—whether they be among mankind or in the spiritual world—can use any means or excuse to impersonate or replace God's identity and status, for there is only One, among all things, who is possessed of this identity, power, authority, and ability to rule over creation: our unique God Himself. He lives and moves among all things; He can rise to the highest place, above all things. He can humble Himself by becoming human, becoming one among those of flesh and blood, coming face-to-face with people and sharing weal and woe with them, while at the same time, He commands all that there is, deciding the fate of all that there is and in what direction it all moves. Moreover, He guides the fate of all mankind, and steers the direction of mankind. A God such as this should be worshiped, obeyed, and known by all living beings. Thus, regardless of which group or type among mankind you belong to, believing in God, following God, revering God, accepting His rule, and accepting His arrangements for your fate is the only choice—the necessary choice—for any person and for any living being.

Excerpted from "God Himself, the Unique X" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

In the vastness of the cosmos and the firmament, countless creatures live and reproduce, follow the cyclical law of life, and adhere to one constant rule. Those who die take with them the stories of the living, and those who are living repeat the same tragic history of those who have perished. And so, mankind cannot help but ask himself: Why do we live? And why do we have to die? Who commands this world? And who created this mankind? Was mankind really created by Mother Nature? Is mankind really in control of his own fate? ... These are the questions mankind has asked ceaselessly for thousands of years. Unfortunately, the more that man has become obsessed with these questions, the more of a thirst he has developed for science. Science offers brief gratification and temporary enjoyment of the flesh, but is far from sufficient to free man from the solitariness, loneliness, and barely-concealed terror and helplessness deep within his soul. Mankind merely uses scientific knowledge that he can see

with his naked eye and understand with his brain in order to anesthetize his heart. Yet such scientific knowledge is not enough to stop mankind from exploring mysteries. Mankind simply does not know who the Sovereign of the universe and all things is, much less the beginning and future of mankind. Mankind merely lives, perforce, amidst this law. None can escape it and none can change it, for among all things and in the heavens there is but One from everlasting to everlasting who holds sovereignty over everything. He is the One who has never been beheld by man, the One whom mankind has never known, in whose existence mankind has never believed—yet He is the One who blew the breath into mankind’s ancestors and gave life to mankind. He is the One who provides and nourishes mankind, allowing him to exist; and He is the One who has guided mankind up to the present day. Moreover, He and He alone is the One mankind depends on for survival. He holds sovereignty over all things and rules all living beings in the universe. He commands the four seasons, and it is He who calls forth wind, frost, snow, and rain. He brings mankind sunshine and ushers in the night. It was He who laid out the heavens and earth, providing man with the mountains, lakes, and rivers and all of the living things within them. His deeds are omnipresent, His power is omnipresent, His wisdom is omnipresent, and His authority is omnipresent. Each of these laws and rules is the embodiment of His deeds, and each one reveals His wisdom and authority. Who can exempt themselves from His sovereignty? And who can discharge themselves from His designs? All things exist beneath His gaze, and moreover, all things live under His sovereignty. His deeds and His power leave mankind with no choice but to acknowledge the fact that He really does exist and holds sovereignty over all things. Nothing apart from Him can command the universe, much less endlessly provide for this mankind. Regardless of whether you are able to recognize God’s deeds, and regardless of whether you believe in the existence of God, there is no doubt that your fate is determined by God, and there is no doubt that God will always hold sovereignty over all things. His existence and authority are not predicated upon whether or not they are recognized and comprehended by man. Only He knows man’s past, present, and future, and only He can determine the fate of mankind. Regardless of whether you are able to accept this fact, it will not be long before mankind witnesses all of this with his own eyes, and this is the fact that God will soon bring to bear. Mankind lives and dies under the eyes of God. Man lives for the management of God, and when his eyes close for the final time, it is for this management that they close as well. Man comes and goes over and over again, back and forth. Without exception, it is all part

of God's sovereignty and His design. God's management has never ceased; it is perpetually advancing. He will make mankind aware of His existence, trust in His sovereignty, behold His deeds, and return to His kingdom. This is His plan, and the work that He has been managing for thousands of years.

Excerpted from "Man Can Only Be Saved Amidst God's Management" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

God created this world and brought man, a living being unto which He bestowed life, into it. Next, man came to have parents and kin, and was no longer alone. Ever since man first laid eyes on this material world, he was destined to exist within the ordination of God. The breath of life from God supports each and every living being throughout growth into adulthood. During this process, no one feels that man is growing up under the care of God; rather, they believe that man is doing so under the loving care of his parents, and that it is his own life instinct that directs his growing up. This is because man knows not who bestowed his life, or from whence it came, much less the way in which the instinct of life creates miracles. He knows only that food is the basis on which his life continues, that perseverance is the source of his existence, and that the beliefs in his mind are the capital upon which his survival depends. Of God's grace and provision, man is utterly oblivious, and thus does he fritter away the life bestowed upon him by God.... Not a single one of this humanity that God cares for day and night takes it upon themselves to worship Him. God only continues to work on man, for whom He holds out no expectations, as He has planned. He does so in the hope that one day, man will awaken from his dream and suddenly realize the value and meaning of life, the price God paid for all that He has given him, and the eager solicitude with which God waits for man to turn back to Him. No one has ever looked into the secrets governing the origin and continuation of man's life. Only God, who understands all of this, silently endures the hurt and the blows that man, who has received everything from God but is not thankful, gives Him. Man takes for granted all that life brings, and, likewise, it is "a matter of course" that God is betrayed by man, forgotten by man, and extorted by man. Could it be that God's plan is truly of such importance? Could it be that man, this living being that came from the hand of God, is truly of such importance? The plan of God is assuredly of importance; however, this living being created by the hand of God exists for the sake of His plan. Therefore, God cannot lay waste to His plan out of hatred for this human race. It is for the sake of His plan and for the breath He exhaled that God endures all torments,

not for the flesh of man but for the life of man. He does so in order to take back not the flesh of man but the life He breathed out. This is His plan.

All who come into this world must pass through life and death, and the majority of them have passed through the cycle of death and rebirth. Those who are living will soon die, and the dead will soon return. All of this is the course of life arranged by God for each living being. Yet this course and this cycle are precisely the truth that God wishes for man to behold: that the life bestowed upon man by God is limitless, unfettered by physicality, time, or space. Such is the mystery of life bestowed upon man by God, and proof that life came from Him. Though many may not believe that life came from God, man inevitably enjoys all that comes from God, whether they believe in or deny His existence. Should God one day have a sudden change of heart and wish to reclaim all that exists in the world and to take back the life He has given, then all shall be no more. God uses His life to supply all things, both living and lifeless, bringing all to good order by virtue of His might and authority. This is a truth that can be conceived or comprehended by none, and these incomprehensible truths are the very manifestation of, and testament to, the life force of God. Now let Me tell you a secret: The greatness of the life of God and the power of His life are unfathomable to any creature. It is thus now, as it was in the past, and it will be thus in the time to come. The second secret I shall impart is this: The source of life comes from God, for all created beings, however different they may be in form or structure. Whatever kind of living being you are, you cannot turn against the life trajectory set by God. In any case, all I wish is for man to understand this: Without the care, keeping, and provision of God, man cannot receive all that he was meant to receive, no matter how diligently he tries or how arduously he struggles. Without the supply of life from God, man loses the sense of value in living and the sense of the meaning of life. How could God allow man, who frivolously wastes the value of His life, to be so carefree? As I have said before: Do not forget that God is the source of your life. If man fails to cherish all that God has bestowed, not only will God take back what He gave in the beginning, but He will exact, as recompense from man, doubly the price of all that He has given.

Excerpted from "God Is the Source of Man's Life" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

God created this world, He created this mankind and, moreover, He was the architect of ancient Greek culture and human civilization. Only God consoles this mankind, and only God

cares for this mankind night and day. Human development and progress are inseparable from the sovereignty of God, and the history and future of mankind are inextricable from the designs of God. If you are a true Christian, then you will surely believe that the rise and fall of any country or nation occurs according to the designs of God. God alone knows the fate of a country or nation, and God alone controls the course of this mankind. If mankind wishes to have a good fate, if a country wishes to have a good fate, then man must bow down to God in worship, repent and confess before God, or else the fate and destination of man will be an unavoidable catastrophe.

Look back to the time when Noah built the ark: Mankind was deeply corrupt, people had strayed from the blessing of God, were no longer cared for by God, and had lost the promises of God. They lived in darkness, without the light of God. Then they became licentious by nature and abandoned themselves to hideous depravity. Such people could no longer receive the promise of God; they were unfit to witness the face of God or to hear the voice of God, for they had abandoned God, had cast aside all that He had bestowed upon them, and had forgotten the teachings of God. Their heart strayed farther and farther from God and, as it did, they became depraved beyond all reason and humanity and became increasingly evil. Then they walked ever closer to death and fell under the wrath and punishment of God. Only Noah worshiped God and shunned evil, and so he was able to hear the voice of God and hear His instructions. He built the ark according to the instructions of God's word, and there assembled all manner of living creatures. And in this way, once everything had been prepared, God unleashed His destruction upon the world. Only Noah and the seven other members of his family survived the destruction, for Noah worshiped Jehovah and shunned evil.

Now look upon the present age: Such righteous men as Noah, who could worship God and shun evil, have ceased to exist. Yet God is still gracious toward this mankind and still absolves them during this final era. God seeks those who long for Him to appear. He seeks those who are able to hear His words, those who have not forgotten His commission and offer up their hearts and bodies to Him. He seeks those who are as obedient as babes before Him and do not resist Him. If you devote yourself to God, unimpeded by any power or force, then God shall look upon you with favor and shall bestow His blessings upon you. If you are of high station, of honorable reputation, possessed of abundant knowledge, the owner of plentiful assets, and supported by many people, yet these things do not prevent you from coming before God to accept His calling

and His commission and to do what God asks of you, then all that you do shall be the most meaningful cause on earth and the most righteous undertaking of mankind. If you reject the call of God for the sake of status and your own goals, all that you do shall be cursed and even despised by God. Perhaps you are a president, a scientist, a pastor, or an elder, but no matter how high your office, if you rely on your knowledge and ability in your undertakings, then you shall always be a failure and shall always be bereft of the blessings of God, because God accepts nothing that you do, and He does not grant that your undertaking is a righteous one, or accept that you are working for the benefit of mankind. He will say that everything you do is done to use the knowledge and strength of mankind to divest man of the protection of God and to deny the blessings of God. He will say that you are leading mankind toward darkness, toward death, and toward the start of a limitless existence in which man has lost God and His blessing.

Excerpted from "God Presides Over the Fate of All Mankind" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Since mankind's contrivance of the social sciences, the mind of man has become occupied by science and knowledge. Science and knowledge then have become tools for the ruling of mankind, and there is no longer sufficient room for man to worship God, and no more favorable conditions for the worship of God. The position of God has sunk ever lower in the heart of man. Without God in his heart, man's inner world is dark, hopeless and empty. Subsequently many social scientists, historians, and politicians have come to the fore to express theories of social science, the theory of human evolution, and other theories that contradict the truth that God created man, to fill the hearts and minds of mankind. And in this way, those who believe that God created everything have become ever fewer, and those who believe in the theory of evolution have become ever greater in number. More and more people treat the records of the work of God and His words during the age of the Old Testament as myths and legends. In their hearts, people become indifferent to the dignity and greatness of God, to the tenet that God exists and holds dominion over all things. The survival of mankind and the fate of countries and nations are no longer important to them, and man lives in a hollow world concerned only with eating, drinking, and the pursuit of pleasure. ... Few people take it upon themselves to seek out where God does His work today, or to look for how He presides over and arranges the destination of man. And in this way, unbeknownst to man, human civilization becomes less and less able to hew to man's wishes, and there are even many people who feel that, living in such a

world, they are less happy than those who have already passed away. Even people of countries that used to be highly civilized air such grievances. For without the guidance of God, no matter how much rulers and sociologists wrack their brains to preserve human civilization, it is to no avail. No one can fill the emptiness in man's heart, for no one can be the life of man, and no social theory can free man from the emptiness with which he is afflicted. Science, knowledge, freedom, democracy, leisure, comfort: these bring man only a temporary consolation. Even with these things, man will inevitably sin and bemoan the injustices of society. These things cannot restrain man's craving and desire to explore. This is because man was made by God and the senseless sacrifices and explorations of man can only lead to more distress and can only cause man to exist in a constant state of fear, not knowing how to face the future of mankind or how to face the path that lies ahead. Man will even come to fear science and knowledge, and fear even more the feeling of emptiness. In this world, regardless of whether you live in a free country or one without human rights, you are utterly incapable of escaping the fate of mankind. Whether you are the ruler or the ruled, you are utterly incapable of escaping the desire to explore the fate, mysteries, and destination of mankind, much less are you capable of escaping the bewildering sense of emptiness. Such phenomena, which are common to all of mankind, are called social phenomena by sociologists, yet no great man can come forth to solve such problems. Man, after all, is man, and the position and life of God cannot be replaced by any man. Mankind does not just require a fair society in which everyone is well-fed and is equal and free; what mankind needs is the salvation of God and His provision of life to them. Only when man receives God's provision of life and His salvation can the needs, the yearning to explore, and the spiritual emptiness of man be resolved. If the people of a country or a nation are unable to receive the salvation and care of God, then such a country or nation will tread the road to ruin, toward darkness, and shall be annihilated by God.

Excerpted from "God Presides Over the Fate of All Mankind" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

In the vast expanse of the world, countless changes have occurred, oceans silting into fields, fields flooding into oceans, over and over. Except for He who rules over all things in the universe, no one is able to lead and guide this human race. There is no mighty one to labor or make preparations for this human race, still less is there anyone who can lead this human race toward the destination of light and liberate it from earthly injustices. God laments the future of

mankind, He grieves at the fall of mankind, and is pained that mankind is marching, step by step, toward decay and the path of no return. A mankind that has broken the heart of God and renounced Him to seek the evil one: Has anyone ever given thought to the direction in which such a mankind might be headed? It is precisely for this reason why no one senses the wrath of God, why no one seeks a way to please God or tries to draw closer to God, and what is more, why no one seeks to comprehend God's grief and pain. Even after hearing the voice of God, man continues on his own path, persists in straying from God, evading God's grace and care, and shunning His truth, preferring to sell himself to Satan, the enemy of God. And who has given any thought—should man persist in his obduracy—to how God will act toward this humanity that has dismissed Him without a backward glance? No one knows that the reason for God's repeated reminders and exhortations is because He has prepared in His hands a calamity like never before, one that will be unbearable to the flesh and soul of man. This calamity is not merely a punishment of the flesh, but also of the soul. You need to know this: When God's plan falls through, and when His reminders and exhortations beget no response, what kind of rage will He unleash? It will be like nothing that has ever been experienced or heard by any created being. And so I say, this calamity is without precedent, and will never be repeated. For God's plan is to create mankind only this once, and to save mankind only this once. This is the first time, and it is also the last. Therefore, no one can comprehend the painstaking intentions and fervent anticipation with which God saves mankind this time.

Excerpted from "God Is the Source of Man's Life" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Humanity, having strayed from the Almighty's provision of life, is ignorant of the purpose of existence, but fears death nonetheless. They are without help or support, yet still reluctant to close their eyes, and they steel themselves to drag out an ignoble existence in this world, sacks of flesh with no sense of their own souls. You live in this way, without hope, as do others, without aim. Only the Holy One of legend will save the people who, moaning in the midst of their suffering, long desperately for His arrival. So far, such belief has not been realized in those who lack consciousness. Nevertheless, the people still yearn for it so. The Almighty has mercy on these people who have suffered deeply; at the same time, He is fed up with these people who lack consciousness, as He has had to wait too long for an answer from humanity. He wishes to seek, to seek your heart and your spirit, to bring you water and food and to awaken you, that

you may no longer be thirsty and hungry. When you are weary and when you begin to feel something of the bleak desolation of this world, do not be lost, do not cry. Almighty God, the Watcher, will embrace your arrival at any time. He is keeping watch by your side, waiting for you to turn back around. He is waiting for the day you suddenly recover your memory: when you realize that you came from God, that, at some unknown time you lost your direction, at some unknown time you lost consciousness on the road, and at some unknown time acquired a “father”; when you realize, furthermore, that the Almighty has always been keeping watch, waiting there a very, very long time for your return. He has been watching with desperate longing, waiting for a response without an answer. His standing watch is beyond any price, and it is for the sake of the human heart and the human spirit. Perhaps this standing watch is indefinite, and perhaps it is at an end. But you should know exactly where your heart and your spirit are right now.

Excerpted from “The Sighing of the Almighty” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

2. What does it mean to believe in God truly?

Relevant Words of God:

Though many people believe in God, few understand what faith in God means, and what they must do to conform to God’s will. This is because, though people are familiar with the word “God” and phrases such as “the work of God,” they do not know God, and still less do they know His work. No wonder, then, that all those who do not know God are muddled in their belief of Him. People do not take belief in God seriously, and this is entirely because believing in God is too unfamiliar, too strange for them. In this way, they fall short of God’s demands. In other words, if people do not know God, and do not know His work, then they are not fit for God’s use, and still less are they able to satisfy His will. “Belief in God” means believing that there is a God; this is the simplest concept as regards believing in God. What’s more, believing that there is a God is not the same as truly believing in God; rather, it is a kind of simple faith with strong religious overtones. True faith in God means the following: On the basis of the belief that God holds sovereignty over all things, one experiences His words and His work, purges one’s corrupt disposition, satisfies the will of God, and comes to know God. Only a journey of this kind may be called “faith in God.” Yet people often see belief in God as a simple and frivolous matter.

People who believe in God in this way have lost what it means to believe in God, and though they may continue to believe until the very end, they shall never gain God's approval, because they tread upon the wrong path. There are still those today who believe in God according to letters and in hollow doctrine. They do not know that they lack the essence of belief in God, and they cannot receive God's approval. Still they pray to God for blessings of safety and sufficient grace. Let us stop, quiet our hearts, and ask ourselves: Can it be that believing in God really is the easiest thing on earth? Can it be that believing in God means nothing more than receiving much grace from God? Are people who believe in God without knowing Him or who believe in God and yet oppose Him really able to satisfy the will of God?

Excerpted from Preface to *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

True belief in God is not a matter of believing in Him solely to be saved, and less still is it one of being a good person. It is also not only a matter of coming to possess human likeness. In fact, people should not take the view that faith is mere belief that there is a God, and that He is the truth, the way, the life, and nothing more. Neither is faith meant only to have you acknowledge God and believe He is the Ruler over all things, that He is almighty, that He created all things in the world, and that He is unique and supreme. Faith is not merely a matter of belief in this fact. God's will is that your whole being and heart should be given to Him and submit to Him—that is, you should follow God, allow God to make use of you, and be happy to do service for Him; whatever you can do for Him, you should. It does not mean that only those predestined and chosen by God should believe in Him. The fact is that all mankind should worship God, heed Him and obey Him, because mankind was made by God. If you always say, "Don't we believe in God in order to gain eternal life? Don't we believe in God in order to be saved?" then your belief in God is like a peripheral matter, done for the mere sake of gaining something. This is not how one should view belief in God.

Excerpted from "Only to Pursue the Truth Is Truly to Believe in God" in *Records of Christ's Talks*

What is real belief in God today? It is the acceptance of God's word as your life reality and the knowing of God from His word in order to achieve a true love of Him. To be clear: Belief in God is so that you may obey God, love God, and perform the duty that should be performed by a creature of God. This is the aim of believing in God. You must achieve a knowledge of the

loveliness of God, of how worthy God is of reverence, of how, in His creatures, God does the work of salvation and making them perfect—these are the bare essentials of your belief in God. Belief in God is principally the switch from a life of the flesh to a life of loving God; from living within corruption to living within the life of God’s words; it is coming out from under the domain of Satan and living under the care and protection of God; it is being able to achieve obedience to God and not obedience to the flesh; it is allowing God to gain your entire heart, allowing God to make you perfect, and freeing yourself from the corrupt satanic disposition. Belief in God is principally so that the power and glory of God may be manifested in you, so that you may do God’s will, and accomplish God’s plan, and be able to bear testimony to God before Satan. Belief in God should not revolve around the desire to behold signs and wonders, nor should it be for the sake of your personal flesh. It should be about the pursuit of knowing God, and being able to obey God, and, like Peter, obeying Him until one’s death. These are the main aims of believing in God. One eats and drinks the word of God in order to know God and satisfy Him. Eating and drinking the word of God gives you a greater knowledge of God, only after which can you obey Him. Only with knowledge of God can you love Him, and this is the goal man should have in his belief in God. If, in your belief in God, you are always trying to behold signs and wonders, then the viewpoint of this belief in God is wrong. Belief in God is principally the acceptance of the word of God as life reality. The aim of God is only attained by putting into practice the words of God from His mouth and carrying them out within yourself. In believing in God, man should strive to be made perfect by God, to be able to submit to God, and for complete obedience to God. If you can obey God without complaint, be mindful of God’s desires, achieve the stature of Peter, and possess the style of Peter spoken of by God, then that will be when you have achieved success in belief in God, and it will signify that you have been gained by God.

Excerpted from “All Is Achieved by the Word of God” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Since you do believe in God, then you must eat and drink His words, experience His words, and live out His words. Only this can be called belief in God! If you say you believe in God with your mouth and yet are unable to put any of His words into practice or to produce any reality, this is not called believing in God. Rather, it is “seeking bread to satisfy hunger.” Speaking only of trivial testimonies, useless things, and superficial matters, without possessing even the

slightest bit of reality: these do not constitute belief in God, and you have simply not grasped the right way of believing in God. Why must you eat and drink as many as possible of God's words? If you do not eat and drink His words but seek only to ascend to heaven, is that believing in God? What is the first step one who believes in God should take? By what path does God perfect man? Can you be perfected without eating and drinking the words of God? Can you be considered a person of the kingdom without the words of God to serve as your reality? What exactly does belief in God mean? Believers in God should, at the very least, be well-behaved on the outside; most important of all is to be possessed of the words of God. No matter what, you can never turn away from His words. Knowing God and fulfilling His intentions are all achieved through His words. In future, every nation, denomination, religion, and sector will be conquered through God's words. God will speak directly, and all people will hold the words of God in their hands, and by means of this, humanity will be perfected. Within and without, the words of God pervade throughout: Humanity will speak God's words with their mouths, practice in accordance with God's words, and keep the words of God within, remaining steeped in God's words both inside and out. Thus will humanity be perfected. Those who fulfill the intentions of God and are able to bear witness to Him, these are the people who possess the words of God as their reality.

Excerpted from "The Age of Kingdom Is the Age of Word" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Someone who serves God should not only know how to suffer for Him; more than that, they should understand that the purpose of believing in God is to pursue a love of God. God makes use of you not just to refine you or for the sake of making you suffer, but rather He makes use of you so that you may know His actions, know the true significance of human life, and in particular, so that you may know that serving God is not an easy task. Experiencing God's work is not about enjoying grace, but rather about suffering for your love of Him. Since you enjoy God's grace, you must also enjoy His chastisement; you must experience all of this. You can experience God's enlightenment in you, and you can also experience how He deals with you and judges you. In this way, your experience will be comprehensive. God has carried out His work of judgment and chastisement upon you. God's word has dealt with you, but not only that; it has also enlightened and illuminated you. When you are negative and weak, God worries for you. All of this work is to let you know that everything about man is within God's orchestrations.

You may think that believing in God is about suffering, or doing all manner of things for Him; you might think that the purpose of believing in God is so that your flesh may be at peace, or so that everything in your life runs smoothly, or so that you may be comfortable and at ease in all things. However, none of these are purposes that people should attach to their belief in God. If you believe for these purposes, then your perspective is incorrect, and it is simply impossible for you to be perfected. God's actions, God's righteous disposition, His wisdom, His words, and His wondrousness and unfathomableness are all things people ought to understand. Having this understanding, you should use it to rid your heart of all personal demands, hopes, and notions. Only by eliminating these things can you meet the conditions demanded by God, and it is only by doing this that you can have life and satisfy God. The purpose of believing in God is to satisfy Him and to live out the disposition He requires, so that His actions and glory may be manifested through this group of unworthy people. This is the correct perspective for believing in God, and this is also the goal that you should seek. You should have the right viewpoint about believing in God and you should seek to obtain God's words. You need to eat and drink God's words and you must be able to live out the truth, and in particular you must be able to see His practical deeds, His wonderful deeds throughout the entire universe, as well as the practical work He does in the flesh. People can, through their practical experiences, appreciate just how God does His work on them and what His will is toward them. The purpose of all of this is to eliminate people's corrupt satanic disposition. Having cast out all the uncleanness and unrighteousness inside you, and having cast off your wrong intentions, and having developed true faith in God—only with true faith can you truly love God. You can only genuinely love God on the foundation of your belief in Him. Can you achieve love for God without believing in Him? Since you believe in God, you cannot be muddle-headed about it. Some people become full of vigor as soon as they see that faith in God will bring them blessings, but then lose all energy as soon as they see that they have to suffer refinements. Is that believing in God? Ultimately, you must achieve complete and utter obedience before God in your faith. You believe in God but still have demands of Him, have many religious notions you cannot put down, personal interests you cannot let go of, and still you seek blessings of the flesh and want God to rescue your flesh, to save your soul—these are all behaviors of people who have the wrong perspective. Even though people with religious beliefs have faith in God, they do not seek to change their dispositions and do not pursue knowledge of God, but rather seek only the interests of their

flesh. Many among you have faiths that belong in the category of religious convictions; this is not true faith in God. To believe in God, people must possess a heart that is prepared to suffer for Him and the will to give themselves up. Unless people meet these two conditions, their faith in God is not valid, and they will not be able to achieve change in their disposition. Only people who genuinely pursue the truth, seek knowledge of God, and pursue life are those who truly believe in God.

Excerpted from “Those Who Are to Be Made Perfect Must Undergo Refinement” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

3. What are the differences between belief in God and belief in religion?

Relevant Words of God:

What is belief in religion? What is belief in God? Is there a difference? What are the common, prominent features of religion? How do people generally define belief in religion? Belief in religion consists of changes in behavior, a change in such behaviors as fighting with others, cursing others, malfeasance, exploiting others, taking advantage of others, and petty thefts and larceny. It refers, in the main, to changes in behavior. When someone believes in religion, they try to behave well, to be a good person; these are external behaviors. What about religion as a psychological crutch? What about the realm of the mind? With faith, one does have a crutch, psychologically. Belief in religion can therefore be defined thus: being well-behaved, and having a psychological crutch—nothing more. When it comes to details such as whether whom they believe in actually exists and what He is, exactly, and what He asks of them, people use inference and their imagination. Belief with such a basis is called belief in religion. Belief in religion chiefly means pursuing a change in behavior and having a psychological crutch, but does it entail any change in the path of a person’s life? There is not the slightest change in the path, purpose, or direction of a person’s life, nor in the basis on which they live. And what is it to believe in God? What does God define and require as believing in Him? (Believing in His sovereignty.) It is believing He exists and believing in His sovereignty—this is most fundamental. What does God require of people in their belief in Him? What does it relate to? (Being honest people, having normal humanity, pursuing the truth, pursuing dispositional

transformation, and seeking to know God.) And is anything required of people with regard to their words and behavior? (In terms of our external behavior, we're required to be devout and not dissolute, and to live out normal humanity.) Externally, you are required to have basic saintly decency and to live out normal humanity. And what is the definition of believing in God? Believing in God is obedience to God's words; it is to exist, live, and perform one's duty according to the words spoken by God, and to engage in all the activities of normal humanity. What this implies is that to believe in God is to follow God, to do as God would have you do, and to live as God would have you live. To believe in God is to follow His way. And in doing so, are the purpose and direction of people's lives not completely different from those of people who believe in religion? What does belief in God involve? People should live out normal humanity; they should obey God's words, no matter what God asks them to do; and they should practice according to God's words. These things all involve the words of God. What are the words of God? (The truth.) Belief in God involves the truth; it is the source, and the right path of life; it involves the path people walk in life. Does the belief in religion involve any of this? It does not. To believe in religion, it is fine merely to behave well externally, restrain oneself, adhere to rules, and have a psychological crutch. If one behaves well and has a psychic support and crutch, does their path in life change? (No.) Some people say, "Believing in religion and believing in God are the same thing." Do they follow God, then? A belief in religion is merely the pursuit of behavioral change, nothing more than the pursuit of a psychological crutch, and it does not involve any truths. As a result, there can be no change in these people's dispositions. They are incapable of putting the truth into practice, or of any substantive change, and they do not have true knowledge of God. When someone believes in religion, regardless of how good their behavior, regardless of how robust their psychological crutch, do they follow God? (No.) Then whom do they follow? They follow Satan. And what is the basis of what they live out, pursue, desire, practice, and rely on in their lives? That basis is entirely the corrupt disposition of Satan and its essence. The way they conduct themselves and treat others is in keeping with the logic and philosophy for living of Satan; everything they say is a lie, bereft of the slightest truth; they have not achieved the slightest change in their satanic dispositions, and what they follow remains Satan. Their life view, values, ways of handling things, and the principles of their actions are all the expressions of their satanic nature; there has only been a small change in their external behavior; there has not been the slightest alteration in their life's path, the way they live, or

their outlook. If you truly believe in God, what changes have actually occurred in you after having believed in God for several years? The foundation of your life undergoes a change. On what basis do you live? What governs what you do and say every day? What is it all based on? (It is all based on God's words and the truth.) For example, perhaps you no longer tell lies — what is the basis of this? Why do you not speak that way anymore? (Because God does not like it.) There is a basis upon which you no longer speak or act that way, and that basis is the word of God, what God asks, and the truth. So, does such a person have the same life path? Here is a summary: What is belief in religion? And what is belief in God? When people believe in religion, they follow Satan; when they believe in God, they follow God. That is the difference. Today, you perform your duty in the house of God; do you believe in religion or in God? What is the difference? What does this depend on? It depends on the path you walk. If what you pursue is good behavior, a psychological crutch, compliance with rules, and plots for personal benefit, and if you do not pursue the truth in the least, but merely to be someone who seems nice, and there is not the slightest change in your nature essence, or corrupt disposition, then you believe in religion. Those who believe in God are able to accept all the truths that God expresses; they are able to reflect on and come to know themselves according to the truth and to repent truly, and ultimately, they become able to live by God's words, obey God, and worship God — only such people are true believers in God.

Excerpted from "Belief in Religion Will Never Lead to Salvation" in Records of Christ's Talks

The simplest way to describe belief in God is trusting there is a God, and, on this foundation, following Him, obeying Him, accepting His dominion, orchestrations, and arrangements, listening to His words, living in accordance with His words, doing everything according to His words, being a true created being, and fearing Him and shunning evil; only this is true belief in God. This is what it means to follow God. You say you follow God, but, in your heart, you do not accept God's words, and you do not accept His dominion, orchestrations, and arrangements. If you always have notions of what God does, and you always misunderstand what He does, and complain about it; if you are always dissatisfied, and you always measure and approach what He does using your own notions and imaginings; if you always have your own understandings—this will cause trouble. You are not experiencing God's work, and you have no way to follow Him truly. Such is not belief in God.

What, exactly, is belief in God? Is belief in religion equivalent to belief in God? When people believe in religion, they follow Satan. Only when they believe in God do they follow God, and only those who follow Christ truly believe in God. Is someone who will never accept God's words as their life a person who believes in God? It is of no use, no matter how many years they have believed in God. Someone who always engages in religious ritual in their faith but does not practice the truth is not a believer in God, and God does not acknowledge them. On what basis does God acknowledge you? His acknowledgment of you is based on whether you act in all matters according to His requirements. His acknowledgment is meted in accordance with His words, not based on how many changes there are in your outward behavior, or how much time you spend running about for Him, but on the path you walk, and whether you pursue the truth. There are many who say they believe in God and speak words of praise for God—but, in their hearts, they do not love the words spoken by God, nor are they interested in the truth. In their hearts they believe always that only if they live by the philosophies of Satan and various doctrines of the outside world will they be normal, and able to protect themselves, that only living like this will give value to their lives in this world. Is this someone who believes in God and follows Him? All the sayings of renowned, great figures sound especially philosophical and are particularly capable of deceiving people. If you treat them as the truth and abide by them as maxims, but, when it comes to God's words, to the most ordinary words of God, which ask that you be an honest person, that you stick scrupulously to your own, allotted station and perform the duty of a created being, and that you remain steadfast—you are incapable of practicing them, and you do not treat them as the truth, then you are no follower of God. You may say you have practiced His words, but what if God may press you for the truth and ask: "What have you practiced? Who spoke those words that you practice? What is the basis of the principles to which you adhere?" If that basis is not the words of God, then it is the words of Satan; what you live out is the words of Satan, yet you still say you practice the truth and satisfy God, is this not blasphemy against Him? God says people should be honest, yet there are those who do not ponder what being honest includes, how they should practice honesty, or which of the things they live out and reveal are not honest, and which of them are. They do not contemplate the essence of the truth in God's words, but find a book of the unbelievers, and, upon reading it, they say, "These are good words—even better than God's. 'Guileless people ever prevail'—isn't that the same as what God said? This is the truth, as well!" So, they abide by these words. What

do they live out when they abide by these words? Are they able to live out the reality of the truth? Are there many such people? They gain a little knowledge, read a few books, and gain a bit of insight, and they hear some famous adage or popular saying and treat these as the truth. They act according to these words, and apply them to their duties and their lives of belief in God, and even think this satisfies Him. Is this not sleight of hand? Is this not trickery? It is blasphemy! There is much of this in people. They abide by pleasant-sounding, correct-seeming folk doctrines as if they were the truth. They put God's words to one side and pay them no heed, and, no matter how many times they read them, they do not take them to heart or treat them as the truth. Is one who does so someone who believes in God? Do they follow God? Such a person believes in religion; they follow Satan! In their hearts, they think there is philosophy in the words spoken by Satan, that these words have profound meaning, that they are scripture, wise sayings, and, no matter what else they may forsake, they could never put these words aside. To do so would be, to them, like losing their life, or having their heart scooped out. What kind of person is this? This is a person who follows Satan.

Excerpted from "Belief in Religion Will Never Lead to Salvation" in Records of Christ's Talks

Are there any among you who believe in religion? Are those who believe in religion unbelievers? (No.) So, to whom does "belief in religion" refer? All who do not pursue the truth, who focus only on good behavior and abiding by rules, who do not practice the truth, and in whose disposition there has not been the slightest change, believe in religion. What distinguishes those who believe in religion? (They only care about external actions and appearing to behave well.) What are the principles and basis of how they act? (Satanic philosophies for living.) What are the satanic philosophies for living and the satanic corrupt dispositions? Cunning and craftiness; being a law unto oneself; arrogance and conceit; always having the last word, never having searched for the truth and never fellowshiping with their brothers and sisters; when acting, always to think of one's own interests, of one's own pride, status, and influence—this, in its entirety, is following Satan, and these are expressions of a satanic disposition. If one believes in God but does not heed His words, accept the truth, or submit to His arrangements and orchestrations; if they only exhibit certain good behaviors, but are unable to forsake the flesh, and relinquish nothing of their pride or interests; if, though to all appearances they perform their duty, they still live by their satanic dispositions, and have

not in the least given up the philosophies and modes of existence of Satan, and do not change—then how could they possibly believe in God? That is belief in religion. Such people forsake things and expend of themselves superficially, but the path they walk and the source and impetus of everything they do are not based on the words of God or the truth; instead, they continue to act according to their own imaginings, desires, and subjective assumptions, and the philosophies and dispositions of Satan continue to be the basis of their existence and actions. In matters whose truth they do not understand, they do not seek it; in matters whose truth they do understand, they do not practice it, exalt God as great, or treasure the truth. Though they are nominally a follower of God, it is in word only; the substance of their actions is nothing but the expression of their corrupt dispositions. There is no sign that their motive and intent are to practice the truth and act according to God's words. People who consider their own interests before all else, who fulfill their own desires and intents first—are these people who follow God? (No.) And can people who do not follow God bring about change in their dispositions? (No.) And if they cannot change their dispositions, are they not pathetic? ... When they have no problems, when everything is going smoothly for them, most people feel that God is mighty, and righteous, and lovely. When God tests them, deals with them, chastens them, and disciplines them, when He asks them to put aside their own interests, to turn their backs on the flesh and practice the truth, when God does work on them, and orchestrates and reigns over their fates and their lives, they become rebellious, and create estrangement between themselves and God; they create conflict and a gulf between them and God. At such times, in their hearts, God is not lovely in the least; He is not at all mighty, for what He does does not fulfill their wishes. God makes them sad; He makes them upset; He brings them pain and suffering; He makes them feel unsettled. They therefore do not submit to God at all, instead rebelling against Him and shunning Him. Are they practicing the truth by doing this? Are they following the way of God? Do they follow God? No. So, regardless of how numerous your notions and imaginings about God's work are, and regardless of how you previously acted according to your own will and rebelled against God, if you truly pursue the truth, and accept the judgment and chastisement of God's words, and accept being pruned and dealt with by God's words; if, in everything He orchestrates, you are able to follow the way of God, obey God's words, seek His will, practice in accordance with His words and His will, are able to seek to submit, and can put all your own will, desires, considerations, motivations, and antagonism to God aside—only then

are you following God! You say you follow God, but all you do, you do according to your own will. In everything you do, you have your own aims, your own plans; you do not leave it up to God. Is God still your God, then? If God is not your God, then, when you say you follow God, are these not empty words? Are such words not an attempt to fool people? You say you follow God, but all your actions and behaviors, your outlook on life, your values, and the attitude and principles with which you approach and handle matters all come from Satan—you handle all this entirely in accordance with the principles and logic of Satan. So, do you follow God?

Excerpted from “Belief in Religion Will Never Lead to Salvation” in Records of Christ’s Talks

What name does God give to the religion of those who believed in Jehovah? Judaism. They became a kind of religious group. And how does God designate the religion of those who believe in Jesus? (Christianity.) In God’s eyes, Judaism and Christianity represent religious groups. Why does God define them as such? Among all those who are members of these religious bodies defined by God, are there any who fear Him and shun evil, do His will, and follow His way? (No.) This makes it clear. In God’s eyes, can all those who nominally follow Him be ones whom He acknowledges to be believers? Do they all have a connection with God? Could they all be targets for His salvation? (No.) So, will a day come when you are reduced to what God views as a religious group? (It’s possible.) Being reduced to a religious group—that seems inconceivable. If people become part of a religious group in God’s eyes, will they be saved by Him? Are they of His house? (No, they aren’t.) So, let us try to summarize: These people who nominally believe in the true God, but whom He believes to belong to religious groups—what path do they walk? Could it be said that such people walk the path of waving the flag of faith without ever following God’s way, and of believing in Him yet never worshiping Him, instead forsaking Him? That is, they walk the path of believing in God but forsaking Him and not following His way; their way is one in which they believe in God but worship Satan, they worship the devil, they try to carry out their own management, and try to establish their own kingdom. Is this not the essence of it? Do people like this have any connection to God’s management plan for the salvation of humanity? (No.) No matter how many people believe in God, as soon as their beliefs are defined by Him as being those of a religion or group, He has already determined that they cannot be saved. Why do I say this? In a gang or crowd of people who are without the work and guidance of God, and who do not worship Him at all, whom do they worship? Whom do they follow? In

form and name, they follow a person, but whom do they essentially follow? Deep down, they acknowledge God, but in fact, they are subject to human manipulation, arrangements, and control. They follow Satan, the devil; they follow the forces that are hostile to God and that are His enemies. Would God save a pack of people such as this? (No.) Why not? Are they capable of repentance? (No.) They are incapable of repentance. They wave the flag of faith, carrying out human enterprises and conducting their own management, and they run counter to God's management plan for mankind's salvation. Their final outcome is one of being detested and rejected by God; He could not possibly save these people, they could not possibly repent, they have already been captured by Satan—they are entirely in Satan's hands. In your faith, does how many years you have believed in God matter to whether or not you are praised by Him? Do the rituals and regulations you abide by matter? Does God look at people's methods of practice? Does He look at how many people there are? He has selected one portion of mankind; how does He measure whether they can and should be saved? He bases this decision on the paths these people walk. In the Age of Grace, although the truths that God told people were less numerous than today, and not as specific, He could still perfect people at the time, and salvation was still possible. Thus, as for the people of this age who have heard many truths and have come to understand God's will, if they are incapable of following His way and unable to walk the path of salvation, then what will their final outcome be? Their final outcome will be the same as that of believers in Christianity and Judaism; there will be no difference. This is God's righteous disposition! Regardless of how many sermons you have heard or how many truths you have understood, if, ultimately, you still follow humans and Satan, and in the end, if you are still incapable of following God's way and unable to fear Him and shun evil, then such people will be detested and rejected by God. To all appearances, such people who are detested and rejected by God can talk much about letters and doctrines, and may have come to understand many truths, yet they are incapable of worshiping God; they cannot fear God and shun evil, and are incapable of total submission to Him. In God's eyes, He defines them as part of a religion, as just a group of humans—a gang of humans—and as a lodging place for Satan. They are collectively referred to as Satan's gang, and these people are utterly despised by God.

Excerpted from "Only by Constantly Living Before God Can One Walk the Path to Salvation" in Records of

Christ's Talks

4. How does one believe in God in order to cast off their satanic disposition and be saved?

Relevant Words of God:

People cannot change their own disposition; they must undergo the judgment and chastisement, and suffering and refinement, of God's words, or being dealt with, disciplined, and pruned by His words. Only then can they achieve obedience and faithfulness to God, and no longer be perfunctory toward Him. It is under the refinement of God's words that people's dispositions change. Only through the exposure, judgment, discipline, and dealing of His words will they no longer dare to act rashly but instead will become steady and composed. The most important point is that they are able to submit to God's current words, and to His work, even if it is not in line with human notions, they are able to put these notions aside and willingly submit.

Excerpted from "People Whose Dispositions Have Changed Are Those Who Have Entered Into the Reality of God's Words" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

If you wish to be purified of corruption and undergo a change in your life disposition, then you must have a love for the truth and the ability to accept the truth. What does it mean to accept the truth? Accepting the truth indicates that no matter what sort of corrupt disposition you have, or which of the great red dragon's poisons are in your nature, you acknowledge it when it is revealed by God's words, and submit to these words; you accept them unconditionally, without making any excuses or trying to pick and choose, and you come to know yourself based on what He says. This is what it means to accept God's words. No matter what He says, no matter how much His utterances might pierce your heart, and no matter what words He uses, you can accept them as long as what He says is the truth, and you can acknowledge them as long as they conform to reality. You can submit to God's words regardless of how deeply you understand them, and you accept and submit to the light that is revealed by the Holy Spirit and fellowshiped by your brothers and sisters. When such a person has pursued the truth to a certain point, he can obtain the truth and achieve a transformation of his disposition.

Excerpted from "How to Know Man's Nature" in *Records of Christ's Talks*

If you believe in God's sovereignty, then you have to believe that everyday occurrences, be they good or bad, do not happen at random. It is not that someone is deliberately being hard on you or targeting you; this was all arranged by God. Why does God orchestrate all these things? It is not to reveal you for who you are or to expose you; exposing you is not the end goal. The goal is to perfect you and save you. How does God do that? He starts by making you aware of your own corrupt disposition, of your nature and essence, of your shortcomings, and of what you lack. Only by knowing these things and having a clear understanding of them can you pursue the truth and gradually cast off your corrupt disposition. This is God providing you with an opportunity. You have to know how to seize this opportunity, and you should not butt heads with God. In particular, when faced with the people, matters, and things that God arranges around you, do not constantly feel that things are not as you wish them to be; do not constantly wish to escape them or always blame and misunderstand God. If you are constantly doing those things, then you are not experiencing God's work, and that will make it very difficult for you to enter truth reality. Whatever you encounter that you cannot fully understand, when a difficulty arises, you must learn to submit. You should begin by coming before God and praying more. That way, before you know it, a shift will occur in your internal state, and you will be able to seek the truth to resolve your problem. As such, you will be able to experience God's work. As this happens, truth reality will be wrought within you, and this is how you will progress and undergo a transformation of the state of your life. Once you have undergone this change and possess this truth reality, you will also possess stature, and with stature comes life.

Excerpted from "To Gain the Truth, You Must Learn From the People, Matters, and Things Around You" in

Records of Christ's Talks

Man's corrupt disposition hides within their every thought and idea, within the motives behind their every action; it hides in every viewpoint man has about anything and within every opinion, understanding, viewpoint and desire they have in their approach to all God does. It is concealed within these things. And what does God do? How does God approach these things of man? He arranges environments to expose you. He will not only expose you, but He will also judge you. When you reveal your corrupt disposition, when you have thoughts and ideas that defy God, when you have states and viewpoints that contend with God, when you have states whereby you misunderstand God, or resist and oppose Him, God will rebuke you, judge you

and chastise you, and He will sometimes even punish you and discipline you. What is the aim of disciplining and rebuking you? It is to make you understand that what you think are the notions of man, and that they are wrong; your motivations are born of Satan, they originate from human will, they do not represent God, they are incompatible with God, they cannot fulfill God's intentions, they are disgusting and hateful to God, they incite His wrath, and even arouse His cursing. After realizing this, you are able to change your motivations. And how are they changed? First of all, you must submit to the way God treats you, and submit to the environments and people, matters, and things that He sets out for you; do not pick holes, do not make objective excuses, and do not shirk your responsibilities. Secondly, seek the truth that people should practice and enter when God does what He does. God asks that you understand these things. He wants you to recognize your corrupt dispositions and satanic essence, for you to be able to submit to the environments He arranges for you and, ultimately, for you to be able to practice what He requires of you in accordance with His will, and to be able to meet His will. Then you will have passed the test.

Excerpted from "Only Being Truly Obedient Is a Real Belief" in Records of Christ's Talks

Can you just begin practicing straightaway after gaining some understanding of a matter? You cannot begin practicing immediately. While you are possessed of understanding, others prune you and deal with you, and then your environment compels you and forces you to act in accordance with the truth principles. Sometimes people are unwilling to go through this, saying, "Why can't I do it that way? Do I have to do it this way?" Others say, "If you believe in God, then you should do it this way. Doing it this way is in accordance with truth." When people reach a certain point at which they have experienced some trials and ended up understanding God's will and some truths, then they will be somewhat happy and willing to act in accordance with the truth principles. At the outset, people are reluctant to practice the truth. Take devotedly fulfilling one's duties as an example: You have some understanding of fulfilling your duties and being devoted to God, and you also understand the related truths, but when will you be able to completely devote yourself to God? When will you be able to fulfill your duties in both name and deed? This will require a process. During this process, you could suffer many hardships. Some people might deal with you, and others might criticize you. Everyone's eyes will be fixed on you, and only then will you begin to realize that you are in the wrong and that you are actually

the one who has done poorly, that lacking devotion in the fulfillment of your duty is unacceptable, and that you must not be careless or perfunctory. The Holy Spirit will enlighten you from within, and reproach you when you make a mistake. During this process, you will understand some things about yourself, and will know that you are too impure, you harbor too many personal motives, and have too many immoderate desires when fulfilling your duties. Once you have understood the essence of these things, you can come before God in prayer and truly repent; in this way, you can be cleansed of those impurities. If, in this manner, you frequently seek the truth to resolve your own practical problems, you will gradually set foot upon the right path of faith. The more someone's corrupt disposition is purified, the more their life disposition will transform.

Excerpted from "What Should Be Known About Transforming One's Disposition" in Records of Christ's
Talks

The greater God's refinement, the more people's hearts are able to love God. The torment in their hearts is of benefit to their lives, they are more able to be at peace before God, their relationship with God is closer, and they are better able to see God's supreme love and His supreme salvation. Peter experienced refinement hundreds of times, and Job underwent several trials. If you wish to be made perfect by God, you too must undergo refinement hundreds of times; only if you go through this process and rely upon this step will you be able to satisfy God's will and be made perfect by God. Refinement is the best means by which God makes people perfect; only refinement and bitter trials can bring out the true love for God in people's hearts. Without hardship, people lack true love for God; if they are not tested within, if they are not truly subjected to refinement, then their hearts will always be floating around outside. Having been refined to a certain point, you will see your own weaknesses and difficulties, you will see how much you are lacking and that you are unable to overcome the many problems you encounter, and you will see how great is your disobedience. Only during trials are people able to truly know their real states; trials make people better able to be perfected.

Excerpted from "Only by Experiencing Refinement Can Man Possess True Love" in The Word Appears in
the Flesh

Man lives amid the flesh, which means he lives in a human hell, and without God's judgment and chastisement, man is as filthy as Satan. How could man be holy? Peter believed that chastisement and judgment by God were man's best protection and greatest grace. Only through chastisement and judgment by God could man awaken and hate the flesh, hate Satan. God's strict discipline frees man from the influence of Satan, frees him from his own little world, and allows him to live in the light of God's presence. There is no better salvation than chastisement and judgment! Peter prayed, "O God! As long as You chastise and judge me, I will know that You have not left me. Even if You do not give me joy or peace, and make me live in suffering, and inflict countless chastenings on me, as long as You do not leave me, my heart will be at ease. Today, Your chastisement and judgment have become my best protection and my greatest blessing. The grace You give me protects me. The grace You bestow upon me today is a manifestation of Your righteous disposition, and is chastisement and judgment; moreover, it is a trial, and, more than that, it is a life of suffering." Peter was able to put aside the pleasures of the flesh and seek a deeper love and greater protection, because he had gained so much grace from God's chastisement and judgment. In his life, if man wishes to be cleansed and achieve changes in his disposition, if he wishes to live out a life of meaning and fulfill his duty as a creature, then he must accept God's chastisement and judgment, and must not allow God's discipline and God's smiting to depart from him, in order that he may free himself from the manipulation and influence of Satan, and live in the light of God. Know that God's chastisement and judgment is the light, and the light of man's salvation, and that there is no better blessing, grace or protection for man. Man lives under the influence of Satan, and exists in the flesh; if he is not cleansed and does not receive God's protection, then man will become ever more depraved. If he wishes to love God, then he must be cleansed and saved.

Excerpted from "The Experiences of Peter: His Knowledge of Chastisement and Judgment" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

In his belief in God, Peter sought to satisfy God in everything, and sought to obey all that came from God. Without the slightest complaint, he was able to accept chastisement and judgment, as well as refinement, tribulation and going without in his life, none of which could alter his love for God. Was this not the ultimate love for God? Was this not the fulfillment of the duty of a creature of God? Whether in chastisement, judgment, or tribulation, you are always

capable of achieving obedience unto death, and this is what should be achieved by a creature of God, this is the purity of the love for God. If man can achieve this much, then he is a qualified creature of God, and there is nothing which better satisfies the desire of the Creator.

Excerpted from “Success or Failure Depends on the Path That Man Walks” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

In summary, taking Peter’s path in one’s faith means to walk the path of pursuing the truth, which is also the path of truly getting to know oneself and changing one’s disposition. Only by walking the path of Peter will one be on the path of being perfected by God. One must be clear on how, exactly, to walk Peter’s path, as well as how to put it into practice. First, one must put aside one’s own intentions, improper pursuits, and even family and all things of one’s own flesh. One must be wholeheartedly devoted; that is, one must completely devote oneself to the word of God, focus on eating and drinking of God’s words, concentrate on the search for the truth and the search for God’s intentions in His words, and try to grasp God’s will in everything. This is the most fundamental and vital method of practice. This was what Peter did after seeing Jesus, and it is only by practicing in this way that one can achieve the best results. Wholehearted devotion to the words of God primarily involves seeking the truth, seeking God’s intentions within His words, focusing on grasping the will of God, and understanding and obtaining more truth from God’s words. When reading His words, Peter was not focused on understanding doctrines, much less was he focused on obtaining theological knowledge; instead, he concentrated on comprehending the truth and grasping God’s will, as well as achieving an understanding of His disposition and His loveliness. Peter also attempted to understand the various corrupt states of man from God’s words, as well as man’s corrupt nature and actual shortcoming, thus meeting all aspects of God’s requirements of man in order to satisfy Him. Peter had so many correct practices that abided by the words of God; this was most in line with God’s will, and it was the best way a person could cooperate while experiencing God’s work. When experiencing the hundreds of trials from God, Peter examined himself strictly against every word of God’s judgment of man, every word of God’s revelation of man, and every word of His demands of man, and strived to fathom the meaning of those words. He tried in earnest to ponder and memorize every word that Jesus said to him, and achieved very good results. Through this manner of practicing, he was able to achieve an understanding of himself from

God's words, and he not only came to understand the various corrupt states of man, but also came to understand man's essence, nature, and various shortcomings. This is what it means to truly understand oneself. From God's words, Peter not only achieved a true understanding of himself, but from the things expressed in God's words—God's righteous disposition, what He has and is, God's will for His work, His demands of mankind—from these words he came to know God completely. He came to know God's disposition, and His essence; he came to know and understand what God has and is, as well as God's loveliness and God's demands for man. Although God did not speak back then as much as He does today, results in these aspects were nevertheless achieved in Peter. This was a rare and precious thing. Peter went through hundreds of trials, but did not suffer in vain. He not only came to understand himself from the words and the work of God, but he also came to know God. In addition, he particularly focused on God's requirements of mankind within His words. In whichever aspects man should satisfy God to be in line with God's will, Peter was able to put forth great effort in these aspects and achieve full clarity; this was extremely beneficial with regard to his own entry. No matter what God spoke of, as long as those words could become his life and they belonged to the truth, Peter was able to carve them into his heart to ponder and appreciate them frequently. After hearing the words of Jesus, he was able to take them to heart, which shows that he was especially focused on God's words, and he truly achieved results in the end. That is, he was able to freely put the words of God into practice, accurately practice the truth and be in line with God's will, act entirely in accordance with God's intention, and give up his own personal opinions and imaginations. In this way, Peter entered into the reality of God's words. Peter's service came in line with God's will primarily because he had done this.

Excerpted from "How to Walk the Path of Peter" in Records of Christ's Talks

II. Truths of Prayer

1. What is the significance of prayer?

Relevant Words of God:

Prayer is one of the ways in which man cooperates with God, it is a means by which man calls upon God, and it is the process by which man is moved by God's Spirit. It can be said that those without prayer are dead people who are devoid of spirit, which proves that they lack the faculty to be moved by God. Without prayer, it would be impossible to lead a normal spiritual life, much less keep up with the work of the Holy Spirit. To be without prayer is to break off one's relationship with God, and it would be impossible to win God's praise. As a believer in God, the more one prays, that is, the more one is moved by God, the more one will be filled with resolution and the better able one will be to receive new enlightenment from God. As a result, this kind of person can very quickly be made perfect by the Holy Spirit.

Excerpted from "Concerning the Practice of Prayer" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

After God created mankind and granted them spirits, He enjoined them that if they did not call out to Him, then they would not be able to connect with His Spirit and, thus, the "satellite television" from heaven would be impossible to receive on earth. When God is no longer in people's spirits, there is an empty seat left for other things, and Satan thus seizes the opportunity to get in. When people contact God with their hearts, Satan immediately panics and rushes to escape. Through mankind's cries, God gives them what they need, but He does not at first "reside" within them. He simply gives them constant aid because of their cries, and from that internal strength people gain hardiness, so that Satan dares not come in to "play" at its will. So, if people continuously connect with God's Spirit, Satan does not dare to come and cause disruptions. Without Satan's disruptions, all people's lives are normal, and God then has the opportunity to work unhindered within them. As such, what God wants to do can be achieved through humans.

Excerpted from "Chapter 17" of *Interpretations of the Mysteries of God's Words to the Entire Universe in*

The Word Appears in the Flesh

Prayer is not a type of ritual; it is a true communion between a person and God, and it carries a profound significance. From people's prayers, one can see that they are directly serving God. If you look at prayer as a ritual, then you are guaranteed not to serve God well. If your prayers are not done in earnest or with sincerity, then it can be said that from God's point of view, you as a person do not exist. How, then, can you have the Holy Spirit working on you? As

a result, after working for a period of time, you will be exhausted. From now on, without prayer, you will not be able to do work. It is prayer that brings about work, and prayer that brings about service. If you are a person who leads, and who serves God, yet you have never devoted yourself to prayer or ever been serious in your prayers, then the manner in which you serve will end up causing you to fall. What makes people feel they have the right not to pray? Have they stopped praying because God is incarnate? That is no excuse; sometimes even I pray! When Jesus was in the flesh, He, too, prayed when it came to critical matters. He prayed in the mountains, aboard boats, and in gardens; He also led His disciples to pray. If you can frequently come before God and pray to Him, this proves that you treat God as God. If you often neglect to pray, and tend to do things on your own, doing this and that behind His back, then you are not serving God; you are merely engaged in your own business. As such, will you not be condemned? From the outside, it will not appear as though you have done anything disruptive, nor will it seem that you have blasphemed God, but you will just be doing your own thing. In doing so, are you not interrupting? Even if, on the surface, it looks as though you are not, in essence you are resisting God.

Excerpted from “The Significance of Prayer and Its Practice” in Records of Christ’s Talks

For you, prayer is of utmost importance. When you pray and you receive the work of the Holy Spirit, your heart will be moved by God, and strength to love God will issue forth. If you do not pray with your heart, if you do not open your heart to commune with God, then God will have no way of working in you. If, after having prayed and spoken the words of your heart, the Spirit of God has not begun His work, and you have received no inspiration, then this shows your heart lacks sincerity, your words are untrue, and still impure. If, after having prayed, you have a sense of gratification, then your prayers have been acceptable to God and the Spirit of God is working in you. As one who serves before God, you cannot be without prayer. If you truly see communion with God as something that is meaningful and valuable, then can you forsake prayer? No one can be without communion with God. Without prayer, you live in the flesh, in bondage to Satan; without true prayer, you live under the influence of darkness.

Excerpted from “Concerning the Practice of Prayer” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

Though to kneel down to pray is to talk with God from the heart, know this: People's prayers are also conduits for the Holy Spirit's work. While a person in a correct state prays and seeks, the Holy Spirit, too, is at work. This is a good coordination between God and man from two different perspectives, or else it can be said that God helps man resolve some of their issues, and this is a kind of cooperation when people come before God. It is also one of the ways God saves and cleanses people, and, beyond that, it is the path of normal life entry. It is not a ritual. Prayer is not merely a thing that invigorates people; if it were, it would be enough to go through the motions and shout a few slogans, and there would be no need to implore God for anything, or for worship, or for piety. Prayer is a thing of deep significance! If you know how to pray and do so often, with frequent prayers that are submissive to God and sensible, then your inner state will more often than not be quite normal. If, on the other hand, your prayers consist often of only a few slogans, and you take no burden on yourself, and do not ponder what would or would not be sensible to say in prayer, nor what would not be truly worshipful to say, and never take these matters seriously, then you will never find success in your praying, and your inner state will always be abnormal. You will never get deeper into the lesson of, nor deepen your entry into, what normal sense, true submission, true worship, and the perspective with which one should pray are. These are all subtle things.

Excerpted from "The Significance of Prayer and Its Practice" in Records of Christ's Talks

I have said before that all people are engaged in their own management and handle their own affairs. People are still like this now; they work for a while and then stop praying, God quite absent from their hearts. They think to themselves, "I just act according to the work arrangements. Anyway, it's not as if I've made a mistake or caused a disturbance...." You do not pray, and less still do you give thanks. What a terrible state to be in! Most of the time you are aware that this state is wrong, but you lack the correct method to rectify it; as a result, you cannot remedy your state, and though you may understand the truth, you are unable to put it into practice. You are aware that there is an abnormal state within you (such as arrogance, corruption, or rebelliousness), yet you cannot manage to rectify it and you cannot overcome it. People always handle their own affairs and do not concern themselves with the work of the Holy Spirit or how He operates, caring only about doing their own thing. As a result of this, the Holy Spirit will forsake you—and when He does, you will feel dark and withered inside, and quite

without nourishment or enjoyment. There are many people who go six months without praying, and though they do their work, they feel parched inside. At times they think, “What am I doing? When will this be over?” Yes, even such thoughts as this occur to them. It is dangerous indeed for a person to go a long time without praying! Prayer is so crucial! If someone’s church life has never been prayerful, their gatherings will be barren and without enjoyment. When you are together, therefore, you must always pray and offer up praise, and then the Holy Spirit will perform extraordinary work. The power the Holy Spirit gives man is inexhaustible; at no time can people exhaust it or use it up. No matter how much a person is able to speak or preach by relying on himself, if the Holy Spirit does not work toward that end, what results can they achieve? There are many times when, in three or five sessions of prayer, a person has only a sentence or two to say, “Oh God, I thank You, I praise You,” and having said that, nothing more comes to them—they no longer have anything to say. What is the measure of such belief? It is dangerous! When a person, in their belief in God, cannot even say words that thank Him, praise Him, or give glory unto Him, and dares not even say the words “Please God,” and is too embarrassed to do so, how degraded that person is! You may cry out to God and acknowledge Him in your heart, but if you do not come before God, and your heart strays far from Him, then the Holy Spirit will not work. When you rise each morning, be sure to pray. When you do, the prospects for that day will be especially fine and fulfilling, and you will feel the Holy Spirit by your side at all times, protecting you.

Excerpted from “The Significance of Prayer and Its Practice” in Records of Christ’s Talks

I find that many people now are particularly lacking in the ability to restrain themselves. Why is this? It is because they never pray. When people do not pray, they become dissolute, and when people are dissolute, they lose their piety and their humility. They speak only of humanity, integrity, and of knowing their own corrupt nature. As for how the Holy Spirit acts, exactly, how He moves people, and how people should seek God’s will in their daily lives—these things all disappear. People believe in their hearts only that there is truly a God, and all that is left of their faith is an acknowledgment of God; the affairs of the life of the spirit are gone. Their faith extends only to the material world and they deny matters of the spirit, and so, as they walk on their own, they go astray and fall down. When a person who does not pray practices the truth, they can only hold to a principle within a certain scope—all mere rules. Though you may adhere

to the arrangements from the Above in your actions and do not offend God, all you are doing is adhering to rules. People's spirits are now so numb and dull. There are many intricate things in man's relationship with God, such as being moved and enlightened by the Spirit. Man cannot feel these things—he is too numb! Man does not read God's words, he is not in touch with the affairs of the life of the spirit, and he cannot wrest control of his own state. To wrest control of one's state of the life of the spirit, it will not do not to pray, nor will it do not to live the church life. Do you feel so? To believe in God, one must pray; without prayer, there is no likeness of belief in God. I say you do not have to adhere to rules—you may pray anywhere and at any time—and so there are some who seldom pray. They do not pray in the morning when they awaken, but merely read a few passages of God's words and listen to hymns. During the day, they busy themselves with external affairs, and they do not pray before they lie down to sleep at night, either. Do you not feel like this? If you merely read God's words and do not pray, are you not then like an unbeliever reading His words, with the words not sinking in? Without prayer, the heart is not engaged, and there are no subtle feelings or stirrings in one's spirit. One is numb and dull; they speak superficially of things related to dispositional change, and they seem to believe in God, yet the feeling in the depths of their spirit is not so strong. They are as ones who do not believe in God. However they try to pray, they are unable to get the words out. This is very dangerous—it means you are too far from God, and He is no longer in your heart. There is, in fact, no conflict between handling external affairs and work and coming back into the spirit to pray. Not only is there no conflict, but coming back into the spirit to pray is actually more beneficial to one's work.

Excerpted from "The Significance of Prayer and Its Practice" in Records of Christ's Talks

What is the first thing people should do each time they encounter an issue? They should pray; prayer comes first. Prayer demonstrates that you are pious, that you have begun to have a God-fearing heart, that you know to seek God, that you have given Him a place in your heart, that you are a pious Christian. Many older believers kneel down to pray at the same time each day, sometimes for so long they cannot get back up again. Let us not speak of whether this is ritual, or whether or not they can gain anything from it; let us only say that these aged brothers and sisters are especially pious, much better and more diligent than you youngsters. The first thing to do upon encountering an issue is pray. Prayer is not just insincerely jawing on; that

would not solve any problems. You might pray eight or ten times and gain nothing, but do not be discouraged—you must still pray. When something happens to you, first pray, first tell God, let God take over, let God help you, let God lead you, and show you the way. This proves that you have put God first, that He is in your heart. If, when you encounter an issue, the first thing you do is to feel resistant, get angry, and fly into a rage—if, before anything else, you become negative—then this is a manifestation of God not being in your heart. In real life, you must pray whenever anything happens to you. At the very first instance, you must kneel and pray—this is crucial. Prayer demonstrates your attitude toward God in His presence. You would not do it if God were not in your heart. Some people say, “I pray but still God does not enlighten me!” You must not say that. First look at whether your motivations for prayer are right; if you truly seek the truth and often pray to God, then He may well enlighten you in some matter so that you may understand—in a word, God will make you understand. Without the enlightenment of God, you could not understand on your own: You lack the acumen, you do not have the brain for it, and this is unattainable by human intellect. When you do understand, is that understanding born of your own mind? If you are not enlightened by the Holy Spirit, then no one you ask will know what the meaning is of the Spirit’s work or what God means; only when God Himself tells you the meaning will you know. And so, the first thing to do when something happens to you is to pray. Prayer requires probing with a seeking attitude, and expressing your thoughts, opinions, and attitudes—this is what it should involve. Simply going through the motions will have no effect, so do not blame the Holy Spirit for not enlightening you. I have found that in some people’s faith in God, they go on believing, but God is only on their lips. God is not in their hearts, they deny the work of the Spirit, and they deny prayer as well; they merely read the words of God, and nothing more. Can this be called faith in God? They keep on and on believing until God disappears altogether from their faith. In particular, there are those who often handle general affairs, and feel they are so busy and get nothing for all their efforts. This is a case of people not walking the right path in their faith in God. Is it not hard work to take the right way? They fail to take this way even after understanding much doctrine, and are prone to take the downhill path. So when something happens to you, you must spend more time praying and seeking—this is the very least you should do. Learning how to seek the will of God and the intentions of the Holy Spirit is the key. If people who believe in God are incapable of

experiencing and practicing thus, then they will gain nothing, and their faith will count for nothing.

Excerpted from “See All Things Through the Eyes of Truth” in Records of Christ’s Talks

2. What is true prayer?

Relevant Words of God:

What is true prayer? It is telling God what is in your heart, communing with God as you grasp His will, communicating with God through His words, feeling especially close to God, sensing He is there before you, and believing you have something to say to Him. Your heart feels filled with light and you feel how lovable God is. You feel especially inspired, and listening to you brings gratification to your brothers and sisters. They will feel that the words you speak are the words within their hearts, the words they wish to say, as though your words were a substitute for their own. This is what true prayer is. After you have engaged in true prayer, your heart will be at peace and will know gratification. The strength to love God can rise up, and you will feel that there is nothing of greater value or significance in life than loving God. All this proves that your prayers have been effective.

Excerpted from “Concerning the Practice of Prayer” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

Prayer is not a case of just going through the motions, following procedure, or reciting the words of God. That is to say, praying is not parroting certain words and it is not imitating others. In prayer, one must reach the state where one’s heart can be given to God, laying open one’s heart so that it may be moved by God. If prayer is to be effective, then it must be based on the reading of God’s words. Only by praying from within God’s words can one receive greater enlightenment and illumination. The manifestations of a true prayer are: Having a heart that yearns for all that God asks, and moreover desires to accomplish what He demands; detesting that which God detests and then, building on this foundation, gaining some understanding of it, and having some knowledge and clarity regarding the truths God expounds. Where there is resolution, faith, knowledge, and a path of practice following prayer, only then can it be called true prayer, and only this type of prayer can be effective. Yet prayer must be built upon the

enjoyment of God's words, it must be established on the foundation of communing with God in His words, and the heart must be able to seek God and become quiet before Him. Prayer of this kind has already entered the stage of true communion with God.

Excerpted from "Concerning the Practice of Prayer" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The minimum that God requires of man is that man be able to open his heart to Him. If man gives his true heart to God and speaks what is truly in his heart, then God is willing to work in him. What God desires is not the twisted heart of man, but a pure and honest heart. If man does not speak from his heart to God, then God will not move his heart or work in him. Therefore, the crux of prayer is to speak to God from your heart, telling Him your shortcomings or rebellious disposition, laying yourself completely open before Him; only then will God be interested in your prayers, or else He will hide His face from you. The minimum criterion for prayer is that you must be able to keep your heart quiet before God, and it must not depart from God. It may be that, during this phase, you do not gain a newer or higher insight, but you must then use prayer to maintain the status quo—you must not regress. This is the very least that you must achieve. If you cannot accomplish even this, then it proves that your spiritual life is not on the right track. As a result, you will be unable to hold on to the vision you first had, you will lose faith in God, and your resolution will subsequently dissipate. One sign of whether or not you have entered into spiritual life is to see if your prayers are on the right track. All people must enter into this reality; they must all do the work of consciously training themselves in prayer, not passively waiting, but consciously seeking to be moved by the Holy Spirit. Only then will they be people who truly seek God.

Excerpted from "Concerning the Practice of Prayer" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

And what about the content of prayer? Your prayer should proceed step by step, in line with the true state of your heart and the work of the Holy Spirit; you come to commune with God in accordance with His will and with what He requires of man. When you begin the practice of prayer, first give your heart to God. Do not attempt to grasp God's will—only try to speak the words within your heart to God. When you come before God, speak in this way: "Oh God, only today do I realize that I used to disobey You. I am truly corrupt and despicable. I have only been wasting my life. From today I will live for You. I will live a life of meaning and will satisfy Your

will. May Your Spirit always work in me, continuously illuminating and enlightening me. Let me bear strong and resounding testimony before You. Let Satan see Your glory, Your testimony, and the proof of Your triumph, manifest in us.” When you pray in this way, your heart will be completely set free. Having prayed in this way, your heart will be closer to God, and if you can pray in this way often, the Holy Spirit will inevitably work in you. If you always call out to God in this way, and make your resolution before Him, a day will come when your resolution is acceptable before God, when your heart and your entire being are gained by God, and you are ultimately made perfect by Him. For you, prayer is of utmost importance. When you pray and you receive the work of the Holy Spirit, your heart will be moved by God, and strength to love God will issue forth. If you do not pray with your heart, if you do not open your heart to commune with God, then God will have no way of working in you. If, after having prayed and spoken the words of your heart, the Spirit of God has not begun His work, and you have received no inspiration, then this shows your heart lacks sincerity, your words are untrue, and still impure. If, after having prayed, you have a sense of gratification, then your prayers have been acceptable to God and the Spirit of God is working in you. As one who serves before God, you cannot be without prayer. If you truly see communion with God as something that is meaningful and valuable, then can you forsake prayer? No one can be without communion with God. Without prayer, you live in the flesh, in bondage to Satan; without true prayer, you live under the influence of darkness. I hope that you brothers and sisters are able to engage in true prayer each and every day. This is not about following the rules, but about achieving a certain result. Are you willing to forgo a little sleep and enjoyment to rise early for morning prayers and enjoy the words of God? If you pray with a pure heart and eat and drink the words of God like this, you will be more acceptable to Him. If every morning you do this, if every day you practice giving your heart to God, communicating and engaging with Him, then your knowledge of God will certainly increase, and you will be better able to grasp God’s will. You say: “O God! I am willing to fulfill my duty. Only to You do I consecrate my whole being, so that You may be glorified in us, so that You may enjoy the testimony borne by this group of us. I beg You to work in us, so that I may become able to truly love You and satisfy You and pursue You as my goal.” As you take on this burden, God will surely make you perfect. You should not pray only for your own benefit, but you should pray also in order to follow God’s will and to love Him. This is the truest kind of prayer. Are you someone who prays for the sake of following the will of God?

In the past, you did not know how to pray, and you neglected the matter of prayer. Now, you must do your best to train yourselves to pray. If you are unable to summon up the strength within you to love God, then how do you pray? You say: “Oh God, my heart is incapable of truly loving You. I want to love You, but I lack the strength. What should I do? May You open my spiritual eyes and may Your Spirit move my heart. Make it so that, as I come before You, I throw off all that is negative, cease to be constrained by any person, matter, or thing, and lay my heart completely bare before You, and make it so that I may offer my entire being before You. However You may test me, I am ready. Now, I give no consideration to my future prospects, nor am I under the yoke of death. With a heart that loves You, I desire to seek the way of life. Every matter, everything—it is all in Your hands; my fate is in Your hands and You hold my very life in Your hand. Now, I seek to love You, and regardless of whether You let me love You, regardless of how Satan interferes, I am determined to love You.” When you encounter this issue, pray like this. If you pray like this every day, the strength to love God will gradually rise up.

Excerpted from “Concerning the Practice of Prayer” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Sometimes, looking to God does not mean asking God to do something using specific words, or asking Him for specific guidance or protection. Rather, it is that when people encounter some issue, they are able to call on Him sincerely. So, what is God doing there when people call on Him? When someone’s heart stirs and they have this thought: “Oh God, I can’t do this myself, I don’t know how to do it, and I feel weak and negative...,” when these thoughts arise in them, does God not know about it? When these thoughts arise in people, are their hearts sincere? When they call on God sincerely in this way, does God assent to help them? Despite the fact that they may not have spoken a word, they show sincerity, and so God assents to help them. When someone encounters an especially thorny difficulty, when they have no one to turn to, and when they feel particularly helpless, they put their only hope in God. What are their prayers like? What is their state of mind? Are they sincere? Is there any adulteration at that time? It is only when you trust God as though He were the last straw that you clutch onto to save your life, hoping that He will help you, that your heart is sincere. Though you may not have said much, your heart has already stirred. That is, you give your sincere heart to God, and God listens. When God listens, He sees your difficulties, and He will enlighten you, guide you, and help you.

Excerpted from “Believers Must Begin by Seeing Through the World’s Evil Trends” in Records of Christ’s
Talks

When he was being chastised by God, Peter prayed, “O God! My flesh is disobedient, and You chastise me and judge me. I rejoice in Your chastisement and judgment, and even if You do not want me, in Your judgment I behold Your holy and righteous disposition. When You judge me, so that others may behold Your righteous disposition in Your judgment, I feel content. If it can express Your disposition and allow Your righteous disposition to be seen by all creatures, and if it can make my love for You more pure, that I can attain the likeness of one who is righteous, then Your judgment is good, for such is Your gracious will. I know that there is still much in me that is rebellious, and that I am still not fit to come before You. I wish for You to judge me even more, whether through a hostile environment or great tribulations; no matter what You do, to me it is precious. Your love is so profound, and I am willing to lay myself at Your mercy without the slightest complaint.” This is Peter’s knowledge after he experienced the work of God, and it is also a testimony to his love of God.

Excerpted from “The Experiences of Peter: His Knowledge of Chastisement and Judgment” in The Word
Appears in the Flesh

I subjected him to countless trials—trials, naturally, that left him half-dead—but amidst these hundreds of trials, he never once lost faith in Me or felt disappointed in Me. Even when I said I had forsaken him, still he was not discouraged, and continued to love Me in a practical way and in accordance with past principles of practice. I told him that I would not praise him even though he loved Me, that I would ultimately cast him into Satan’s hands. But amid such trials, trials that did not come upon his flesh, but were of words, he still prayed to Me and said, “O God! Among heaven and earth and all things, is there any human, any creature, or any thing that is not in the hands of You, the Almighty? When You are merciful toward me, my heart greatly rejoices with Your mercy. When You judge me, unworthy though I may be, I gain a greater sense of the unfathomableness of Your deeds, because You are filled with authority and wisdom. Though my flesh suffers hardship, my spirit is comforted. How could I not give praise to Your wisdom and deeds? Even if I were to die after knowing You, how could I not do so gladly and happily? Almighty One! Do You really not wish to let me see You? Am I really unfit to

receive Your judgment? Could it be that there is something in me You do not wish to see?" During such trials, even though Peter was not able to accurately grasp My will, it was evident that he was proud and honored to be used by Me (even though he received My judgment so that humanity might see My majesty and wrath), and that he was not distressed by these trials. Because of his loyalty before Me, and because of My blessing of him, he has been an exemplar and model to man for thousands of years. Is this not precisely what you should emulate? Think long and hard about why I have given such a lengthy account of Peter; these should be the principles by which you act.

Excerpted from "Chapter 6" of God's Words to the Entire Universe in The Word Appears in the Flesh

3. What is the prayer of religious ceremony? Can it meet with God's approval?

Bible Verses for Reference:

"And when you pray, you shall not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men" (Mat 6:5).

Relevant Words of God:

Faith in God necessitates a normal spiritual life, which is the foundation for experiencing God's words and entering into reality. Does all your current practice of prayers, of drawing near to God, of hymn-singing, praise, meditation, and pondering the words of God amount to a "normal spiritual life"? None of you seems to know. A normal spiritual life is not limited to such practices as praying, singing hymns, participating in church life, and eating and drinking of God's words. Rather, it involves living a new and vibrant spiritual life. What matters is not how you practice, but what fruit your practice bears. Most people believe that a normal spiritual life necessarily involves praying, singing hymns, eating and drinking the words of God or pondering His words, regardless of whether such practices actually have any effect or lead to true understanding. These people focus on following superficial procedures without any thought to their results; they are people who live in religious rituals, not people who live within the church, and much less are they people of the kingdom. Their prayers, hymn singing, and eating and drinking of God's words are all just rule-following, done out of compulsion and to keep up with

trends, not out of willingness nor from the heart. However much these people pray or sing, their efforts will bear no fruit, for what they practice is just the rules and rituals of religion; they are not actually practicing God's words. They focus only on making a fuss over how they practice, and they treat God's words as rules to follow. Such people are not putting God's words into practice; they are just gratifying the flesh, and performing for other people to see. These religious rules and rituals are all human in origin; they do not come from God. God does not follow rules, nor is He subject to any law. Rather, He does new things every day, accomplishing practical work. Like people in the Three-Self Church, who limit themselves to practices such as attending morning services every day, offering evening prayers and prayers of gratitude before meals, and giving thanks in all things—however much they do and for however long they do it, they will not have the work of the Holy Spirit. When people live amidst rules and have their hearts fixed on methods of practice, the Holy Spirit cannot work, because their hearts are occupied by rules and human notions. Thus, God is unable to intervene and work on them, and they can only continue living under the control of laws. Such people are forever incapable of receiving God's praise.

Excerpted from "Regarding a Normal Spiritual Life" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

When do you all pray? What do you pray about? Most people pray when they suffer, saying, "Oh God, I am in such anguish, please help me!"—that is the first thing they say. Is it good to always pray about your suffering? (No.) If not, then why do you always pray like that? Given the way those characters pray in the scripts and articles you write, as well as the movies and videos you shoot, I can see that you are unable to pray yourselves and do not know how to go about it. You have no idea what people should say and do when they come before God; you only know to open your mouths when you are having a hard time and say to Him, "Oh God, I am suffering so much! I feel so down. Please help me." If you do not know how to pray, then what problem does this pose? Is it a major problem or a minor one? (A major one.) If you do not know how to pray, then there is one thing at the very least that can be confirmed, and that is that you do not know how to rely on God, seek Him, or allow Him to lead you when something happens to you, nor when you encounter a problem do you know what you need God to do for you, how to cooperate with God, or what sort of attitude you should have. You have no understanding of these things; you are but a layperson. Some people, from start to finish, and no matter what sort of problem

it is they face, do not genuinely pray; when coming before God, they do not rely on Him in earnest, nor do they sincerely seek. They just say, "God, I am suffering. Oh God, I am suffering so." They repeat this phrase to the point that people get fed up and disgusted at the sound of it. Most of you pray like that, do you not? (We do.) From people's prayers, it can be seen how pitiful their conditions are! You only seek out God when you are suffering, and when you are not, and are not facing any problems, you feel no need for God, nor do you want to rely on Him. You just want to be your own master. Is this not the condition you are in? (It is.) How do most people pray when experiencing the judgment and chastisement of God's words, being pruned and dealt with by God's words, and recognizing their own corrupt dispositions? They are all of the same stripe, saying, "God, I am suffering. Oh God, I am suffering so." Do those words not make you feel disgusted? (They do.) When you come before God, do you not actually need Him to enlighten you with a bit of something else? Do you not need faith and strength, or for God to be your mainstay, moreover enlighten and guide you so that you may walk well the onward path? Do you not need His discipline and chastening? Do you not need His guidance? Do you only need Him to relieve you of your suffering? People really are withered up inside, and in such a pitiful condition! Not knowing how to pray might seem to be a minor issue, but actually, when you penetrate this minor issue and dissect its essence, you see that it is not minor at all. This shows that you as a person do not possess any sort of life to speak of, and in what life you do have, you interact with God very seldomly. Between you and God, you simply have not established the sort of relationship that should exist between God and His followers or between objects of creation and their Creator. When faced with a problem, you make decisions based on your own subjective assumptions, notions, thoughts, knowledge, gifts and talents, and corrupt dispositions; you have nothing to do with God, so when you come before Him, you never have anything to say to Him. This is the sorrowful state of people who believe in God! This is such a pitiful condition! Inside, people are dried up and numb; they feel nothing when it comes to these things, nor do they have any understanding of them. When they come before God, they have nothing to say. No matter what sort of situation you find yourself in, no matter what plight you face, and no matter what hardships you encounter, if you are speechless before God, then can your faith not be called into question? Is this not the pitiful face of people? After believing in God for so many years, you still have to learn how to pray all over again, you still do not know how to pray, and whenever you encounter a problem, you either just shout out catchphrases

and make resolutions or complain to God and voice your grievances, saying how you are suffering, or otherwise rationalize and justify yourself in confession. It is no wonder that you have been so slow to enter the truth.

Excerpted from “For Leaders and Workers, Choosing a Path Is of Utmost Importance (17)” in Records of
Christ’s Talks

There is nothing God despises more than the prayers of religious ceremony. Prayers to God are only accepted when they are sincere. If you have nothing sincere to say, then keep quiet; do not always speak false words and blindly make oaths before God, trying to deceive Him, talking about how much you love Him, about how much you wish to be loyal to Him. If you are incapable of achieving your desires, if you lack this resolve and stature, do not, under any circumstances, pray thus before God. That is ridicule. Ridicule means making fun of someone, trifling with them. When people pray before God with this kind of disposition, then at the very least, this is deception. At worst, if you do this often, then you are of utterly contemptible character. If God were to condemn you, it would be called blasphemy! People have no reverence toward God, they do not know how to revere God, or how to love and satisfy Him. If the truth is not clear to them, or their disposition is corrupt, God will let it slide. But they bring such character before God, and treat God as the unbelievers treat other people. Moreover, they solemnly kneel before Him in prayer, using these words to try and wheedle God, and when they are finished, they not only feel no self-reproach, but also have no sense of the seriousness of their actions. That being the case, is God with them? Can someone who is utterly without the presence of God be enlightened and illuminated? Can they be enlightened with the truth? (No, they can’t.) Then they are in trouble. Have you prayed thus many times? Do you do so often? When people spend too long in the outside world, they reek of society’s stench, their scummy nature is amplified, and they become suffused with satanic poisons and ways of living; what come from their mouths are words of falseness and deceit, they speak without thinking, or else speak words that always contain nothing but their own motivations and aims, and seldom have the proper motivations. These are serious problems. When people take these satanic philosophies and ways of living before God, do they not offend God’s disposition? And what will be the consequence of this? On the surface, these prayers are attempts to deceive and fool God,

and are incompatible with His will and requirements. Fundamentally speaking, this is caused by human nature; it is not some momentary revelation of corruption.

Excerpted from “Only When You Know Yourself Can You Pursue the Truth” in Records of Christ’s Talks

4. What can true prayer achieve?

Relevant Words of God:

People may be able to carry out the practice of prayer and to understand the significance of prayer, but for prayer to be effective is no simple matter. Prayer is not a case of just going through the motions, following procedure, or reciting the words of God. That is to say, praying is not parroting certain words and it is not imitating others. In prayer, one must reach the state where one’s heart can be given to God, laying open one’s heart so that it may be moved by God. If prayer is to be effective, then it must be based on the reading of God’s words. Only by praying from within God’s words can one receive greater enlightenment and illumination. The manifestations of a true prayer are: Having a heart that yearns for all that God asks, and moreover desires to accomplish what He demands; detesting that which God detests and then, building on this foundation, gaining some understanding of it, and having some knowledge and clarity regarding the truths God expounds. Where there is resolution, faith, knowledge, and a path of practice following prayer, only then can it be called true prayer, and only this type of prayer can be effective. Yet prayer must be built upon the enjoyment of God’s words, it must be established on the foundation of communing with God in His words, and the heart must be able to seek God and become quiet before Him. Prayer of this kind has already entered the stage of true communion with God.

Excerpted from “Concerning the Practice of Prayer” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

Be an honest person; pray to God to rid you of the deception in your heart. Purify yourself through prayer at all times, be moved by the Spirit of God through prayer, and your disposition will gradually change. The true spiritual life is a life of prayer—it is a life that is moved by the Holy Spirit. The process of being moved by the Holy Spirit is the process of changing man’s disposition. A life that is not moved by the Holy Spirit is not a spiritual life, but a life of religious

ritual only. Only those who are often moved by the Holy Spirit, and enlightened and illuminated by the Holy Spirit, have entered into spiritual life. Man's disposition constantly changes as he prays. The more the Spirit of God moves him, the more proactive and obedient he becomes. So, too, will his heart gradually be purified, and his disposition gradually change. Such is the effect of true prayer.

Excerpted from "Concerning the Practice of Prayer" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Sometimes, when you are enjoying the words of God, your spirit is touched, and you feel that you cannot help but love God, that there is great strength within you, and that there is nothing that you cannot put aside. If you feel like this, then you have been touched by the Spirit of God, and your heart has wholly turned to God, and you will pray to God and say: "O God! We truly have been predestined and chosen by You. Your glory gives me pride, and it feels glorious for me to be one of Your people. I will expend anything and give anything to do Your will, and will devote all my years, and an entire lifetime of efforts, to You." When you pray like this, there will be unending love and true obedience toward God in your heart. Have you ever had such an experience as this? If people are often touched by the Spirit of God, then they are especially willing to devote themselves to God in their prayers: "O God! I wish to behold Your day of glory, and I wish to live for You—nothing is more worthy or meaningful than to live for You, and I have not the slightest desire to live for Satan and the flesh. You raise me up by enabling me to live for You today." When you have prayed in this way, you will feel that you cannot help but give your heart to God, that you must gain God, and that you would hate to die without having gained God while you are alive. Having spoken such a prayer, there will be an inexhaustible strength within you, and you will not know from where it comes; in your heart there will be limitless power, and you will have a sense that God is so lovely, and that He is worth loving. This is when you will have been touched by God. All those who have had such an experience have been touched by God. For those who are often touched by God, changes occur in their lives, they are able to make their resolution and are willing to completely gain God, the love for God in their hearts is stronger, their hearts have completely turned to God, they hold no regard for family, the world, entanglements, or their future, and they are willing to devote a lifetime of efforts to God. All those who have been touched by the Spirit of God are people who pursue the truth, and who have hope of being made perfect by God.

Excerpted from “Know God’s Newest Work and Follow His Footsteps” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Most people do not pray truly much of the time; they merely think back to the past, with scant knowledge in their minds and a willingness to repent, yet they have neither contemplated nor fathomed the truth. To contemplate God’s words and seek the truth while praying is far more profound than mere recollection and knowledge. The stirrings visited on you by the work of the Holy Spirit and the enlightenment and illumination His work supplies to you through God’s words lead you to true knowledge and true repentance; they are much more profound than human thoughts and knowledge. This is something you must know well. If you engage merely in superficial, haphazard thinking and examination, you have no fitting path on which to practice, and you make little progress toward the truth, then you will remain incapable of change. There are times, for instance, when people resolve to expend themselves in earnest for God, and to repay His love in earnest—yet, with this desire, you may not expend yourself with much energy, and your heart may not be wholly committed to the endeavor. If, however, having prayed and been moved, you make a resolution and say, “God, I am willing to suffer hardship; I am willing to accept Your trials; and I am willing to submit to You completely. No matter how great my suffering, I am willing to repay Your love. I enjoy Your great love, and You have raised me up so—for this, I thank You from the bottom of my heart, and give all glory unto You,” after having offered such a prayer, your whole body will be empowered, and you will have a path on which to practice. This is the effect of prayer. After a person prays, the Holy Spirit sets to work on them, enlightening, illuminating, and guiding them, and giving them the faith and courage necessary to put the truth into practice. There are people who read God’s words daily without achieving such a result, yet, having read them, when they fellowship about them, their hearts grow bright, and they find something of a way forward. If, in addition, the Holy Spirit moves you a bit and gives you a bit of guidance, as well as a bit of a burden, the results will be very different indeed. When you read God’s words on your own, you may be somewhat moved, and you may weep, only to have the feeling pass after a short while. If, however, you offer a tearful prayer, an earnest prayer, or a prayer that is genuine and sincere, then you will be given such vigor as can last for days. This is the effect of prayer. The purpose of prayer is to have people come before God and accept that which He would give them. If you pray often, and come often before God to commune with Him, and have a normal relationship with Him, then you will

always be moved inside by Him, and will always receive His provisions—and one who always receives God’s provisions is changed, and their conditions are ever improving. In particular, when brothers and sisters pray together, an especially great energy arises afterward, and they feel they have gained a great deal. In truth, they may not have fellowshiped much in their time together; it was prayer that roused them, such that they could not wait a second longer to renounce their families and the world, and they wanted nothing, and having God alone sufficed. What great faith! The power that the Holy Spirit’s work gives man can be enjoyed without end! How far can you go without relying on that power, but bracing yourself and stiffening your neck as you walk on, or depending on your own perseverance and willpower? Not far ahead is where you will fall and be degraded; as you walk, your strength will fail. People must maintain their contact with God unto the end! Yet man, as he walks on, strays far from God. God is God, man is man, and each follows their own path; God speaks the words of God, and man walks his own path, which is not the same as God’s. When a person loses strength in their belief in God, they come before God to pray a few words and borrow a bit of strength. After they have got some energy, they depart once more. In a while, they run out of fuel, and come back to God for more. When acting this way, a person cannot sustain it for a long time; if a person leaves God, they have no way forward.

Excerpted from “The Significance of Prayer and Its Practice” in Records of Christ’s Talks

Now you should be able to clearly see the precise path that Peter took. If you can clearly see Peter’s path, then you will be certain about the work being done today, so you will not complain or be passive, or long for anything. You should experience Peter’s mood at the time: He was stricken with sorrow; he no longer asked for a future or any blessings. He did not seek profit, happiness, fame, or fortune in the world; he only sought to live the most meaningful life, which was to repay God’s love and dedicate what he held utterly most precious to God. Then he would be satisfied in his heart. He often prayed to Jesus with the words: “Lord Jesus Christ, I once loved You, but I never truly loved You. Though I said I had faith in You, I never loved You with a true heart. I only looked up to You, adored You, and missed You, but I never loved You nor truly had faith in You.” He constantly prayed to make his resolution, and he was always encouraged by the words of Jesus and drew motivation from them. Later, after a period of experience, Jesus tested him, provoking him to yearn for Him further. He said: “Lord Jesus

Christ! How I miss You, and long to look upon You. I lack too much, and cannot make up for Your love. I beg You to soon take me away. When will You have need of me? When will You take me away? When will I once again look upon Your face? I do not wish to live any longer in this body, to continue becoming corrupted, nor do I wish to rebel any further. I am ready to dedicate all I have to You as soon as I can, and I do not wish to sadden You any further.” This is how he prayed, but he did not know at the time what Jesus would perfect in him. During the agony of his test, Jesus appeared to him again and said: “Peter, I wish to make you perfect, such that you become a piece of fruit, one that is the crystallization of My perfection of you, and which I will enjoy. Can you truly testify for Me? Have you done what I ask you to do? Have you lived out the words I have spoken? You once loved Me, but though you loved Me, have you lived Me out? What have you done for Me? You recognize that you are unworthy of My love, but what have you done for Me?” Peter saw that he had done nothing for Jesus and remembered his previous oath to give his life to God. And so, he no longer complained, and his prayers from then on grew much better. He prayed, saying: “Lord Jesus Christ! I once left You, and You too once left me. We have spent time apart, and time together in company. Yet You love me more than all else. I have repeatedly rebelled against You and repeatedly grieved You. How can I forget such things? I am always bearing in mind and never forget the work You have done on me and what You have entrusted me with. I have done everything that I can for the work You have done on me. You know what I can do, and You further know what role I can play. I wish to submit to Your orchestrations, and I will dedicate everything I have to You. Only You know what I can do for You. Although Satan fooled me so much and I rebelled against You, I believe You do not remember me for those transgressions and that You do not treat me based on them. I wish to dedicate my entire life to You. I ask for nothing, and neither do I have other hopes or plans; I only wish to act according to Your intention and to do Your will. I will drink from Your bitter cup, and I am Yours to command.”

Excerpted from “How Peter Came to Know Jesus” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

5. How does one enter true prayer?

Relevant Words of God:

When praying, you must have a heart that is quiet before God, and you must have a sincere heart. You are truly communing and praying with God—you must not try to wheedle God with nice-sounding words. Prayer should center upon that which God wishes to accomplish right now. Ask God to grant you greater enlightenment and illumination, bring your actual states and your troubles into His presence when you pray, including the resolution that you made before God. Prayer is not about following procedure; it is about seeking God with a sincere heart. Ask that God protect your heart, so that your heart may often be quiet before Him; that in the environment in which He has placed you, you would know yourself, despise yourself, and forsake yourself, thus allowing you to have a normal relationship with God and truly become someone who loves God.

Excerpted from “Concerning the Practice of Prayer” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The minimum that God requires of man is that man be able to open his heart to Him. If man gives his true heart to God and speaks what is truly in his heart, then God is willing to work in him. What God desires is not the twisted heart of man, but a pure and honest heart. If man does not speak from his heart to God, then God will not move his heart or work in him. Therefore, the crux of prayer is to speak to God from your heart, telling Him your shortcomings or rebellious disposition, laying yourself completely open before Him; only then will God be interested in your prayers, or else He will hide His face from you. The minimum criterion for prayer is that you must be able to keep your heart quiet before God, and it must not depart from God. It may be that, during this phase, you do not gain a newer or higher insight, but you must then use prayer to maintain the status quo—you must not regress. This is the very least that you must achieve. If you cannot accomplish even this, then it proves that your spiritual life is not on the right track. As a result, you will be unable to hold on to the vision you first had, you will lose faith in God, and your resolution will subsequently dissipate. One sign of whether or not you have entered into spiritual life is to see if your prayers are on the right track. All people must enter into this reality; they must all do the work of consciously training themselves in prayer, not passively waiting, but consciously seeking to be moved by the Holy Spirit. Only then will they be people who truly seek God.

Excerpted from “Concerning the Practice of Prayer” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Prayer is not a case of just going through the motions, following procedure, or reciting the words of God. That is to say, praying is not parroting certain words and it is not imitating others. In prayer, one must reach the state where one's heart can be given to God, laying open one's heart so that it may be moved by God. If prayer is to be effective, then it must be based on the reading of God's words. Only by praying from within God's words can one receive greater enlightenment and illumination. The manifestations of a true prayer are: Having a heart that yearns for all that God asks, and moreover desires to accomplish what He demands; detesting that which God detests and then, building on this foundation, gaining some understanding of it, and having some knowledge and clarity regarding the truths God expounds. Where there is resolution, faith, knowledge, and a path of practice following prayer, only then can it be called true prayer, and only this type of prayer can be effective. Yet prayer must be built upon the enjoyment of God's words, it must be established on the foundation of communing with God in His words, and the heart must be able to seek God and become quiet before Him. Prayer of this kind has already entered the stage of true communion with God.

The most basic knowledge about prayer:

1. Do not blindly say whatever comes to mind. There must be a burden on your heart, that is, you must have an objective when you pray.
2. Prayer must contain the words of God; it must be founded upon the words of God.
3. When praying, you must not rehash outdated issues. Your prayers should relate to the current words of God, and when you pray, tell God your innermost thoughts.
4. Group prayer must revolve around a center, which is, necessarily, the present work of the Holy Spirit.
5. All people have to learn intercessory prayer. This is also a way of showing consideration for the will of God.

The individual's life of prayer is based upon an understanding of the significance of prayer and of a basic knowledge of prayer. In daily life, pray frequently for your own shortcomings, pray to effect change in your disposition in life, and pray on the basis of your knowledge of God's words. Each person should establish their own life of prayer, they should pray for the sake of knowing God's words, and they should pray to seek knowledge of God's work. Lay bare your personal circumstances before God and be real without fussing over the way you pray, and the key issue is to attain true understanding, and to gain real experience of God's words. A person

who pursues entry into the spiritual life must be able to pray in many different ways. Silent prayer, ruminating upon the words of God, coming to know the work of God—these are all examples of the purposeful work of spiritual fellowship for the sake of achieving entry into normal spiritual life, which ever improves one's states before God and pushes one to make ever greater progress in life. In short, all that you do, whether it be eating and drinking the words of God, or praying silently, or proclaiming loudly, is in order to enable you to clearly see God's words, His work, and that which He wishes to achieve in you. More importantly, all that you do is done in order to reach the standards that God requires and to raise your life to new heights.

Excerpted from "Concerning the Practice of Prayer" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

And how do you seek being touched by the Holy Spirit? The crucial thing is to live in God's present words, and to pray upon the foundation of God's requirements. Having prayed in this way, the Holy Spirit is sure to touch you. If you do not seek with a basis in the foundation of the words spoken by God today, then this is fruitless. You should pray, and say: "O God! I oppose You, and I owe You so much; I am so disobedient, and never able to satisfy You. O God, I wish for You to save me, I wish to give service to You to the very end, I wish to die for You. You judge me and chastise me, and I have no complaints; I oppose You and I deserve to die, so that all people may behold Your righteous disposition in my death." When you pray from within your heart in this way, God will hear you, and will guide you; if you do not pray upon the foundation of the words of the Holy Spirit today, then there is no possibility of the Holy Spirit touching you. If you pray according to God's will, and according to that which God wishes to do today, you will say: "O God! I wish to accept Your commissions and be faithful to Your commissions, and I am willing to devote my entire life to Your glory, so that all that I do can reach the standards of the people of God. May my heart be touched by You. I wish for Your Spirit to ever enlighten me, to make all I do bring shame upon Satan, that I am ultimately gained by You." If you pray in this way, in a way that is centered around the will of God, then the Holy Spirit will inevitably work in you. It matters not how many are the words of your prayers—what is key is whether or not you grasp the will of God. You may all have had the following experience: Sometimes, whilst praying in an assembly, the dynamics of the work of the Holy Spirit reach their peak, causing everyone's strength to rise up. Some people cry bitterly and weep tears while praying, overcome with remorse before God, and some people show their resolve, and make vows. Such is the effect

to be achieved by the work of the Holy Spirit. Today, it is crucial that all people completely pour their hearts into the words of God. Do not focus on the words that were spoken before; if you still hold on to what came before, then the Holy Spirit will not work within you. Do you see how important this is?

Excerpted from “Know God’s Newest Work and Follow His Footsteps” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

I have discovered a problem that all people share: When something happens to them, they come before God to pray, but, to them, prayer is one thing, and the matter at hand is another. They believe they should not speak of what is happening to them in prayer. You seldom pray genuinely, and there are some who do not even know how. Actually, to pray is mainly to say what is in your heart, as if you were speaking as you normally do. However, there are people who forget their place as soon as they begin to pray; they insist that God grant them something, heedless of whether it accords with His will, and, as a result, their prayers wither in the praying. When you pray, whatever it is you are asking for in your heart, whatever it is you long for; or, perhaps, there is an issue you wish to address, but into which you have no insight, and you are asking that God give you wisdom or strength, or that He enlighten you—whatever your request, you must be sensible in phrasing it. If you are not, and kneel down and say, “God, give me strength; let me see my nature; I beg You to work; I beg You for this and that; I beg You to make me such-and-such....” That “beg” of yours has a coercive quality; it is an attempt to put pressure on God, to compel Him to do what you want—whose terms you have unilaterally decided in advance, no less. As the Holy Spirit sees it, what effect could such a prayer have, when you have already set the terms and decided what you want to do? One should pray with a seeking, submissive heart. When something has befallen you, for instance, and you are not sure how to handle it, you might say, “God! I do not know what to do about this. I wish to satisfy You in this matter, and to seek Your will. May Your will be done. I wish only to do as You will, not as I will. You know that all human will is contrary to Yours, and resists You, and does not accord with the truth. I ask that You enlighten me, give me guidance in this matter, and let me not offend You....” That is the appropriate tone for a prayer. If you merely say, “God, I ask that You help me, guide me, furnish me with the right environment and the right people, and let me do my work well,” then, after your prayer, you will still not have grasped God’s will, as you will have been asking God to act according to your own will.

You must now ascertain whether the words you use in prayer are sensible. If your prayers are not sensible, no matter if this is due to your foolishness or by design, the Holy Spirit will not work on you. Therefore, when you pray, you must speak sensibly, in a suitable tone. Say this: “God! You know of my weakness and my rebelliousness. I ask only that You give me strength and help me endure my circumstances, but only according to Your will. This is all I ask. I don’t know what Your will is, but may Your will be done all the same. Even if I were made to do service, or to be a foil, I would do so willingly. I ask that You give me strength and wisdom, and let me satisfy You in this matter. I wish only to submit to Your arrangements....” After such a prayer, your heart will feel at ease. If all you do is constantly beg, then, no matter how much you say, it will all be hollow words; God will not work in response to your plea, because you will have decided what you want in advance. When you kneel in prayer, say this: “God! You know of man’s weakness, and You know man’s states. I ask that You enlighten me in this matter. Let me understand Your will. I wish only to submit to all You arrange; my heart is willing to obey You....” Pray thus, and the Holy Spirit will move you. If the way you pray is not correct, your prayer will be stale, and the Holy Spirit will not move you. Do not prattle on, speaking for yourself—to do so is nothing but careless and perfunctory. Would the Holy Spirit work if you are careless and perfunctory? When one comes before God, they must be right and proper, with a pious attitude, like the priests in the Age of Law, who all knelt down when they offered a sacrifice. It is not a simple thing to pray. How could it be viable for a person to come before God baring their fangs and brandishing their claws, or to pray supine, nestled in their quilt, believing that God can hear them? That is not piety! My purpose in this talk is not to demand that people adhere to some specific rule; the least one can do is incline their heart toward God, and come before Him with a pious attitude.

Excerpted from “The Significance of Prayer and Its Practice” in Records of Christ’s Talks

How can people maintain a relationship with God? And what should they rely on to do this? They should rely on supplicating God, praying to God, and communicating with God in their hearts. With a relationship such as this, people live always before God, and such people are very peaceful. Some people spend their whole time in external actions, busying themselves with external tasks. After one or two days without the spiritual life, they feel nothing; after three or five days, or one or two months, they still feel nothing; they have not prayed, made supplication,

or held spiritual communion. Supplication is when something happens to you, and you ask God to help you, guide you, provide for you, enlighten you, and allow you to understand His will and know what to do in line with the truth. The scope of prayer is wider: Sometimes you speak the words in your heart, talking to God of your difficulties or negativity and weakness; so, too, do you pray to God when you are rebellious, or else you speak to Him of the things that happen to you each day, whether they are clear to you or not. This is praying. The scope of prayer is basically talking and opening up to God. Sometimes it is done at regular times, sometimes not; you can pray whenever and wherever you wish. Spiritual communion is not overly formal. Sometimes it is because you have a problem, sometimes not. Sometimes it involves words, sometimes not. When you have a problem, you talk of it with God and pray; when you do not have a problem, you think of how God loves people, how He is concerned about people, how He rebukes people. You may commune with God at any time or place. This is what spiritual communion is. Sometimes, when you are out and about and you think of something that upsets you, you do not have to get down on your knees or close your eyes. You just have to say to God in your heart: "O God, please guide me in this. I am weak, I cannot overcome it." Your heart is moved; you speak but a few simple words, and God knows. Sometimes you miss home and say, "O God! I really miss home...." You do not say who specifically you miss. You just feel down, and speak of this to God. Problems can only be solved when you pray to God and say what is in your heart. Can talking to other people solve problems? It is okay if you encounter someone who understands the truth, but if they do not—if you encounter someone negative and weak—you could have an effect on them. If you speak to God, God will comfort you, and move you. If you are able to read God's words quietly before God, then you will be able to understand the truth and solve the problem. God's words will allow you to find a way through, to get past this little hurdle. The hurdle will not trip you up, it will not restrain you, nor will it affect your performance of your duty. There are times when you suddenly feel a little down or uneasy inside. At such times, do not hesitate to pray to God. It may be that you make no supplication to God, there may be nothing you wish God to do or enlighten you with—you just speak to God and open up to Him at any time, wherever you are. What must you feel at all times? It is, "God is always with me, He has never left me, I can feel it. No matter where I am or what I'm doing—I could be taking a rest, or be in a gathering, or be performing my duty—in my heart, I know that my hand is led by God, that He has never left me." Sometimes, recalling how you have passed each

day over the past few years, you feel that your stature has grown, that you have been guided by God, that God's love has protected you throughout. Thinking these things, you pray in your heart, offering thanks to God: "O God, I thank You! I am so weak and frail, so profoundly corrupt. Without You to guide me like this, I would not have made it to today relying on myself." Is this not spiritual communion? If people can often commune in this way, will they not have much to say to God? They would not go many days without anything to say to God. When you have nothing to say to God, God is absent from your heart. If God is in your heart, and you have faith in God, then you will be able to speak of everything in your heart to Him, including those things you would speak of to your confidants. In fact, God is your closest confidant. If you treat God as your closest confidant, as your family whom you depend on most, rely on most, trust most, confide in most, whom you are closest to, then it will be impossible for you to have nothing to say to God. If you always have something to say to God, will you not always live before God? If you can always live before God, then at every moment, you will sense how God guides you, how He cares for and protects you, how He brings you peace and joy, how He blesses you, how He enlightens you, and how He rebukes you, disciplines you, chastens you, and judges and chastises you; all this will be clear and evident to you in your heart. You will not just muddle through each day, knowing nothing, only saying you believe in God, performing your duty and attending gatherings only for appearance's sake, reading God's words and praying on a daily basis, simply going through the motions—yours will not simply be this kind of external religious ceremony. Instead, in your heart, you will look to God and pray to God at every moment, you will commune with God at all times, and you will be able to submit to God, and live before God. Excerpted from "If You Cannot Always Live Before God, You Are a Nonbeliever" in Records of Christ's Talks

III. Truths of Spiritual Life

1. What is normal spiritual life?

Relevant Words of God:

Faith in God necessitates a normal spiritual life, which is the foundation for experiencing God's words and entering into reality. Does all your current practice of prayers, of drawing near

to God, of hymn-singing, praise, meditation, and pondering the words of God amount to a “normal spiritual life”? None of you seems to know. A normal spiritual life is not limited to such practices as praying, singing hymns, participating in church life, and eating and drinking of God’s words. Rather, it involves living a new and vibrant spiritual life. What matters is not how you practice, but what fruit your practice bears. Most people believe that a normal spiritual life necessarily involves praying, singing hymns, eating and drinking the words of God or pondering His words, regardless of whether such practices actually have any effect or lead to true understanding. These people focus on following superficial procedures without any thought to their results; they are people who live in religious rituals, not people who live within the church, and much less are they people of the kingdom. Their prayers, hymn singing, and eating and drinking of God’s words are all just rule-following, done out of compulsion and to keep up with trends, not out of willingness nor from the heart. However much these people pray or sing, their efforts will bear no fruit, for what they practice is just the rules and rituals of religion; they are not actually practicing God’s words. They focus only on making a fuss over how they practice, and they treat God’s words as rules to follow. Such people are not putting God’s words into practice; they are just gratifying the flesh, and performing for other people to see. These religious rules and rituals are all human in origin; they do not come from God. God does not follow rules, nor is He subject to any law. Rather, He does new things every day, accomplishing practical work. Like people in the Three-Self Church, who limit themselves to practices such as attending morning services every day, offering evening prayers and prayers of gratitude before meals, and giving thanks in all things—however much they do and for however long they do it, they will not have the work of the Holy Spirit. When people live amidst rules and have their hearts fixed on methods of practice, the Holy Spirit cannot work, because their hearts are occupied by rules and human notions. Thus, God is unable to intervene and work on them, and they can only continue living under the control of laws. Such people are forever incapable of receiving God’s praise.

Excerpted from “Regarding a Normal Spiritual Life” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

A normal spiritual life is a life lived before God. When praying, one can quiet one’s heart before God, and through prayer, one can seek the Holy Spirit’s enlightenment, know God’s words, and understand God’s will. By eating and drinking of His words, people can gain a

clearer and more thorough understanding of God's current work. They can also gain a new path of practice, and will not cling to the old; what they practice will all be to achieve growth in life. As for prayer, it is not about speaking a few nice-sounding words or breaking down in tears before God to show how indebted you are; rather, its purpose is to train oneself in the use of the spirit, allowing one to quiet one's heart before God, to train oneself to seek out guidance from God's words in all matters, so that one's heart can be drawn to a fresh new light each day, and so that one will not be passive or lazy and may set foot upon the right track of putting God's words into practice. Most people nowadays focus on methods of practice, yet they do not do so in order to pursue the truth and achieve life growth. This is where they have gone astray. There are also some who are capable of receiving new light, but their methods of practice do not change. They bring their old religious notions with them as they look to receive God's words of today, so what they receive is still doctrine colored by religious notions; they are not receiving today's light simply. As a result, their practices are tainted; they are the same old practices in new packaging. However well they might practice, they are hypocrites. God leads people in doing new things every day, demanding that each day they gain new insight and understanding, and requiring that they not be old-fashioned and repetitive. If you have believed in God for many years, yet your methods of practice have not changed at all, and if you are still zealous and busy about external matters, yet do not have a quiet heart to bring before God to enjoy His words, then you will obtain nothing. When it comes to accepting God's new work, if you do not plan differently, do not go about your practice in a new way, and do not pursue any new understanding, but instead cling to the old and receive only some limited new light, without changing the way you practice, then such people as you are in this stream in name only; in actuality, they are religious Pharisees outside the stream of the Holy Spirit.

Excerpted from "Regarding a Normal Spiritual Life" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

2. What is engaging in religious ceremony?

Relevant Words of God:

A normal spiritual life is not limited to such practices as praying, singing hymns, participating in church life, and eating and drinking of God's words. Rather, it involves living a

new and vibrant spiritual life. What matters is not how you practice, but what fruit your practice bears. Most people believe that a normal spiritual life necessarily involves praying, singing hymns, eating and drinking the words of God or pondering His words, regardless of whether such practices actually have any effect or lead to true understanding. These people focus on following superficial procedures without any thought to their results; they are people who live in religious rituals, not people who live within the church, and much less are they people of the kingdom. Their prayers, hymn singing, and eating and drinking of God's words are all just rule-following, done out of compulsion and to keep up with trends, not out of willingness nor from the heart. However much these people pray or sing, their efforts will bear no fruit, for what they practice is just the rules and rituals of religion; they are not actually practicing God's words. They focus only on making a fuss over how they practice, and they treat God's words as rules to follow. Such people are not putting God's words into practice; they are just gratifying the flesh, and performing for other people to see. These religious rules and rituals are all human in origin; they do not come from God. God does not follow rules, nor is He subject to any law. Rather, He does new things every day, accomplishing practical work. Like people in the Three-Self Church, who limit themselves to practices such as attending morning services every day, offering evening prayers and prayers of gratitude before meals, and giving thanks in all things—however much they do and for however long they do it, they will not have the work of the Holy Spirit. When people live amidst rules and have their hearts fixed on methods of practice, the Holy Spirit cannot work, because their hearts are occupied by rules and human notions. Thus, God is unable to intervene and work on them, and they can only continue living under the control of laws. Such people are forever incapable of receiving God's praise.

Excerpted from "Regarding a Normal Spiritual Life" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

If, in believing in God, people treat the truth as a set of regulations to be adhered to, then will their belief not be liable to turn into just a bunch of religious ceremonies? And what are the differences between such religious ceremonies and Christianity? These people may be deeper and more progressive in how they say things, but if their faith has merely come down to a set of regulations and a type of ceremony, then does that not mean that it has turned into Christianity? (Yes, it does.) There are differences between the old teachings and the new, but if teachings are nothing more than a kind of theory, and have merely become a form of ceremony or regulation

for people—and, likewise, if people can neither gain the truth from it nor use it to enter the truth reality—then has their faith not become just the same as Christianity? In essence, is this not Christianity? (Yes, it is.) Then, in your behavior and when performing your duties, in which things do you have views and states that are the same as or similar to those of believers in Christianity? (In adhering to regulations, and in equipping ourselves with letters and doctrines.) (In focusing on the appearance of being spiritual and exhibiting good behavior, and on being devout and humble.) You seek to outwardly exhibit good behavior, doing your utmost to package yourselves in a kind of spiritual appearance, and you do some things that are relatively approved of within human notions and imaginings, pretending to be virtuous. You stand in the high pulpit preaching letters and doctrines, teaching people to do good, be virtuous, and understand the truth; you preach spiritual doctrine, saying the right spiritual things; you put on airs of being spiritual and exude a superficial spirituality in everything you say and do, yet in practice and in performing your duty, you never seek the truth. As soon as you encounter a problem, you act entirely according to human will, tossing God aside. You have never acted according to the truth principle, nor do you have any idea what the truth even is, what God's intentions are, or what the standards that He requires of man are; you have never taken these matters seriously or even concerned yourselves with them. Do such external actions and internal states of people—that is, does this type of faith—comprise a fear for God and the shunning of evil? If there is no connection between people's faith and the pursuit of the truth, then do they or do they not believe in God? Regardless of how many years people who have no connection with pursuing the truth might believe in Him, can they or can they not truly fear God and shun evil? (They cannot.) What, then, is the outward behavior of such people? What kind of path can they walk? (The path of the Pharisees.) With what do they spend their days equipping themselves? Is it not with letters and doctrines? Do they not spend their days arming themselves, dressing themselves up with letters and doctrines to make themselves more like the Pharisees, more spiritual, and more like people who supposedly serve God? Just what is the nature of all these deeds? Is it worshiping God? Is it genuine faith in Him? (No, it isn't.) So, what are they doing? They are deceiving God; they are just going through the steps of a process, and engaging in religious ceremonies. They are waving the flag of faith and performing religious rites, attempting to deceive God in order to achieve their aim of being blessed. These people do

not worship God at all. In the end, will such a group of people not end up just like those within the church who supposedly serve God, and who supposedly believe in and follow God?

Excerpted from “Only by Constantly Living Before God Can One Walk the Path to Salvation” in Records of
Christ’s Talks

How many religious practices do you observe? How many times have you rebelled against the word of God and gone your own way? How many times have you put God’s word into practice because you are truly considerate of His burdens and seek to satisfy His will? You should understand the word of God and put it into practice accordingly. Be principled in all your actions and deeds, though this does not mean abiding by rules or doing something grudgingly just for show; rather, it means practicing the truth and living by the word of God. Only practice such as this satisfies God. Any course of action that pleases God is not a rule, but the practice of truth. Some people have a penchant for drawing attention to themselves. In the presence of their brothers and sisters, they might say they are indebted to God, but behind their backs, they do not practice the truth and act entirely differently. Are these not religious Pharisees? A person who truly loves God and possesses the truth is one who is loyal to God but does not outwardly show off as such. Such a person is willing to practice the truth when situations arise, and does not speak or act in a way that goes against their conscience. This sort of person demonstrates wisdom when matters arise, and is principled in his or her deeds regardless of the circumstances. This kind of person can provide true service. There are some who often pay lip service to their indebtedness to God; they spend their days with brows locked in worry, putting on an affected air and pretending to be pitiable. How despicable! If you were to ask them, “Can you tell me about how you are indebted to God?” then they would be rendered speechless. If you are loyal to God, then do not talk outwardly about it; instead, demonstrate your love for God by way of actual practice, and pray to Him with a true heart. Those who just deal with God verbally and perfunctorily are all hypocrites! Some speak of indebtedness to God each time they pray, and begin to weep each time they pray, even without being moved by the Holy Spirit. People such as this are possessed by religious rituals and notions; they live by such rituals and notions, always believing that those actions please God and that He favors superficial godliness or sorrowful tears. What good can come of such absurd people? In order to demonstrate humility, some feign graciousness when speaking in the presence of others.

Some are deliberately servile when in the presence of other people, acting like lambs without an ounce of strength. Is this a manner befitting people of the kingdom? People of the kingdom should be lively and free, innocent and open, honest and lovable, and be living in a state of freedom. They should have integrity and dignity and be able to stand witness wherever they go; such people are beloved by both God and man. Those who are novices in the faith have too many outward practices; they must first undergo a period of being dealt with and broken. People who have faith in God deep down are not outwardly distinguishable from others, but their actions and deeds are commendable. Only such people can be deemed to be living out the word of God. If you preach the gospel every day to various people in an effort to bring them to salvation, yet in the end are still living by rules and doctrines, then you cannot bring glory to God. Such people are religious figures, as well as hypocrites.

Excerpted from “In Faith, One Must Focus on Reality—Engaging in Religious Ritual Is Not Faith” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

During the course of man’s entry, life is always boring, full of the monotonous elements of spiritual life, such as praying, eating and drinking the words of God, or forming gatherings, and so people always feel that believing in God brings no great enjoyment. Such spiritual activities are always carried out on the basis of humanity’s original disposition, which has been corrupted by Satan. Although people can sometimes receive the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, their original thinking, disposition, lifestyles and habits are still rooted within, and so their nature remains unchanged. The superstitious activities that people engage in are what God hates the most, but many people are still unable to let go of them, thinking these superstitious activities to be decreed by God, and even today have yet to shed them completely. Such things as the arrangements young people make for wedding feasts and bridal trousseaus; gifts of cash, banquets, and similar ways with which joyous occasions are celebrated; ancient formulae that have been handed down; all the meaningless superstitious activities conducted for the dead and their obsequies: these are even more detestable to God. Even the day of worship (including the Sabbath, as observed by the religious world) is detestable to Him; and the social relationships and worldly interactions between man and man are all the more despised and rejected by God. Even the Spring Festival and Christmas Day, which are known to everyone, are not decreed by God, let alone the toys and decorations for these festive holidays such as couplets, firecrackers,

lanterns, Holy Communion, Christmas gifts, and Christmas festivities—are they not idols in the minds of men? The breaking of bread on the Sabbath, wine, and fine linen are even more emphatically idols. All the traditional festival days popular in China, such as the Dragon Heads-raising Day, the Dragon Boat Festival, the Mid-Autumn Festival, the Laba Festival, and New Year's Day, and the festivals in the religious world, such as Easter, Baptism Day, and Christmas Day, all of these unjustifiable festivals have been arranged and handed down from olden times to today by many people. It is humanity's rich imagination and ingenious conception that have allowed them to be passed down to today. They appear to be free of flaws, but are in fact tricks Satan plays on humanity. The more a place is thronged with Satans, and the more obsolete and backward that place is, the more deeply entrenched are its feudal customs. These things bind people tight, allowing absolutely no room for movement. Many of the festivals in the religious world seem to display great originality and to create a bridge to the work of God, but they are actually the invisible ties with which Satan binds people and prevents people from coming to know God—they are all Satan's cunning stratagems. In fact, when a stage of God's work is finished, He has already destroyed the tools and the style of that time, without leaving any trace. However, "devout believers" continue to worship those tangible material objects; meanwhile they consign what God has to the back of their minds, studying it no further, seeming to be full of the love of God when they actually pushed Him out of the house long ago and placed Satan on the table to worship. Portraits of Jesus, the Cross, Mary, Jesus' Baptism and the Last Supper—people venerate these as the Lord of Heaven, all the while repeatedly crying out "Lord, heavenly Father." Is this not all a joke? To this day, many similar sayings and practices that have been passed down amongst humanity are hateful to God; they seriously obstruct the way ahead for God and, furthermore, create huge setbacks to humanity's entry. ...

The best way to change the human disposition is to remedy those portions of people's innermost hearts that have been profoundly poisoned, allowing people to begin changing their thinking and morality. First of all, people need to see clearly that all these religious rites, religious activities, years and months, and festivals are hateful to God. They should break free from these bonds of feudal thinking and eradicate every trace of their deep-seated propensity to superstition. These are all included in humanity's entry. You must understand why God leads humanity out of the secular world, and again why He leads humanity away from rules and regulations. This is the gate through which you will enter, and although these things have

nothing to do with your spiritual experience, they are the greatest obstacles blocking your entry, blocking you from knowing God. They form a net which enmeshes people.

Excerpted from “Work and Entry (3)” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

3. How can one enter into normal spiritual life?

Relevant Words of God:

To live a normal spiritual life, one must be able to receive new light daily and pursue a true understanding of God’s words. One must see the truth clearly, find a path of practice in all matters, discover new questions through reading God’s words each day, and realize one’s own inadequacies so that one may have a longing and seeking heart that moves one’s entire being, and so that one may be quiet before God at all times, deeply afraid of falling behind. A person with such a longing, seeking heart, who is willing to continually attain entry, is on the right track of spiritual life. Those who are moved by the Holy Spirit, who desire to do better, who are willing to pursue being perfected by God, who long for a deeper understanding of God’s words, who do not pursue the supernatural but rather pay a real price, who truly care for God’s will, who actually attain entry so that their experiences are more genuine and real, who do not pursue empty words and doctrines or pursue to feel the supernatural, who do not worship any great personality—these are the ones who have entered into a normal spiritual life. Everything they do is intended to achieve further growth in life and to make them fresh and lively in spirit, and they are always able to attain entry actively. Without realizing it, they come to understand the truth and enter into reality. Those with normal spiritual lives find the liberation and freedom of spirit each day, and they can practice the words of God in a free way to His satisfaction. For these people, praying is not a formality or a procedure; each day, they are able to keep pace with the new light. For example, people train themselves to quiet their hearts before God, and their hearts can truly be quiet before God, and they can be disturbed by no one. No person, event, or thing can constrain their normal spiritual lives. Such training is intended to yield results; it is not intended to make people follow rules. This practice is not about rule-following, but is instead about promoting growth in people’s life. If you see this practice only as rules to follow, your life will never change. You may be engaged in the same practice as others, but while they

are ultimately able to keep pace with the work of the Holy Spirit, you are eliminated from the stream of the Holy Spirit. Are you not deceiving yourself?

Excerpted from “Regarding a Normal Spiritual Life” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

The way that people believe in God, love God, and satisfy God is by touching the Spirit of God with their heart and thereby obtaining His satisfaction, and by using their heart to engage with God’s words and thus being moved by the Spirit of God. If you wish to achieve a normal spiritual life and establish a normal relationship with God, then you must first give your heart to Him. Only after you have quieted your heart before Him and poured your whole heart into Him will you gradually be able to develop a normal spiritual life. If in people’s belief in God, they do not give their heart to Him and if their heart is not in Him and they do not treat His burden as their own, then everything they do is an act of cheating God, an act typical of religious people, and cannot receive God’s praise. God cannot gain anything from this kind of person; this kind of person can only serve as a foil to God’s work, like a decoration in the house of God, something superfluous and useless. God does not make use of this kind of person. In such a person, not only is there no opportunity for the work of the Holy Spirit, there is not even any value in their being perfected. This type of person is, in truth, a walking corpse. Such people have nothing that can be used by the Holy Spirit, but on the contrary, all of them have been appropriated and deeply corrupted by Satan. God will weed these people out. Currently, in making use of people the Holy Spirit not only employs those parts of them that are desirable in order to get things done, He also perfects and changes their undesirable parts. If your heart can be poured into God and remain quiet before Him, then you will have the opportunity and the qualifications to be used by the Holy Spirit, to receive the enlightenment and illumination of the Holy Spirit, and even more, you will have the opportunity for the Holy Spirit to make good your shortcomings. When you give your heart to God, on the positive side, you can attain deeper entry and attain a higher plane of insight; on the negative side, you will have more understanding of your own faults and shortcomings, you will be more eager to seek to satisfy God’s will, and you will not be passive, but will actively enter in. Thus, you will become a correct person.

Excerpted from “It Is Very Important to Establish a Normal Relationship With God” in The Word Appears

in the Flesh

No step is more crucial to entering God's words than quieting your heart in His presence. It is a lesson that all people are in urgent need of entering at present. The paths of entry into quieting your heart before God are as follows:

1. Withdraw your heart from external matters. Be at peace before God, and give your undivided attention to praying to God.

2. With your heart at peace before God, eat, drink, and enjoy God's words.

3. Meditate on and contemplate God's love and ponder God's work in your heart.

First, begin from the aspect of prayer. Pray with undivided attention and at fixed times. No matter how pressed you are for time, how busy your work, or what befalls you, pray every day as normal, and eat and drink God's words as normal. As long as you eat and drink God's words, no matter what your surroundings are, you will have great enjoyment in your spirit, and you will be undisturbed by the people, events, or things around you. When you ordinarily contemplate God in your heart, what goes on outside cannot bother you. This is what it means to possess stature. Begin with prayer: Praying quietly before God is most fruitful. After that, eat and drink the words of God, seek out the light in God's words by pondering them, find the path to practice, know God's purpose in speaking His words, and understand them without deviation. Ordinarily, it should be normal for you to be able to draw close to God in your heart, to contemplate God's love and to ponder the words of God, without being disturbed by external things. When your heart has achieved a certain degree of peace, you will be able to muse silently and, within yourself, to contemplate God's love and truly draw near to Him, regardless of your surroundings, until finally you reach the point where praise wells up in your heart, and it is even better than prayer. Then you will be possessed of a certain stature. If you are able to achieve the states of being described above, it will be proof that your heart is truly at peace before God. This is the first basic lesson. Only after people are able to be at peace before God can they be touched by the Holy Spirit, and enlightened and illuminated by the Holy Spirit, and only then are they able to have true communion with God, as well as to grasp God's will and the guidance of the Holy Spirit. They will then have entered onto the right track in their spiritual lives. When their training to live before God has reached a certain depth, and they are able to forsake themselves, to despise themselves, and to live in God's words, then their hearts are truly at peace before God. Being able to despise oneself, curse oneself, and forsake oneself is the effect achieved by

God's work, and cannot be done by people on their own. Thus, the practice of quieting one's heart before God is a lesson people should immediately enter.

Excerpted from "On Quietening Your Heart Before God" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

As mentioned before, you must give your heart to God. This is a prerequisite for walking the path on which the Holy Spirit leads. You must do this in order to enter onto the right track. How does a person consciously do the work of giving their heart to God? In your daily lives, when you experience God's work and pray to Him, you do it carelessly—you pray to God while you work. Can this be called giving your heart to God? You are thinking about household matters or affairs of the flesh; you are always of two minds. Can this be considered quieting your heart in the presence of God? This is because your heart is always fixated on external affairs, and is not able to return before God. If you would have your heart truly at peace before God, then you must do the work of conscious cooperation. This is to say that every one of you must have a time for your devotions, a time when you put aside people, events, and things; settle your heart and quiet yourself before God. Everyone must keep individual devotional notes, recording their knowledge of God's word and how their spirit is moved, regardless of whether they are profound or superficial; everyone must consciously quiet their heart before God. If you can dedicate one or two hours each day to true spiritual life, then your life that day will feel enriched and your heart will be bright and clear. If you live this kind of spiritual life every day, then your heart will be able to return more into God's possession, your spirit will become stronger and stronger, your condition will constantly improve, you will become more capable of walking the path on which the Holy Spirit leads, and God will bestow increased blessings upon you. The purpose of your spiritual life is consciously to gain the presence of the Holy Spirit. It is not to observe rules or conduct religious rituals, but truly to act in concert with God, truly to discipline your body—this is what man should do, so you should do this with the utmost effort. The better your cooperation and the more effort you commit, the more your heart will be able to return to God and the better you will be able to quiet your heart before Him. At a certain point, God will gain your heart completely. No one will be able to sway or capture your heart, and you will belong completely to God. If you walk this path, then God's word will reveal itself to you at all times and enlighten you about everything that you do not understand—this can all be achieved through your cooperation. This is why God always says, "All who act in concert with Me, I will

reward twice over.” You must see this path clearly. If you wish to walk the right path, then you must do all that you can to satisfy God. You must do all that you can to attain a spiritual life. At the start, you may not achieve great results in this pursuit, but you must not allow yourself to regress or wallow in negativity—you must keep working hard! The more you live a spiritual life, the more your heart will be occupied by the words of God, always concerned with these matters, always bearing this burden. After that, reveal your innermost truth to God through your spiritual life; tell Him what you are willing to do, what you are thinking about, your understanding and view of His word. Do not hold back anything, not even a little bit! Practice speaking the words within your heart and revealing your true feelings to God; if it is in your heart, then by all means, say it. The more you speak in this way, the more you will feel God’s loveliness, and God will tug more strongly on your heart. When this happens, you will feel that God is dearer to you than anyone else. You will never leave God’s side, no matter what. If you practice this kind of spiritual devotion on a daily basis and do not put it out of your mind, but treat it as a matter of great importance in your life, then God’s word will occupy your heart. This is what it means to be touched by the Holy Spirit. It will be as if your heart has always been possessed by God, as if that which you love is always in your heart. No one can take that away from you. When this happens, God will truly live inside you and have a place within your heart.

Excerpted from “A Normal Spiritual Life Leads People Onto the Right Track” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

4. How should one eat and drink God’s words and ponder God’s words?

Relevant Words of God:

Of the principles of eating and drinking the words of God, one relates to knowledge, and the other to entry. Which words should you come to know? You should come to know the words that relate to visions (such as, those relating to which age God’s work has now entered, what God wishes to achieve now, what the incarnation is, and so on; all these are related to visions). What is meant by the path that man should enter into? This refers to the words of God that man should practice and enter into. The above are the two aspects of eating and drinking the words of God. From now on, eat and drink the words of God in this way. If you have a clear

understanding of His words concerning visions, then there is no need to keep reading all the time. Of primary importance is to eat and drink more of the words on entering, such as how to turn your heart toward God, how to quiet your heart before God, and how to forsake the flesh. These are the things you should put into practice. Without knowing how to eat and drink the words of God, true fellowship is impossible. Once you know how to eat and drink His words, when you have grasped what is key, fellowship will become free, and whatever issue is raised, you will be able to fellowship and grasp the reality. If, when fellowshiping the words of God, you have no reality, then you have not grasped what is key, which shows that you do not know how to eat and drink God's words. Some people may find reading the words of God tiresome, which is not a normal state. What is normal is never growing tired of reading God's words, always thirsting for them, and always finding the words of God to be good. This is how one who has really entered eats and drinks the words of God. When you feel that the words of God are exceedingly practical and are exactly what man should enter into; when you feel that His words are greatly helpful and beneficial to man, and that they are the provision of man's life—it is the Holy Spirit that gives you this feeling, and it is the Holy Spirit that moves you. This proves that the Holy Spirit is working in you and that God has not turned away from you. Some people, seeing that God is always speaking, become tired of His words, and think it of no consequence whether they read them or not—which is not a normal state. They lack a heart that thirsts to enter into reality, and such people neither thirst for nor place importance on being perfected. Whenever you find you do not thirst for the words of God, this shows that you are not in a normal state. In the past, whether God had turned away from you could be determined by whether you were at peace within, and whether you experienced enjoyment. Now the key is whether you thirst for the words of God, whether His words are your reality, whether you are faithful, and whether you are able to do all that you can for God. In other words, man is judged by the reality of the words of God. God directs His words to all of humanity. If you are willing to read them, He will enlighten you, but if you are not, He will not. God enlightens those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, and He enlightens those who seek Him. Some say that God did not enlighten them even after they read His words. But in what way did you read these words? If you read His words in the way a man on horseback looks at flowers, and placed no importance on reality, how could God enlighten you? How can one who does not treasure God's words be made perfect by Him? If you do not treasure the words of God, then you will have

neither truth nor reality. If you treasure His words, then you will be able to put the truth into practice, and only then will you possess reality. This is why you must eat and drink the words of God at all times, whether you are busy or not, whether the circumstances are adverse or not, and whether you are being tried or not. All in all, the words of God are the foundation of man's existence. No one can turn away from His words, but must eat His words as they do the three meals of the day. Could being made perfect and gained by God be that easy? Whether or not you understand at present, and whether or not you have insight into the work of God, you must eat and drink the words of God as much as possible. This is entering in a proactive way. After reading the words of God, hasten to put into practice what you can enter into, and set aside for the moment what you cannot. There may be many of the words of God that you cannot understand in the beginning, but after two or three months, perhaps even a year, you will. How can this be? It is because God cannot make people perfect in a day or two. Most of the time, when you read His words, you may not understand right away. At that time, they may seem like nothing more than mere text; you must experience them for a time before you can understand them. God having spoken so much, you should do your utmost to eat and drink His words, and then, without you realizing it, you will come to understand, and without you realizing it, the Holy Spirit will enlighten you. When the Holy Spirit enlightens man, it is often without man's awareness. He enlightens and guides you when you thirst and seek. The principle by which the Holy Spirit works is centered around the words of God that you eat and drink. All those who place no importance on the words of God and are always of a different attitude toward His words—believing, in their befuddled thinking, it a matter of indifference whether they read His words or not—are those who do not possess reality. Neither the Holy Spirit's work nor His enlightenment can be seen in such a person. People like this are merely coasting along, pretenders without true qualifications, like Mr. Nanguo of the parable.^[a]

Excerpted from "The Age of Kingdom Is the Age of Word" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

When you eat and drink the words of God, you must measure the reality of your own state against them. That is, when you discover your shortcomings in the course of your real experience, you must be capable of finding a path to practice, of turning your back on your incorrect motivations and notions. If you always strive for these things and pour your heart into achieving them, then you will have a path to follow, you will not feel empty, and thus you will

be able to maintain a normal state. Only then will you be someone who carries a burden in your own life, who has faith. Why is it that some people, after reading God's words, are unable to put them into practice? Is it not because they cannot grasp the most crucial things? Is it not because they do not take life seriously? The reason that they cannot grasp the crucial things and have no path to practice is that when they read God's words, they are unable to relate their own states to them, nor can they master their own states. Some people say: "I read God's words and relate my state to them, and I know that I am corrupt and of poor caliber, but I am incapable of satisfying God's will." You have only seen the very surface; there are many real things that you do not know: how to put aside the enjoyments of the flesh, how to put aside self-righteousness, how to change yourself, how to enter into these things, how to improve your caliber, and from which aspect to begin. You only grasp a few things on the surface, and all that you know is that you are indeed very corrupt. When you meet your brothers and sisters, you talk about how corrupt you are, and it seems that you know yourself and carry a great burden for your life. In fact, your corrupt disposition has not changed, which proves you have not found the path to practice.

Excerpted from "Practice (7)" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

If you wish to pursue the truth, if you wish to understand and gain the truth, then you must learn how to be quiet before God, how to ponder the truth, and how to ponder God's words. Are there formalities to follow in order to ponder the truth? Are there any rules? Are there any time limitations? Do you have to do it in a certain place? No—God's words can be pondered at any time or place. If you spent less time on your usual vacuous thoughts and flights of fancy, and used it to ponder the truth, how much time a day would not be wasted as a result? What do people do when they waste time? They spend all day chatting and gossiping, only doing what interests them, engaging only in frivolities, thinking only of the useless things of times gone by, and imagining what their future will hold, where the future kingdom will be, where hell is—are these not frivolities? If this time is spent on positive things—if you are quiet before God, spend more time pondering God's words and fellowshiping the truth, reflect upon each of your actions, and hold them up before God for His scrutiny, and then look at whether there are any major issues that you have failed to realize or identify, looking in particular, at those critical areas

where you are most rebellious to God, and searching for the corresponding words of God to solve them—then you will gradually enter the truth reality.

What does pondering the words of God involve? It involves holding up the so-called spiritual terms and doctrines you so frequently utter, and the spiritual principles of practice you frequently believe to be correct, and pray-reading: “I’m clear about the theory of these spiritual phrases and terminology, I have a good understanding of their literal meaning, but what about their reality? How should I put them into practice?” That is how to ponder the words of God; start from this aspect. If, when they believe in God, people do not know how to ponder His words, they will have great difficulty entering and understanding the truth. If people are incapable of truly understanding the truth, are they able to enter the truth reality? If they are unable to enter the truth reality, can they gain the truth? If people cannot gain the truth, and cannot enter the truth reality, can they satisfy God’s will? It would be very difficult. Take the oft-repeated words of “fear God and shun evil,” for example: You must contemplate these words, and say to yourself, “What is fearing God? If I say something wrong, is this fearing God or not? Is speaking thus doing evil, or doing good? Is it remembered by God? Is it condemned by God? What things are evil? Are my own ideas, motivations, thoughts, views, the impetus and origins behind the things I say and do, the various dispositions I reveal—are these considered evil? Which of them are approved of by God? Which are loathed by God? Which are condemned by God? In which matters is there a high chance of me making a grave mistake?” All of this is worthy of consideration. Do you regularly ponder the truth? How much time have you wasted? How many matters concerning the truth, concerning faith in God, concerning life entry, concerning fearing God and shunning evil, have you given thought to? When your pondering of God’s words or pondering of matters concerning faith in God and the truth bears fruit, you will have attained life entry. You still do not know how to ponder these things today, and you have not attained life entry. When someone has attained life entry, and is able to ponder God’s words, and contemplate issues, they have then begun to enter the truth reality.

Excerpted from “The Path Comes From Often Pondering the Truth” in Records of Christ’s Talks

When you hear the word of God, do you apply it to yourselves, or are you just listening to doctrine, the words going in one ear and out the other? What kind of attitudes and motivations are there within you? You do not really know how to eat and drink the word of God. After

reading the passage of God's words entitled "A Warning to Those Who Do Not Practice the Truth," for example, all you understand is that God is saying that those who do not practice the truth shall be eliminated, that God does not delight in those who do not practice the truth, and that, in God's eyes, they are not good, they are evil. But have you ever thought about which of people's behaviors are not practicing the truth, which of their actions, attitudes, and the paths they walk are regarded by God as manifestations of not practicing the truth? Do you know how to contemplate that? You must do so regularly, and not wait until you gather together to think about this; you must learn to contemplate the words of God often. What is the word of God? It is the reality of all positive things; it is the truth, the way, and the life that God bestows on man. God's words are not doctrines, slogans, or arguments, nor are they some sort of philosophy and learning. Rather, they have to do with man's life and existence, with his behavior and disposition, with all that man reveals, and with the ideas and opinions that are conceived in man's heart and exist in his mind. If your contemplation of God's words is untethered from these things, and if you are untethered from them as you read His words and listen to sermons and fellowship, then what you can understand will be superficial and limited. You must learn how to contemplate God's words. This is crucial. There are many ways to contemplate God's words: You may read them silently and pray in your heart, seeking enlightenment and illumination from the Holy Spirit; you may also fellowship and pray-read in the company of those who pursue the truth; and, of course, you may integrate fellowships and sermons into your contemplation to deepen your understanding and appreciation of God's words. The ways are many and varied. In short, if, in reading God's words, one wishes to achieve an understanding of them, then it is crucial to contemplate and pray-read God's words. The purpose of pray-reading God's words is not to be able to recite them, nor is it to commit them to memory; rather, it is to gain an accurate understanding of these words after having pray-read and contemplated them and to know the meaning of these words spoken by God, as well as His intention. It is to find therein the path on which one should practice, and to keep from turning to one's own way. In addition, it is to be able to discern between all the various sorts of states and types of people revealed in God's words, to be able to find the accurate path of practice with which to treat each type of person. At the same time, it is to avoid going astray and setting foot on the path that God abhors. Once you learn how to pray-read and how to contemplate God's words, and do it often, only then can God's words take root in your heart and become your life.

Excerpted from “For Leaders and Workers, Choosing a Path Is of Utmost Importance (11)” in Records of Christ’s Talks

Whichever aspect of the truth reality you have heard, if you hold yourself up against it, implement these words in your own life, and incorporate them into your own practice, then you will definitely gain something, and you are bound to change. If you simply stuff these words into your belly and memorize them in your brain, then you will never change. Whilst listening to the sermons, you should ponder thusly: “What sort of state are these words referring to? What aspect of essence are they referring to? In what matters should I apply this aspect of the truth? Whenever I do something related to this aspect of the truth, am I practicing in accordance with it? And when I’m putting it into practice, is my state in keeping with these words? If not, then should I seek, fellowship, or wait?” Do you practice in this manner in your lives? If you do not, then your life is without God and without the truth. You live according to letters and doctrines or according to your own interests, confidence, and enthusiasm. Those who do not possess the truth as reality are those who have no reality, and people who do not have God’s words as their reality are people who have not entered His words.

Excerpted from “The Most Fundamental Practice of Being an Honest Person” in Records of Christ’s Talks

Coming to a genuine understanding of the actual meaning of God’s words is no simple matter. Do not think this way: “I can interpret the literal meaning of God’s words, and everyone says my interpretation is good, and gives me a thumbs-up, so this means I understand God’s words.” That is not the same as understanding God’s words. If you have gained some light from within God’s utterances, and you have gotten a sense of the true meaning of His words; and if you can express the intention behind His words and what effect they will ultimately achieve, then once you have a clear understanding of all of these things, you can be considered to have some level of understanding of God’s words. Thus, understanding God’s words is not all that simple. Just because you can give a flowery explanation of the literal meaning of God’s words does not mean you understand them. No matter how much you can explain their literal meaning, your explanation is still based on human imagination and way of thinking. It is useless! How can you understand God’s words? The key is to seek the truth from within them; only in that way can you truly understand what He says. Whenever God speaks, He certainly does not speak

in mere generalities. Each sentence He utters contains details that are certain to be revealed further in God's words, and they may be expressed differently. Man cannot fathom the ways in which God expresses the truth. God's utterances are very profound and cannot be fathomed with human way of thinking. People can discover the entire meaning of every aspect of the truth as long as they make an effort; if you do this, then as you experience them, what details remain will be filled in completely as the Holy Spirit enlightens you, thus giving you an understanding of these concrete states.

Excerpted from "How to Know Man's Nature" in Records of Christ's Talks

Eating and drinking of God's words can enable you to understand the truth only if it is done the right way. However, simply understanding the truth does not mean you are able to enter truth reality. Some people are of good caliber but do not love the truth; although they are able to understand a bit of the truth, they do not practice it. Can such people enter truth reality? Understanding the truth is not as simple as understanding doctrines. To understand the truth, you must know how to eat and drink of God's words. Take the eating and drinking of a passage concerning the truth of love for God, for example. God's word says: "Love, as it is called, refers to an emotion that is pure and without blemish, where you use your heart to love, to feel, and to be thoughtful. In love there are no conditions, no barriers, and no distance. In love there is no suspicion, no deceit, and no cunning. In love there is no trade and nothing impure." This is how God defines love, and this is the truth. But whom shall you love? Shall you love your husband? Your wife? Your brothers and sisters? No. When God speaks of love, He speaks not of love for your fellow man, but of man's love of God. This love is true love. How should you comprehend this truth? It means God wants people not to doubt Him or distance themselves from Him, but to have a love for Him which is pure and without blemish. "Without blemish" means having no extravagant desires and making no extravagant demands of God, laying no conditions on Him, and not making any excuses. It means He comes first in your heart; it means only His words occupy your heart. This is an emotion that is pure and without blemish. This emotion occupies a certain place in your heart; you are always thinking of Him and missing Him, and can bring Him to mind at each and every moment. To love means to love with your heart. Loving with your heart consists of being considerate, caring and longing. To succeed in loving with your heart, you must undergo a process of knowing. At the present time, while you

have little knowledge of God, you should use your heart to yearn for Him, to long for Him, to obey Him, to be considerate toward Him, to pray to Him, and to cry out for Him; you should even be able to share in His thoughts and concerns. You must put your heart into these things. Do not merely pay lip service, saying: "Dear God! I'm doing this for You, I'm doing that for You!" Only loving and satisfying God with your heart is real. Although you do not say so aloud, you have God in your heart, in your heart you are thinking of Him. You can give up your husband, your wife, your children, your parents; but your heart cannot be without God. Without God, you simply cannot live. This means you have love, and you have God in your heart. "[U]se your heart to love, to feel, and to be thoughtful." This involves many things. It is the true love that God requires of man; in other words, you must love and care for Him with your heart, and always keep Him in mind. This does not mean just voicing the words, nor does it mean how you express yourself with your bearing; rather, primarily, it means doing things with heart, and letting your heart govern all of your actions. In doing things this way, there is no motivation, no adulteration, no suspicion; a heart such as this is much purer. How are doubts in your heart expressed? They are expressed when you are always thinking, "Is it right for God to do this? Why does God say this? If there's no reason behind God saying this, I won't obey it. If it is unjust for God to do this, I won't obey. I'll drop it for now." To not harbor doubts means recognizing that whatever God says and does is right, and with God there is no right or wrong. Man must obey God, be considerate toward God, satisfy God, and share in His thoughts and concerns. Regardless of whether or not everything God does seems meaningful to you, whether it is agreeable to man's notions and imaginings, and regardless of whether it makes sense to man, you can always obey and have a reverent, submissive heart toward these things. Is not such practice in conformity with the truth? Is it not the manifestation and practice of love? Therefore, if from God's words you do not understand God's will and the intentions behind His utterances, if you do not understand the aims and results that His words intend to achieve, if you do not understand what His words seek to accomplish and perfect in man, if you do not understand these things, then it proves that you do not yet comprehend the truth. Why does God say what He says? Why does He speak in that tone? Why is He so earnest and sincere in every word He speaks? Why does He choose to use certain words? Do you know? If you cannot say for sure, it means you do not understand God's will or His intentions, you do not understand the context behind His words. If you do not comprehend this, then how can you gain the truth? Gaining the truth

means understanding God's meaning through every word that He says; it means you are able to put God's words into practice once you have understood them, so that God's words can be lived out by you and become your reality. Only when you have a thorough understanding of the word of God can you really grasp the truth.

Excerpted from "Only Those With the Reality of the Truth Can Lead" in Records of Christ's Talks

In summary, taking Peter's path in one's faith means to walk the path of pursuing the truth, which is also the path of truly getting to know oneself and changing one's disposition. Only by walking the path of Peter will one be on the path of being perfected by God. One must be clear on how, exactly, to walk Peter's path, as well as how to put it into practice. First, one must put aside one's own intentions, improper pursuits, and even family and all things of one's own flesh. One must be wholeheartedly devoted; that is, one must completely devote oneself to the word of God, focus on eating and drinking of God's words, concentrate on the search for the truth and the search for God's intentions in His words, and try to grasp God's will in everything. This is the most fundamental and vital method of practice. This was what Peter did after seeing Jesus, and it is only by practicing in this way that one can achieve the best results. Wholehearted devotion to the words of God primarily involves seeking the truth, seeking God's intentions within His words, focusing on grasping the will of God, and understanding and obtaining more truth from God's words. When reading His words, Peter was not focused on understanding doctrines, much less was he focused on obtaining theological knowledge; instead, he concentrated on comprehending the truth and grasping God's will, as well as achieving an understanding of His disposition and His loveliness. Peter also attempted to understand the various corrupt states of man from God's words, as well as man's corrupt nature and actual shortcoming, thus meeting all aspects of God's requirements of man in order to satisfy Him. Peter had so many correct practices that abided by the words of God; this was most in line with God's will, and it was the best way a person could cooperate while experiencing God's work. When experiencing the hundreds of trials from God, Peter examined himself strictly against every word of God's judgment of man, every word of God's revelation of man, and every word of His demands of man, and strived to fathom the meaning of those words. He tried in earnest to ponder and memorize every word that Jesus said to him, and achieved very good results. Through this manner of practicing, he was able to achieve an understanding of himself from

God's words, and he not only came to understand the various corrupt states of man, but also came to understand man's essence, nature, and various shortcomings. This is what it means to truly understand oneself. From God's words, Peter not only achieved a true understanding of himself, but from the things expressed in God's words—God's righteous disposition, what He has and is, God's will for His work, His demands of mankind—from these words he came to know God completely. He came to know God's disposition, and His essence; he came to know and understand what God has and is, as well as God's loveliness and God's demands for man. Although God did not speak back then as much as He does today, results in these aspects were nevertheless achieved in Peter. This was a rare and precious thing. Peter went through hundreds of trials, but did not suffer in vain. He not only came to understand himself from the words and the work of God, but he also came to know God. In addition, he particularly focused on God's requirements of mankind within His words. In whichever aspects man should satisfy God to be in line with God's will, Peter was able to put forth great effort in these aspects and achieve full clarity; this was extremely beneficial with regard to his own entry. No matter what God spoke of, as long as those words could become his life and they belonged to the truth, Peter was able to carve them into his heart to ponder and appreciate them frequently. After hearing the words of Jesus, he was able to take them to heart, which shows that he was especially focused on God's words, and he truly achieved results in the end. That is, he was able to freely put the words of God into practice, accurately practice the truth and be in line with God's will, act entirely in accordance with God's intention, and give up his own personal opinions and imaginations. In this way, Peter entered into the reality of God's words.

Excerpted from "How to Walk the Path of Peter" in Records of Christ's Talks

Footnotes:

a. The original text does not contain the phrase "of the parable."

5. How can one establish a normal relationship with God?

Relevant Words of God:

The way that people believe in God, love God, and satisfy God is by touching the Spirit of God with their heart and thereby obtaining His satisfaction, and by using their heart to engage with God's words and thus being moved by the Spirit of God. If you wish to achieve a normal spiritual life and establish a normal relationship with God, then you must first give your heart to Him. Only after you have quieted your heart before Him and poured your whole heart into Him will you gradually be able to develop a normal spiritual life. If in people's belief in God, they do not give their heart to Him and if their heart is not in Him and they do not treat His burden as their own, then everything they do is an act of cheating God, an act typical of religious people, and cannot receive God's praise. God cannot gain anything from this kind of person; this kind of person can only serve as a foil to God's work, like a decoration in the house of God, something superfluous and useless. God does not make use of this kind of person. In such a person, not only is there no opportunity for the work of the Holy Spirit, there is not even any value in their being perfected. This type of person is, in truth, a walking corpse. Such people have nothing that can be used by the Holy Spirit, but on the contrary, all of them have been appropriated and deeply corrupted by Satan. God will weed these people out. Currently, in making use of people the Holy Spirit not only employs those parts of them that are desirable in order to get things done, He also perfects and changes their undesirable parts. If your heart can be poured into God and remain quiet before Him, then you will have the opportunity and the qualifications to be used by the Holy Spirit, to receive the enlightenment and illumination of the Holy Spirit, and even more, you will have the opportunity for the Holy Spirit to make good your shortcomings. When you give your heart to God, on the positive side, you can attain deeper entry and attain a higher plane of insight; on the negative side, you will have more understanding of your own faults and shortcomings, you will be more eager to seek to satisfy God's will, and you will not be passive, but will actively enter in. Thus, you will become a correct person. Assuming your heart is able to remain quiet before God, the key to whether or not you receive praise from the Holy Spirit, and whether or not you please God, is whether you can actively enter in. When the Holy Spirit enlightens a person and makes use of them, it never makes them negative but always makes them actively progress. Even though this person has weaknesses, they can avoid basing the way they live their lives on those weaknesses. They can avoid delaying growth in their life, and continue to seek to satisfy God's will. This is a standard. If you can attain this, it is sufficient proof that you have obtained the presence of the Holy Spirit.

If a person is always negative, and if, even after receiving enlightenment and coming to know themselves, they remain negative and passive and unable to stand up and act in concert with God, then this type of person just receives the grace of God, but the Holy Spirit is not with them. When a person is negative, this means that their heart has not turned to God and their spirit has not been moved by God's Spirit. This should be understood by all.

Excerpted from "It Is Very Important to Establish a Normal Relationship With God" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

In believing in God, you must at least resolve the issue of having a normal relationship with God. If you do not have a normal relationship with God, then the meaning of your belief in God is lost. The establishment of a normal relationship with God is entirely achievable with a heart that is quiet in God's presence. Having a normal relationship with God means being able not to doubt and not to deny any of His work and being able to submit to His work. It means having correct intentions in God's presence, not making plans for yourself, and considering the interests of God's family first in all things; it means accepting God's scrutiny and obeying God's arrangements. You must be able to quiet your heart in God's presence in all that you do. Even if you do not understand God's will, you must still fulfill your duties and responsibilities to the best of your ability. Once God's will has been revealed to you, act on it, and it will not be too late. When your relationship with God has become normal, then you will also have normal relationships with people. Everything is built on the foundation of God's words. Eat and drink the words of God, then put God's requirements into practice, correct your views, and avoid doing anything to resist God or disturb the church. Do nothing that does not benefit the lives of your brothers and sisters, say nothing that is unhelpful to others, and do nothing shameful. Be just and honorable in everything you do and ensure that your every action is presentable before God. Although the flesh may sometimes be weak, you must be able to put the interests of God's family first, without greed for personal profit, and you must be able to act righteously. If you can practice in this way, then your relationship with God will be normal.

In everything you do, you must examine whether your intentions are correct. If you are able to act according to the requirements of God, then your relationship with God is normal. This is the minimum standard. Look into your intentions, and if you find that incorrect intentions have arisen, be able to turn your back on them and act according to the words of God;

thus will you become someone who is right before God, which in turn demonstrates that your relationship with God is normal, and that all that you do is for God's sake, not your own. In all you do and all you say, be able to set your heart right and be righteous in your actions, and do not be led by your emotions, nor act according to your own will. These are principles by which believers in God must conduct themselves. Small things can reveal a person's intentions and stature, and so, for someone to enter onto the path of being made perfect by God, they must first rectify their intentions and their relationship with God. Only when your relationship with God is normal can you be made perfect by Him; only then can God's dealing, pruning, discipline, and refinement achieve their intended effect in you. That is to say, if human beings are able to keep God in their hearts and do not pursue personal gain or give thought to their own prospects (in a fleshly sense), but instead bear the burden of entering life, do their best to pursue the truth, and submit to God's work—if you can do this, then the goals you pursue will be correct, and your relationship with God will become normal. Making right one's relationship with God can be called the first step of entry into one's spiritual journey. Although man's fate is in God's hands and is predestined by God, and cannot be changed by man, whether you can be made perfect by God or be gained by Him depends on whether your relationship with God is normal. There may be parts of you that are weak or disobedient—but as long as your views and your intentions are correct, and as long as your relationship with God is right and normal, then you are qualified to be made perfect by God. If you do not have the right relationship with God, and act for the sake of the flesh or your family, then regardless of how hard you work, it will be for nothing. If your relationship with God is normal, then everything else will fall into place. God looks at nothing else, but only at whether your views in your belief in God are correct: whom you believe in, for whose sake you believe, and why you believe. If you are able to see these things clearly and practice with your views well disposed, then you will make progress in your life, and you will also be guaranteed entry onto the right track. If your relationship with God is not normal, and the views of your belief in God are deviant, then all else is in vain, and no matter how hard you believe, you will receive nothing. Only after your relationship with God becomes normal will you win praise from Him when you forsake the flesh, pray, suffer, endure, submit, help your brothers and sisters, expend more of yourself for God, and so on. Whether what you do has value and significance depends on whether your intentions are right and your views correct. Nowadays, many people believe in God as if they were tilting their heads to look at a clock—

their perspectives are skewed, and they must be righted with a breakthrough. If this problem is resolved, everything will be fine; if not, everything will come to nothing. Some people behave well in My presence, but behind My back, all they do is resist Me. This is a manifestation of crookedness and deceitfulness, and this type of person is a servant of Satan; they are the typical embodiment of Satan, come to test God. You are only a correct person if you are able to submit to My work and My words. As long as you are able to eat and drink the words of God; as long as everything you do is presentable before God and you behave justly and honorably in all that you do; as long as you do not do shameful things, or things that would harm the lives of others; and as long as you live in the light and do not allow yourself to be exploited by Satan, then your relationship with God is in proper order.

Excerpted from "How Is Your Relationship With God?" in The Word Appears in the Flesh

In your daily life, you must understand which words you say and which things you do might cause abnormality in your relationship with God, and then rectify yourself to enter into the correct manner. At all times, examine your words, your actions, your each and every move, and all your thoughts and ideas. Gain a proper understanding of your real state and enter into the manner of the Holy Spirit's work. This is the only way to have a normal relationship with God. By assessing whether your relationship with God is normal, you will be able to correct your intentions, understand the nature essence of man, and truly understand yourself, and, in doing so, you will be able to enter into real experiences, forsake yourself in a real way, and submit with intention. As you experience these matters concerning whether or not your relationship with God is normal, you will find opportunities to be perfected by God and become able to grasp many states of the Holy Spirit's work. You will also be able to see through many of Satan's tricks and penetrate its conspiracies. Only this path leads to being perfected by God. You put right your relationship with God, that you may submit to His arrangements in their entirety, and that you may enter even more deeply into real experience and receive even more of the Holy Spirit's work. When you practice having a normal relationship with God, in most cases, success will be achieved by forsaking the flesh and through real cooperation with God. You should understand that "without a cooperative heart, it is difficult to receive the work of God; if the flesh does not suffer, there will be no blessings from God; if the spirit does not struggle, Satan will not be put to shame." If you practice these principles and understand them thoroughly, the views of your

belief in God will be put right. In your current practice, you must discard the mindset of “seeking bread to satisfy hunger”; you must discard the mindset of “everything is done by the Holy Spirit, and people are unable to intervene.” Everyone who says so thinks, “People can do whatever they want, and when the time comes, the Holy Spirit will do His work. People have no need to restrain the flesh or cooperate; all that matters is that they be moved by the Holy Spirit.” These opinions are all absurd. Under such circumstances, the Holy Spirit is unable to work. It is this kind of viewpoint that greatly hinders the work of the Holy Spirit. Often, the work of the Holy Spirit is attained through human cooperation. Those who do not cooperate and are not resolved, yet wish to achieve a change in their disposition and receive the work of the Holy Spirit and enlightenment and illumination from God, have extravagant thoughts indeed. This is called “indulging one’s self and pardoning Satan.” Such people do not have a normal relationship with God. You should find many revelations and manifestations of satanic disposition within yourself and find any practices you have that run contrary to what God now requires. Will you now be able to forsake Satan? You should attain a normal relationship with God, act in accordance with God’s intentions, and become a new person with a new life. Do not dwell on past transgressions; do not be unduly remorseful; be able to stand up and cooperate with God, and fulfill the duties that are yours to fulfill. In this way, your relationship with God will become normal.

Excerpted from “How Is Your Relationship With God?” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

If you want to have a normal relationship with God, then your heart must turn to God. With this as a foundation, you will also have a normal relationship with other people. If you do not have a normal relationship with God, then no matter what you do to maintain your relationships with other people, no matter how hard you work or how much energy you exert, it will all just pertain to a human philosophy for living. You are maintaining your position among people through a human perspective and a human philosophy so that people will praise you, but you are not following the word of God to establish normal relationships with people. If you do not focus on your relationships with people but maintain a normal relationship with God, if you are willing to give your heart to God and learn to obey Him, then naturally your relationships with all people will become normal. This way, these relationships are not established in the flesh, but on the foundation of God’s love. There are almost no fleshly interactions, but in the spirit there

is fellowship, mutual love, mutual comfort, and provision for one another. This is all done on the foundation of a heart that satisfies God. These relationships are not maintained by relying on a human philosophy for living, but are formed very naturally through carrying a burden for God. It does not require man-made effort. You need only practice according to God's word principle. Are you willing to be considerate of the will of God? Are you willing to be a person who is "without reason" before God? Are you willing to completely give your heart to God and to disregard your position among people? Of all the people you have contact with, with whom do you have the best relationships? With whom do you have the worst relationships? Are your relationships with people normal? Do you treat all people equally? Are your relationships with others maintained according to your philosophy for living, or are they built on the foundation of God's love? When a person does not give their heart to God, then their spirit becomes obtuse, numb and unconscious. This kind of person will never understand God's words and will never have a normal relationship with God; this kind of person's disposition will never be changed. Changing one's disposition is the process of giving one's heart completely to God, and of receiving enlightenment and illumination from the words of God. God's work can allow a person to actively enter in, as well as enable them to purge their negative aspects after gaining knowledge about them. When you reach the point of giving your heart to God, then you will be able to perceive every subtle movement within your spirit, and you will know every enlightenment and illumination received from God. Hold onto this, and you will gradually enter into the path of being perfected by the Holy Spirit. The quieter your heart can be before God, the more sensitive and delicate your spirit will be and the more your spirit will be able to perceive how the Holy Spirit moves it, and then your relationship with God will become ever more normal. A normal relationship between people is established on the foundation of giving their hearts to God, and not through human effort. Without God in their hearts, interpersonal relationships between people are merely relationships of the flesh. They are not normal, but rather, are an abandonment to lust. They are relationships that God detests, that He loathes. If you say that your spirit has been moved, but you always want to have fellowship with people who you like, with whomever you think highly of, and if another person is seeking but you do not like them, even hold a bias against them and will not engage with them, this is more proof that you are subject to your emotions and you do not have a normal relationship with God at all. You are attempting to deceive God and cover up your own ugliness. Even if you can share

some understanding yet you carry wrong intentions, then everything you do is good only by human standards. God will not praise you—you are acting according to the flesh, not according to God's burden. If you are able to quiet your heart in front of God and have normal interactions with all those who love God, only then are you fit for God's use. This way, no matter how you associate with others, it will not be according to a philosophy for living, but it will be before God, living in a way that is considerate of His burden. How many people like this are there amongst you? Are your relationships with others really normal? On what foundation are they built? How many philosophies for living are there within you? Have they been cast off? If your heart cannot completely turn to God, then you are not of God—you come from Satan, and you will be returned to Satan in the end. You are not worthy of being one of God's people. All of this requires your careful consideration.

Excerpted from "It Is Very Important to Establish a Normal Relationship With God" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Read God's every utterance and put them into practice as soon as you understand them. Perhaps there were occasions when your flesh was weak, or you were rebellious, or you resisted; regardless of how you behaved in the past, it is of little consequence, and it cannot hinder your life from maturing today. So long as you can have a normal relationship with God today, there is hope. If there is change in you every time you read God's words, and others can tell your life has changed for the better, it shows that your relationship with God is now normal, that it has been put right. God does not treat people according to their transgressions. Once you have understood and become aware, as long as you can cease to rebel or resist, then God will still have mercy on you. When you have the understanding and the resolve to pursue being perfected by God, then your state in God's presence will become normal. No matter what you are doing, consider the following when you are doing it: What will God think if I do this? Will it benefit my brothers and sisters? Will it be beneficial to the work in God's house? Whether in prayer, fellowship, speech, work, or in contact with others, examine your intentions, and check if your relationship with God is normal. If you cannot discern your own intentions and thoughts, this means you lack discrimination, which proves that you understand too little of the truth. If you are able to understand clearly everything God does, and can perceive things through the lens of His words, standing on His side, then your views will have become correct. Therefore,

establishing a good relationship with God is of the utmost importance to anyone who believes in God; everyone should regard it as a task of paramount importance and the biggest event in their life. Everything you do is measured by whether you have a normal relationship with God. If your relationship with God is normal and your intentions are correct, then act. To maintain a normal relationship with God, you must not be afraid of suffering losses to your personal interests; you cannot allow Satan to prevail, you cannot allow Satan to gain a purchase on you, and you cannot allow Satan to make you a laughing stock. Having such intentions is a sign that your relationship with God is normal—not for the sake of the flesh, but rather for peace of spirit, for gaining the work of the Holy Spirit, and for satisfying the will of God. To enter the right state, you must establish a good relationship with God and put right the views of your belief in God. This is so that God may gain you, and so that He may manifest the fruits of His words in you and enlighten and illuminate you even further. In this way, you will have entered into the right manner. Continue eating and drinking God’s words of today, enter into the Holy Spirit’s current manner of working, act according to God’s demands of today, do not observe old-fashioned methods of practice, do not cling to old ways of doing things, and enter into today’s manner of working as soon as possible. Thus, your relationship with God will become completely normal and you will have embarked on the right track of belief in God.

Excerpted from “How Is Your Relationship With God?” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

IV. Truths of Knowing Oneself

1. As God does the work of judgment in the last days, why does He require man to know himself?

Relevant Words of God:

After several thousand years of corruption, man is numb and dull-witted; he has become a demon that opposes God, to the extent that man’s rebelliousness toward God has been documented in the books of history, and even man himself is incapable of giving a full account of his rebellious behavior—for man has been profoundly corrupted by Satan, and has been led astray by Satan such that he knows not where to turn. Even today, man still betrays God: When

man sees God, he betrays Him, and when he cannot see God, so too does he betray Him. There are even those who, having witnessed God's curses and God's wrath, still betray Him. And so I say that man's sense has lost its original function, and that man's conscience, too, has lost its original function. The man that I look upon is a beast in human attire, he is a venomous snake, and no matter how pitiable he tries to appear before My eyes, I will never be merciful toward him, for man has no grasp of the difference between black and white, of the difference between truth and non-truth. Man's sense is so benumbed, yet still he wishes to gain blessings; his humanity is so ignoble yet still he wishes to possess the sovereignty of a king. Who could he be the king of, with sense such as that? How could he with such a humanity sit atop a throne? Man truly has no shame! He is a conceited wretch! For those of you who wish to gain blessings, I suggest you first find a mirror and look at your own ugly reflection—do you have what it takes to be a king? Do you have the face of one who could gain blessings? There has not been the slightest change in your disposition and you have not put any of the truth into practice, yet still you wish for a wonderful tomorrow. You are deluding yourself! Born into such a filthy land, man has been severely blighted by society, he has been influenced by feudal ethics, and he has been taught at “institutes of higher learning.” The backward thinking, corrupt morality, mean view on life, despicable philosophy for living, utterly worthless existence, and depraved lifestyle and customs—all of these things have severely intruded upon man's heart, and severely undermined and attacked his conscience. As a result, man is ever more distant from God, and ever more opposed to Him. Man's disposition becomes more vicious by the day, and there is not a single person who will willingly give up anything for God, not a single person who will willingly obey God, nor, moreover, a single person who will willingly seek the appearance of God. Instead, under the domain of Satan, man does nothing but pursue pleasure, giving himself over to the corruption of the flesh in the land of mud. Even when they hear the truth, those who live in darkness give no thought to putting it into practice, nor are they inclined to seek out God even if they have beheld His appearance. How could a mankind so depraved have any chance of salvation? How could a mankind so decadent live in the light?

Changing man's disposition starts with knowledge of his essence and through changes in his thinking, nature, and mental outlook—through fundamental changes. Only in this way will true changes be achieved in the disposition of man. Man's corrupt disposition stems from his being poisoned and trampled upon by Satan, from the egregious harm that Satan has inflicted

upon his thinking, morality, insight, and sense. It is precisely because the fundamental things of man have been corrupted by Satan, and are utterly unlike how God originally created them, that man opposes God and does not understand the truth. Thus, changes in man's disposition should begin with changes in his thinking, insight, and sense that will change his knowledge of God and his knowledge of the truth. Those who were born in the most deeply corrupted of all lands are even more ignorant of what God is, or what it means to believe in God. The more corrupted people are, the less they know the existence of God, and the poorer their sense and insight. The source of man's opposition and rebelliousness against God is his corruption by Satan. Because of Satan's corruption, man's conscience has grown numb; he is immoral, his thoughts are degenerate, and he has a backward mental outlook. Before he was corrupted by Satan, man naturally followed God and obeyed His words after hearing them. He was naturally of sound sense and conscience, and of normal humanity. After being corrupted by Satan, man's original sense, conscience, and humanity grew dull and were impaired by Satan. Thus, he has lost his obedience and love toward God. Man's sense has become aberrant, his disposition has become the same as that of an animal, and his rebelliousness toward God is ever more frequent and grievous. Yet man still neither knows nor recognizes this, and merely opposes and rebels blindly. Man's disposition is revealed in expressions of his sense, insight, and conscience; because his sense and insight are unsound, and his conscience has grown supremely dull, thus his disposition is rebellious against God. If man's sense and insight cannot change, then changes in his disposition are out of the question, as is conforming to God's will. If man's sense is unsound, then he cannot serve God and is unfit for use by God. "Normal sense" refers to obeying and being faithful to God, to yearning for God, to being absolute toward God, and to having a conscience toward God. It refers to being of one heart and mind toward God, and not deliberately opposing God. Having an aberrant sense is not like this. Since man was corrupted by Satan, he has come up with notions about God, and he has had no loyalty to God or yearning for Him, to say nothing of a conscience toward God. Man deliberately opposes God and passes judgments on Him, and, furthermore, hurls invective at Him behind His back. Man passes judgment on God behind His back, with clear knowledge that He is God; man has no intention of obeying God, and merely makes blind demands and requests of Him. Such people—people who have aberrant sense—are incapable of knowing their own despicable behavior or of regretting their rebelliousness. If people are capable of knowing themselves, then they have

regained a little of their sense; the more rebellious against God people who cannot yet know themselves are, the less are they sound of sense.

Excerpted from “To Have an Unchanged Disposition Is to Be in Enmity to God” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Before man was redeemed, many of Satan’s poisons had already been planted within him and, after thousands of years of being corrupted by Satan, he has within him an established nature that resists God. Therefore, when man has been redeemed, it is nothing more than a case of redemption in which man is bought at a high price, but the poisonous nature within him has not been eliminated. Man that is so defiled must undergo a change before becoming worthy to serve God. By means of this work of judgment and chastisement, man will fully come to know the filthy and corrupt essence within his own self, and he will be able to change completely and become clean. Only in this way can man become worthy to return before the throne of God. All the work done this day is so that man can be made clean and be changed; through judgment and chastisement by the word, as well as through refinement, man can purge away his corruption and be made pure. Rather than deeming this stage of work to be that of salvation, it would be more apt to say it is the work of purification. In truth, this stage is that of conquest as well as the second stage in the work of salvation. It is through judgment and chastisement by the word that man arrives at being gained by God, and it is through the use of the word to refine, judge, and disclose that all of the impurities, notions, motives, and individual aspirations within man’s heart are completely revealed. For all that man may have been redeemed and forgiven of his sins, it can only be considered as God not remembering the transgressions of man and not treating man in accordance with his transgressions. However, when man, who lives in a body of flesh, has not been set free from sin, he can only continue to sin, endlessly revealing his corrupt satanic disposition. This is the life that man leads, an endless cycle of sinning and being forgiven. The majority of mankind sin in the day only to confess in the evening. This way, even though the sin offering is forever effective for man, it will not be able to save man from sin. Only half the work of salvation has been completed, for man still has a corrupt disposition. For instance, when people realized that they were descended from Moab, they brought forth words of complaint, ceased to pursue life, and became utterly negative. Does this not show that humanity is still unable to fully submit under the dominion of God? Is this not precisely their

corrupt satanic disposition? When you were not being subjected to chastisement, your hands were raised higher than all others, even that of Jesus. And you cried out in a loud voice: “Be a beloved son of God! Be an intimate of God! We would rather die than bow down to Satan! Revolt against the old Satan! Revolt against the great red dragon! May the great red dragon fall abjectly from power! May God make us complete!” Your cries were louder than all others. But then came the time of chastisement and, once again, the corrupt disposition of humanity was revealed. Then, their cries ceased, and their resolution failed. This is the corruption of man; running deeper than sin, it is something planted by Satan and deeply rooted within man. It is not easy for man to become aware of his sins; he has no way of recognizing his own deeply rooted nature, and he must rely on judgment by the word in order to achieve this result. Only thus can man gradually be changed from this point onward.

Excerpted from “The Mystery of the Incarnation (4)” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The disposition of God runs through all of God’s utterances, but the main thread of His words is revealing the rebellion of all mankind and exposing things such as their disobedience, insubordination, unfairness, unrighteousness, and inability to truly love God, such that God’s words have reached the point where He says that every pore in people’s bodies contains opposition to God, that even their capillaries contain defiance to God. If people do not try to examine these things, they will always be incapable of knowing them, and will never be able to cast them aside. This is to say, the virus that is opposition to God will spread in them and ultimately, it will be as if their white blood cells have devoured their red blood cells, leaving their entire body devoid of red blood cells; in the end, they will die from leukemia. This is the real state of man, and no one can deny it. Having been born in the land in which the great red dragon lies coiled, there is at least one thing within each person that typifies and exemplifies the great red dragon’s venom. Thus, in this stage of work, the main thread throughout God’s words has been knowing oneself, denying oneself, forsaking oneself, and slaying oneself. It can be said that this is God’s primary work during the last days, and that this round of work is the most comprehensive and thorough of all—this shows that God is planning to bring the age to an end. No one expected this, but at the same time, it is something that they have anticipated in their feelings.

Excerpted from “Chapter 31” of Interpretations of the Mysteries of God’s Words to the Entire Universe in
The Word Appears in the Flesh

Every single thing that exists in our hearts is in opposition to God. This includes the things we think are good, and even those we already believe to be positive. We have listed these things as truths, as part of normal humanity, and as positive things; however, from God’s perspective, they are things that He loathes. The gulf between what we think and the truth spoken by God is immeasurable. Hence, we must know ourselves. From our ideas, viewpoints, and actions to the cultural education we have received, each thing is worth delving deep into and thoroughly dissecting. Some of these things come from social environments, some come from families, some come from school education, and some come from books. Some also come from our imaginations and notions. These sorts of things are the most frightening, for they bind and control our words and actions, dominate our minds, and guide our motives, intentions, and goals in what we do. If we do not unearth these things, we will never fully accept God’s words within us, and we will never accept God’s requirements without reservation and put them into practice. As long as you harbor your own ideas and viewpoints, and convictions of things that you believe to be correct, you will never fully or unreservedly accept God’s words, nor will you practice them in their original form; you will surely only put them into practice after first processing them in your mind. This will be how you do things, and it will also be the way in which you help others: You may still fellowship on God’s words, but you will always have your own impurities mixed in, and you will think that this is what it means to practice the truth, that you have understood the truth, and that you have it all. Is man’s state not pitiful? Is it not scary?

Excerpted from “Only by Recognizing Your Misguided Views Can You Know Yourself” in Records of Christ’s

Talks

No matter which aspect of the truth one pursues, whether it be aspiring to be honest, or training oneself to submit to God, or whether it be engaging amicably with one’s brothers and sisters, or living out normal humanity, one can embrace its practice each day of their life, with each truth touching on the issue of self-knowledge. Does aspiring to be honest not have something to do with knowing oneself? You will not aspire to be honest until you have come to know your own deceit and dishonesty. When you come to know you have failed to obey God,

you will then practice obedience to Him, or seek out what one must do to obey Him. If you do not know yourself, any talk of your aspiring to be honest or submitting to God rings hollow, for man's disposition is corrupt, and no aspect of the truth is easy to practice, and each aspect is practiced within man's corrupt disposition. In your practice of any aspect of the truth, your corrupt disposition will certainly rear its head, thwarting your aspiration to be honest, obstructing your submission to God, and inhibiting your patience and tolerance for your brothers and sisters. If you do not recognize it, dissect it, and unearth it, but rely on your imaginings to practice the truth, then your practice will not be a true one. Therefore, no matter which aspect of the truth one is practicing, or what one is doing, they must first know themselves.

Excerpted from "Only by Recognizing Your Misguided Views Can You Know Yourself" in Records of Christ's
Talks

There are some states within people that, if they do not understand them and do not feel that they are wrong, then, no matter how earnestly they pursue or how enthusiastic they are, they may fall one day. Only a minority of people can obtain the truth, after all. Understanding the truth is not a simple matter. It takes a long time to understand even a little of it, a long time to gain a little experiential knowledge, to attain something of a pure understanding or to gain a bit of light. If you do not resolve all the impurities within you, then that little bit of light can be drowned at any time or place. Man's main difficulty now is that every person has within them some imaginings, notions, desires and empty ideals that they are themselves unable to discover. These things constantly accompany people as adulterations inside them. This is indeed very dangerous, and people are liable to voice grievances at any moment. There are so many adulterations inside man. Although people may have good aspirations, wishing to pursue the truth and to believe earnestly in God, they are yet unable to achieve it. This kind of thing happens often in each person's experience: They encounter a small matter, and others think that they should be able easily to relinquish it. Why is it they cannot? Why do they who are relatively experienced most of the time, who look relatively strong to others, and who have a clear head fall when they encounter a small matter, and fall so quickly? Man is truly subject to the fickleness of fortune; how could he possibly predict it? Inside every person, there are some things they are willing to pursue and obtain, and everyone has their own preferences. More

often than not, people cannot perceive this themselves, or they believe these things are fine, that there is nothing wrong with them. Then, one day, something like this comes along and they stumble; they become negative and weak, and they cannot get back up. They may not know themselves what the problem is, feeling that they are justified and that it is God who has wronged them. If people do not understand themselves, they will never be able to know where their own difficulties lie, or in which areas they are liable to fail and fall down. They are pitiful. Therefore, people who do not understand themselves may fall down, fail, and ruin themselves at any moment.

Excerpted from “Only by Understanding Your Own State Can You Embark on the Right Track” in Records
of Christ’s Talks

Back then, Paul did not feel it was wrong to walk down that path; he fully believed that it was correct. He did not possess the truth, and he especially did not undergo a change in disposition. He believed too much in himself, and felt that there was not the slightest issue with going that way. He continued onward, full of confidence and with the utmost self-assurance. By the end, he never came to his senses; he still thought that to him to live was Christ. As such, Paul continued down that path to the very end, and by the time he was ultimately punished, it was all over for him. Paul’s path did not involve coming to know himself, much less seeking a change in disposition. He never analyzed his own nature, nor did he gain any knowledge of what he was; he simply knew that he was the chief culprit in the persecution of Jesus. He had not had the slightest understanding of his own nature, and after finishing his work, Paul actually felt that he was Christ and should be rewarded. The work that Paul did was merely service rendered for God. For Paul personally, though he received some revelations from the Holy Spirit, he had no truth or life at all. He was not saved by God; he was punished by God. Why is it said that Peter’s path is the path to perfection? It is because, in Peter’s practice, he placed particular emphasis on life, on seeking to know God, and on knowing himself. Through his experience of God’s work, he came to know himself, gained an understanding of man’s corrupt states, learned of his own shortcomings, and discovered the most valuable thing that people should pursue. He was able to sincerely love God, he learned how to repay God, he gained some truth, and he possessed the reality that God requires. From all the things that Peter said during his trials, it can be seen that he was indeed the one with the most understanding of God. Because he came

to understand so much truth from God's words, his path grew brighter and brighter, and more and more in alignment with God's will. If Peter had not possessed this truth, then the path he took could not have been so correct.

Excerpted from "How to Walk the Path of Peter" in Records of Christ's Talks

Is it good or bad when people discover just how serious their problems are? It is good. The more capable you are of discovering your own corruption, the more accurate this discovery, and the more you can know your own essence, then the more likely it is you will be saved and the closer you will come to salvation; the more incapable you are of discovering your problems, the more you think you are a good person, a pretty great person, then the further you are away from the path to salvation, and you are still in great danger. Anyone who spends all day parading themselves—flaunting their accomplishments, saying they are silver-tongued, reasonable, that they understand the truth, can practice the truth, and are capable of making sacrifices—is of especially small stature. What kind of person has greater hope of salvation, and is capable of walking the path of salvation? Those who truly know their corrupt disposition. The more profound their knowledge, the closer they come to salvation. Knowing your corrupt disposition, knowing that you are nothing, useless, that you are a living Satan—when you truly know your essence, this is no longer a serious problem. This is a good thing, not a bad thing. Is there anyone who becomes more negative the more they know themselves, thinking to themselves: "It's all over, the judgment and chastisement of God has befallen me, it is punishment and retribution, God doesn't want me and I have no hope of salvation"? Will these people have such illusions? In fact, the more people recognize how hopeless they are, the greater the hope for them; they should not be negative and they should not give up. Knowing yourself is a good thing—it is the path that must be taken to salvation. If you are utterly insensible of your own corrupt disposition and of your essence, which is multifarious in its opposition to God, and if you have not yet any plans to change, then you are in trouble; such people have already grown numb, they are dead. Can the dead be brought back to life? They are already dead—they cannot.

Excerpted from "Only When You Know Yourself Can You Pursue the Truth" in Records of Christ's Talks

2. What is true knowledge of oneself? What does it include?

Relevant Words of God:

To know yourself, you must know your own expressions of corruption, your own vital weaknesses, your disposition, and your nature essence. You must also know, down to the very last detail, those things that are revealed in your daily life—your motives, your perspectives, and your attitude about every single thing—whether you are at home or out, when you are in gatherings, when you are eating and drinking of the words of God, or in every single issue you encounter. Through these things you must come to know yourself. To know yourself on a deeper level, you must integrate God’s words; only by knowing yourself based on His words can you achieve results.

Excerpted from “The Importance of Pursuing the Truth and the Path of Pursuing It” in Records of Christ’s
Talks

The key to achieving a change in disposition is to know one’s own nature, and this must happen in accordance with revelations from God. Only in God’s word can one know one’s own hideous nature, recognize in one’s own nature Satan’s various poisons, realize that one is foolish and ignorant, and recognize the weak and negative elements in one’s nature. After these are fully known, and you are truly able to hate yourself and forsake the flesh, consistently carry out God’s word, and have the will to absolutely submit to the Holy Spirit and to the word of God, then you will have embarked on the path of Peter.

Excerpted from “To Know Oneself Is Primarily About Knowing Human Nature” in Records of Christ’s Talks

If people’s knowledge of themselves is too shallow, they will find it impossible to solve problems, and their life dispositions simply will not change. It is necessary to know oneself on a profound level, which means knowing one’s own nature: what elements are included in that nature, how these things originated, and where they came from. Moreover, are you actually able to hate these things? Have you seen your own ugly soul and your evil nature? If you are truly able to see the truth about yourself, then you will start to loathe yourself. When you loathe yourself and then practice God’s word, you will be able to forsake the flesh and have the strength to carry out truth without difficulty. Why do many people follow their fleshly preferences? Because they consider themselves to be pretty good, feeling that their actions are right and

justified, that they have no faults, and even that they are entirely in the right, they are therefore capable of acting with the assumption that justice is on their side. When one recognizes what one's true nature is—how ugly, how despicable, and how pitiful—then one is not overly proud of oneself, not so wildly arrogant, and not so pleased with oneself as before. Such a person feels, "I must be earnest and down to earth, and practice some of God's word. If not, then I will not measure up to the standard of being human, and will be ashamed to live in God's presence." One then truly sees oneself as paltry, as truly insignificant. At this time, it becomes easy for one to carry out truth, and one will appear to be somewhat like a human should be. Only when people truly loathe themselves are they able to forsake the flesh. If they do not loathe themselves, they will be unable to forsake the flesh. Truly hating oneself comprises a few things: First, knowing one's own nature; and second, seeing oneself as needy and pitiful, seeing oneself to be extremely small and insignificant, and seeing one's own pitiful and dirty soul. When one fully sees what one truly is, and this outcome is achieved, one then truly gains knowledge of oneself, and it can be said that one has come to know oneself fully. Only then can one truly hate oneself, going so far as to curse oneself, and truly feel that one has been corrupted profoundly by Satan such that one does not even resemble a human being. Then, one day, when the threat of death appears, such a person will think, "This is God's righteous punishment. God is indeed righteous; I really should die!" At this point, he will not lodge a complaint, much less blame God, simply feeling that he is so needy and pitiful, so filthy and corrupt that he should be wiped out by God, and a soul like his is not fit to live on earth. At this point, this person will not resist God, much less betray God.

Excerpted from "To Know Oneself Is Primarily About Knowing Human Nature" in Records of Christ's Talks

To know yourself is to know your every word and deed, your every movement and action; it is to know your mind and thoughts, your motives, and your notions and imaginings; it is even to know your philosophies for living that are of the world, and the various toxins of Satan within you, as well as the knowledge and education you acquired in school. All these things must be dissected. Though a person may have done a great number of good works since coming to faith in God, many matters may yet be opaque to them, and less still may they have come to an understanding of the truth—yet, because of their many good works, they feel they have already come to live in God's words, and have submitted to Him, and have quite satisfied His will. This

is because when no adverse circumstances arise, you do whatever you are told; you have no qualms about performing any duty, and you do not resist. When you are told to spread the gospel, it is a hardship you can bear, and you offer no complaint, and when you are told to run here and there, or to do manual labor, you do so. Because of these displays, you feel you are one who submits to God and a true pursuer of the truth. Yet were one to question you more deeply and ask, “Are you an honest person? Are you a person who genuinely submits to God? A person with a changed disposition?” then, thus questioned, thus held up against the truth for scrutiny, you—and, it may be said, anyone at all—would be found wanting, and neither is any person able truly to practice according to the truth. Therefore, when the root of all man’s acts and deeds, as well as the essence and nature of his actions, are held up against the truth, all are condemned. What is the reason for this? It is that man does not know himself; he always believes in God in his own way, performs his duty in his own way, and serves God in his own way. What is more, he feels he is full of faith and reason, and, in the end, he feels he has gained much. Without his knowing it, he comes to feel he is already acting in line with God’s will and has satisfied it completely, and that he has already met God’s requirements and is following His will. If this is how you feel, or if, in your several years of belief in God, you feel you have reaped some gains, then all the more should you come back before God to reflect on yourself. You should look at the path you have walked over your years of faith and see whether all your actions and behavior before God have been entirely after His heart, what you do that resists God, what you do that is able to satisfy God, and whether what you do meets God’s requirements and can be entirely in accord with His will—you should be clear on all these things.

Excerpted from “Only by Recognizing Your Misguided Views Can You Know Yourself” in Records of Christ’s
Talks

To know ourselves is to know what things there are in our thoughts and viewpoints that oppose God, that are not at all compatible with the truth, and that do not contain the truth. Man’s arrogance, self-righteousness, lies, and deceit, for instance, are aspects within a corrupt disposition that are easy for people to know. You can come to some knowledge of them simply by fellowshiping the truth a few times, or by fellowshiping often, or by having your state pointed out by your brothers and sisters. In addition, everyone possesses arrogance and deceitfulness, though to varying degrees. However, people’s thoughts and viewpoints are not easy to know;

they are not as easy as knowing people's dispositions. These are deep-rooted things. Therefore, when you have achieved a little change in your behavior and outward conduct, there are still many aspects of your thinking, notions, viewpoints, and the education of traditional culture you have received which are against God and which you have not yet unearthed. These are the deep-seated things that lead to our enmity toward God. Therefore, when God does something that does not conform to your notions, or something that differs from what you imagine God to do, you will resist and oppose it. You will not understand why God has acted so, and, though you know there is truth in everything God does and you may wish to submit, you will find yourself unable to do so. Why can you not submit? Why such resistance and opposition? The reason is that there are some things within man's thoughts and views that are hostile to God, and that are hostile to the principles by which He acts and to His essence. These thoughts and views are difficult for man to know.

Excerpted from "Only by Recognizing Your Misguided Views Can You Know Yourself" in Records of Christ's Talks

3. What can true knowledge of oneself achieve?

Relevant Words of God:

Nowadays, most people have a very superficial understanding of themselves. They have not come to clearly know the things that are part of their nature at all. They only have knowledge of a few of their corrupt states, the things they are likely to do, or a few of their shortcomings, and this makes them believe that they know themselves. If, furthermore, they abide by a few rules, ensure that they do not make mistakes in certain areas, and manage to avoid committing certain transgressions, they then consider themselves to possess reality in their belief in God and assume that they will be saved. This is completely human imagination. If you abide by those things, will you really become able to refrain from committing any transgressions? Will you have attained a true change in disposition? Will you really be living out the likeness of a human being? Can you genuinely satisfy God that way? Absolutely not, this is for sure. Belief in God works only when one has high standards and has attained the truth and some transformation in one's life disposition. So, if people's knowledge of themselves is too shallow, they will find it

impossible to solve problems, and their life dispositions simply will not change. It is necessary to know oneself on a profound level, which means knowing one's own nature: what elements are included in that nature, how these things originated, and where they came from. Moreover, are you actually able to hate these things? Have you seen your own ugly soul and your evil nature? If you are truly able to see the truth about yourself, then you will start to loathe yourself. When you loathe yourself and then practice God's word, you will be able to forsake the flesh and have the strength to carry out truth without difficulty. Why do many people follow their fleshly preferences? Because they consider themselves to be pretty good, feeling that their actions are right and justified, that they have no faults, and even that they are entirely in the right, they are therefore capable of acting with the assumption that justice is on their side. When one recognizes what one's true nature is—how ugly, how despicable, and how pitiful—then one is not overly proud of oneself, not so wildly arrogant, and not so pleased with oneself as before. Such a person feels, "I must be earnest and down to earth, and practice some of God's word. If not, then I will not measure up to the standard of being human, and will be ashamed to live in God's presence." One then truly sees oneself as paltry, as truly insignificant. At this time, it becomes easy for one to carry out truth, and one will appear to be somewhat like a human should be. Only when people truly loathe themselves are they able to forsake the flesh. If they do not loathe themselves, they will be unable to forsake the flesh. Truly hating oneself comprises a few things: First, knowing one's own nature; and second, seeing oneself as needy and pitiful, seeing oneself to be extremely small and insignificant, and seeing one's own pitiful and dirty soul. When one fully sees what one truly is, and this outcome is achieved, one then truly gains knowledge of oneself, and it can be said that one has come to know oneself fully. Only then can one truly hate oneself, going so far as to curse oneself, and truly feel that one has been corrupted profoundly by Satan such that one does not even resemble a human being. Then, one day, when the threat of death appears, such a person will think, "This is God's righteous punishment. God is indeed righteous; I really should die!" At this point, he will not lodge a complaint, much less blame God, simply feeling that he is so needy and pitiful, so filthy and corrupt that he should be wiped out by God, and a soul like his is not fit to live on earth. At this point, this person will not resist God, much less betray God. If one does not know oneself, and still considers oneself to be pretty good, then when death comes knocking, this person will think, "I have done so well in my faith. How hard I have sought! I have given so much, I have suffered so much, yet

ultimately, God is now asking me to die. I don't know where God's righteousness is. Why is He asking me to die? If even a person like me has to die, then who will be saved? Won't the human race come to an end?" First of all, this person has notions about God. Secondly, this person is complaining, and not showing any submission whatsoever. This is just like Paul: When he was about to die, he did not know himself, and by the time God's punishment was nigh, it was too late to repent.

Excerpted from "To Know Oneself Is Primarily About Knowing Human Nature" in Records of Christ's Talks

What Peter sought was to come to know himself and see what had been revealed in him through the refinement of God's words and within the various trials that God provided for him. When he truly came to understand himself, Peter realized just how deeply corrupt humans are, how worthless and unworthy of serving God they are, and that they do not deserve to live before Him. Peter then fell prostrate before God. Ultimately, he thought, "Knowing God is the most precious thing! If I died before knowing Him, it would be such a pity; I feel that knowing God is the most important, most meaningful thing there is. If man does not know God, then he does not deserve to live and has no life." By the time Peter's experience had reached this point, he had grown fairly knowledgeable with regard to his own nature and gained a relatively good understanding of it. Although he perhaps would not have been able to thoroughly explain it in terms that would accord with what people nowadays imagine, Peter had indeed reached this state. Therefore, the path of pursuing life and attaining perfection by God involves gaining a deeper understanding of one's own nature from within God's utterances, as well as comprehending the aspects of one's nature and accurately describing it in words. To thoroughly understand one's old life—the life of that old satanic nature—means to have achieved the results that God requires. If your knowledge has not yet reached this point, but you claim to know yourself and say that you have gained life, then are you not simply bragging? You do not know yourself, nor do you know what you are in front of God, whether you have truly met the standards of being human, or how many satanic elements you still have within you. You are still unclear about who you belong to, and you do not even have any self-knowledge—so how can you possess reason in front of God? When Peter was pursuing life, he focused on understanding himself and transforming his disposition over the course of his trials, and he strove to know God, and in the end, he thought, "People must seek an understanding of God in life; knowing

Him is the most critical thing. If I do not know God, then I cannot rest in peace when I die. Once I know Him, if God then has me die, then I will still feel most gratified to do so; I will not complain in the slightest, and my entire life will have been fulfilled.” Peter was not able to gain this level of understanding or reach this point immediately after he had begun to believe in God; he first had to undergo a great many trials. His experience had to reach a certain milestone, and he had to completely understand himself, before he could sense the value of knowing God. Therefore, the path Peter took was one of gaining life and of being perfected; this was the aspect upon which his specific practice was primarily focused.

Excerpted from “How to Walk the Path of Peter” in Records of Christ’s Talks

Are corrupt dispositions easy to resolve? This involves one’s nature essence. People have this essence, this root, and it must be dug out bit by bit. It must be dug out from every state, from the intents behind every word you speak. It must be dissected and understood from the words you speak. When such awareness grows ever more clear and your spirit ever more astute, you can then achieve change. Resolving corrupt dispositions requires care and diligence. You must pay great attention and examine your intentions and states little by little. When you constantly examine these things, the day will arrive when you suddenly come to a realization about the way you usually speak: “This is evil, and is not an expression of normal humanity. It is at odds with the truth and I have to change how I speak.” From the day you possess this awareness, you will ever more clearly feel the grave severity of this evil disposition. So, what should you do next? Ceaselessly examine the intentions that exist in that same way you speak, and through the process of your incessant unearthing, you will be ever more able to truly and accurately determine that you have this sort of essence and disposition. When the day comes that you can genuinely admit to yourself that you do have an evil disposition, you will finally be able to loathe and detest it. When someone goes from believing that they are a good person, that they act uprightly and justly, that they are endowed with a sense of justice, that they are honorable and guileless, to recognizing their nature essence as being arrogant, hardened, deceitful, wicked, and with no love for the truth, only then will they be able to accurately know their place, and to know exactly what they are. Merely acknowledging or blithely recognizing that they have such manifestations and states, they are incapable of true hatred; true hatred is

only attainable once they have recognized in their actions that they have these dispositions and essences....

Only when people are able to recognize the various states produced by various dispositions will there begin to be a change in their dispositions. If people do not recognize these states, if they cannot assimilate them and apply them to themselves, can there be a change in their dispositions? (No.) Change in disposition starts from recognizing the various states produced by various dispositions. If one has not begun to recognize this, if one has not entered this aspect of reality, then a change in one's disposition is out of the question.

Excerpted from "Only When You Know Yourself Can You Pursue the Truth" in Records of Christ's Talks

So, as I judge you thus today, what degree of understanding will you have in the end? You will say that although your status is not high, you have nonetheless enjoyed the elevation of God. Because you are of lowly birth you do not have status, but you gain status because God elevates you—this is something He bestowed upon you. Today you are able to personally receive God's training, His chastisement, and His judgment. This, even more so, is His elevation. You are able to personally receive His purification and burning. This is God's great love. Through the ages there has not been a single person who has received His purification and burning, and not a single person has been able to be perfected by His words. God is now speaking with you face to face, purifying you, revealing your inner rebelliousness—this truly is His elevation. What abilities do people have? Whether they are the sons of David or the descendants of Moab, in sum, people are created beings who have nothing worthy of boasting about. Since you are God's creatures, you must perform the duty of a creature. There are no other requirements of you. This is how you should pray: "Oh God! Whether I have status or not, I now understand myself. If my status is high it is because of Your elevation, and if it is low it is because of Your ordination. Everything is in Your hands. I have neither any choices, nor any complaints. You ordained that I would be born in this country and among this people, and all that I should do is to be completely obedient under Your dominion because everything is within what You have ordained. I do not give thought to status; after all, I am but a creature. If You place me in the bottomless pit, in the lake of fire and brimstone, I am nothing but a creature. If You use me, I am a creature. If You perfect me, I am yet a creature. If You do not perfect me, I will still love You because I am no more than a creature. I am nothing more than a minuscule creature created

by the Lord of creation, just one among all created humans. It was You who created me, and now You have once again placed me in Your hands to do with me as You will. I am willing to be Your tool and Your foil because everything is what You have ordained. No one can change it. All things and all events are in Your hands.” When the time comes that you will no longer give thought to status, then you will break free from it. Only then will you be able to confidently and boldly seek, and only then can your heart become free of any constraints. Once people have been extricated from these things, then they will have no more concerns.

Excerpted from “Why Are You Unwilling to Be a Foil?” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

4. How can one achieve true self-knowledge?

Relevant Words of God:

To allow people to know themselves, God uses many different methods. He allows people to gradually come to know themselves through experience. Whether He uses trials, judgment or chastisement, in words or in facts, God allows people to constantly experience, to experience the judgment, chastisement and discipline of God’s words, and to experience the enlightenment and illumination of God’s words. At the same time, He allows people to recognize their own corruption, rebelliousness, and nature. So what is God’s ultimate goal in doing this? It is to allow every person experiencing God’s work to know what man is. What does “what man is” include? It includes allowing people to recognize their own identity, position, duty, and responsibility. It is to let you know who man is and who you are yourself. This is the ultimate goal of God’s allowing people to know themselves.

Excerpted from “God Himself, the Unique III” in Records of Christ’s Talks

The key to achieving a change in disposition is to know one’s own nature, and this must happen in accordance with revelations from God. Only in God’s word can one know one’s own hideous nature, recognize in one’s own nature Satan’s various poisons, realize that one is foolish and ignorant, and recognize the weak and negative elements in one’s nature. After these are fully known, and you are truly able to hate yourself and forsake the flesh, consistently carry out God’s word, and have the will to absolutely submit to the Holy Spirit and to the word of God,

then you will have embarked on the path of Peter. Without the grace of God, and without enlightenment and guidance from the Holy Spirit, it would be difficult to walk this path, because people do not possess truth and are unable to betray themselves. Walking Peter's path of perfection primarily rests on being resolved, having faith, and relying on God. Furthermore, one must submit to the work of the Holy Spirit; in all things, one cannot do without God's words. These are the key aspects, none of which can be violated. Getting to know oneself through experience is very difficult; without the work of the Holy Spirit, it is very hard to enter it.

Excerpted from "To Know Oneself Is Primarily About Knowing Human Nature" in Records of Christ's Talks

To know yourself, you must know your own expressions of corruption, your own vital weaknesses, your disposition, and your nature essence. You must also know, down to the very last detail, those things that are revealed in your daily life—your motives, your perspectives, and your attitude about every single thing—whether you are at home or out, when you are in gatherings, when you are eating and drinking of the words of God, or in every single issue you encounter. Through these things you must come to know yourself. To know yourself on a deeper level, you must integrate God's words; only by knowing yourself based on His words can you achieve results. When receiving the judgment of God's words, we must not fear suffering, nor should we be afraid of pain, and much less should we fear that God's words will pierce our hearts. We should read more of His utterances about how He judges and chastises us and exposes our corrupt essences. We must read them and hold ourselves up to them more. Do not compare others to them—we must compare ourselves against them. We are not lacking in any single one of these things; we can all square with them. If you do not believe it, go experience it yourself. After reading God's words, some people are incapable of applying them to themselves; they think that parts of these words are not about them, but are instead about other people. For example, when God exposes people as sluts and whores, some sisters feel that because they have been unerringly faithful to their husbands, such words must not be in reference to them; some sisters feel that since they are unmarried and have never had sex, such words must not be about them, either. Some brothers feel that these words are only aimed at women, and have nothing to do with them; some people believe that such words of God are too unpleasant-sounding, and refuse to accept them. There are even people who say that in some instances, God's words are wrong. Is this the right attitude to have toward God's words? People are incapable of reflecting

upon themselves based on God's words. Here, "sluts" and "whores" refer to people's corruption of promiscuity. Whether man or woman, married or not married, everyone is possessed of the corruption of promiscuity—so how can it have nothing to do with you? God's words expose people's corrupt dispositions; whether male or female, one's level of corruption is the same. Is this not fact? Prior to doing anything else, we have to realize that we must accept every one of the words spoken by God, whether these utterances are pleasant-sounding or not and whether they give us a bitter feeling or a sweet one. Such is the attitude we should have toward God's words. What sort of attitude is this? Is it a devout attitude, a patient attitude, or an attitude of embracing suffering? I tell you that it is not any of these. In our faith, we must firmly maintain that God's words are the truth. Since they are indeed the truth, we should accept them rationally. Whether or not we are able to recognize or admit it, our first attitude toward God's words should be one of absolute acceptance. Every single line of God's words pertains to a specific state. That is, none of the lines of His utterances are about external appearances, much less about external rules or a simple form of behavior in people. They are not like that. If you see every line uttered by God as being about a simple kind of human behavior or external appearance, then you have no spiritual understanding and you do not understand what the truth is. God's words are profound. How are they profound? Everything that God says, everything that He reveals, is about people's corrupt dispositions, and essential and deep-rooted things within their lives. They are essential things, not external appearances, and particularly not external behaviors.

Excerpted from "The Importance of Pursuing the Truth and the Path of Pursuing It" in Records of Christ's Talks

When reading God's words, Peter was not focused on understanding doctrines, much less was he focused on obtaining theological knowledge; instead, he concentrated on comprehending the truth and grasping God's will, as well as achieving an understanding of His disposition and His loveliness. Peter also attempted to understand the various corrupt states of man from God's words, as well as man's corrupt nature and actual shortcoming, thus meeting all aspects of God's requirements of man in order to satisfy Him. Peter had so many correct practices that abided by the words of God; this was most in line with God's will, and it was the best way a person could cooperate while experiencing God's work. When experiencing the hundreds of trials from God, Peter examined himself strictly against every word of God's

judgment of man, every word of God's revelation of man, and every word of His demands of man, and strived to fathom the meaning of those words. He tried in earnest to ponder and memorize every word that Jesus said to him, and achieved very good results. Through this manner of practicing, he was able to achieve an understanding of himself from God's words, and he not only came to understand the various corrupt states of man, but also came to understand man's essence, nature, and various shortcomings. This is what it means to truly understand oneself.

Excerpted from "How to Walk the Path of Peter" in Records of Christ's Talks

If people are to understand themselves, they must understand their true states. The most important aspect of understanding one's own state is to have a grasp on one's own thoughts and ideas. In every time period, people's thoughts have been controlled by one major thing. If you can gain control over your thoughts, you can gain control over the things that are behind them. People cannot control their thoughts and ideas, but they do need to know where these thoughts and ideas come from, what the motives behind them are, how these thoughts and ideas are produced, what controls them, and what their nature is. After your disposition has transformed, your thoughts and ideas, the desires your heart seeks after, and your viewpoints about pursuit—which have been produced from the parts of you that have transformed—will be different. Those thoughts and ideas that originate from the parts of you that have not changed, the things that you do not understand clearly, and the things which you have not replaced with the experiences of truth are filthy, dirty, and ugly. People nowadays, who have experienced God's work for several years, have some sense and awareness of these matters. Those who have experienced God's work for a short period of time do not yet understand these matters; they are still unclear. They do not know where their Achilles' heel is or in what areas it is easy that they will fall. You do not currently know what kind of a person you are, and though other people can see to some extent what kind of a person you are, you cannot sense it. You cannot clearly distinguish your ordinary thoughts or intents, and you do not have a clear understanding of what the essence of these matters is. The deeper you understand an aspect, the more you will transform in that aspect; as such, the things you do will be in accordance with the truth, you will be able to meet God's requirements, and you will be closer to the will of God. Only by seeking in this way can you obtain results.

How do you understand human nature? Understanding your nature actually means dissecting the depths of your soul; it involves what is in your life. It is the logic of Satan and the viewpoints of Satan by which you have been living; that is, it is the life of Satan that you have been living by. Only by unearthing the deep-down parts of your soul can you understand your nature. How can these things be unearthed? They cannot be unearthed or dissected through a mere one or two events; many times, after you are finished doing something, you still have not come to an understanding. It could take three or five years before you are able to gain even a tiny bit of realization and understanding. In many situations, you must self-reflect and come to know yourself, and only when you practice digging deep will you see results. As your understanding of the truth grows more and more profound, you will gradually come to know your own nature essence through self-reflection and self-knowledge. In order to know your nature, you must accomplish a few things. First, you must have a clear understanding of what you like. This does not refer to what you like to eat or wear; rather, it means the kinds of things you enjoy, the things you envy, the things you worship, the things you seek, and the things you pay attention to in your heart, the types of people you enjoy coming into contact with, the type of things you like to do, and the types of people you idolize in your heart. For example, most people like people of great standing, people who are elegant in their speech and deportment, or like those who speak with eloquent flattery or those who put on an act. The aforementioned is about what people they like to interact with. As for the things people enjoy, these include being willing to do certain things that are easy to do, enjoying doing things that others think are good and that would cause people to sing praises and give compliments. In people’s natures, there is a common characteristic of the things they like. That is, they like people, events, and things that others are envious of due to outward appearances, they like people, events, and things that look beautiful and luxurious, and they like people, events and things that make others worship them due to appearances. These things that people are fond of are great, dazzling, gorgeous, and grand. People all worship these things. It can be seen that people do not possess any of the truth, nor do they have the likeness of genuine human beings. There is not the slightest degree of significance in worshipping these things, yet people still like them. ... what you like, what you

focus on, what you worship, what you envy, and what you think about in your heart every day are all representative of your nature. It is enough to prove that your nature is fond of unrighteousness, and in serious situations, your nature is evil and incurable. You should analyze your nature in this way; that is, examine what you are fond of and what you forsake in your life. You might be good to someone for a time, but this does not prove that you are fond of them. What you are truly fond of is precisely what is in your nature; even if your bones were broken, you would still enjoy it and could never forsake it. This is not easy to change. Take finding a partner, for example. If a woman really fell in love with someone, then no one would be able to stop her. Even if her legs were broken, she would still want to be with him; she would want to marry him even if it meant she had to die. How can this be? It is because no one can change what people have deep inside of themselves. Even if a person died, his soul would still like the same things; these are the things of human nature, and they represent a person's essence. The things people are fond of contain some unrighteousness. Some are obvious in their fondness for those things, while some are not; some have a strong liking for them, while others do not; some people have self-control, while others cannot control themselves. Some people are liable to sink into the dark things, which proves that they do not possess even a shred of life. If people are able to not be occupied and constrained by those things, it proves that their dispositions have been transformed a little and that they have a little stature. Some people understand some truths and feel that they have life and that they love God. In fact, it is still too early, and undergoing transformation in one's disposition is not a simple matter. Is one's nature easy to understand? Even if you understood it a little, it would not be easy to change. This is an area of difficulty for people. Regardless of how people, matters, or things around you may change and regardless of how the world may be turned upside down, if the truth is guiding you from within, if it has taken root within you and God's words guide your life, your preferences, your experiences and your existence, at that point you will have truly transformed. Now this so-called transformation is just people cooperating a little and having a little bit of enthusiasm and faith, but this cannot be considered transformation and it does not prove that people have life; it is just people's preferences—nothing more.

In addition to unearthing the things people are fond of in their natures, other aspects pertaining to their natures also need to be unearthed. For example, people's viewpoints on things, people's methods and goals in life, people's life values and views on life, as well as views

on all things relating to truth. These are all things deep within people's souls and they have a direct relationship with the transformation of disposition. What, then, is the life view of corrupt humankind? It can be said to be this: "Every man for himself and the devil take the hindmost." People all live for themselves; to put it more distinctly, they are living for the flesh. They are living just to put food in their mouths. How does this existence differ from that of the animals? There is no value whatsoever in living like this, let alone any meaning. One's life view is about what you rely on to live in the world, what you live for, and how you live—and these are all things to do with the essence of human nature. Through dissecting people's natures, you will see that people are all resisting God. They are all devils and there is no genuinely good person. Only by dissecting people's natures can you truly know the essence and corruption of man and understand what people actually belong to, what people truly lack, what they should be equipped with, and how they should live out a human likeness. Truly dissecting a person's nature is not easy, and cannot be done without experiencing God's words or having true experiences.

Excerpted from "What Should Be Known About Transforming One's Disposition" in Records of Christ's
Talks

When it comes to knowing man's nature, the most important thing is to see it from the perspective of man's world view, life view, and values. Those who are of the devil all live for themselves. Their life view and maxims mainly come from Satan's sayings, such as, "Everyone for himself and the devil take the hindmost." The words spoken by those devil kings, great ones, and philosophers of the earth have become man's very life. In particular, most of the words of Confucius, who is touted by Chinese people to be a "sage," have become man's life. There are also the famous proverbs of Buddhism and Taoism, and the oft-quoted classic sayings of various famous figures; these are all outlines of Satan's philosophies and Satan's nature. They are also the best illustrations and explanations of Satan's nature. These poisons that have been infused into the heart of man all come from Satan; not the least bit of them comes from God. Such devilish words are also in direct opposition to God's word. It is absolutely clear that the realities of all positive things come from God, and all those negative things that poison man come from Satan. Therefore, you can discern a person's nature and to whom he belongs from his life view and values. Satan corrupts people through the education and influence of national governments

and of the famous and great. Their devilish words have become man's life and nature. "Everyone for himself and the devil take the hindmost" is a well-known satanic saying that has been instilled into everyone, and that has become man's life. There are other words of philosophies for living that are also like this. Satan uses each nation's fine traditional culture to educate people, causing mankind to fall into and be engulfed by a boundless abyss of destruction, and in the end people are destroyed by God because they serve Satan and resist God. Imagine asking someone who has been active in society for decades the following question: "Given that you have lived in the world for so long and achieved so much, what are the main famous sayings that you live by?" He might say, "The most important one is, 'Officials do not strike gift-givers, and those who do not flatter accomplish nothing.'" Are these words not representative of that person's nature? Unscrupulously using any means to obtain position has become his nature, and being an official is what gives him life. There are still many satanic poisons in people's lives, in their conduct and behavior; they possess almost no truth at all. For example, their philosophies for living, their ways of doing things, and their maxims are all filled with the poisons of the great red dragon, and they all come from Satan. Thus, all things that flow through people's bones and blood are all things of Satan. All of those officials, those who hold power, and those who are accomplished have their own paths and secrets to success. Are such secrets not perfectly representative of their nature? They have done such big things in the world, and no one can see through the schemes and intrigues that lay behind them. This shows just how insidious and venomous their nature is. Mankind has been profoundly corrupted by Satan. Satan's venom flows through the blood of every person, and it can be seen that man's nature is corrupt, evil, and reactionary, filled by and immersed in the philosophies of Satan—it is, in its entirety, a nature that betrays God. This is why people resist God and stand in opposition to God. Man's nature can be known to all if dissected in this way.

Excerpted from "How to Know Man's Nature" in Records of Christ's Talks

How can you tell what a person's essence is? You cannot tell what a person's nature essence is when they do either nothing or when they do something trivial. These are shown in what they regularly reveal, in the motives behind their actions, in the intents behind what they do, in the desires they harbor, and in the path they walk. Even more importantly, these things are shown in how they react when they encounter an environment arranged by God, when they encounter

something personally done to them by God, when they are tried and refined, or are dealt with and pruned, or else when God personally illuminates and guides them. What does all of this relate to? It relates to a person's actions, the way they live, and the principles by which they conduct themselves. It also relates to the direction and goals of their pursuit, and the means by which they pursue. In other words, it relates to the path this person takes, how they live, what they live by, and what the basis of their existence is.

Excerpted from "How to Discern the Nature Essence of Paul" in Records of Christ's Talks

The key to self-reflection and knowing yourself is this: The more you feel that in certain areas you have done well or have done the right thing, and the more you think you can satisfy God's will or are able to boast in certain areas, then the more it is worth it for you to know yourself in those areas and the more it is worth it for you to dig deep into them to see what impurities exist in you, as well as what things in you cannot satisfy God's will. Let us take Paul as an example. Paul was especially knowledgeable, and he suffered a lot in his preaching work. He was especially adored by many. As a result, after completing much work, he assumed there would be a crown set aside for him. This caused him to go farther and farther down the wrong path, until finally he was punished by God. If, at the time, he had reflected upon himself and dissected himself, then he would not have thought that. In other words, Paul had not focused on seeking the truth in the words of the Lord Jesus; he had only believed in his own notions and imaginings. He had thought that as long as he did a few good things and exhibited good behavior, he would be praised and rewarded by God. In the end, his own notions and imagination blinded his spirit and covered his true face. However, people did not know this, and without God's bringing this to light, they continued to set Paul as a standard to reach for, an example to live by, and regarded him as the one they longed to be like and as the object of their pursuit, and as someone to be emulated. This story about Paul serves as a warning for everyone who believes in God, which is that whenever we feel we have done especially well, or believe that we are especially gifted in some respect, or think that we do not need to change or need to be dealt with in some respect, we should strive to reflect on and know ourselves better in that respect; this is crucial. This is because you certainly have not unearthed, paid attention to, or dissected the aspects of yourself which you believe to be good, in order to see whether or not they actually contain anything that resists God.

God can perfect man in both positive and negative aspects. It depends on whether you are able to experience, and on whether you pursue being perfected by God. If you truly seek being perfected by God, then the negative cannot make you suffer loss, but can bring you things that are more real, and can make you more able to know that which is lacking within you, more able to grasp your real state, and see that man has nothing, and is nothing; if you do not experience trials, you do not know, and will always feel that you are above others and better than everyone else. Through all this you will see that all that came before was done by God and protected by God. Entry into trials leaves you without love or faith, you lack prayer and are unable to sing hymns, and without realizing it, in the midst of this you come to know yourself. God has many means of perfecting man. He employs all manner of environments to deal with the corrupt disposition of man, and uses various things to lay man bare; in one regard, He deals with man, in another He lays man bare, and in another He reveals man, digging out and revealing the “mysteries” in the depths of man’s heart, and showing man his nature by revealing many of his states. God perfects man through many methods—through revelation, through dealing with man, through man’s refinement, and chastisement—so that man may know that God is practical.

Excerpted from “Only Those Who Focus on Practice Can Be Perfected” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

Having failed and fallen down multiple times is not a bad thing; nor is being exposed. Whether you have been dealt with, pruned, or been exposed, you must remember this at all times: Being exposed does not mean that you are being condemned. Being exposed is a good thing; it is the best opportunity for you to get to know yourself. It can bring your life experience a change of gears. Without it, you will possess neither the opportunity, the condition, nor the context to be able to reach an understanding of the truth of your corruption. If you can come to know the things inside you, all those aspects hidden deep within you that are hard to recognize and difficult to unearth, then this is a good thing. Becoming able to truly know yourself is the best opportunity for you to mend your ways and become a new person; it is the best opportunity for you to obtain new life. Once you truly know yourself, you will be able to see that when the truth becomes one’s life, it is a precious thing indeed, and you will thirst for the truth and enter

into the reality. This is such a great thing! If you can grab this opportunity and earnestly reflect upon yourself and gain a genuine knowledge of yourself whenever you fail or fall down, then in the midst of negativity and weakness, you will be able to stand back up. Once you have crossed this threshold, you will then be able to take a big step forward and enter truth reality.

Excerpted from “To Gain the Truth, You Must Learn From the People, Matters, and Things Around You” in
Records of Christ’s Talks

V. Truths of True Repentance

1. What is true repentance? Is it true repentance only to pray to God and admit one’s sins?

Relevant Words of God:

Every person, to a greater or lesser extent, has transgressed. When you do not know something is a transgression, you regard it with a hazy state of mind, or perhaps you still cling to your own opinions, practices, and ways of understanding—but, one day, whether through fellowship with your brothers and sisters or by God’s revelation, you learn this thing is a transgression, an offense against God. What will your attitude be then? Will you still be holding on, reasoning, arguing, hewing to your own ideas, believing that what you are doing accords with the truth? This involves your attitude toward God. With what attitude did David regard his transgressions? (Remorse.) Remorse—he would no longer commit them. So, what did he do? He prayed asking God to punish him: “If I make this mistake again, may God punish me and cause me to die!” Such was his resolve; that was true remorse. Can ordinary people achieve this? For ordinary people, it is good if they do not try to argue or tacitly admit responsibility, and, in their hearts, they yet think: “I hope no one brings this up again. I’d be humiliated.” Is this true remorse? To be truly remorseful, you must discard your past evil, put it down, and not do such a thing again. Well, what should be done, then? Will it work just to discard the evil, not to do that thing and not to think of it? What is your attitude toward God? What approach will you take to God exposing you now? (We will accept God’s punishment.) Accepting God’s punishment, His judgment and chastisement—that is one part of it. The other part is accepting

God's scrutiny while you accept His punishment. When you have accepted both parts, how will your resolve be? When you encounter such circumstances and such matters in the future, what will you do? Without true remorse, one cannot discard an evil, and anywhere, at any time, they could go back to their same old way, doing the same bad thing, committing the same transgression, making the same mistake over and over and over again. Is this not the attitude one has toward the truth? This reveals man's attitude toward the truth and toward God. What, then, can someone do to cast off a transgression completely? Practice the truth? One must have the correct attitude toward the truth. And what attitude should someone have and how should they practice to demonstrate their correct attitude toward the truth? What will you do if you fall into temptation when you come across this issue again? Two words: "Stay away!" At the same time, one must set one's resolve to be punished by God if one makes the same sort of mistake again. To do so is to hate the thing from the bottom of one's heart, to see it as the most abhorrent thing, an evil thing, a thing that offends God, an eternal stain. The Bible says: "A prudent man foresees the evil, and hides himself: but the simple pass on, and are punished" (Pro 22:3). That is not simplicity—it is stupidity, plain and simple. "Stay away"—how is that as a way to practice? (It is good.) Yet are there times when one cannot stay away? What will you do then? You must pray earnestly to God in your heart, and ask Him to orchestrate things. Some trials are also temptations. Why does God allow such things to befall you? They do not happen by chance; they are God trying and testing you. If you do not accept God's test and try to ignore it, does this not reveal your attitude toward God? Does it not speak of man's attitude toward God that you turn your back on the circumstances He arranges for you and the trials He gives you, and have an attitude of impertinence, and neither pray nor seek, nor search in those circumstances and trials for the path of practice? There are those who say: "I haven't had such thoughts, and I don't have that intention." If you are without intention, then what is your attitude toward God? Some attitudes are deliberate and intended, while some are unintentional—what is yours? Is one who is impertinent and does not take God seriously someone who loves the truth? It is established that one who treats the truth and God as children's games, as empty air, is not someone who loves the truth.

Excerpted from God's Fellowship

How can whether someone loves the truth or not be measured? Look at what they ordinarily live out, whether they do what they say, whether their words match their actions. If they do not, if what they say sounds good, and they speak very clearly, but they are incapable of recognizing that they reveal any corrupt dispositions when something happens to them later on, then they are someone who does not love the truth. They may be aware, for example, that they are deceitful and calculating, and they may be able to tell when other people are being deceitful. But when, after saying they are deceitful, they encounter the same issue again, watch them and see whether they are able to forsake such behavior, whether they repent, whether they have a sense of recrimination in their hearts after what they did, and whether they have a sense of shame. If they feel no shame, then their recognition of their own deceitfulness is blithe and cursory, it is not genuine. Conversely, they believe that they are not the most deceitful ones, that everyone else is more deceitful than them, and so it does not matter if they say they are deceitful. That is what they are thinking inside. So how can it be discerned if someone loves the truth, if they are one of those who genuinely pursue the truth? Look at whether there is any change in them. If, after revealing and recognizing their own deceitfulness, they carry on as usual; if they make only passing reference to their own deceitfulness, as if they are telling a joke or just rolling off some stock phrases; if they do not disclose their deceitfulness with an attitude of disgust and hate, or an attitude of repentance and recognition that come from the depths of their heart, but only superficially open up about themselves, then they are not someone who genuinely pursues the truth. Some people are only going through the motions in their self-knowledge: “Everyone is saying they’re deceitful, so I will, too—it’ll be awkward if I don’t.” They say it cheerfully, as if they are putting a feather in their cap. This is going through the motions. So is there any indebtedness in this knowledge that comes from going through the motions? There is not. No matter how they recognize their own deceitfulness and corrupt dispositions, it is not true recognition. And why do I say it is not true recognition? Theirs is not a true disclosure of and hatred for themselves that comes from deep within their heart. They feel no hatred, no sense of indebtedness when they do anything bad; they feel no indebtedness when they try to cheat God, or blaspheme God, or rebel against God, nor when they cheat other people. If they feel no indebtedness, are they capable of remorse? And can people with no remorse repent? Can people who do not repent turn around and reject the interests of the flesh to practice the truth? They cannot—this is a matter of the heart. Inwardly, some people truly know themselves and

repent. Though their mouths do not say it, they are ashamed, they feel that they have lied, and they cannot bring themselves to tell others, in their hearts, they know they are deceitful and bad, that they are not someone of integrity, that they are entirely false and deceptive, that they are deceiving the brothers and sisters and deceiving God. In their hearts, they hate themselves, and then they repent. Though everyone has the same nature essence, once they discover their own ignobility, they feel disgraced, they acknowledge everything that God reveals as being right, and begin to accept judgment and chastisement. They feel true remorse in the depths of their hearts. This is true perception and knowledge. Those who lack true perception, meanwhile, are also able to repeat certain formalities, as if they are telling a joke, or singing a nursery rhyme; these are just pet phrases. Their deceptions bring tears to people's eyes, but it means nothing to them. Are there many people like this? (Yes.) People like this are the most deceptive of all.

Excerpted from "Only When You Know Yourself Can You Pursue the Truth" in Records of Christ's Talks

The Repentance of Nineveh's King Wins Jehovah God's Commendation

When the king of Nineveh heard this news, he arose from his throne, took off his robe, dressed himself in sackcloth and sat in ashes. He then proclaimed that no one in the city would be allowed to taste anything, and that no sheep, oxen or any other livestock would be allowed to graze or drink water. Man and livestock alike were to don sackcloth, and the people were to make earnest entreaties to God. The king also proclaimed that every one of them would turn away from their evil ways and forsake the violence in their hands. Judging from this series of actions, the king of Nineveh had true repentance in his heart. This series of actions he took—arising from his throne, casting off his king's robe, wearing sackcloth and sitting in ashes—tells people that the king of Nineveh was laying aside his royal status and donning sackcloth alongside the common people. This is to say that the king of Nineveh did not occupy his royal post to continue his evil way or the violence in his hands after hearing the announcement from Jehovah God; rather, he laid aside the authority he held and repented before Jehovah God. At this moment the king of Nineveh was not repenting as a king; he had come before God to repent and confess his sins as an ordinary subject of God. Moreover, he also told the entire city to repent and confess their sins before Jehovah God in the same manner as he had; additionally, he had a specific plan for how to do so, as seen in the scriptures: "Let neither man nor beast,

herd nor flock, taste any thing: let them not feed, nor drink water: ... and cry mightily to God: yes, let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that is in their hands.” As the city’s ruler, the king of Nineveh possessed supreme status and power, and could do anything he wished to. When faced with Jehovah God’s announcement, he could have ignored the matter or simply repented and confessed his sins alone; as for whether or not the people in the city chose to repent, he could have completely ignored the matter. However, the king of Nineveh did not do this at all. Not only did he arise from his throne, wear sackcloth and ashes and repent and confess his sins before Jehovah God, but he also ordered all people and livestock within the city to do the same. He even ordered the people to “cry mightily to God.” Through this series of actions, the king of Nineveh truly accomplished that which a ruler should. His series of actions is one that was difficult for any king in human history to achieve, and indeed, no other king achieved these things. These actions can be called unprecedented in human history, and they are worthy of being both commemorated and imitated by mankind. Since the dawn of man, every king had led his subjects to resist and oppose God. No one had ever led his subjects to entreat God to seek redemption for their wickedness, receive Jehovah God’s pardon and avoid imminent punishment. The king of Nineveh, however, was able to lead his subjects to turn to God, to leave their respective evil ways behind and abandon the violence in their hands. Furthermore, he was also able to put aside his throne, and in return, Jehovah God had a change of mind and felt regret, retracting His wrath and allowing the people of the city to survive, keeping them from destruction. The king’s actions can only be called a rare miracle in human history, and even a model example of corrupt humanity repenting and confessing their sins before God.

Excerpted from “God Himself, the Unique II” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The True Repentance in the Ninevites’ Hearts Wins Them God’s Mercy and Changes Their Own Outcomes

Was there any contradiction between God’s change of heart and His wrath? Of course not! This is because God’s tolerance at that particular time had its reason. What reason might this be? It is the one given in the Bible: “Every person turned away from their evil way” and “abandoned the violence in their hands.”

This “evil way” does not refer to a handful of evil acts, but to the evil source from which people’s behavior springs. “Turning away from one’s evil way” means that those in question will never commit these actions again. In other words, they will never again behave in this evil way; the method, source, purpose, intent and principle of their actions have all changed; they will never again use those methods and principles to bring enjoyment and happiness to their hearts. The “abandon” in “abandon the violence in one’s hands” means to lay down or to cast aside, to fully break with the past and to never turn back. When the people of Nineveh abandoned the violence in their hands, this proved and represented their true repentance. God observes people’s outward appearances as well as their hearts. When God observed the true repentance in the hearts of the Ninevites without question and also observed that they had left their evil ways and abandoned the violence in their hands, He changed His heart. This is to say that these people’s conduct and behavior and various ways of doing things, as well as their true confession and repentance of sins in their hearts, caused God to change His heart, to change His intentions, to retract His decision and not to punish or destroy them. Thus, the people of Nineveh achieved a different outcome for themselves. They redeemed their own lives and at the same time won God’s mercy and tolerance, at which point God also retracted His wrath.

Excerpted from “God Himself, the Unique II” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Sermon and Fellowship Excerpts for Reference:

When people admit their mistakes and confess their sins, is this the same as knowing themselves? Can such admission and confession bring about true repentance? For people who only admit the fact of their sin but do not know its roots or essence, despite admitting their sin, and regardless of how good their attitude is, they are incapable of true repentance. The facts of the religious world prove this: People of the religious world often confess their sins before God, but then often sin again, failing to rid themselves of sin right up to when they die. What is the reason for this? It is because they lack true knowledge of themselves. They have confessed their sins, but they have not truly repented and changed. If there really had been repentance and change, their sins ought to have become ever fewer, and ultimately, in their faith in the Lord, they ought not to sin anymore; so why do they persist in sinning, their lives never escaping the vicious circle of sinning and confessing, confessing and sinning? This proves that they have not truly repented. They have not changed. Thus, when people only superficially admit their sins

but do not know the essence of these sins, true repentance is impossible, nor can there be true change.

Excerpted from Sermons and Fellowship on Entry Into Life

Why is knowing oneself a true life experience? Because the more you know yourself, the more you are capable of true repentance, and the more you can truly change—and only the experience of being able to attain true repentance and changes in one's life disposition is true life experience. And so, only knowing oneself is true life experience. Those religious believers in the Lord—people who spend their whole lives expending for the Lord, spreading the gospel, and testifying to the Lord, yet still do not know their own corrupt essence, and simply pray to the Lord each day, confessing their sins and asking for His forgiveness—ultimately, will they truly repent? No. Much of their behavior may be good, but they still often lie and sin, which proves they have not really repented at all. The profound corruption of mankind is chiefly manifested in his lies, his attempts to trick God, and his opposition to God. True repentance is only achieved when he has genuinely become like a child, when he does not lie or try to trick God, and his heart is honest. So why do people not truly repent and change no matter how much they repent and confess their sins to the Lord? After experiencing the judgment and chastisement of God, it is clear to us that this is because people lack knowledge of their nature essence; this is the root of the problem. So when, seeing that they lie, rebel against God, and do not practice the truth, people persist in confessing to God, this does not count as knowing themselves. This is nothing more than beholding the fact of their sin and admitting that they are sinful; the essence and root of their ability to commit these sins, the essential questions of why people lie and try to trick God, meanwhile, remain invisible to them, leaving them incapable of attaining the true knowledge of themselves and true repentance. And so, regardless of how religious people pray to the Lord and confess their sins, they never truly know themselves. True knowledge of yourself is not just identifying what sins you have committed; of chief importance is being clear about the root and essence of your sins, just where these corrupt dispositions of man come from, and how they should be addressed in order to be cleansed. If such issues are not clear to people, and they only admit that they have sinned, then nothing can be solved.

Excerpted from Sermons and Fellowship on Entry Into Life

2. How can one achieve true repentance?

Relevant Words of God:

For a long time, people who believe in God have all been earnestly hoping for a beautiful destination, and all of God's believers hope that good fortune will suddenly come to them. They all hope that before they know it, they will find themselves peacefully seated at one place or another in heaven. But I say that these people, with their lovely thoughts, have never known whether they are qualified to receive such good fortune that falls down from heaven or even to sit on a seat there. You, at present, have a good knowledge of yourselves, yet you still hope to escape the disasters of the last days and the hand of the Almighty when He punishes the evil ones. It seems as though having sweet dreams and wanting things just how they like is a common feature of all people whom Satan has corrupted, and not some stroke of genius by any lone individual. Even so, I still wish to put an end to these extravagant desires of yours, as well as your eagerness to gain blessings. Given that your transgressions are numerous, and that the fact of your rebelliousness is ever-growing, how can these things fit with your lovely blueprints for the future? If you want to go on as you please, remaining in the wrong with nothing holding you back, yet at the same time you still want your dreams to come true, then I urge you to continue in your stupor and never wake up—for yours is an empty dream and in the presence of the righteous God, He will not make an exception for you. If you simply want your dreams to come true, then never dream; rather, forever face the truth and the facts. This is the only way that you can be saved. What, in concrete terms, are the steps of this method?

First, take a look at all your transgressions, and examine any behavior and thoughts you have that do not conform to the truth.

This is one thing that you can do easily, and I believe that all intelligent people are able to do this. However, those who never know what is meant by transgression and truth are the exception, because on a fundamental level, they are not intelligent people. I am talking to people who have been approved by God, are honest, have not seriously violated any administrative decrees, and can easily discern their own transgressions. Though this is one thing that I require of you, and that is easy for you to accomplish, it is not the only thing that I require of you. No

matter what, I hope that you will not laugh in private at this requirement, and especially that you will not look down on it or take it lightly. You should treat it seriously, and not dismiss it.

Secondly, for each of your transgressions and disobediences, you should look for a corresponding truth, and then use these truths to resolve those issues. After that, replace your transgressive acts and disobedient thoughts and acts with the practice of the truth.

Thirdly, you should be an honest person, not someone who is always being clever and constantly deceitful. (Here I am asking you again to be an honest person.)

If you can accomplish all three of these things, then you are one of the fortunate—a person whose dreams come true and who receives good fortune. Perhaps you will treat these three unappealing requirements seriously, or perhaps you will treat them irresponsibly. Whichever, My purpose is to fulfill your dreams and put your ideals into practice, not to make fun of you or to make a fool out of you.

Excerpted from “Transgressions Will Lead Man to Hell” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Nowadays, most people have a very superficial understanding of themselves. They have not come to clearly know the things that are part of their nature at all. They only have knowledge of a few of their corrupt states, the things they are likely to do, or a few of their shortcomings, and this makes them believe that they know themselves. If, furthermore, they abide by a few rules, ensure that they do not make mistakes in certain areas, and manage to avoid committing certain transgressions, they then consider themselves to possess reality in their belief in God and assume that they will be saved. This is completely human imagination. If you abide by those things, will you really become able to refrain from committing any transgressions? Will you have attained a true change in disposition? Will you really be living out the likeness of a human being? Can you genuinely satisfy God that way? Absolutely not, this is for sure. Belief in God works only when one has high standards and has attained the truth and some transformation in one’s life disposition. So, if people’s knowledge of themselves is too shallow, they will find it impossible to solve problems, and their life dispositions simply will not change. It is necessary to know oneself on a profound level, which means knowing one’s own nature: what elements are included in that nature, how these things originated, and where they came from. Moreover, are you actually able to hate these things? Have you seen your own ugly soul and your evil nature? If you are truly able to see the truth about yourself, then you will start to loathe yourself. When

you loathe yourself and then practice God's word, you will be able to forsake the flesh and have the strength to carry out truth without difficulty. Why do many people follow their fleshly preferences? Because they consider themselves to be pretty good, feeling that their actions are right and justified, that they have no faults, and even that they are entirely in the right, they are therefore capable of acting with the assumption that justice is on their side. When one recognizes what one's true nature is—how ugly, how despicable, and how pitiful—then one is not overly proud of oneself, not so wildly arrogant, and not so pleased with oneself as before. Such a person feels, "I must be earnest and down to earth, and practice some of God's word. If not, then I will not measure up to the standard of being human, and will be ashamed to live in God's presence." One then truly sees oneself as paltry, as truly insignificant. At this time, it becomes easy for one to carry out truth, and one will appear to be somewhat like a human should be. Only when people truly loathe themselves are they able to forsake the flesh. If they do not loathe themselves, they will be unable to forsake the flesh. Truly hating oneself comprises a few things: First, knowing one's own nature; and second, seeing oneself as needy and pitiful, seeing oneself to be extremely small and insignificant, and seeing one's own pitiful and dirty soul. When one fully sees what one truly is, and this outcome is achieved, one then truly gains knowledge of oneself, and it can be said that one has come to know oneself fully. Only then can one truly hate oneself, going so far as to curse oneself, and truly feel that one has been corrupted profoundly by Satan such that one does not even resemble a human being. Then, one day, when the threat of death appears, such a person will think, "This is God's righteous punishment. God is indeed righteous; I really should die!" At this point, he will not lodge a complaint, much less blame God, simply feeling that he is so needy and pitiful, so filthy and corrupt that he should be wiped out by God, and a soul like his is not fit to live on earth. At this point, this person will not resist God, much less betray God.

Excerpted from "To Know Oneself Is Primarily About Knowing Human Nature" in Records of Christ's Talks

Some people follow their own wills when they act. They violate the principles and admit only that they are arrogant, that they made a mistake only because they do not have the truth. In their hearts, they even complain, "No one else sticks their neck out, just me—and in the end, I get stuck with the responsibility. That's dumb of me. I won't do the same thing next time, sticking my neck out. Birds that stick their necks out get shot!" What do you think of this

attitude? Is it an attitude of repentance? (No.) What attitude is it? Through the mistake they make, they become slippery and deceitful—a fall in the pit, a gain in your wit, so to speak. “I’m lucky that didn’t lead to a disaster. If I caused a disaster, I’d go to hell and be destroyed. I have to be more careful in the future.” They do not seek the truth, using their pettiness and cunning schemes to handle and treat the matter. Can they gain the truth in this way? They cannot—they do not know to repent. The first thing to be done when repenting is to know the thing you have done and to understand where you have erred, the essence of the problem, and the disposition you have revealed; reflect on these things and accept them, then practice according to the truth. This is the attitude of repentance. If, on the other hand, your way of considering the issue is more slippery than before, and your techniques are more clever and concealed, and you have more methods to deal with it, then the problem is not quite as simple as being deceitful. You are using underhanded means and you have secrets you will not divulge, and what you are doing is evil. God sees you as overly hard and evil, one who superficially admits that they have erred and accepts being dealt with and pruned, yet who is without even the least bit of a repentant attitude. This is because, in the aftermath of the event or while it is happening, you do not practice according to the truth at all, nor do you seek it. Your attitude is one of using Satan’s methods, techniques and philosophies to resolve or sidestep the problem, to wrap it up in a neat package so that others can see no trace of the problem, nor see the package’s seams—and, in the end, you feel you are quite smart. These are the things God sees, rather than your having truly reflected, repented, and confessed your sin in the face of the matter that has befallen you, then going on to seek the truth and practicing according to the truth. Your attitude is not one of seeking the truth or of practicing the truth, nor is it one of submission to God’s sovereignty and arrangements, but one of using Satan’s techniques and methods to resolve your problem. You give others a false impression and resist being exposed by God, and you are confrontational and defensive regarding the circumstances that God has orchestrated for you. This means your heart is more closed than before. If you are more closed to God, can you still live in the light, with peace and joy? No longer—you have shunned the truth and shunned God. Is such a state prevalent in people? “I was dealt with this time. Next time, I’ve got to be more careful, and smarter. Being smart is the foundation of life—and people who aren’t smart are dummies.” If you are always guiding and goading yourself so, will you ever get anywhere? Will you be able to gain the truth? If an issue befalls you and you can seek the truth, then you can understand an

aspect of the truth and gain that aspect of the truth. What can be achieved by understanding the truth? When you understand an aspect of the truth, you understand an aspect of God's will, and you understand why God visited this thing on you, why He would make such a demand of you, why He would orchestrate circumstances to chasten and discipline you so, why He would use this matter to discipline you, and why you have fallen down, failed, and been exposed in this matter. If you can understand these things, you will be able to pursue the truth and will achieve life entry. If you cannot understand these things and do not accept these facts, but insist on opposition and resistance, on using your own techniques to cover up after yourself, on facing all others and facing God with a false countenance, then you will be forever unable to gain the truth.

Excerpted from "Only by Pursuing the Truth Can One Resolve Their Notions and Misunderstandings of God" in Records of Christ's Talks

Some people previously exhibited certain manifestations of an antichrist: They were wanton and arbitrary, it was always their way or the highway. But through being dealt with and pruned, through brothers and sisters sharing fellowship with them, through being reallocated or replaced, by suffering some major setbacks, being negative for a time and then thinking, "I must do my duty properly, won't it be over for me if I don't? I am walking the path of the antichrist, but I haven't been classed as one, so I must be good in my belief, I must pursue in earnest. There's nothing wrong with the path of pursuing the truth,"—bit-by-bit, they turn themselves around, and then they repent. There are good manifestations in them, they seek the truth principles when performing their duty, and seek the truth principles when engaging with others, too. In every regard, they are heading in a better direction. Have they not then changed? This is turning from walking the path of the antichrist to walking the path of practicing and pursuing the truth. There is hope for them, they have a chance, they can turn themselves around. Can you class such people as antichrists because they once exhibited some manifestations of an antichrist or walked the path of the antichrists? No. Antichrists do not repent, they have no shame and, furthermore, their dispositions are fierce and evil, and they detest the truth to an extreme degree. What does their extreme detestation determine? That they can never repent. If they detest the truth to such a degree, can they practice the truth, and are they able to repent? Impossible. If there is one thing for certain about people who are able to repent, it is that they

have made mistakes but are able to accept the judgment and chastisement of God, are able to accept the truths spoken by God, and are able to try as hard as they can to cooperate, taking the words of God as their own personal maxims, and making God's words into the reality of their lives. They accept the truth, and deep down, they do not detest it. Is this not the difference? Antichrists, on the other hand, do not listen to anyone, they do not trust that the truth is the truth, and they do not acknowledge that the words of God are the truth.

Excerpted from "For Leaders and Workers, Choosing a Path Is of Utmost Importance (8)" in Records of Christ's Talks

While following God, because of their foolishness and ignorance and due to their various corrupt dispositions, people often reveal themselves to be disobedient, and they misunderstand or even resent God. They go astray, and some even become negative and slacken in their work, resenting God and losing their faith. Disobedient behaviors often arise over various stages of people's lives. They have God in their hearts and know He is at work, yet they sometimes cannot get their heads around that fact. Though they are able to submit superficially, they simply cannot accept it deep down. What makes it evident that deep down they cannot accept it? One way this manifests is that, despite knowing everything, they are simply unable to put aside what they have done and come before God to admit to their mistakes and say, "God, I was wrong. I won't act like that anymore. I will seek Your will and do as You'd have me do. I didn't use to heed You; I was immature, disobedient, and foolish. I know that now." With what attitude do people admit to their mistakes? (They want to make a turnaround.) If people have conscience and rationality, and yearn for the truth, yet they never know to make a turnaround in their mistakes, believing instead that the past is past and feeling certain that they are never wrong, then what sort of disposition does this show? What sort of behavior? What is the essence of such behavior? Such people are hardened and, come what may, that is the path they will follow. God does not like such people. What did Jonah say when he first expressed God's words to the Ninevites? ("Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown" (Jonah 3:4).) How did the Ninevites react to these words? As soon as they saw that God was going to destroy them, they took up sackcloth and ashes, and hastened to confess their sins to Him. This is what it means to repent. Such repentance presents man with an enormous opportunity. What opportunity is that? It is the opportunity to keep on living. Without such repentance, it would be hard for you

to continue forward, whether in your performance of duty or in your search for salvation. At every stage—whether when God is disciplining or chastening you, or when He is reminding and exhorting you—as long as a conflict has occurred between you and God, yet you continue to cling to your own ideas, viewpoints, and attitudes, then even though your steps are headed forward, the conflict between you and God, your misunderstandings and resentment of Him, and your rebelliousness will not be rectified, and, if you do not make a turnaround, then God, for His part, will eliminate you. Though you have not let go of the duty at hand, and are able to uphold it, and though you have accepted God’s commission and are loyal to it, there will forever remain by you the knot of the dispute that has arisen between you and God. If you do not untie it, or let go of it, and instead continue to believe that God is mistaken and that you have been wronged, then this means you have not made a turnaround. Why does God place such importance on making a turnaround for people? With what attitude should a created being regard the Creator? An attitude that acknowledges that the Creator is right, no matter what He does. If you do not acknowledge this, that the Creator is the truth, the way, and the life will be but hollow words to you. If they are but hollow words to you, will God still be able to save you? He will not. You would be unqualified; God does not save people like you. There are some who say, “God asks that people be repentant, and that they know to make a turnaround. Well, in many things, I haven’t made a turnaround. Do I still have time to do it?” Yes, there is still time. Additionally, some say, “In what things do I have to make a turnaround? Things in the past are gone and forgotten.” If your disposition does not change even for a single day, and if even a single day goes by without your coming to know what in your actions does not accord with the truth and what cannot accord with God, then that knot that exists between you and God has not yet been untied; the matter has not been resolved, nor has it passed. This disposition is within you; this idea, viewpoint, and attitude is inside you. As soon as the right circumstances appear, this viewpoint of yours will once again emerge, and your conflict with God will flare up. Thus, though you may not rectify the past, you must rectify things that will happen in the future. How are they to be rectified? You must make a turnaround and put aside your ideas and intentions. Once you have this intent, yours will naturally also be an attitude of submission. However, to speak a bit more precisely, this actually refers to people making a turnaround in their attitude toward God, the Creator; it is a recognition and affirmation of the fact that the Creator is the truth, the way, and the life. If you can turn yourself around, this demonstrates that you can put

aside those things you think are right, or those things that mankind—which is corrupt—thinks collectively to be right; and, instead, you are acknowledging that God’s words are the truth and positive things. If you can have this attitude, it proves your recognition of the identity of the Creator and of His essence. This is how God views the issue, and He therefore considers it especially important.

Excerpted from “Only by Resolving One’s Notions Can One Enter the Right Track of Believing in God (3)”

in Records of Christ’s Talks

3. What is the relationship between true repentance and knowledge of oneself?

Relevant Words of God:

If people’s knowledge of themselves is too shallow, they will find it impossible to solve problems, and their life dispositions simply will not change. It is necessary to know oneself on a profound level, which means knowing one’s own nature: what elements are included in that nature, how these things originated, and where they came from. Moreover, are you actually able to hate these things? Have you seen your own ugly soul and your evil nature? If you are truly able to see the truth about yourself, then you will start to loathe yourself. When you loathe yourself and then practice God’s word, you will be able to forsake the flesh and have the strength to carry out truth without difficulty. Why do many people follow their fleshly preferences? Because they consider themselves to be pretty good, feeling that their actions are right and justified, that they have no faults, and even that they are entirely in the right, they are therefore capable of acting with the assumption that justice is on their side. When one recognizes what one’s true nature is—how ugly, how despicable, and how pitiful—then one is not overly proud of oneself, not so wildly arrogant, and not so pleased with oneself as before. Such a person feels, “I must be earnest and down to earth, and practice some of God’s word. If not, then I will not measure up to the standard of being human, and will be ashamed to live in God’s presence.” One then truly sees oneself as paltry, as truly insignificant. At this time, it becomes easy for one to carry out truth, and one will appear to be somewhat like a human should be. Only when people truly loathe themselves are they able to forsake the flesh. If they do not loathe themselves,

they will be unable to forsake the flesh. Truly hating oneself comprises a few things: First, knowing one's own nature; and second, seeing oneself as needy and pitiful, seeing oneself to be extremely small and insignificant, and seeing one's own pitiful and dirty soul. When one fully sees what one truly is, and this outcome is achieved, one then truly gains knowledge of oneself, and it can be said that one has come to know oneself fully. Only then can one truly hate oneself, going so far as to curse oneself, and truly feel that one has been corrupted profoundly by Satan such that one does not even resemble a human being. Then, one day, when the threat of death appears, such a person will think, "This is God's righteous punishment. God is indeed righteous; I really should die!" At this point, he will not lodge a complaint, much less blame God, simply feeling that he is so needy and pitiful, so filthy and corrupt that he should be wiped out by God, and a soul like his is not fit to live on earth. At this point, this person will not resist God, much less betray God. If one does not know oneself, and still considers oneself to be pretty good, then when death comes knocking, this person will think, "I have done so well in my faith. How hard I have sought! I have given so much, I have suffered so much, yet ultimately, God is now asking me to die. I don't know where God's righteousness is. Why is He asking me to die? If even a person like me has to die, then who will be saved? Won't the human race come to an end?" First of all, this person has notions about God. Secondly, this person is complaining, and not showing any submission whatsoever. This is just like Paul: When he was about to die, he did not know himself, and by the time God's punishment was nigh, it was too late to repent.

Excerpted from "To Know Oneself Is Primarily About Knowing Human Nature" in Records of Christ's Talks

Paul did not know his own essence or corruption, much less did he know his own disobedience. He never mentioned his despicable defiance of Christ, nor was he overly regretful. He only offered a brief explanation and, deep down in his heart, he did not completely submit to God. Though he fell on the road to Damascus, he did not look deep within himself. He was content merely to keep working, and he did not consider knowing himself and changing his old disposition to be the most crucial of issues. He was satisfied with merely speaking the truth, with providing to others as a salve for his own conscience, and with no longer persecuting Jesus' disciples to console himself and forgive himself for his past sins. The goal that he pursued was nothing more than a future crown and transitory work, the goal he pursued was abundant grace. He did not seek sufficient truth, nor did he seek to progress deeper into the truth which he had

previously not understood. His knowledge of himself can therefore be said to be false, and he did not accept chastisement or judgment. That he was able to work does not mean he possessed a knowledge of his own nature or essence; his focus was on outward practices only. What he strived for, moreover, was not change, but knowledge. His work was completely the result of the appearance of Jesus on the road to Damascus. It was not something he had resolved to do originally, nor was it work that occurred after he had accepted the pruning of his old disposition. No matter how he worked, his old disposition did not change, and so his work did not atone for his past sins but merely played a certain role among the churches of the time. For someone such as this, whose old disposition did not change—that is to say, who did not gain salvation, and was even more without the truth—he was absolutely incapable of becoming one of those accepted by the Lord Jesus.

Excerpted from “Success or Failure Depends on the Path That Man Walks” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Sermon and Fellowship Excerpts for Reference:

Knowing yourself is the most critical and fundamental issue of entry into life. It is also the first issue that should be solved when people believe in God. Those who do not know themselves do not truly believe in God; their faith is merely for the sake of being blessed. Why do I say this? Two thousand years ago, the Lord Jesus said, “**Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand**” (Mat 4:17). Today, the Lord Jesus has returned, and now is the time for those who truly believe in God to be accepted into the kingdom of heaven. So what is the first problem people should address today? True repentance. If people are incapable of true repentance, they cannot enter the kingdom of heaven, period. To truly repent, you must first truly know yourself. The more people know themselves, the more capable they become of true repentance and real change. If they do not know themselves, they can never truly repent, nor is it possible for them to really change. Thus, knowing oneself is the first issue to be solved in order to truly repent and enter the kingdom of heaven. Everyone wants to enter the kingdom of heaven, but is this possible if their faith in God is like that of religious people? The religious people spend their whole lives expending for God, spreading the gospel, and testifying to the Lord, and they often pray to the Lord, confessing their sins and asking for forgiveness. But ultimately, do they truly repent? No. Though much of their behavior is good, they do not know their own corrupt essence,

and continue to lie and sin frequently—which shows that they have not really repented at all. Mankind’s profound corruption is chiefly manifested in his lies, his attempts to trick God, and his opposition to God. True repentance is only achieved when he has genuinely become like a child, when he does not lie or try to trick God, and worships God with heart and honesty. So why do religious people often repent and confess their sins to the Lord, yet fail to truly repent and change? Because they do not know their own nature essence. This is where the root of the problem lies. When, seeing that they lie, rebel against God, and do not practice the truth, people persist in confessing to God, this does not count as knowing themselves. This is nothing more than beholding the fact of their sin and admitting that they are sinful; the essence and root of their ability to commit these sins, the essential questions of why people lie and try to trick God, meanwhile, remain invisible to them, leaving them incapable of attaining the true knowledge of themselves and true repentance. And so, regardless of how religious people pray to the Lord and confess their sins, they never truly know themselves. True knowledge of yourself is not just identifying what sins you have committed; of chief importance is being clear about the root and essence of your sins, just where these corrupt dispositions of man come from, and how they should be addressed in order to be cleansed. If such issues are not clear to people, and they only admit that they have sinned, then nothing can be solved, much less can they enter the kingdom of heaven. Some people say, “We believe in Almighty God. We eat and drink the words of God and hold assembly normally. So, too, do we perform our duty. Does this count as true repentance, or not? Can we enter the kingdom of heaven?” What do the words of God say? That only when people know themselves, and attain changes in their life disposition, does this count as true repentance, and only then can they enter the kingdom of heaven. God’s words are clear about what the satanic nature of man is, what is contained within this satanic nature, what people’s attitude toward God is when they have a satanic nature, whether they are obedient, and fear God, and are compatible with God. If people do not pursue the truth, and do not focus on knowing themselves, they cannot truly repent.

Excerpted from Sermons and Fellowship on Entry Into Life

Today, you have basically seen some of the importance of knowing yourself. You see that if people do not know themselves, they are bound to think themselves wonderful. They will continue to be arrogant and conceited, crooked and deceitful, selfish and ignoble; they will still

pursue the things they like, and will continue to take the wrong path. True repentance only occurs when people really know themselves. There are many manifestations of true repentance. They chiefly include: 1) divesting oneself of one's corrupt disposition; 2) correcting the mistaken practices, views, notions, and ways of doing things of the past. These are the manifestations of true repentance. True repentance is an indicator of entry into the truth reality, as well as the starting point for entry into the truth reality. Only those who truly repent can set foot upon the correct path of human life and enter onto the right track of faith in God, and only then can they receive God's praise and be after God's heart. Without true repentance, people's corrupt dispositions will continue to exist, their erroneous methods of faith in God will remain, they will still cling to old things, their way of seeing things will still be the perspective of Satan, and the path they take will bound to be that of the Pharisees—they will be hypocrites. Such people cannot be saved. The Lord Jesus said, "**Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand**" (Mat 4:17). Only those who truly repent can enter the kingdom of heaven; those who do not truly repent cannot, they are the ones who shall be eliminated. Thus is true repentance of the utmost importance! What are the chief conditions for attaining true repentance? What is the foundation? Knowing yourself. Only by knowing yourself can you achieve true repentance, and only by knowing yourself can your corruption be cleansed. To attain true repentance, you must focus on knowing yourself. If people do not know themselves—if theirs is a muddled faith in God—then can their corruption be cleansed by going to assembly, reading the words of God, spreading the gospel, and performing their duty every day? Will they be able to understand the truth, and gain the truth? Impossible. And so, if people believe in God but do not know themselves—if they are ever muddle-headed—there can be no true repentance.

Excerpted from Sermons and Fellowship on Entry Into Life

VI. Truths of Being an Honest Person

1. What is an honest person? Why does God require people to be honest?

Relevant Words of God:

You ought to know that God likes those who are honest. In essence, God is faithful, and so His words can always be trusted; His actions, furthermore, are faultless and unquestionable, which is why God likes those who are absolutely honest with Him. Honesty means giving your heart to God, being genuine with God in all things, being open with Him in all things, never hiding the facts, not trying to deceive those above and below you, and not doing things only to curry favor with God. In short, to be honest is to be pure in your actions and words, and to deceive neither God nor man. What I say is very simple, but to you it is doubly arduous. Many people would rather be condemned to hell than speak and act honestly. Little wonder that I have other treatment in store for those who are dishonest. Of course, I know full well how difficult it is for you to be honest. Because you are all so clever, so good at measuring people with your own petty yardstick, this makes My work much simpler. And since you each hug your secrets to your bosom, well then, I shall send you, one by one, into disaster to be “schooled” by fire, so that thereafter you may become dead set on your belief in My words. Ultimately, I shall wrest from your mouth the words “God is a faithful God,” whereupon you shall beat upon your breast and lament, “Devious is the heart of man!” What will be your state of mind at this time? I imagine you will not be as triumphant as you are now. And much less will you be as “profound and abstruse” as you are now. In the presence of God, some people are all prim and proper, they take pains to be “well-behaved,” yet they bare their fangs and brandish their claws in the presence of the Spirit. Would you number such people among the ranks of the honest? If you are a hypocrite, someone who is skilled in “interpersonal relations,” then I say that you are definitely someone who tries to trifle with God. If your words are riddled with excuses and valueless justifications, then I say that you are someone who is loath to put the truth into practice. If you have many confidences that you are reluctant to share, if you are highly averse to laying bare your secrets—your difficulties—before others to seek the way of the light, then I say that you are someone who will not attain salvation easily, and who will not easily emerge from the darkness. If seeking the way of the truth pleases you well, then you are someone who dwells always in the light. If you are very glad to be a service-doer in the house of God, working diligently and conscientiously in obscurity, always giving and never taking, then I say that you are a loyal saint, because you seek no reward and are simply being an honest person. If you are willing to be candid, if you are willing to expend your all, if you are able to sacrifice your life for God and stand firm in your testimony, if you are honest to the point where you know only to

satisfy God and not to consider yourself or take for yourself, then I say that such people are those who are nourished in the light and who shall live forever in the kingdom.

Excerpted from “Three Admonitions” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

I take pleasure in those who are not suspicious of others, and I like those who readily accept the truth; toward these two kinds of people I show great care, for in My eyes they are honest people. If you are deceitful, then you will be guarded and suspicious toward all people and matters, and thus your faith in Me will be built upon a foundation of suspicion. I could never acknowledge such faith. Lacking true faith, you are even more devoid of true love. And if you are liable to doubt God and speculate about Him at will, then you are, without question, the most deceitful of all people. You speculate whether God can be like man: unpardonably sinful, of petty character, devoid of fairness and reason, lacking a sense of justice, given to vicious tactics, treacherous and cunning, pleased by evil and darkness, and so on. Is not the reason that people have such thoughts because they lack the slightest knowledge of God? Such faith is nothing short of sin!

Excerpted from “How to Know the God on Earth” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

My kingdom requires those who are honest, those who are not hypocritical or deceitful. Are not the sincere and honest people unpopular in the world? I am just the opposite. It is acceptable for the honest people to come to Me; I delight in this kind of person, and I also need this kind of person. This is precisely My righteousness.

Excerpted from “Chapter 33” of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in
the Flesh

In the dispositions of normal people there is no crookedness or deceitfulness, people have a normal relationship with each other, they do not stand alone, and their lives are neither mediocre nor decadent. So, too, is God exalted among all; His words permeate among man, people live in peace with one another and under the care and protection of God, the earth is filled with harmony, without the interference of Satan, and the glory of God holds the utmost importance among man. Such people are like angels: pure, vibrant, never complaining about God, and devoting all their efforts solely to God’s glory on earth.

Excerpted from “Chapter 16” of Interpretations of the Mysteries of God’s Words to the Entire
Universe in The Word Appears in the Flesh

I have held man to a strict standard throughout. If your loyalty comes with intentions and conditions, then I would rather be without your so-called loyalty, for I abhor those who deceive Me through their intentions and extort Me with conditions. I wish only for man to be absolutely loyal to Me, and to do all things for the sake of—and in order to prove—one word: faith. I despise your use of blandishments to try to make Me rejoice, for I have always treated you with sincerity, and so wish for you to also act with true faith toward Me.

Excerpted from “Are You a True Believer in God?” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

Why has God always emphasized that people should be honest? Because it is so important, and it directly relates to whether or not you can be saved. Some people say: “I’m arrogant, self-righteous, I’m quick-tempered, I often expose my naturalness, I’m superficial and vain, I love making people laugh, I always want the approval of others...” These are all mere trifles. Do not always go on talking about them. Regardless of your disposition or personality, as long as you are able to be honest as God requires, you can be saved. So what do you say, is it important to be honest? This is the most important thing, and so it is that in the passage of God’s words, Three Admonitions, God talks about being honest. Despite the fact that God talks about how to live in the spirit, how to live a normal spiritual life, or how to live a proper church life, or how to live out normal humanity in other texts, nowhere does He explicitly tell people what kind of person to be, or how to practice—but in talking about being honest, He shows people a path, and tells them how to put it into practice; this is very explicit. God says, “If you have many confidences that you are reluctant to share, if you are highly averse to laying bare your secrets—your difficulties—before others to seek the way of the light, then I say that you are someone who will not attain salvation easily...” Being honest relates to attaining salvation. What do you say, is being honest important? (Yes.) What God wants are people who are honest. If you are capable of lies and deception, you are a deceitful, crooked, and sinister person, and not an honest person. If you are not an honest person, then there is no chance that God will save you, nor can you possibly be saved. You have not changed into someone who is honest, and you say you are already very devout, that you are not arrogant or self-righteous, that you are well able to pay a

price, or that you can spread the gospel and bring many people to God. But you are not honest, and you are still deceitful, and have not changed at all. Can you be saved? (No.) And so these words of God remind every one of us that, to be saved, we must first of all be honest in accordance with the words and requirements of God. We must open ourselves up, lay bare our corrupt dispositions, be able to lay bare our motives and secrets, and search for the way of the light.

Excerpted from “The Most Fundamental Practice of Being an Honest Person” in Records of
Christ’s Talks

That God asks for people to be honest proves that He truly loathes those who are deceitful, and that He does not like deceitful people. The fact that God does not like deceitful people means that He dislikes their actions, disposition, and motivations; that is, He does not like the way they do things. Therefore, if we are to please God, we must first change our actions and the way in which we exist. Previously, we relied on lies and pretense to live among people, using these as our capital and as the existential basis, life, and foundation by which we conducted ourselves. This was something that God despised. Among the world’s unbelievers, if you do not know how to be manipulative or deceitful, then it could be difficult for you to stand firm. You could only tell lies, engage in trickery, and use conniving and insidious methods to protect and camouflage yourself in order to obtain a better life. In God’s house, it is precisely the opposite: The more deceitful you are, and the more you employ sophisticated manipulation to put on an act and package yourself, the less able you are to stand firm and the more God despises and rejects you. God has predestined that only honest people can be a part of the kingdom of heaven. If you are not honest, and if, in your life, your practice is not directed toward being honest and you do not reveal your own true face, then you will never have any chance of gaining God’s work or praise.

Excerpted from “The Most Fundamental Practice of Being an Honest Person” in Records of
Christ’s Talks

Only if people seek to be honest can they know how deeply corrupted they are and whether or not they have any human likeness; only when they are practicing honesty can they become aware of how many lies they tell and how deeply hidden their deceit and dishonesty are. Only

while having the experience of practicing being honest can people gradually come to know the truth of their own corruption and recognize their own nature essence, and only then can their corrupt dispositions be constantly purified. Only in the course of their corrupt dispositions being constantly purified will people be able to gain the truth. Take your time experiencing these words. God does not perfect those who are deceitful. If your heart is not honest—if you are not an honest person—then you will never be gained by God. Likewise, you will never gain the truth, and will also be incapable of gaining God. If you cannot gain God and you do not understand the truth, then what does this mean? It means that you are hostile to God, you are incompatible with Him, and He is not your God. And if God is not your God, then you cannot attain salvation. If you cannot attain salvation, you will forever be a bitter enemy of God, and your outcome will be set. Thus, if people wish to be saved, then they must start by being honest. There is a sign that marks those who shall ultimately be gained by God. Do you know what it is? It is written in Revelation, in the Bible: “And in their mouth was found no lie; they are without blemish.” Who are “they”? They are those who are perfected and gained by God, and are saved. How does God describe these people? What are the characteristics and the expressions of their actions? (They are without blemish. They speak no lies.) You should all understand and grasp what speaking no lies means: It means being honest. What does it mean to be without blemish? How does God define someone who is without blemish? Those without blemish are able to fear God and shun evil; they are the ones who can abide by God’s way. Such people are perfect in God’s eyes; they are without blemish.

Excerpted from “Six Indicators of Life Growth” in Records of Christ’s Talks

2. What is a deceitful person? Why are deceitful people unable to attain salvation?

Relevant Words of God:

I take pleasure in those who are not suspicious of others, and I like those who readily accept the truth; toward these two kinds of people I show great care, for in My eyes they are honest people. If you are deceitful, then you will be guarded and suspicious toward all people and matters, and thus your faith in Me will be built upon a foundation of suspicion. I could never acknowledge such faith. Lacking true faith, you are even more devoid of true love. And if you

are liable to doubt God and speculate about Him at will, then you are, without question, the most deceitful of all people. You speculate whether God can be like man: unpardonably sinful, of petty character, devoid of fairness and reason, lacking a sense of justice, given to vicious tactics, treacherous and cunning, pleased by evil and darkness, and so on. Is not the reason that people have such thoughts because they lack the slightest knowledge of God? Such faith is nothing short of sin! There are even some who believe that the ones who please Me are precisely those who flatter and bootlick, and that those lacking in such skills will be unwelcome in the house of God and will lose their place there. Is this the only knowledge you have acquired after all these years? Is this what you have gained? And your knowledge of Me does not stop at these misunderstandings; even worse is your blasphemy against God's Spirit and vilification of Heaven. This is why I say that such faith as yours will only cause you to stray further from Me and be in greater opposition against Me.

Excerpted from "How to Know the God on Earth" in The Word Appears in the Flesh

All those who believe in God, yet do not pursue the truth, have no way of escaping from Satan's influence. All those who do not live their lives with honesty, who behave one way in front of others but another way behind their backs, who give the appearance of humility, patience, and love though their essence is insidious, cunning, and without loyalty to God—such people are typical representatives of those who live under the influence of darkness; they are the ilk of the serpent. Those who only ever believe in God for their own benefit, who are self-righteous and haughty, who show off, and who protect their own status are people who love Satan and oppose the truth. These people resist God and belong entirely to Satan. Those who are not attentive to God's burdens, who do not serve God wholeheartedly, who are always concerned with their own self-interests and the interests of their families, who are unable to abandon everything to expend themselves for God, and who never live by His words are people outside of His words. Such people cannot receive God's praise.

Excerpted from "Escape From the Influence of Darkness, and You Will Be Gained by God" in The Word
Appears in the Flesh

Are your goals and intentions made with Me in mind? Are all your words and actions said and done in My presence? I examine all of your thoughts and ideas. Do you not feel guilty? You

put on a false front for others to see and you calmly assume an air of self-righteousness; you do this to shield yourself. You do this to conceal your evil, and you even think up ways to push that evil onto someone else. What treachery dwells in your heart!

Excerpted from “Chapter 13” of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh

Some people are always claiming that everything they do is for the church when, in fact, they are working to benefit themselves. People like this have the wrong kind of intention. They are crooked and deceitful and most of the things that they do are for their own personal benefit. This kind of person does not pursue love of God; their hearts still belong to Satan and cannot turn toward God. Thus God has no way of obtaining this kind of person.

Excerpted from “Genuine Love for God Is Spontaneous” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

Your destination and your fate are very important to you—they are of grave concern. You believe, if you do not do things with great care, it will mean that you cease to have a destination, that you have destroyed your own fate. But has it ever occurred to you that people who expend effort solely for the sake of their destination are laboring in vain? Such efforts are not genuine—they are fakery and deceit. If that is the case, then those who work only for the sake of their destination are on the threshold of their final defeat, for failure in one’s belief in God is caused by deceit. I have previously said that I do not like to be flattered or fawned on, or treated with enthusiasm. I like honest people to face up to My truth and My expectations. Even more, I like it when people are able to show the utmost care and consideration for My heart, and when they are even capable of giving up everything for My sake. Only in this way can My heart be comforted.

Excerpted from “On Destination” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

Those who are deceitful are perfunctory when they perform their duty, they do not do it well, and such people find it hard to attain salvation. Tell Me, when deceitful people put the truth into practice, do they engage in deceit? Putting the truth into practice requires them to pay a price, to relinquish their own interests, to lay themselves bare to others. But they hold something back; when they speak, they only give half away, and hold on to the rest. Others always have to guess what they mean, always have to connect the dots to work out their meaning.

They always give themselves room to maneuver, they give themselves some wiggle room. As soon as others see that they are deceitful, they do not want to interact with them, they always take precautions when dealing with them, and do not believe anything they say, wondering whether what they said is true or false, and how much of it is diluted. And so, in their hearts, people often lose trust in them, they carry very little weight in people's hearts, or no weight at all. Such is your status and the weight you carry in people's hearts. And so how will you be looked upon by God in His presence? Compared to man, God sees people more accurately, more incisively, and more realistically.

Excerpted from "The Most Fundamental Practice of Being an Honest Person" in Records of Christ's Talks

I love all who sincerely expend themselves for Me and devote themselves to Me. I hate all who are born of Me yet who do not know Me, and even resist Me. I will not abandon anyone who is sincerely for Me; rather, I will double that person's blessings. I will doubly punish those who are ungrateful and violate My kindness, and I will not let them off easily. In My kingdom there is no crookedness or deceit, and no worldliness; that is, there is no smell of the dead. Rather, all is rectitude and righteousness; all is purity and openness, with nothing hidden or concealed. Everything is fresh, everything is enjoyment, and everything is edification. Anyone who still reeks of the dead can in no way remain in My kingdom, and will instead be ruled by My iron rod.

Excerpted from "Chapter 70" of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh

I shall chastise everyone born of Me who yet does not know Me in order to make manifest all My wrath, My great power, and My full wisdom. In Me, all is righteous, and there is absolutely no unrighteousness, no deceit, and no crookedness; whosoever is crooked and deceitful must be a son of hell, born in Hades. In Me everything is open; whatever I say shall be accomplished, shall indeed be accomplished; whatever I say shall be established, shall be established, and no one can change or emulate these things because I am the one and only God Himself.

Excerpted from "Chapter 96" of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh

That God asks for people to be honest proves that He truly loathes those who are deceitful, and that He does not like deceitful people. The fact that God does not like deceitful people means that He dislikes their actions, disposition, and motivations; that is, He does not like the way they do things. Therefore, if we are to please God, we must first change our actions and the way in which we exist. Previously, we relied on lies and pretense to live among people, using these as our capital and as the existential basis, life, and foundation by which we conducted ourselves. This was something that God despised. Among the world's unbelievers, if you do not know how to be manipulative or deceitful, then it could be difficult for you to stand firm. You could only tell lies, engage in trickery, and use conniving and insidious methods to protect and camouflage yourself in order to obtain a better life. In God's house, it is precisely the opposite: The more deceitful you are, and the more you employ sophisticated manipulation to put on an act and package yourself, the less able you are to stand firm and the more God despises and rejects you. God has predestined that only honest people can be a part of the kingdom of heaven. If you are not honest, and if, in your life, your practice is not directed toward being honest and you do not reveal your own true face, then you will never have any chance of gaining God's work or praise.

Excerpted from "The Most Fundamental Practice of Being an Honest Person" in Records of Christ's Talks

You should know whether there is true faith and true loyalty within you, whether you have a record of suffering for God, and whether you have wholly submitted to God. If you lack these, then there remains within you disobedience, deceit, greed, and complaint. As your heart is far from honest, you have never received positive recognition from God and never lived in the light. How one's fate will work out in the end hinges upon whether they have an honest and blood-red heart, and whether they have a pure soul. If you are someone who is very dishonest, someone with a heart of malice, someone with an unclean soul, then you are sure to end up in the place where man is punished, as is written in the record of your fate. If you claim to be very honest, and yet never manage to act in accordance with the truth or to speak a word of truth, then are you still waiting for God to reward you? Do you still hope for God to regard you as the apple of His eye? Is such thinking not preposterous? You deceive God in all things; how could the house of God accommodate one such as you, whose hands are unclean?

Excerpted from "Three Admonitions" in The Word Appears in the Flesh

Many people would rather be condemned to hell than speak and act honestly. Little wonder that I have other treatment in store for those who are dishonest. Of course, I know full well how difficult it is for you to be honest. Because you are all so clever, so good at measuring people with your own petty yardstick, this makes My work much simpler. And since you each hug your secrets to your bosom, well then, I shall send you, one by one, into disaster to be “schooled” by fire, so that thereafter you may become dead set on your belief in My words. Ultimately, I shall wrest from your mouth the words “God is a faithful God,” whereupon you shall beat upon your breast and lament, “Devious is the heart of man!” What will be your state of mind at this time? I imagine you will not be as triumphant as you are now. And much less will you be as “profound and abstruse” as you are now. In the presence of God, some people are all prim and proper, they take pains to be “well-behaved,” yet they bare their fangs and brandish their claws in the presence of the Spirit. Would you number such people among the ranks of the honest? If you are a hypocrite, someone who is skilled in “interpersonal relations,” then I say that you are definitely someone who tries to trifle with God. If your words are riddled with excuses and valueless justifications, then I say that you are someone who is loath to put the truth into practice. If you have many confidences that you are reluctant to share, if you are highly averse to laying bare your secrets—your difficulties—before others to seek the way of the light, then I say that you are someone who will not attain salvation easily, and who will not easily emerge from the darkness.

Excerpted from “Three Admonitions” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

“If you have many confidences that you are reluctant to share, if you are highly averse to laying bare your secrets—your difficulties—before others to seek the way of the light, then I say that you are someone who will not attain salvation easily, and who will not easily emerge from the darkness.” Here God has granted humans a path of practice, and if you do not practice in this way, and merely shout slogans and doctrines, then you are someone who will not receive salvation easily. This is indeed linked to salvation. Being saved is very important to each and every person. Has God referred to this anywhere else? Elsewhere, He seldom refers to the difficulty of being saved, but He does speak of it when talking about being honest: If you do not act in this way, then you are someone who is very difficult to save. “Not receiving salvation easily”

means it is difficult for you to be saved and you are incapable of taking the right track to salvation, and so it is impossible to save you. God says this in order to give people some leeway; that is to say, you are not easy to save, but on the other hand, if you put God's words into practice, there will be hope for you and you can be saved. If you do not put God's words into practice, and if you never dissect your own secrets or difficulties, or never tell anyone these private things or open up to people about them, never commune with people about them, or dissect them with people in order to lay yourself bare, then there is no possibility of you being saved. And why is that? If you do not lay yourself bare or dissect yourself in this way, your corrupt disposition will never change. And if you are unable to change, you can forget about being saved. This is what God means in saying these words, and this is God's will.

... God says, "If you have many confidences that you are reluctant to share, if you are highly averse to laying bare your secrets—your difficulties—before others to seek the way of the light, then I say that you are someone who will not attain salvation easily...." Being honest relates to attaining salvation. What do you say, is being honest important? (Yes.) What God wants are people who are honest. If you are capable of lies and deception, you are a deceitful, crooked, and sinister person, and not an honest person. If you are not an honest person, then there is no chance that God will save you, nor can you possibly be saved. You have not changed into someone who is honest, and you say you are already very devout, that you are not arrogant or self-righteous, that you are well able to pay a price, or that you can spread the gospel and bring many people to God. But you are not honest, and you are still deceitful, and have not changed at all. Can you be saved? (No.) And so these words of God remind every one of us that, to be saved, we must first of all be honest in accordance with the words and requirements of God. We must open ourselves up, lay bare our corrupt dispositions, be able to lay bare our motives and secrets, and search for the way of the light.

Excerpted from "The Most Fundamental Practice of Being an Honest Person" in Records of Christ's Talks

3. What are the principles of practice in being an honest person?

Relevant Words of God:

Honesty means giving your heart to God, being genuine with God in all things, being open with Him in all things, never hiding the facts, not trying to deceive those above and below you, and not doing things only to curry favor with God. In short, to be honest is to be pure in your actions and words, and to deceive neither God nor man. ... In the presence of God, some people are all prim and proper, they take pains to be “well-behaved,” yet they bare their fangs and brandish their claws in the presence of the Spirit. Would you number such people among the ranks of the honest? If you are a hypocrite, someone who is skilled in “interpersonal relations,” then I say that you are definitely someone who tries to trifle with God. If your words are riddled with excuses and valueless justifications, then I say that you are someone who is loath to put the truth into practice. If you have many confidences that you are reluctant to share, if you are highly averse to laying bare your secrets—your difficulties—before others to seek the way of the light, then I say that you are someone who will not attain salvation easily, and who will not easily emerge from the darkness. If seeking the way of the truth pleases you well, then you are someone who dwells always in the light. If you are very glad to be a service-doer in the house of God, working diligently and conscientiously in obscurity, always giving and never taking, then I say that you are a loyal saint, because you seek no reward and are simply being an honest person. If you are willing to be candid, if you are willing to expend your all, if you are able to sacrifice your life for God and stand firm in your testimony, if you are honest to the point where you know only to satisfy God and not to consider yourself or take for yourself, then I say that such people are those who are nourished in the light and who shall live forever in the kingdom.

Excerpted from “Three Admonitions” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The most important part of being an honest person is that your heart must be open to God. Afterward, you can learn to be open to other people, to speak honestly and truly, to say what is in your heart, to be a person with dignity, integrity, and character, and to not speak bombastically or falsely or use words to disguise yourself or deceive others. There is yet another aspect of practice involved in being an honest person, which is that one must adopt an honest attitude in the performance of their duty and do it with an honest heart. You must be in accord with the principles and implement them in your practice; it is not a mere matter of talking, nor is merely to have a certain attitude and then tell others to go do things while you rest. Where is the reality of being an honest person while you are resting? It will not do merely to shout slogans

without possessing any reality. God scrutinizes man, and, apart from scrutinizing the innermost heart of man and seeing man's inner heart, He also sees man's behavior and his practice. If you think something in your inner heart but you do not put it into practice, is this the expression of an honest person? To do so is to say one thing and think another; it is to do things which make you look good and it is to make fools of others with your words—just like the Pharisees, who were excellent at reading the scriptures and knew them forward and backward. Yet, when it came time to practice, when they had to pay a price and give up the blessings of status, they did not do so, and they began to judge God and condemn Him and vie for His position. God found that detestable; that was not a good way to tread! Can others trust this kind of person? (No.)

Excerpted from “Only by Being Honest Can One Live Out a True Human Likeness” in Records of Christ's
Talks

When practicing to be an honest person, one first must learn to open their heart to God and pray every day, telling God what is in their heart. Suppose today you have spoken falsely; no one has yet discovered it, and you have not yet mustered up the courage to be open with everyone. At the very least, you must at once take to God the mistakes and falsehoods and lies you have scrutinized and found in your conduct today, and confess your sins, and say: “Oh God, I have told a lie again. I did it for the sake of such-and-such. I beg You to discipline me.” If you have such an attitude, God will accept you, and He will remember it. Perhaps it will be very strenuous and laborious for you to resolve the defect or corrupt disposition of lying, but never fear—God is with you, and He will guide you and help you past this recurring difficulty, giving you the courage not to tell lies or the courage to acknowledge that you have told lies; to acknowledge what lies you have told, why you lied, and what your intentions and aims were; to acknowledge that you are not an honest person; to acknowledge that you are a deceitful person; and He will give you the courage to break through this barrier, and break out of Satan's cage and away from its control. In this way, you will gradually come to live in the light, under God's guidance and blessing. When you have broken through this barrier of fleshly constraints and are able to submit to the truth, you will have become free and liberated. When you live this way, not only will people like you, but God too, will like you. Though you will at times still be capable of wrong actions, and though you will at times still be capable of telling lies, and though you will at times still have your own intentions, as well as selfish motives, and selfish and

contemptible actions and ideas, you can accept God's scrutiny and reveal your heart, your actual state, and your corrupt disposition before God—and thus will you have a correct path of practice. If your path of practice is correct and your direction forward is correct, your prospects will be beautiful and bright. In this way, you will live with your heart at ease; your spirit will be nourished, and you will feel enriched and joyful. If you are unable to break through this barrier of fleshly constraints and are always bound up in emotions and satanic philosophies, and your speech and actions are always furtive and secret, never in broad daylight, then you are one who lives under the domain of Satan. When you understand the truth and are able to break through the barrier of fleshly constraints, you gradually take on a human likeness. You speak and act frankly and straightforwardly, and show others any view or thoughts you may have or anything you have done wrong, so that everyone may see it clearly—and, ultimately, they will say you are a transparent person. What is a transparent person? It is someone who does not tell lies, who is exceedingly honest in speech, and whose words everyone believes to be true. Even if they tell a lie unconsciously or say something wrong, everyone is able to forgive them, knowing that they do it unconsciously. Once they are aware of it, they will come back to apologize and put it right. This is a transparent person. Everyone likes and can trust this kind of person. If you reach this level and gain God's and others' trust, you will have accomplished no simple task—this is the highest dignity a person can have, and only such people have self-respect.

Excerpted from “Only by Being Honest Can One Live Out a True Human Likeness” in Records of Christ's Talks

Today, most people are too afraid to bring their actions before God; while you may deceive His flesh, you cannot deceive His Spirit. Any matter that cannot withstand God's scrutiny is at odds with the truth, and should be cast aside; to do otherwise is to commit a sin against God. So, you must lay your heart before God at all times, when you pray, when you speak and fellowship with your brothers and sisters, and when you perform your duty and go about your business. When you fulfill your function, God is with you, and so long as your intent is correct and is for the work of God's house, He will accept all that you do; you should sincerely devote yourself to fulfilling your function. When you pray, if you have love for God in your heart and seek God's care, protection and scrutiny, if these things are your intent, your prayers will be effective. For example, when you pray at meetings, if you open your heart and pray to God and

tell Him what is in your heart without speaking falsehoods, then your prayers will surely be effective.

Excerpted from “God Perfects Those Who Are After His Own Heart” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

Today, all who cannot accept God’s scrutiny cannot receive His approval, and those who do not know God incarnate cannot be perfected. Look at all that you do, and see if it can be brought before God. If you cannot bring all that you do before God, this shows that you are an evildoer. Can evildoers be perfected? All that you do, every action, every intention, and every reaction should be brought before God. Even your daily spiritual life—your prayers, your closeness to God, how you eat and drink of God’s words, your fellowship with your brothers and sisters, and your life within the church—and your service in partnership can be brought before God for His scrutiny. It is such practice that will help you achieve growth in life. The process of accepting God’s scrutiny is the process of purification. The more you can accept God’s scrutiny, the more you are purified and the more you are in accord with God’s will, so that you will not be drawn into debauchery, and your heart will live in His presence. The more you accept His scrutiny, the greater are Satan’s humiliation and your ability to forsake the flesh. So, the acceptance of God’s scrutiny is a path of practice people should follow. No matter what you do, even when communing with your brothers and sisters, you can bring your acts before God and seek His scrutiny and aim to obey God Himself; this will make what you practice much more correct. Only if you bring all you do before God and accept God’s scrutiny can you be someone who lives in the presence of God.

Excerpted from “God Perfects Those Who Are After His Own Heart” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

As an honest person, you must first lay your heart bare so that everyone can look into it, see all that you are thinking, and glimpse your true face; you must not try to disguise or package yourself to look good. Only then will people trust you and consider you honest. This is the most fundamental practice, and the prerequisite, of being an honest person. You are always pretending, always feigning holiness, virtuousness, greatness, and feigning high moral qualities. You do not let people see your corruption and your failings. You present a false image to people so that they believe you are upstanding, great, self-sacrificing, impartial, and selfless. This is deceitfulness. Do not put on a disguise, and do not package yourself; instead, lay yourself and

your heart bare for others to see. If you can lay your heart bare for others to see, and lay bare all your thoughts and plans—both positive and negative—then are you not being honest? If you can lay yourself bare for others to see, then God, too, will see you and say, “You have laid yourself bare for others to see, and so you are surely honest before Me, too.” If you only lay yourself bare to God when out of view of other people, and always pretend to be great and virtuous or just and selfless when in their company, then what will God think and say? He will say, “You are genuinely deceitful; you are purely hypocritical and petty; and you are not an honest person.” God will condemn you thusly. If you wish to be an honest person, then regardless of what you do before God or others, you should be able to open yourself up and lay yourself bare. Is this easy to achieve? It requires time; it requires an internal struggle, and we must practice constantly. Little by little, our hearts will open up and we will be able to lay ourselves bare.

Excerpted from “The Most Fundamental Practice of Being an Honest Person” in Records of Christ’s Talks

What are the expressions of an honest person? The crux of the matter is to practice the truth in all things. If you say you are honest, but you always put God’s words to the back of your mind and do whatever you want, then is this an expression of an honest person? You say, “My caliber is low, but I am honest at heart.” When a duty falls to you, however, you are afraid of suffering or that if you do not fulfill it well, you will have to bear the responsibility, so you make excuses to shirk it. Is this an expression of an honest person? It clearly is not. How, then, should an honest person behave? They should accept and obey, and then be utterly devoted in doing their duties to the best of their ability, striving to meet God’s will. This is expressed in several ways. One way is that you should accept your duty with honesty, not think about anything else, and not be half-hearted about it. Do not plot for your own benefit. This is an expression of honesty. Another way is putting all your strength and heart into it. You say, “This is everything I can do; I will put it all into play, and dedicate it completely to God.” Is this not an expression of honesty? You dedicate all you have and all you can do—this is an expression of honesty. If you are unwilling to dedicate all you have, if you keep it hidden and tucked away, are slippery in your actions, evade your duty and get someone else to do it because you are afraid of having to bear the consequences for not doing a good job, then is this being honest? No, it is not. Being an honest person, therefore, is not merely a matter of having a desire. If you do not put it into

practice when things befall you, then you are not an honest person. When you encounter issues, you must practice the truth and have practical expressions. This is the only way to be an honest person, and only these are the expressions of an honest heart. Some people feel that to be an honest person, it is enough to just speak the truth and not tell lies. Is the definition of being honest really so narrow? Absolutely not. You must reveal your heart and give it to God; this is the attitude an honest person ought to have. Therefore, honesty is so very precious. What is the implication here? It is that this heart is able to control your behavior and control your states. This heart is so precious. If you have this sort of honesty, then you should live in this sort of state, exhibit this sort of behavior, and have this sort of expenditure.

Excerpted from “Only by Being an Honest Person Can One Be Truly Happy” in Records of Christ’s Talks

No matter what you encounter while performing your duty—negativity and weakness, or being in a bad mood after being dealt with—you should treat it properly, and you must also seek the truth and understand God’s will. By doing these things, you will have a path to practice. If you wish to do a good job in fulfilling your duty, then you must not be affected by your mood. No matter how negative or weak you are feeling, you should practice the truth in everything you do, with absolute strictness, and sticking to the principles. If you do this, then not only will other people approve of you, but God will like you, too. As such, you will be a person who is responsible and who shoulders a burden; you will be a genuinely good person who actually fulfills your duties up to standard and who fully lives out the likeness of a genuine person. Such people are purified and achieve real transformation when fulfilling their duties, and they can be said to be honest in God’s eyes. Only honest people can persevere with practicing the truth and succeed in acting with principle, and can fulfill their duties up to standard. People who act with principle fulfill their duties meticulously when they are in a good mood; they do not work in a perfunctory manner, they are not arrogant and they do not show themselves off to make others think highly of them. When they are in a bad mood, however, they complete their everyday tasks just as earnestly and responsibly, and even if they encounter something that is detrimental to the fulfilment of their duties, or that puts a bit of pressure on them or causes a disruption while they do their duties, they are still able to quiet their hearts before God and pray, saying, “No matter how big a problem I come up against—even if the heavens come tumbling down—as long as God allows me to keep on living, I am determined to do my best to fulfill my

duty. Every day I am allowed to live is a day I will work hard at performing my duty so that I am worthy of this duty bestowed upon me by God, as well as this breath He has put in my body. Regardless of how much difficulty I might be in, I will set it all aside, for fulfilling my duty is of the utmost importance!” Those who are not affected by any person, event, thing, or environment, who are not controlled by any mood or external situation, and who put their duties and the commissions with which God has entrusted them first and foremost—they are the people who are loyal to God and who genuinely submit to Him. People like this have attained life entry and have entered truth reality. This is one of the most practical and genuine expressions of living out the truth.

Excerpted from “Life Entry Must Begin With the Experience of Performing One’s Duty” in Records of Christ’s Talks

VII. Truths of Performing One’s Duty

1. What is it to perform one’s duty? How should one regard their duty?

Relevant Words of God:

There is no correlation between the duty of man and whether he is blessed or cursed. Duty is what man ought to fulfill; it is his heaven-sent vocation, and should not depend on recompense, conditions, or reasons. Only then is he doing his duty. To be blessed is when someone is made perfect and enjoys God’s blessings after experiencing judgment. To be cursed is when someone’s disposition does not change after they have experienced chastisement and judgment, it is when they do not experience being made perfect but are punished. But regardless of whether they are blessed or cursed, created beings should fulfill their duty, doing what they ought to do, and doing what they are able to do; this is the very least that a person, a person who pursues God, should do. You should not do your duty only to be blessed, and you should not refuse to act for fear of being cursed. Let Me tell you this one thing: Man’s performance of his duty is what he ought to do, and if he is incapable of performing his duty, then this is his rebelliousness. It is through the process of doing his duty that man is gradually changed, and it is through this process that he demonstrates his loyalty. As such, the more you are able to do

your duty, the more truth you shall receive, and the more real your expression shall become. Those who merely go through the motions in doing their duty and do not seek the truth shall be eliminated in the end, for such people do not do their duty in the practice of truth, and do not practice truth in the fulfillment of their duty. They are those who remain unchanged and will be cursed. Not only are their expressions impure, but everything they express is wicked.

Excerpted from “The Difference Between the Ministry of God Incarnate and the Duty of Man” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

How does duty come into being? To speak broadly, it comes into being as a result of God’s management work of bringing salvation to humanity; to speak specifically, as God’s management work unfolds amongst mankind, various tasks arise that need to be done, and they require people to cooperate and complete them. This has given rise to responsibilities and missions for people to fulfill, and these responsibilities and missions are the duties God bestows upon mankind. Therefore, in God’s house, the various tasks that require people’s cooperation are the duties they should fulfill. So, are there differences between duties in terms of better and worse, lofty and lowly, or great and small? Such differences do not exist; as long as something has to do with God’s management work, is a requirement of His carrying that work out, or is a requirement of the work of His house, then it is a person’s duty. This is the definition and origin of duty. Without God’s work of management, would people on earth—regardless of how they live—have duties? (No.) Now you see clearly that there is a direct relationship between the duties of created beings and God’s management work of the salvation of mankind. It can be said that without God’s salvation of mankind, and without the management work He has launched on the earth, among man, people would not have any duties to speak of. Looking at it from this perspective, duty is important for every person who follows God, is it not? Speaking broadly, you are taking part in the work of God’s management plan; more specifically, you are cooperating with God at different times and among different groups of people to fulfill the requirements of various types of jobs. Regardless of what your duty is, it is a mission God has given you. Sometimes you may be required to look after or safeguard an important object. This might be a comparatively trivial matter that can only be said to be a responsibility of yours, but it is a task God has given you; you received it from Him. To put it in broader terms, God gives you a commission, which might be to spread the gospel or lead a church, or it might be work

that is even more dangerous and more important. Regardless, as long as it has to do with God's work and the work of His house, people should accept it as a duty from God. Duty, to put it in even broader terms, is a person's mission, a commission entrusted by God; more specifically, it is your responsibility, your obligation. Given that it is your mission, a commission entrusted to you by God, and is your responsibility and obligation, it has nothing to do with your personal affairs.

Excerpted from "What Is the Adequate Performance of Duty?" in Records of Christ's Talks

A duty is not managed by you—it is not your own career or your own work; instead, it is God's work. God's work requires your cooperation, which gives rise to your duty. The part of God's work with which man must cooperate is his duty. The duty is a portion of God's work—it is not your career, not your domestic affairs nor your personal affairs in life. Whether your duty is to deal with external or internal affairs, it is the work of the house of God, it forms one part of God's management plan, and it is the commission God has given to you. It is not your personal business....

No matter what duty you fulfill, you must always seek to grasp God's will and understand what His requirements are regarding your duty; only then will you be able to handle matters in a principled way. In performing your duty, you absolutely cannot go by your personal preferences, by just doing whatever you would like to do, whatever you would be happy and comfortable doing, or whatever would make you look good. If you forcibly impose your personal preferences on God or practice them as though they were the truth, observing them as if they were the truth principles, then that is not fulfilling your duty, and performing your duty in this way will not be remembered by God. Some people do not understand the truth, and they do not know what it means to fulfill their duties well. They feel that since they have put their heart and effort into it, forsaken their flesh and suffered, then the fulfilling of their duties should be up to standard—but why, then, is God always dissatisfied? Where have these people gone wrong? Their mistake was to not seek out God's requirements, and instead act according to their own ideas; they treated their own desires, preferences, and selfish motives as the truth, and they treated them as though they were what God loved, as though they were His standards and requirements. They saw what they believed to be correct, good, and beautiful to be the truth; this is wrong. In fact, even though people might sometimes think something is right and that it

accords with the truth, that does not necessarily mean that it accords with God's will. The more people think something is right, the more cautious they should be and the more they should seek the truth to see whether what they are thinking meets God's requirements. If it happens to run counter to His requirements and counter to His words, then you are wrong to think it is right, it is but a human thought, and it will not necessarily accord with the truth no matter how right you think it is. Your determination of right and wrong must be based solely on God's words, and no matter how right you think something is, unless there is a basis for it in God's words, you must discard it. What is duty? It is a commission entrusted by God to people. So how should you fulfill your duty? By acting in accordance with God's requirements and standards, and by basing your behavior on the truth principles rather than on human subjective desires. In this way, your fulfilling of your duties will be up to standard.

Excerpted from "Only by Seeking the Principles of the Truth Can One Perform Their Duty Well" in Records
of Christ's Talks

Let us put aside antichrists for the time being and speak instead of how God works to manage mankind, save mankind, and thereby give rise to the duty of mankind; and regardless of what duty man performs, is there anything more proper? This is the most beautiful and righteous thing among man. Creatures of God should perform their duty; you live under God's dominion, you accept all that is provided by God, everything that comes from God, and so you should fulfill your responsibilities and obligations—this is your duty. From this it can be seen that for mankind to perform the duty of a creature of God is more righteous, beautiful, and noble than anything else done whilst living in the world of man; nothing among mankind is more meaningful or worthy, and nothing brings greater meaning and worth to the life of a creature of God, than performing the duty of a creature of God. For a creature of God to be able to perform the duty of a creature of God, to be able to satisfy the Creator, is the most wonderful thing among mankind, and is something that should be celebrated among mankind. Anything entrusted by the Creator to creatures of God should be unconditionally accepted by them; for mankind, this is something blessed and glorious, and for all of mankind who perform the duty of a creature of God, nothing is more wonderful or worthy of commemoration—it is something positive. And as for how the Creator treats those who perform the duty of a creature of God, and what He promises them, this is a matter for the Creator, and no business of created mankind.

To put it bluntly, this is up to God; you will get whatever God gives you, and if He gives you nothing, then there is nothing you can say about it. When a creature of God accepts God's commission, and cooperates with the Creator to perform their duty and do what they can, this is not a transaction or a trade; creatures of God must not try to use any attitude or thing to barter for blessings or promises from God. When the Creator entrusts this work to you, it is right and proper that, as creatures of God, you accept this duty and commission; there is no transaction involved. On the Creator's side, He is willing to entrust this commission to each and every one of you; and on created mankind's side, people should gladly accept this duty, treating it as their life's obligation, as the worth they should live out in this life. There is no transaction here, this is not an equivalent exchange, much less does it involve any reward or any kind of interpretation. This is not a trade, it is not an exchange for the price people pay or the labor they contribute when performing their duty. God has never said that, and it should not be understood thus by man.

Excerpted from "For Leaders and Workers, Choosing a Path Is of Utmost Importance (15)" in Records of Christ's Talks

How you regard God's commissions is a very serious matter! If you cannot complete what God has entrusted to you, then you are not fit to live in His presence and should be punished. It is Heaven's law and earth's principle for humans to complete whatever commissions God entrusts to them; this is their highest responsibility, just as important as their very lives. If you do not take God's commissions seriously, then you are betraying Him in the most grievous way; in this, you are more lamentable than Judas, and should be cursed. People must gain a thorough understanding of how to view what God entrusts to them and, at the very least, must comprehend that the commissions He entrusts to humanity are exaltations and special favors from God; they are most glorious things. Everything else can be abandoned; even if one must sacrifice one's own life, he must still fulfill God's commission.

Excerpted from "How to Know Man's Nature" in Records of Christ's Talks

The thing that most directly and perceptibly reflects the bond that links you to God is how you treat the matters God entrusts to you and the tasks He assigns you, and the attitude you have. What is observable most directly is this issue. When you have grasped this crucial point

and fulfilled the commission God has given to you, your relationship with God will be normal. If, when God entrusts a task to you, or tells you to perform a certain duty, your attitude is cursory and apathetic, and you do not see it as a priority, is this not precisely the opposite of giving all your heart and strength? So, your attitude when performing your duty is of crucial importance, as are the method and path you choose. What is the result of performing your duty carelessly and perfunctorily, and treating it lightly? It is the poor performance of your duty, though you are capable of performing it well—your performance will not be up to standard, and God will not be satisfied with your attitude toward your duty. If, originally, you had sought and cooperated normally; if you had devoted all your thoughts to it; if you had put your heart and soul into doing it, and put all your effort into it, and had devoted a period of your labor, your striving, and your thoughts to it, or had devoted some time to referencing materials, and committed the whole of your mind and body to it; had you been capable of such cooperation, then God would be up ahead, guiding you. You do not need to exert much strength; when you spare no effort in cooperating, God will have already arranged everything for you. If you are wily and treacherous, and, halfway through the job, you have a change of heart and go astray, then God will show no interest in you; you will have lost this opportunity, and God will say, “You are not good enough; you are useless. Go stand off to the side. You like being lazy, no? You like being deceitful and cunning, do you not? You like resting? Well then, take a rest.” God will give this grace and opportunity to the next person. What do you say: Is this a loss or a win? It is an enormous loss!

Excerpted from “How to Solve the Problem of Being Careless and Perfunctory When Performing Your Duty” in Records of Christ’s Talks

Some people see fulfilling their duties as capital, some see fulfilling their duties as their own personal tasks, and some see fulfilling their duties as their own work, enterprises, or private matters, or see a duty as a sort of pastime, entertainment, or hobby to kill the time. In short, no matter what sort of attitude you have toward your duty, if you did not receive it from God, and if you are unable to treat it as a task that a created being within God’s management work should do or with which it should cooperate, then what you are doing is not fulfilling your duty. Why do I raise these topics? What problems am I trying to resolve by fellowshipping about them? I am attempting to fix the incorrect attitudes people have toward their duties. Once they

have understood these truths, their attitudes toward their duties will gradually come in line with the truth and conform to its principles, as well as God's requirements. At the very least, your perspective and attitude with regard to your duty should be in line with the truth and God's requirements. Duties are tasks entrusted to people by God; they are missions for people to complete. However, a duty is certainly not your own personally managed business, nor is it a counterweight to your standing out from the crowd. Some people use their duties as opportunities to engage in their own management and form cliques; some to satisfy their desires; some to fill the voids they feel inside; and some to satisfy their trust-to-luck mentality, thinking that as long as they fulfill their duties, they will have a share in God's house and in the wonderful destination God arranges for man. Such attitudes about duty are incorrect; they disgust God and must be urgently resolved.

Excerpted from "What Is the Adequate Performance of Duty?" in Records of Christ's Talks

What is the most basic attitude toward duty that one should have? If you said, "Since God's house has given this duty to me, it belongs to me, and I can fulfill it however I want," would this be an acceptable attitude? It absolutely would not. If you have such thoughts, they will cause trouble, and it means you have started down a bad path. You must not think this way. So, what is the correct way of thinking? First, you must seek the truth and principles. Seek these things: how this duty should be fulfilled, what God requires, what the principles are of God's requirements of people, what you should do, which parts of the work you should complete, and how you should act to be utterly devoted and responsible while fulfilling this duty. So, to whom should devotion be given? To God—you should be devoted to Him, responsible toward other people, and, as for yourself, you should adhere to principle and uphold your duty. What does it mean to adhere to principle? To adhere to principle is to act in accordance with God's words and the truth. What, then, does it mean to uphold duty? Say, for example, a duty has been given to you for a year or two, but, so far, no one has checked up on you. What should you do? If no one checks up on you, does that mean the duty is gone? Pay no mind to whether anyone checks up on you or sees how you are doing; this task was entrusted to you, and, though it is not your personal business, it was assigned to you, and it is your responsibility. You should consider how this job should be done and how it can be done well, and that is how you should do it. If you are always waiting for others to check up on you, for them to supervise you and urge you on, is this

the attitude you should have in your duty? What kind of attitude is this? This is a passive attitude; it is not the attitude you should adopt toward your duty.

Excerpted from “What Is the Adequate Performance of Duty?” in Records of Christ’s Talks

You should each do your own duty to the best of your ability, with open and honest hearts, and be willing to pay whatever price is necessary. As you have said, when the day comes, God will not be remiss toward anyone who has suffered or paid a price for Him. This kind of conviction is worth holding on to, and it is right that you should never forget it. Only in this way can I put My mind at ease about you. Otherwise, you will forever be people about whom I cannot put My mind at ease, and you will forever be the objects of My distaste. If all of you can follow your conscience and give your all for Me, sparing no effort for My work, and devoting the energy of a lifetime to My gospel work, then will My heart not often leap for joy on your account? This way, I will be able to put My mind entirely at ease regarding you, won’t I?

Excerpted from “On Destination” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

Man’s performance of his duty is, in actuality, the accomplishment of all that is inherent within man, which is to say, that which is possible for man. It is then that his duty is fulfilled. The defects of man during his service are gradually reduced through progressive experience and the process of his undergoing judgment; they do not hinder or affect man’s duty. Those who cease to serve or yield and fall back for fear that there may be drawbacks to their service are the most cowardly of all. If people cannot express what they ought to express during service or achieve what is inherently possible for them, and instead fool about and go through the motions, they have lost the function that a created being should have. Such people are what are known as “mediocrities”; they are useless refuse. How can such people properly be called created beings? Are they not corrupt beings that shine on the outside but are rotten within? If a man calls himself God yet is unable to express the being of divinity, do the work of God Himself, or represent God, he is undoubtedly not God, for he has not the substance of God, and that which God can inherently achieve does not exist within him. If man loses what is inherently attainable by him, he can no longer be considered man, and he is not worthy to stand as a created being or come before God and serve Him. Moreover, he is not worthy to receive the grace of God or to be watched over, protected, and made perfect by God. Many who have lost the trust of God

go on to lose the grace of God. Not only do they not despise their misdeeds, but they brazenly propagate the idea that the way of God is incorrect, and the rebellious ones even deny the existence of God. How can such people, who are possessed of such rebelliousness, be entitled to enjoy the grace of God? Those who do not perform their duty are very rebellious against God, and owe much to Him, yet they turn around and lambaste that God is wrong. How could such kind of man be worthy of being made perfect? Is this not the precursor to being eliminated and punished? People who do not do their duty before God are already guilty of the most heinous of crimes, for which even death is an insufficient punishment, yet they have the gall to argue with God and match themselves against Him. What is the worth of perfecting such people? When people fail to fulfill their duty, they should feel guilt and indebtedness; they ought to despise their weakness and uselessness, their rebelliousness and corruption, and more over, ought to give their life to God. Only then are they created beings who truly love God, and only such people are worthy of enjoying the blessings and promise of God, and of being made perfect by Him. And what of the majority of you? How do you treat the God who lives among you? How have you performed your duty before Him? Have you done all you were called upon to do, even at the expense of your own life? What have you sacrificed? Have you not received much from Me? Can you discern? How loyal are you to Me? How have you served Me? And what of all that I have bestowed upon you and have done for you? Have you taken measure of it all? Have you all judged and compared this with what little conscience you have within you? Who could your words and actions be worthy of? Could it be that such minuscule sacrifice of yours is worthy of all I have bestowed upon you? I have no other choice and have been wholeheartedly devoted to you, yet you harbor wicked intentions and are half-hearted toward Me. That is the extent of your duty, your only function. Is this not so? Do you not know that you have utterly failed to perform the duty of a created being? How can you be considered a created being?

Excerpted from “The Difference Between the Ministry of God Incarnate and the Duty of Man” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

2. What is meant by “leave everything behind and follow God”?

Bible Verses for Reference:

“If any man come to Me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brothers, and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple” (Luk 14:26).

“Whoever he be of you that forsakes not all that he has, he cannot be My disciple” (Luk 14:33).

“Truly I say to you, There is no man that has left house, or parents, or brothers, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God’s sake, who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting” (Luk 18:29–30).

Relevant Words of God:

If you can devote your heart, body, and all of your genuine love to God, place them before Him, be completely obedient toward Him, and be absolutely considerate of His will—not for the flesh, not for family, and not for your own personal desires, but for the interests of God’s household, taking God’s word as the principle and foundation in everything—then by doing so, your intentions and your perspectives will all be in the right place, and you will then be a person before God who receives His praise. The people God likes are those who are absolute toward Him; they are the ones who can be devoted solely to Him. Those whom God loathes are the ones who are half-hearted toward Him and who rebel against Him. He loathes those who believe in Him and always want to enjoy Him while yet being unable to completely expend themselves for His sake. He loathes those who say they love Him but who rebel against Him in their hearts; He loathes those who use eloquent, flowery words to engage in deception. Those who are not genuinely dedicated to God or who have not truly submitted before Him are treacherous and overly arrogant by nature. Those who cannot be genuinely submissive in front of the normal, practical God are even more arrogant, and they especially are the dutiful progeny of the archangel. People who truly expend themselves for God lay out their entire being before Him; they genuinely submit to all of His utterances, and are able to put His words into practice. They make God’s words the foundation of their existence, and they are able to search earnestly within God’s words to find out which parts to practice. Such are people who truly live before God.

Excerpted from “Those Who Truly Love God Are Those Who Can Submit Absolutely to His Practicality” in

The Word Appears in the Flesh

You believe in God and follow God, and so in your heart you must love God. You must cast aside your corrupt disposition, you must seek to fulfill God's desire, and you must perform the duty of a creature of God. Since you believe in and follow God, you should offer everything to Him, and should not make personal choices or demands, and you should achieve the fulfillment of God's desire. Since you were created, you should obey the Lord that created you, for you are inherently without dominion over yourself, and have no ability to control your own destiny. Since you are a person who believes in God, you should seek holiness and change. Since you are a creature of God, you should adhere to your duty, and keep your place, and you must not overstep your duty. This is not to constrain you, or to suppress you through doctrine, but is instead the path through which you can perform your duty, and it can be achieved—and should be achieved—by all those who do righteousness. ... As a creature of God, man should seek to perform the duty of a creature of God, and seek to love God without making other choices, for God is worthy of man's love. Those who seek to love God should not seek any personal benefits or seek that which they personally long for; this is the most correct means of pursuit.

Excerpted from "Success or Failure Depends on the Path That Man Walks" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Keep your thoughts on the work of the church. Put aside the prospects of your own flesh, be decisive about family matters, wholeheartedly devote yourself to the work of God, and put God's work first and your own life second. This is the decency of a saint.

Excerpted from "The Ten Administrative Decrees That Must Be Obeyed by God's Chosen People in the Age of Kingdom" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

You must suffer hardship for the truth, you must give yourself to the truth, you must endure humiliation for the truth, and to gain more of the truth you must undergo more suffering. This is what you should do. You must not throw away the truth for the sake of a peaceful family life, and you must not lose your life's dignity and integrity for the sake of momentary enjoyment. You should pursue all that is beautiful and good, and you should pursue a path in life that is more meaningful. If you lead such a vulgar life, and do not pursue any objectives, do you not waste your life? What can you gain from such a life? You should forsake all enjoyments of the

flesh for the sake of one truth, and should not throw away all truths for the sake of a little enjoyment. People like this have no integrity or dignity; there is no meaning to their existence!

Excerpted from “The Experiences of Peter: His Knowledge of Chastisement and Judgment” in The Word

Appears in the Flesh

3. What are the differences between performing one’s duty and rendering service?

Relevant Words of God:

Whatever sort of talents, gifts, or skills one has, if they simply take action and exert themselves in performing their duty, and, no matter what they do, rely on their imaginings or notions, or on their own instincts as they exert themselves, and never seek the will of God, and there is not any concept or need in their heart that says, “I must put the truth into practice. I am performing my duty”; and their sole impetus is to do their job well and complete their tasks, then are they not someone who lives entirely by their gifts, talents, abilities, and skills? Are there many such people? In faith, they think only of exerting themselves, selling their own labor, and selling their own skills. Particularly when God’s house gives people general work to do, most will take such a point of view in doing it. All they do is exert themselves. Sometimes that means using their mouth to speak a bit; sometimes it means using their hands and physical strength; and sometimes it means using their legs to run about. Why is it said that relying on those things to live is using one’s strength, rather than putting the truth into practice? When someone has accepted a task given to them by God’s house, they think only of how to complete it as soon as possible, so that they can give an account to their leaders and gain their praise. They might lay out a step-by-step plan, and they may appear quite earnest, but they focus only on completing the task so that others may see, or when they are doing it, they set their own standards to judge their performance, based on how they can act such that they might arrive at happiness and contentment, and achieve the level of perfection they strive for. No matter what standards they set for themselves, if they are unconnected to the truth, and they do not seek the truth, or to understand and confirm what God asks of them before taking action, instead acting blindly, in bewilderment, then what they are doing is mere exertion. They are acting according

to their own wishes, by dint of their own mind or their gifts, or on strength of their own abilities or skills. What is the consequence of acting this way? The task may have been accomplished, and perhaps no one found fault with it, and you may feel very pleased—but, in the course of doing it, firstly, you did not understand God’s will, and secondly, you did not act with all your heart, all your mind, and all your strength—you did not put your whole heart into it. If you had sought the truth principles and sought the will of God, then you would have accomplished nine-tenths of the task, and you would also have been able to enter into the truth reality and to understand correctly that what you were doing was in accord with God’s will. If you acted carelessly and haphazardly, however, though the task was done, you would not know in your heart how well it was done. You would have no benchmark, and you would not know whether it accorded with God’s will or with the truth. Therefore, to describe any performance of duty in such a state, two words will suffice—exerting yourself.

Everyone who believes in God should understand His will. Only those who perform their duties well can satisfy God, and only by completing the tasks with which He entrusts them can one’s performance of their duty be satisfactory. There are standards for the accomplishment of God’s commission. The Lord Jesus said: “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.” Loving God is one aspect of what He requires of people. In truth, so long as God has given people a commission, and so long as they believe in Him and perform their duty, these are the standards that He requires of them: that they act with all their heart, and with all their soul, and with all their mind, and with all their strength. If you are present but your heart is not—if the memory and thoughts of your mind are present, but your heart is not—and if you accomplish things by means of your own abilities, are you fulfilling God’s commission? So, what is the standard that must be met in order to fulfill God’s commission, and to perform your duty loyally and well? It is to do your duty with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength. If you attempt to perform your duty well without a heart of love for God, it will not work. If your love for God grows ever stronger and more genuine, then you will naturally be able to perform your duty with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.

Excerpted from “Exactly What People Have Been Relying on to Live” in Records of Christ’s Talks

Most people do their duties in this state of mind: "If someone leads, I follow. I will follow them wherever they lead, and do whatever they ask me to do." Taking on responsibility or concern or paying extra attention, on the other hand, are things they cannot achieve and prices they are unwilling to pay. They have a share in exerting physical effort, but they do not share in the responsibility. This is not truly doing one's duty. You must learn to put your heart into your duty; if one has a heart, one must be able to use it. If someone never uses their heart, this proves they are heartless, and a heartless person cannot attain the truth! Why can they not attain the truth? They do not know how to come before God; they do not know how to put their heart into perceiving God's enlightenment and guidance, or how to put their heart into contemplation, or into seeking the truth, or into seeking, understanding and showing consideration for God's will. Do you have those states in which you are able to be quiet before God often, and in which, no matter what arises and no matter your duty, you are able to come often before God, and use your heart to contemplate God's words, and put your heart into seeking the truth and contemplating how your duty should be performed? Are there many such times? Putting your heart into your duty and being able to take responsibility require you to suffer and to pay a price—it is not enough simply to talk about it. If you do not put your heart into your duty, instead wanting always to exert physical effort, then your duty will certainly not be done well. You will simply go through the motions and nothing more, and you will not know how well you have done your duty. If you put your heart into it, you will gradually come to understand the truth; if you do not, then you will not. When you put your heart into performing your duty and pursuing the truth, you then become gradually able to understand God's will, to discover your own corruption and deficiencies, and to master all your various states. If you do not use your heart to examine yourself, and focus only on making external efforts, then you will be unable to discover the different states that arise in your heart and all the reactions you have to different external environments; if you do not use your heart to examine yourself, then it will be hard for you to resolve the issues in your heart. Therefore, you must use your heart and your honesty to praise and worship God. To use your heart and honesty to worship God, you must have a heart that is quiet and sincere; in the deepest recesses of your heart, you must know to seek God's will and the truth, and you must contemplate how to do your duty well, contemplating which parts of your duty you do not yet understand and how to do your duty better. Only by thinking of these things often in your heart will you be able to gain the truth. If these things are not what

you contemplate often in your heart, and your heart is filled instead with things of the mind or external things, occupied with such things that have nothing to do with using your heart and honesty to worship God—nothing whatsoever to do with it—are you then able to gain the truth? Do you have a relationship with God?

Excerpted from “Only by Being Honest Can One Live Out a True Human Likeness” in Records of Christ’s
Talks

Service-doing means that you do whatever you want to, at least, provided that what you do does not offend God’s disposition. As long as nobody investigates your actions and as long as what you do is passable, then that is good enough. You do not concern yourself with changes of disposition, with doing things in accordance with the truth principles, with satisfying God’s will, and even less with how to submit to God’s orchestrations and arrangements, or with how to do your duty well and give an account of it to God. You pay no mind to any of these things, and this is what is called service-doing. Service-doing is about exerting oneself with all that you have and working as though you were a slave, from morning until night. If you ask such a person, “All these years of bitter, hard work that you have immersed yourself in, what has it all been for?” then they will reply, “Why, so that I may gain blessings.” If you ask them whether their disposition has had some change as a result of all of their years of believing in God, whether they have become certain of God’s existence, whether they have some degree of true understanding or experience of the Creator’s orchestrations and arrangements, the answer to all of these will be a categorical “No,” and they will be unable to speak about any of these things. When there has been no improvement or progression in any of the indicators relating to changes in disposition, such a person just constantly renders service. Supposing a person does service for many years and, without realizing it, comes to understand that they possess a corrupt disposition, that they often rebel against God, that they often utter complaints, that they often are unable to obey God, that they are deeply corrupted, that no matter how God tells them to submit to Him they are unable to do so. They attempt to restrain themselves but this does not work, and neither does cursing themselves or swearing oaths. In the end, they discover: “Man truly does possess a corrupt disposition, and that is why he is able to rebel against God. Whenever something happens people always have their own desires, and they are always researching God’s orchestrations and arrangements. Although they are willing to exert

themselves, the moment something implicates their disposition and their wild ambitions and desires, intentions and wishes, they are unable to forsake them or let them go. They always want to do things in a way that satisfies themselves. This is me, and I am truly a handful to manage! What can be done?” If they have begun to ponder these things, then they already have some small understanding of human ways. If at some time people who are engaged in service-doing are able to take up the real work, are able to focus their minds upon changes of disposition, gain understanding that in fact they also have a corrupt disposition, that they too are arrogant and unable to submit to God, and that it will not do to continue in this way; when the time comes that they are able to think of these things, then they will have begun to turn themselves around and there is hope that their disposition might change and that they might attain salvation. Suppose that someone never thinks of these things, and all they know is how to labor, thinking that finishing the work in their hands is all that is required to complete God’s commission, and that once they have finished exerting themselves they will have properly performed their duty, never thinking about what God’s requirements are, about what the truth is, or about whether they may be counted as someone who obeys God—they never ponder these things. Can someone who approaches their duty in such a way attain salvation? The answer is no. They have not set foot upon the path to attaining salvation or on the right track of belief in God, nor have they established proper relations with God, and yet still they exert themselves and engage in service-doing in the house of God. This kind of person does service in the house of God, and God looks after and protects them, but He does not plan to save them, nor does He deal with them and prune them, nor judge and chastise them, nor subject them to trials or refinement; He only allows them to gain some measure of blessings in this lifetime, and nothing more. If a time comes when these people know to reflect on these things and understand the sermons they hear, they will realize: “So, this is what believing God is all about. Well then, I must seek to attain salvation. If I don’t, and instead settle for rendering service, then that will have nothing to do with belief in God.” They then ponder: “What aspects of a corrupt disposition do I possess? What exactly is this thing, this corrupt disposition? No matter what, first I must submit to God!” These things relate to the truth and to changes of disposition, and there is hope for them.

Excerpted from “Only by Seeking the Principles of the Truth Can One Perform Their Duty Well” in Records
of Christ’s Talks

Your attitude toward your duty is, I'll see how little I can do, what I can get away with; you drag your feet, unconcerned with how long a delay you cause. But if you took things seriously, you would get them done in no time at all. There are some things you do not know how to do, so I give you exact instructions. You do not have to think, you just have to listen and get on with it—but even that is beyond you. Where is your loyalty? It is nowhere to be seen! You are all talk and no heart. Even when your heart understands, you do nothing. This is someone who does not love the truth! If you can see it with your eyes and feel it in your heart but still do nothing, then why even have a heart? Your scrap of conscience does not govern your actions, it does not direct your thoughts—so what use is it? It counts for nothing; it is just decoration. Man's faith is truly pathetic! And what is pathetic about it? Even when he does understand the truth, he does not put it into practice. Even when he thoroughly understands the problem, he does not take responsibility for it; he knows that it is his responsibility, but he does not put his heart into it. If you do not take on the responsibilities that are within your grasp, what is the value of those meager responsibilities that you do undertake? What effect do they have? You are just making a token effort, saying things for the sake of it. You do not put your heart into it, much less all your energy. This is not performing your duty to an acceptable standard, there is no loyalty involved; you are just living by the sweat of your brow, getting by as a follower of God. Is there any significance to faith like this? Such faith is so paltry—what is it worth? When you perform your duty, you must pay a price. You must take it seriously. What does it mean to take it seriously? Taking it seriously does not mean putting in a little effort or suffering some physical torment. What is key is that there is God in your heart, and a burden. In your heart, you must weigh the importance of your duty, and then carry this burden and responsibility in all you do and put your heart into it. You must make yourself worthy of the mission God has given you, as well as everything God has done for you, and His hopes for you. Only doing so is being serious. There is no use in you going through the motions; you may trick people, but you cannot fool God. If there is no real price and no loyalty when you perform your duty, then it is not up to standard. If you do not take your faith in God and performance of your duty seriously; if you always go through the motions and are perfunctory in your actions, like an unbeliever working for their boss; if you just make a token effort, muddling through each day as it comes, ignoring messes when you see them, seeing a spill and not cleaning it up, and indiscriminately dismissing everything that is not to your own benefit—then is this not trouble? How could someone like

this be a member of God's household? Such people are outsiders; they are not of the house of God. In your heart, you are clear about whether you are being true, being serious, when you perform your duty, and God keeps account, too. So, have you ever taken the performance of your duty seriously? Have you ever taken it to heart? Have you treated it as your responsibility, your obligation? Have you taken ownership of it? Have you ever spoken up when you have discovered a problem when performing your duty? If you have never spoken up after discovering a problem, nor even thought to, if you are disinclined to concern yourself with such things, and think the less trouble the better—if that is the principle you take toward them, then you are not performing your duty; you are living by the sweat of your brow, you are doing service. Service-doers do not belong to the house of God. They are employees; after finishing their work they take their money and leave, each goes their own way and becomes a stranger to the other. That is their relationship with the house of God. Members of the house of God are different: They take pains over everything in God's house, they take responsibility, their eyes see what needs doing in God's house and they keep those tasks in mind, they remember everything they think and see, they are emburdened, they have a sense of responsibility—these are members of God's house. Have you reached this point? (No.) Then you still have a long way to go, so you must keep pursuing! If you do not consider yourself a member of God's house and eliminate yourself, then how does God look upon you? God does not treat you as an outsider; it is you who put yourself beyond His door. So, objectively speaking, what kind of person are you exactly? You are not in His house. Does this have anything to do with what God says or determines? It is you who have placed your end and position outside the house of God—who else is there to blame?

Excerpted from "Performing Duty Well Requires a Conscience, at the Very Least" in Records of Christ's
Talks

For some people, no matter what issue they might encounter when performing their duties, they do not seek the truth, and they always act according to their own thoughts, notions, imaginings, and desires. They are constantly satisfying their own selfish desires, and their corrupt dispositions are always in control over their actions. Though they may complete the duties to which they have been assigned, they do not gain any truth. So, what are such people relying on when performing their duties? They are relying neither on the truth nor on God. That

bit of truth that they do understand has not taken up sovereignty in their hearts; they are relying on their own gifts and abilities, on whatever knowledge that they have acquired, and on their talents, as well as on their own willpower or good intentions, to complete these duties. This is a different sort of nature, is it not? Though you may sometimes rely on your naturalness, imagination, notions, knowledge, and learning to fulfill your duty, no issues of principle emerge in some of the things you do. On the surface, it looks as though you have not taken the wrong path, but there is one thing that cannot be overlooked: During the process of performing your duty, if your notions, imaginings, and personal desires never change and are never replaced with the truth, and if your actions and deeds are never done in accordance with the truth principle, then what will the final outcome be? You will become a service-doer. This is precisely what was written in the Bible: “Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name? and in Your name have cast out devils? and in Your name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess to them, I never knew you: depart from Me, you that work iniquity” (Mat 7:22–23). Why does God call these people who exert effort and who render service, “you that work iniquity”? There is one point we can be sure on, and that is that no matter what duties or work these people do, their motivations, impetus, intentions, and thoughts arise entirely from their selfish desires, are totally based on their own ideas and personal interests, and their considerations and plans completely revolve around their reputation, status, vanity, and future prospects. Deep down, they possess no truth, nor do they act in accordance with the truth principle. Thus, what is crucial for you to seek now? (We should seek the truth, and perform our duties in accordance with God’s will and requirements.) What specifically should you do when performing your duties in accordance with God’s requirements? With regard to your intentions and ideas when doing something, you must learn how to discern whether or not they accord with the truth, as well as whether your intentions and ideas are geared toward fulfilling your own selfish desires or the interests of God’s house. If your intentions and ideas accord with the truth, then you can do your duty in line with your thinking; however, if they do not accord with the truth, then you must quickly turn around and abandon that path. That path is not right, and you cannot practice that way; if you continue to walk that path, then you will end up committing evil.

Excerpted from “How to Experience God’s Words in One’s Duties” in Records of Christ’s Talks

Peter's work was the performance of the duty of a creature of God. He did not work in the role of an apostle, but worked whilst pursuing the love for God. The course of Paul's work also contained his personal pursuit: His pursuit was for the sake of nothing more than his hopes for the future, and his desire for a good destination. He did not accept refinement during his work, nor did he accept pruning and dealing. He believed that as long as the work he did satisfied God's desire, and all that he did was pleasing to God, then a reward ultimately awaited him. There were no personal experiences in his work—it was all for its own sake, and not carried out amid the pursuit of change. Everything in his work was a transaction, it contained none of the duty or submission of a creature of God. During the course of his work, there occurred no change in Paul's old disposition. His work was merely of service to others, and was incapable of bringing about changes in his disposition. Paul carried out his work directly, without having been made perfect or dealt with, and he was motivated by reward. Peter was different: He was someone who had undergone pruning and dealing and had undergone refinement. The aim and motivation of the work of Peter were fundamentally different to those of Paul. Although Peter did not do a large amount of work, his disposition underwent many changes, and what he sought was the truth, and real change. His work was not carried out simply for the sake of the work itself. Although Paul did much work, it was all the work of the Holy Spirit, and even though Paul cooperated in this work, he did not experience it. That Peter did much less work was only because the Holy Spirit did not do that much work through him. The quantity of their work did not determine whether they were made perfect; the pursuit of one was in order to receive rewards, and that of the other was in order to achieve an ultimate love for God, and fulfill his duty as a creature of God, to the extent that he could live out a lovely image in order to satisfy God's desire. Externally they were different, and so too were their essences different. You cannot determine who of them was made perfect based on how much work they did. Peter sought to live out the image of one who loves God, to be someone who obeyed God, to be someone who accepted dealing and pruning, and to be someone who fulfilled his duty as a creature of God. He was able to devote himself to God, to put the entirety of himself in the hands of God, and obey Him until death. That was what he resolved to do and, moreover, that was what he achieved. This is the fundamental reason why finally his end was different to that of Paul. The work that the Holy Spirit did in Peter was to make him perfect, and the work that the Holy Spirit did in Paul was to use him. That is because their natures and their views toward

pursuit were not the same. Both had the work of the Holy Spirit. Peter applied this work to himself, and also provided it to others; Paul, meanwhile, only provided the entirety of the work of the Holy Spirit to others, and gained nothing from it himself. In this way, after he had experienced the work of the Holy Spirit for so many years, the changes in Paul were close to non-existent. He still remained almost in his natural state, and he was still the Paul of before. It was merely that after enduring the hardship of many years of work, he had learned how to “work,” and had learned endurance, but his old nature—his highly competitive and mercenary nature—still remained. After working for so many years, he did not know his corrupt disposition, nor had he rid himself of his old disposition, and it was still clearly visible in his work. In him there was merely more work experience, but such little experience alone was incapable of changing him and could not alter his views about existence or the significance of his pursuit. Though he worked many years for Christ, and never again persecuted the Lord Jesus, in his heart there was no change in his knowledge of God. This means that he did not work in order to devote himself to God, but rather he was compelled to work for the sake of his future destination. For, in the beginning, he persecuted Christ, and did not submit to Christ; he was inherently a rebel who deliberately opposed Christ, and someone who had no knowledge of the work of the Holy Spirit. When his work was almost concluded, still he did not know the work of the Holy Spirit, and merely acted of his own accord pursuant to his own character, without paying the slightest attention to the will of the Holy Spirit. And so his nature was in enmity to Christ and did not obey the truth. Someone like this, who had been forsaken by the work of the Holy Spirit, who did not know the work of the Holy Spirit, and who also opposed Christ—how could such a person be saved? Whether or not man can be saved does not depend on how much work he does, or how much he devotes, but is instead determined by whether or not he knows the work of the Holy Spirit, whether or not he can put the truth into practice, and whether or not his views toward pursuit are in conformity with the truth.

Excerpted from “Success or Failure Depends on the Path That Man Walks” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Peter was made perfect through experiencing dealing and refinement. He said, “I must satisfy God’s desire at all times. In all that I do I only seek to satisfy God’s desire, and whether I am chastised, or judged, still I am happy to do so.” Peter gave his all to God, and his work,

words, and entire life were all for the sake of loving God. He was someone who sought holiness, and the more he experienced, the greater was his love for God deep within his heart. Paul, meanwhile, did only outward work, and though he also worked hard, his labors were for the sake of doing his work properly and thus gaining a reward. Had he known that he would receive no reward, he would have given up his work. What Peter cared about was the true love within his heart, and that which was practical and could be achieved. He did not care about whether he would receive a reward, but about whether his disposition could be changed. Paul cared about working ever harder, he cared about outward work and devotion, and about the doctrines not experienced by normal people. He cared nothing for changes deep within him nor for the true love for God. The experiences of Peter were in order to achieve true love and true knowledge of God. His experiences were in order to gain a closer relationship to God, and to have a practical living out. The work of Paul was done because of that entrusted to him by Jesus, and in order to obtain the things that he longed for, yet these were unrelated to his knowledge of himself and God. His work was solely for the sake of escaping chastisement and judgment. What Peter sought was pure love, and what Paul sought was the crown of righteousness. Peter experienced many years of the work of the Holy Spirit, and had a practical knowledge of Christ, as well as a profound knowledge of himself. And so, his love of God was pure. Many years of refinement had elevated his knowledge of Jesus and life, and his love was an unconditional love, it was a spontaneous love, and he asked for nothing in return, nor did he hope for any benefits. Paul worked for many years, yet he did not possess a great knowledge of Christ, and his knowledge of himself was also pitifully small. He simply had no love for Christ, and his work and the course that he ran were in order to obtain the final laurel. What he sought was the finest crown, not the purest love. He did not seek actively, but passively; he was not performing his duty, but was compelled in his pursuit after having been seized by the work of the Holy Spirit. And so, his pursuit does not prove that he was a qualified creature of God; it was Peter who was a qualified creature of God who performed his duty. Man thinks that all those who make a contribution to God should receive a reward, and that the greater the contribution, the more it is taken for granted that they should receive God's favor. The essence of man's viewpoint is transactional, and he does not actively seek to perform his duty as a creature of God. For God, the more that people seek a true love for God and complete obedience to God, which also means seeking to perform their duty as a creature of God, the more they are able to gain God's approval.

God's viewpoint is to demand that man recover his original duty and status. Man is a creature of God, and so man should not overstep himself by making any demands of God, and should do nothing more than perform his duty as a creature of God. The destinations of Paul and Peter were measured according to whether they could perform their duty as creatures of God, and not according to the size of their contribution; their destinations were determined according to that which they sought from the beginning, not according to how much work they did, or other people's estimation of them. And so, seeking to actively perform one's duty as a creature of God is the path to success; seeking the path of the true love for God is the most correct path; seeking changes in one's old disposition, and seeking the pure love for God, is the path to success. Such a path to success is the path of the recovery of the original duty as well as the original appearance of a creature of God. It is the path of recovery, and it is also the aim of all of God's work from beginning to end. If the pursuit of man is tainted with personal extravagant demands and irrational longings, then the effect that is achieved will not be changes in man's disposition. This is at odds with the work of recovery. It is undoubtedly not work done by the Holy Spirit, and so this proves that pursuit of this kind is not approved of by God. What significance has a pursuit that is not approved of by God?

Excerpted from "Success or Failure Depends on the Path That Man Walks" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

4. How can one perform their duty adequately?

Relevant Words of God:

In the phrase "the adequate performance of duty," the emphasis is on the word "adequate." So, how should "adequate" be defined? In this, too, there is a truth to seek. Is it adequate merely to do a passable job? For the specific details of how to understand and regard the word "adequate," you must understand many truths and fellowship more on the truth. In fulfilling your duty, you must understand the truth and its principles; only then can you arrive at an adequate performance of duty. Why should people fulfill their duties? Once they believe in God and have accepted His commission, people have their share of responsibility and obligation in the work of God's house and in the site of God's work, and, in turn, because of this responsibility

and obligation, they have become an element in God's work—an element of the objects of His work and an element of the objects of His salvation. Thus, there is quite a substantial relationship between people's salvation and how they fulfill their duties, whether they can do them well, and whether they can do them adequately. Since you have become a part of God's house and accepted His commission, you now have a duty. It is not for you to say how you should fulfill this duty; it is for God to say, and it is dictated by the standards of the truth. Therefore, people should understand and be clear on how things are measured by God—this is a worthwhile thing to seek. In God's work, different people receive different duties. That is, people receive duties that vary depending on their gifts, calibers, ages, conditions, and eras. No matter what duty you are given, and no matter the era or circumstances of your receiving it, a duty is just a duty; it is not something a person manages. Ultimately, the standard that God requires of you is to perform your duty adequately. How should the word "adequately" be explained? It means that to meet God's requirements and satisfy Him, your work must be called adequate by God and be given His nod of approval; only then will you have fulfilled your duty adequately. If God says your work is inadequate, then you have not fulfilled your duty well. Though you may be doing your duty and He acknowledges that you have done it, if you do not do it adequately, then what will the consequences be? In severe cases, people's hopes of salvation might disappear and be dashed; in less severe cases, they might be deprived of their right to fulfill duties. After being deprived of such rights, some people are set aside, after which they are separately taken care of and arranged. Does being separately taken care of and arranged mean they are eliminated? Not necessarily; God will wait and see how these people act. Thus, how one fulfills one's duty is pivotal. People should treat it with prudence and take it seriously, and regard it as a matter of great importance in their life entry and in their attainment of salvation; they must not treat it carelessly.

Excerpted from "What Is the Adequate Performance of Duty?" in Records of Christ's Talks

Everyone who believes in God should understand His will. Only those who perform their duties well can satisfy God, and only by completing the tasks with which He entrusts them can one's performance of their duty be satisfactory. There are standards for the accomplishment of God's commission. The Lord Jesus said: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength." Loving God is one

aspect of what He requires of people. In truth, so long as God has given people a commission, and so long as they believe in Him and perform their duty, these are the standards that He requires of them: that they act with all their heart, and with all their soul, and with all their mind, and with all their strength. If you are present but your heart is not—if the memory and thoughts of your mind are present, but your heart is not—and if you accomplish things by means of your own abilities, are you fulfilling God’s commission? So, what is the standard that must be met in order to fulfill God’s commission, and to perform your duty loyally and well? It is to do your duty with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength. If you attempt to perform your duty well without a heart of love for God, it will not work. If your love for God grows ever stronger and more genuine, then you will naturally be able to perform your duty with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.

Excerpted from “Exactly What People Have Been Relying on to Live” in Records of Christ’s Talks

No matter what duty you fulfill, you must always seek to grasp God’s will and understand what His requirements are regarding your duty; only then will you be able to handle matters in a principled way. In performing your duty, you absolutely cannot go by your personal preferences, by just doing whatever you would like to do, whatever you would be happy and comfortable doing, or whatever would make you look good. If you forcibly impose your personal preferences on God or practice them as though they were the truth, observing them as if they were the truth principles, then that is not fulfilling your duty, and performing your duty in this way will not be remembered by God. Some people do not understand the truth, and they do not know what it means to fulfill their duties well. They feel that since they have put their heart and effort into it, forsaken their flesh and suffered, then the fulfilling of their duties should be up to standard—but why, then, is God always dissatisfied? Where have these people gone wrong? Their mistake was to not seek out God’s requirements, and instead act according to their own ideas; they treated their own desires, preferences, and selfish motives as the truth, and they treated them as though they were what God loved, as though they were His standards and requirements. They saw what they believed to be correct, good, and beautiful to be the truth; this is wrong. In fact, even though people might sometimes think something is right and that it accords with the truth, that does not necessarily mean that it accords with God’s will. The more people think something is right, the more cautious they should be and the more they should

seek the truth to see whether what they are thinking meets God's requirements. If it happens to run counter to His requirements and counter to His words, then you are wrong to think it is right, it is but a human thought, and it will not necessarily accord with the truth no matter how right you think it is. Your determination of right and wrong must be based solely on God's words, and no matter how right you think something is, unless there is a basis for it in God's words, you must discard it. What is duty? It is a commission entrusted by God to people. So how should you fulfill your duty? By acting in accordance with God's requirements and standards, and by basing your behavior on the truth principles rather than on human subjective desires. In this way, your fulfilling of your duties will be up to standard.

Excerpted from "Only by Seeking the Principles of the Truth Can One Perform Their Duty Well" in Records
of Christ's Talks

When fulfilling your duty, you should always examine yourself to see if you are doing things according to principle, if your performance of your duty is up to standard, whether or not you are simply doing it in a perfunctory manner, whether you have tried to shirk your responsibilities, and whether there are any problems with your attitude and the way you think. Once you have self-reflected and these things become clear to you, you will have an easier time fulfilling your duty. No matter what you encounter while performing your duty—negativity and weakness, or being in a bad mood after being dealt with—you should treat it properly, and you must also seek the truth and understand God's will. By doing these things, you will have a path to practice. If you wish to do a good job in fulfilling your duty, then you must not be affected by your mood. No matter how negative or weak you are feeling, you should practice the truth in everything you do, with absolute strictness, and sticking to the principles. If you do this, then not only will other people approve of you, but God will like you, too. As such, you will be a person who is responsible and who shoulders a burden; you will be a genuinely good person who actually fulfills your duties up to standard and who fully lives out the likeness of a genuine person. Such people are purified and achieve real transformation when fulfilling their duties, and they can be said to be honest in God's eyes. Only honest people can persevere with practicing the truth and succeed in acting with principle, and can fulfill their duties up to standard. People who act with principle fulfill their duties meticulously when they are in a good mood; they do not work in a perfunctory manner, they are not arrogant and they do not show

themselves off to make others think highly of them. When they are in a bad mood, however, they complete their everyday tasks just as earnestly and responsibly, and even if they encounter something that is detrimental to the fulfilment of their duties, or that puts a bit of pressure on them or causes a disruption while they do their duties, they are still able to quiet their hearts before God and pray, saying, “No matter how big a problem I come up against—even if the heavens come tumbling down—as long as God allows me to keep on living, I am determined to do my best to fulfill my duty. Every day I am allowed to live is a day I will work hard at performing my duty so that I am worthy of this duty bestowed upon me by God, as well as this breath He has put in my body. Regardless of how much difficulty I might be in, I will set it all aside, for fulfilling my duty is of the utmost importance!” Those who are not affected by any person, event, thing, or environment, who are not controlled by any mood or external situation, and who put their duties and the commissions with which God has entrusted them first and foremost—they are the people who are loyal to God and who genuinely submit to Him. People like this have attained life entry and have entered truth reality. This is one of the most practical and genuine expressions of living out the truth.

Excerpted from “Life Entry Must Begin With the Experience of Performing One’s Duty” in Records of
Christ’s Talks

Regardless of what kind of duty you are performing or what professional skill you are studying, you will get better at it over time. If you keep trying to improve, you will get better and better at it. If you do not take anything seriously, then even the things you have learned will be of no use. If you do not even take the things you can use seriously and have no idea how they will turn out, and there is no one there who understands to guide you, then you will never make any progress, and the skills you have learned will lie waste. In learning anything, it is easy to learn its theory, but not so easy to put it into practice. If you want to elevate theory to practice, and then go even higher by achieving something from a foundation of practice, taking greater advantage of your strengths, or implementing what you have learned in practice and achieving results, what must you do? You must spend more time studying professional skills and seeking out all manner of material about them; in all their aspects, you must constantly study, constantly search, constantly bolster your weaknesses with others’ strengths, learning what you must and should learn from others. In this way, your professional skills will constantly improve.

When others tell you how to do something, you must try to understand and you must mull it over. If, when someone tells you something, you know of what they are saying and acknowledge that it is a good way of doing things, but you give it some thought afterward and say to yourself, “Close enough,” what kind of attitude do you have? Whether toward professional skills and specialties, or toward your pursuit of the truth in your faith, your attitude is bad—it is one of perfunctoriness. What kind of disposition is it? It is arrogance, it is not loving positive things, it is hardness. Are such things manifested in you? (Yes.) Are they manifested often, occasionally, or only with certain matters? (Often.) Your attitude toward acknowledging this kind of disposition is quite sincere and honest, but mere acknowledgment is not enough; if you do nothing more than acknowledge it, change is impossible. So, how can you change? When an arrogant disposition is revealed in people, and people’s attitude is one of perfunctoriness, dismissiveness, and sloppiness, they must be sure to come before God and pray immediately, allowing themselves to be dealt with and disciplined by God, accepting God’s scrutiny as well as God’s discipline; what is more, they must recognize how this aspect of their disposition arises and how it can be changed. The aim of knowing is change. So, how can such change be achieved? What should be the first step? People must first pray, first come before God, accept God’s scrutiny, and accept His discipline, after which they must actively cooperate. How should they cooperate? When they are performing their duty, as soon as they find themselves thinking “close enough,” they must correct themselves and not think that way. When an arrogant disposition arises, in your heart, you must sense the reproach—the reproach and chastening of God; you must quickly turn around: “Just now I was wrong. Yet again, I was about to reveal a corrupt, satanic disposition; to be directed by a satanic disposition; to let Satan take power; to be perfunctory. I should be disciplined!” If you sense reproach, you should confess your sins before God and turn yourself around. How should you confess your sins? There is no need to adopt a serious attitude and kneel down, prostrate yourself, and pray to God. It is unnecessary to do so. You communicate with God in your heart, saying, “God, I was wrong, I was about to be careless and perfunctory again. I beg You to observe me; I don’t want my corrupt disposition to have mastery within me or govern all of me. I want to be commanded by God, and I wish to practice according to the truth. I beg You to observe me.” When you pray like this, the state within you will change. What is the goal of changing your state? It is meant to allow you to turn yourself around successfully, to allow you to be loyal, obedient, and accepting of God’s reproach

and discipline without compromise. This is how you will turn yourself around. When you are about to be perfunctory again, when you want to treat your duty lightly once more, you will be able to turn yourself around straight away because of God's discipline and reproach—and will you not thus be saved from your negligence? Will your transgression not be redeemed? Is this something good or bad? This is a good thing.

Sometimes, after finishing a job, you feel a little uneasy in your heart. On closer inspection, you find that there is indeed a problem. It must be amended, after which you will feel at ease. Your unease proves there is a problem on which you need to spend extra time and to which you must pay closer attention. This is a serious, responsible attitude toward performing one's duty. When one can be serious, responsible, dedicated, and hard-working, the work will be done properly. Sometimes, you do not have such a heart, and you cannot find or discover a mistake that is clear as day. Were one to have such a heart, then, with the prompting and guidance of the Holy Spirit, they would be able to identify the issue. But if the Holy Spirit guided you and gave you such awareness, allowing you to sense that something is wrong, yet you did not have such a heart, you would still be incapable of identifying the problem. So, what does this show? It shows that it is very important that people cooperate; their hearts are very important, and where they direct their thoughts and intentions is very important. God scrutinizes and can see what people hold in their hearts as they perform their duty, and how much energy they exert. It is crucial that people put all their heart and strength into what they do. Cooperation, too, is a crucial component. Only if people strive to have no regrets about the duties they have completed and the things they have done, and not to be in debt to God, will they be acting with all their heart and strength. If, today, you do not give all your heart and strength, then, when something goes wrong later, and there are consequences, will it not be too late for regrets? You will be forever indebted; it will be a stain on you! A stain in the performance of one's duty is a transgression. You must therefore strive to do properly the share of things you must and ought to do, with all your heart and strength. Those things must not be done carelessly or perfunctorily; you must not have any regrets. In this way, the duties you perform at this time shall be remembered by God. Those things remembered by God are good deeds. What, then, are the things that are not remembered? They are transgressions. People might not accept that they are evil deeds if they were described thus presently, but, if a day comes when there are serious consequences to these things, and they become a negative influence, then you will sense that

these things are not mere behavioral transgressions, but evil deeds. When you realize this, you will be regretful, and think to yourself: I should have chosen an ounce of prevention! With a little more thought and effort, I wouldn't have this problem. Nothing will wipe this eternal stain from your heart, and it would cause trouble if it should leave you in permanent debt. So, today, every time you perform your duty, or accept a commission, you must strive to do it with all your strength and all your heart. You must do it such that you are free of guilt and regret, so that it is remembered by God, and is a good deed. Do not act carelessly and perfunctorily, with one eye open and the other closed; you will regret it, and unable to make amends. It will constitute transgression, and ultimately, in your heart, there will always be guilt, indebtedness, and accusation. Which of these two paths is best? Which path is the right way? Performing your duty with all your heart and strength, and preparing and accumulating good deeds, without any regrets. Do not let your transgressions accumulate, regret them, and fall into debt. What happens when a person has committed too many transgressions? They are accruing God's anger at them in His presence! If you transgress ever more, and God's wrath toward you grows ever greater, then, ultimately, you shall be punished.

Excerpted from "How to Solve the Problem of Being Careless and Perfunctory When Performing Your Duty" in Records of Christ's Talks

Some people are always afraid that others will steal their limelight and surpass them, obtaining recognition while they themselves are neglected. This leads them to attack and exclude others. Is this not a case of being jealous of people more capable than themselves? Is such behavior not selfish and contemptible? What kind of disposition is this? It is malicious! Thinking only of oneself, satisfying only one's own desires, showing no consideration for the duties of others, and thinking only about one's own interests and not the interests of God's house—people like this have a bad disposition, and God has no love for them. If you are truly capable of being considerate of God's will, then you will be able to treat other people fairly. If you give someone your recommendation, and that person is cultivated into someone of talent, thereby bringing one more talented person into God's house, will you not then have done your work well? Will you not then have been loyal in performing your duty? This is a good deed before God, and it is the sort of conscience and reason people should possess. Those who are capable of putting the truth into practice can accept God's scrutiny when doing things. When

you accept God's scrutiny, your heart is set straight. If you only ever do things for others to see, and do not accept God's scrutiny, then is God still in your heart? People like this have no reverence for God. Do not always do things for your own sake and do not constantly consider your own interests; give no thought to your own status, prestige, or reputation. Also do not consider the interests of man. You must first give thought to the interests of God's house, and make them your first priority. You should be considerate of God's will and begin by contemplating whether or not you have been impure in the fulfillment of your duty, whether you have done your utmost to be loyal, done your best to fulfill your responsibilities, and given your all, as well as whether or not you have wholeheartedly given thought to your duty and the work of God's house. You must give consideration to these things. Think about them frequently, and it will be easier for you to perform your duty well. If you are of poor caliber, your experience is shallow, or you are not proficient in your professional work, then there may be some mistakes or deficiencies in your work, and the results may not be very good—but you will have put forth your best effort. When you are not thinking of your own selfish desires or considering your own interests in the things you do, and are instead giving constant consideration to the work of God's house, bearing its interests in mind, and performing your duty well, then you will be accumulating good deeds before God. People who perform these good deeds are the ones who possess truth reality; as such, they have borne testimony.

Excerpted from "Give Your True Heart to God, and You Can Obtain the Truth" in Records of Christ's Talks

To achieve adequacy in the performance of duty, it is first necessary to achieve harmonious cooperation in its performance. There are some who are currently practicing in this direction, which means that after having listened to the truth, they have begun to work in accordance with this principle, though they are unable to succeed in putting the truth absolutely, one hundred percent into practice. In the process, they might fail or grow weak, and deviate, and frequently make mistakes, yet the path they walk is one of striving to be able to act in accordance with this principle. For example, though you might sometimes feel that your way of doing something is correct, if you are in a situation in which it will not delay the task at hand, you might also find your work partners or team members to discuss it with. Fellowship until you are clear on the matter, until you have reached a consensus in thinking that doing it in a certain way can achieve the best results, does not exceed the scope of principle, is for the benefit of God's house, and

can maximize the protection of the interests of God's house. Though the end result might sometimes leave a bit to be desired, the way, the direction, and the goal of your work are correct. How, then, will God look at this? How will He define this matter? He will say that you are fulfilling this duty adequately.

Excerpted from "What Is the Adequate Performance of Duty?" in Records of Christ's Talks

To perform your duty adequately, it does not matter how many years you have believed in God, how much you have done in your duty, how many contributions you have made to God's house, nor does it matter how experienced you are in your duty. The main thing God looks at is the path a person takes. In other words, He looks at one's attitude toward the truth and the principles, direction, origin, and impetus behind one's actions. God focuses on these things; they are what determine the path you walk. If, in the process of your fulfilling your duty, these things cannot be seen in you at all, and the origin of your work is your own thoughts, your impetus is to protect your own interests and safeguard your reputation and position, your modus operandi is to make decisions and act alone and have the final say, never discussing things with others or cooperating harmoniously, let alone seeking the truth, then how will God see you? You are not yet up to standard if you perform your duty so; you have not set foot on the path of pursuing the truth, because, as you do your work, you do not seek the truth principle and always act as you wish. This is the reason why most people do not perform their duties satisfactorily. Looking at it now, is it difficult to fulfill one's duty adequately? In fact, it is not; people must only be able to take a stance of humility, possess a bit of sense, and adopt an appropriate position. No matter how educated you think you are, what awards you have won, or how much you have achieved, and no matter how high you believe your caliber and rank might be, you must start by letting go of all of these things, because they count for nothing. In God's house, however great and good those things are, they cannot be higher than the truth; they are not the truth, and cannot take its place. This is why I say you must have this thing called sense. If you say, "I am very talented, I have a very sharp mind, I have quick reflexes, I am a quick learner, and I have an exceedingly good memory," and you always use these things as capital, then this will cause trouble. If you see these things as the truth, or as higher than the truth, then it will be hard for you to accept the truth and put it into practice. Haughty, arrogant people who always act superior have the hardest time accepting the truth and are most prone

to falling. If one can resolve the issue of one's arrogance, then it becomes easy to put the truth into practice. Thus, you must first put down and deny those things that seem on their surface to be nice and lofty and that provoke the envy of others. Those things are not the truth; rather, they can block you from entering the truth. The most important thing to do now is to seek the truth, practice in accordance with the truth, and fulfill your duty adequately, because the adequate performance of duty is the only first step onto the path of life entry, which means it is a beginning. In every matter, there is a most fundamental, basic thing, a thing that gets your foot in the door, and fulfilling your duty adequately is a path that will take you through the door of life entry. If your fulfillment of duty does not at all involve this "adequacy," then you need to exert yourself. How should you exert yourself? It is not that you need to change your character or abandon your talents and professional strengths; you may carry these strengths and things you have learned with you as you fulfill your duty, all while seeking the truth and acting according to the truth principle. If, you attain life entry while doing your duty, you can fulfill your duty adequately.

Excerpted from "What Is the Adequate Performance of Duty?" in Records of Christ's Talks

In the process of fulfilling your duty, on the positive side of things, you can treat your duty correctly, not giving up on it no matter what situation you encounter. Even if everyone else stops believing and performing their duties, you can still keep going and not give up. That is, you are able to keep from abandoning your duty, from start to finish, persevering and remaining devoted to the very end; in this way, you have truly taken your duty as a duty. If you can achieve this, then you have basically achieved adequacy in the performance of your duty. This is the positive side of things. However, prior to achieving this, on the negative side of things, people must withstand all manner of temptations. If, in the process of fulfilling his duty, a person has not been able to withstand temptations and has abandoned and turned his back on his duty, then can he still have anything to do with salvation? All hope will be lost for that person, and being adequate or inadequate will be utterly irrelevant; salvation will have nothing to do with him. Therefore, one must hold fast to one's duty. To do that, first of all, the biggest difficulty everyone faces is whether or not one can stand firm when encountering temptations. What sorts of temptations are there? Money, status, relationships with the opposite sex, emotions. What else? If some duties involve taking on a bit of risk, or are life-threatening even, and if in

performing them you might end up in jail or dead, would you still do them? How would you perform them? All such things are temptations. Are these temptations easy to overcome or not? They all require you to pursue the truth. In the process of pursuing the truth, with all these temptations you encounter, you must be able to gradually exercise discernment and gain knowledge. Recognize their essence, understand their true colors, and know your own essence and corrupt dispositions; get to know your own weaknesses, and frequently implore God to protect you and make you able to withstand these temptations. If you can withstand them, and can hold fast to your duty no matter what situation you find yourself in, neither turning your back on it nor running away, then you will be halfway to salvation. Is this halfway mark easy to reach? For every step you take, there is a potential pitfall; the path is fraught with danger. It is not easy! So, are there any people who take one look at how difficult it is and feel that life is just too exhausting, and that it would be better just to go ahead and die? They want blessings, but they do not want to suffer. What sort of people are they? They are spineless good-for-nothings. As for how to adequately fulfill their duties, what the definition of adequacy is, what the criteria for adequacy are, the reasons God has given for this standard of adequacy, and the relationship between adequately fulfilling one's duty and life entry, people have come to understand these things. If you can get to where you can hold fast to your duty regardless of time or place, without giving up on it, and can withstand all manner of temptations, and then understand and gain knowledge of all the various truths that God requires in all the different situations He lays out for you, then in God's view, you have basically achieved adequacy. There are three fundamental ingredients to achieving adequacy in the performance of your duty: One is the attitude with which you treat your duty, another is being able to withstand all manner of temptations in the process of fulfilling it, and another is being able to understand every truth while you perform your duty.

Excerpted from "What Is the Adequate Performance of Duty?" in Records of Christ's Talks

VIII. Differences Between God's People and Service-doers

1. What are God's people? How do they manifest?

Relevant Words of God:

The situation now is not what it once was, and My work has entered on a new starting point. That being so, there will be a new approach: All those who see My word and accept it as their very life are people in My kingdom, and being in My kingdom, they are people of My kingdom. Because they accept the guidance of My words, even though they are referred to as My people, this title is in no way secondary to being called My “sons.” Having been made into God’s people, then all must serve with the utmost devotion in My kingdom and fulfill their duties in My kingdom. Whosoever commits offense against My administrative decrees must receive My punishment. This is My advice to all.

Excerpted from “Chapter 1” of God’s Words to the Entire Universe in The Word Appears in the Flesh

Since you are called My people, you should be able to glorify My name; that is, stand testimony in the midst of trial. If anyone attempts to wheedle Me and conceal the truth from Me, or engage in disreputable dealings behind My back, such people will, without exception, be chased out and removed from My house to wait for Me to deal with them. Those who have been unfaithful and unfilial to Me in the past, and who rise up again today to judge Me openly—they, too, will be chased out of My house. Those who are My people must constantly show consideration for My burdens as well as seek to know My words. Only people like this will I enlighten, and they will surely live under My guidance and enlightenment, never meeting with chastisement. Those who, failing to show consideration for My burdens, concentrate on planning for their own futures—that is, those who do not aim with their actions to satisfy My heart, but rather who look for handouts—these beggar-like creatures I absolutely refuse to use, because from the time they were born, they have known nothing of what it means to show consideration for My burdens. They are people who lack normal sense; such people are suffering from “malnutrition” of the brain, and need to go home for some “nourishment.” I have no use for such people. Among My people, everyone will be required to regard knowing Me as an obligatory duty to be seen through to the end, like eating, dressing, and sleeping, something that one never forgets about for a moment, so that in the end, knowing Me will become as familiar as eating—something you do effortlessly, with a practiced hand. As for the words I speak, every single one must be taken with the utmost faith and fully assimilated; there can be no perfunctory half-measures. Anyone who does not pay attention to My words will be regarded

as directly resisting Me; anyone who does not eat of My words, or does not seek to know them, will be regarded as not paying attention to Me, and will directly be swept out the door of My house. This is because, as I have said in the past, what I want is not a great number of people, but excellence. Out of a hundred people, if only one is able to know Me through My words, then I will willingly throw away all the others to focus on enlightening and illuminating this single one. From this you can see that it is not necessarily true that greater numbers alone can manifest Me and live Me out. What I want is wheat (even though the kernels may not be full) and not tares (even when the kernels are full enough to be admired). As for those who give no regard to seeking, but who instead behave in a slack manner, they should leave of their own accord; I do not wish to see them anymore, lest they continue to bring disgrace to My name. Regarding what I require of My people, I will stop at these precepts for now, and will wait to make further sanctions, depending on how circumstances change.

Excerpted from “Chapter 5” of God’s Words to the Entire Universe in The Word Appears in the Flesh

A person who can truly be at peace in God’s presence is able to free themselves from all worldly ties, and to attain possession by God. All who are incapable of being at peace in God’s presence are assuredly dissolute and unrestrained. All who are capable of being at peace before God are those who are pious before God, and who yearn for God. Only those who are at peace before God value life, value fellowship in the spirit, thirst for God’s words, and pursue the truth. Whoever does not value being at peace before God and does not practice being at peace before God is vain and superficial, attached to the world and without life; even if they say they believe in God, they are just paying lip service. Those whom God ultimately perfects and completes are people who can be at peace in His presence. Therefore, those who are at peace before God are graced with great blessings. People who scarcely take time to eat and drink God’s words throughout the day, who are busily preoccupied with external affairs and place little value on life entry—these are all hypocrites with no prospect of future growth. It is those who can be at peace before God and who can genuinely commune with God who are God’s people.

Excerpted from “On Quietening Your Heart Before God” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

Man will be fully made complete in the Age of Kingdom. After the work of conquest, man will be subjected to refinement and tribulation. Those who can overcome and stand testimony

during this tribulation are the ones who will ultimately be made complete; they are the overcomers. During this tribulation, man is required to accept this refinement, and this refinement is the last instance of God's work. It is the last time that man will be refined prior to the conclusion of all the work of God's management, and all those who follow God must accept this final test, and they must accept this last refinement. Those who are beset by tribulation are without the work of the Holy Spirit and the guidance of God, but those who have been truly conquered and who truly seek after God will ultimately stand fast; they are the ones who are possessed of humanity, and who truly love God. No matter what God does, these victorious ones will not be bereft of the visions and will still put the truth into practice without failing in their testimony. They are the ones who will finally emerge from the great tribulation.

Excerpted from "God's Work and Man's Practice" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

A member of God's house and kingdom—where does this title come from? How do people obtain it? It comes from having paid a price and, through understanding the truth, you have pursued the truth and arrived at a certain level of change in your disposition; you can now submit to God and revere Him, and you have become a member of His house. Like Job and Peter, you no longer have to undergo Satan's persecution and corruption. You are able to live freely in God's house and in His kingdom, and you no longer need to fight against your corrupt disposition; you are, in God's eyes, a true object of creation and a genuine human. This means that the days of hardship suffered by a person who has been corrupted by Satan are completely over; now is the time of peace, joy, and happiness, in which a person can live in the light of the Creator's countenance and live alongside God.

Excerpted from "For Leaders and Workers, Choosing a Path Is of Utmost Importance (17)" in *Records of Christ's Talks*

2. What are the service-doers? How do they manifest?

Relevant Words of God:

If we look at the phrase "service-doers" from a literal point of view, to comprehend it according to human linguistic terms, it means temporary workers who provide temporary

services in a certain industry or job, and who are needed on an ad hoc basis. In God's house, in His management plan and in His work, the group of people referred to as service-doers are absolutely indispensable. When such people arrive at God's house, and come to God's workplace, they know nothing about God or about faith, nor do they know anything at all about His work or His management plan. They understand nothing; they are just laypeople. What are laypeople in God's house called? Unbelievers. When people who are unbelievers in God's eyes come to God's house, what can they do? What exactly does God need from them? Because people have corrupt dispositions, and due to their nature essence, what they can do is to do as they are told, carry out whatever instructions God gives them, go wherever His work takes them, and know whatever His words allow them to know. All they can do is know; they cannot attain comprehension. In every part of God's work that He requires, people only cooperate passively; they do not take any initiative. If you really took some initiative, then you would have understood the truth and God's will! "Passively" here means you do not know what God wants to do, you do not know the meaning of what He has you do or wherein lies its value, and you do not know what sort of path you should take. When you come to God's house, you are like a machine; whatever way God operates you is the way in which you function. What does God need you for? (As an object for God's expressing of the truth to judge humanity.) Correct; you are an object for God to speak His words to. What else? Your gifts, right? (Right.) Does normal human thinking count? (Yes.) God will only use you if you possess normal human thinking. If your mental state is abnormal, then you are not qualified even to be a service-doer. What else? (One's skills and strengths.) In other words, all the various skills people possess. What else? (The resolve to cooperate with God.) This, too, is something He requires; it is a kind of aspiration in people to listen and submit, and it can also be said to be the desire to love positive things and the light. If we call it a resolution, then that might be a bit too narrow to encompass it. Aspirations cover a broader range, and they are more minor than resolutions in terms of their reach. That is, you start with an aspiration, and only after you have an aspiration will you gradually develop various resolutions. Resolutions are more concrete, whereas aspirations cover a broader range. In terms of corrupt humans, from the Creator's point of view, these are the things for which God needs you. That is, when a layperson who has absolutely no knowledge of God, of His management, of His essence, of His utterances, or of His disposition comes to His house, that person is like a machine. What that person can do for God and how they can

cooperate with God's work basically has no relation to the standard that God requires (the truth). The things of a person that God can utilize are those things that were just mentioned: First, one becomes an object for God to speak to; second, the various gifts one possesses; third, possessing normal human thinking; fourth, the various skills a person possesses; and fifth—the most important—is having the aspiration to listen to and submit to God's words. These things are key. When someone is in possession of these qualities, they begin to work in the service of God's work and His management plan. They have then formally embarked on the right track, that is, they have officially become a service-doer in God's house.

Prior to understanding God's words, the truth, and God's will, and prior to developing even a shred of reverence for God, the role that every person plays can only be that of a service-doer, and nothing else. That is, you are one whether you want to be one or not; you cannot escape this appellation. Some people say, "But I've believed in God my entire life; it's been several decades since I started believing in Jesus. Am I seriously still just a service-doer?" What do you think about this question? Whom are you asking? You need to ask yourself this: Do you understand God's will yet? Are you currently just exerting some effort, or are you practicing the truth? Have you set foot upon the path to pursuing and understanding the truth? Have you entered the truth reality? Do you revere God in your heart? If you are in possession of these qualities, can stand firm when encountering God's trials, and are able to fear God and shun evil, then of course you are no longer a service-doer. If, however, you are not in possession of these qualities, then you are without a doubt still a service-doer. This is inescapable, and it is also inevitable. Some people say, "I've believed in God for more than thirty years; I became one of His followers from the moment He came to do work as flesh incarnate and uttered the very first word. I was one of the first people to experience God's work, and was also among the first to personally hear God speak His words. After all these years, I am still following God and believing in God. Through all the persecution I have been through, through my being arrested several times and all of the dangers I have experienced, God has always protected me and led me through to the other side. He never abandoned me. Now I'm still performing my duty, and my condition is getting better and better, my faith continues to grow, and I don't have the slightest doubt when it comes to God. Am I really still just a service-doer?" Whom are you asking? Do you not think you are asking the wrong person? This is not a question you should ask. Given that you have been a believer for so many years, you should by now have a clear idea

of what exactly it is that you are. Since you have believed for so many years, how can you not know whether you are still a service-doer or not? Why do you not ask whether or not you possess truth reality? Have you given rise to reverence for God? Have you shown any evidence of having shunned evil? God has worked for so many years and uttered so many words; how many have you gained? How much have you entered? How much have you accepted of God's pruning and dealing with you, and of the trials and refinement He has put you through? When accepting these things, have you stood testimony? Can you testify to God? If you were to encounter trials of the sort Job underwent, would you deny God? Just how much faith do you have in God, anyway? Is that faith of yours simply a matter of believing, or is it true faith? Ask yourself these questions. If you do not even know the answer to these questions, then you are muddle-headed. I think you are just someone who parrots the words and actions of others, and are not even worthy of being called a service-doer. This is the sort of attitude people have toward service-doers; deep down, such people keep such muddled accounts of them. However, God is not muddled in how He treats anyone.

Excerpted from "For Leaders and Workers, Choosing a Path Is of Utmost Importance (17)" in Records of Christ's Talks

When people enter God's house and they do not understand the truth, but only have various aspirations or develop some resolve to cooperate, the role they can fulfill during this period can only be that of service-doers. "Rendering service" is not a very nice-sounding phrase, of course. To put it another way, it means people serve and toil for the work of God's management plan, meaning that they exert themselves for it. They do not comprehend or understand anything, but have a few skills and gifts, and are able to learn and pass on what others say and take on some work of general affairs, but when it comes to the various aspects of specific work of God's salvation and management of humanity, as well as the various aspects of work related to the truth, they cannot dedicate any effort or cooperate at all; they merely put forth a bit of effort and say a few things while doing some work of general affairs, and do some peripheral service-related work. If this is how the essence of people's duty, or of the roles they play and the work they do in God's house is, then they will have a hard time shrugging off the title of "service-doers." Why will they have a hard time shrugging it off? Does it not have to do with what God defines this title to mean? It is quite easy for people to put forth some effort, and

do things by their innate abilities, gifts, and intelligence. However, living by the truth, entering the truth reality, acting in accordance with God's will—these things are very strenuous; they require time, they require people to lead, they require enlightenment from God, and they require God's discipline. Moreover, they require the coming of God's words of judgment and chastisement. Thus, during the time it takes to reach this goal, what most people are capable of doing and providing is limited to those handful of things: Fulfilling the role of objects for God to speak to; possessing certain gifts and having some use in God's house; thinking the way normal humanity thinks, and being able to grasp and carry out whatever jobs are allocated to you; being equipped with certain skills and able to play to your strengths in whatever job you are given to do in God's house; and, most importantly, having an aspiration to listen and submit. When doing service in God's house, and when exerting effort for God's work, if you have that little bit of an inclination to listen and submit, you will be unable to run away or stir up trouble; rather, you will do your best to restrain yourself and do fewer bad deeds and more good ones. This is the state and condition of most people, is it not?

Excerpted from "For Leaders and Workers, Choosing a Path Is of Utmost Importance (17)" in Records of Christ's Talks

And what is the role of these service-doers? It is to serve God's chosen ones. For the most part, their role is to give service to God's work, to cooperate with it, and to accommodate God's completion of His chosen ones. Regardless of whether they are laboring, carrying out some aspect of work, or undertaking certain tasks, what is God's requirement of these service-doers? Is He very demanding in His requirements of them? (No, He asks only that they be loyal.) Service-doers, too, must be loyal. Regardless of your origins or why God selected you, you must be loyal to God, to any commissions God entrusts to you, and to the work for which you are responsible and the duties you perform. For service-doers who are capable of being loyal and satisfying God, what will their outcomes be? They will be able to remain. Is it a blessing to be a service-doer who remains? What does it mean to remain? What is the significance of this blessing? In status, they seem unlike God's chosen ones; they seem different. But in fact, is what they enjoy in this life not the same as that of God's chosen ones? At the very least, it is the same in this lifetime. You do not deny this, do you? God's utterances, God's grace, God's provision, God's blessings—who does not enjoy these things? Everyone enjoys such abundance. The

identity of a service-doer is one who does service, but to God, they are just one among all the things that He created; it is simply that their role is that of service-doer. Being that they are both God's creatures, is there any difference between a service-doer and one of God's chosen? In effect, there is not. Nominally speaking, there is a difference; in essence and in terms of the role they play, there is a difference—but God does not treat this group of people unfairly. So why are these people defined as service-doers? You must have some understanding of this! Service-doers come from among the unbelievers. As soon as we mention that they come from among the unbelievers, it is apparent that they share a bad background: They are all atheists, and were so in the past, too; they did not believe in God, and were hostile to Him, to the truth, and to all things positive. They did not believe in God or in His existence. As such, are they capable of understanding God's words? It is fair to say that to a large extent, they are not. Just as animals are incapable of understanding human words, service-doers cannot understand what God is saying, what He requires, or why He makes such demands. They do not understand; these things are incomprehensible to them, and they remain unenlightened. For this reason, these people do not possess the life of which we have spoken. Without the life, can people understand the truth? Are they equipped with the truth? Do they have experience and knowledge of God's words? (No.) Such are the origins of service-doers.

Excerpted from "God Himself, the Unique X" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Now you have a general understanding of this title, "service-doers," do you not? Is this a discriminatory way for God to address humans? Has He deliberately used this appellation to belittle people or to expose people and put them through a trial? (No.) So, is it that God wants to use this title to make people understand just what they are? Does God have even a hint of this intention? Actually, God does not have such an intention. It is not His intention to expose people or belittle them or make cutting remarks about them, nor is it His intention to use this term to put people through a trial. The only meaning is this: This title arose and was determined by God based on humanity's behavior and essence, as well as on the roles humans are fulfilling in this phase of His work, what they are capable of, and how they can cooperate. Looking at it from this meaning, every member of God's house does service for God's management plan and has previously fulfilled this kind of role. Can it be put this way? (Yes.) It sure can! God does not want to use this appellation to attack anyone's positivity or to put your faith or your true belief

in God to the test, much less to belittle you, make you more well-behaved, make you more obedient, or make you aware of your identity and status; even less does He have any intention to use the title of “service-doers” to deprive people of their right to fulfill their duties as objects of creation. This title is completely the result of people’s states and essences, and the sort of condition they are in through the process of God’s work while they follow God. Therefore, this appellation has absolutely nothing to do with what sort of identity, standing, position, or destination people will have after God’s work of management is done. The provenance of this title lies wholly in the requirements of God’s management plan and His work of management, and it is a sort of condition people are in while that work is ongoing. As for whether this condition—in which a person is a service-doer providing service for God’s house and is used like a machine—will continue to the very end or can be improved along the way, that depends on a person’s pursuit. If someone pursues the truth, can achieve change in their disposition, and can come to revere and submit to God, then that person will have thoroughly gotten rid of the title of “service-doer.” After losing that title, what do people become? They become God’s true followers, His people, the people of the kingdom—that is, people in God’s kingdom. If, in the process, you merely settle for paying a price, suffering, and putting forth effort, but do not pursue the truth or put it into practice, and if your disposition does not transform in the slightest and you do not act in accordance with the principles of God’s house in anything you do, and you ultimately are unable to achieve submission to God and reverence of Him, then this appellation of “service-doer”—this “crown of laurels”—will remain squarely on your head, and you will forever be unable to shake it off. If you are still in this sort of state once God’s work is finished, and your disposition has still not changed, then you will not have any share in the title of “the people of God’s kingdom.” How can these words be comprehended? Some people might ask, “What does ‘not have any share in the title of “the people of God’s kingdom”’ and that we will forever be service-doers mean?” Do you understand or not? As soon as God’s work is done, that is, when everyone He is going to save has been saved, when the work God does is finished; when He no longer speaks or guides people or does any further work of salvation for humans, when it is all done, and in that moment, God’s work is concluded, tell Me, does that mean the path of faith in God that everyone is walking will also be finished? There is a line that reads, “He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still” (Rev 22:11).

What do these words mean? They mean the moment God says His work is finished, it means He will no longer do any further work of saving people, or of chastising and judging people; He will no longer enlighten you, guide you, or speak painstaking words of exhortation to you, or words which prune you and deal with you anymore. He will not do these things any longer. What does this mean? It means the outcomes of all things will have been revealed, and the end of humanity will have been finalized. Not a single person will be able to change this; you will have no more opportunities. That is what this means.

Excerpted from “For Leaders and Workers, Choosing a Path Is of Utmost Importance (17)” in Records of Christ’s Talks

Your attitude toward your duty is, I’ll see how little I can do, what I can get away with; you drag your feet, unconcerned with how long a delay you cause. But if you took things seriously, you would get them done in no time at all. There are some things you do not know how to do, so I give you exact instructions. You do not have to think, you just have to listen and get on with it—but even that is beyond you. Where is your loyalty? It is nowhere to be seen! You are all talk and no heart. Even when your heart understands, you do nothing. This is someone who does not love the truth! If you can see it with your eyes and feel it in your heart but still do nothing, then why even have a heart? Your scrap of conscience does not govern your actions, it does not direct your thoughts—so what use is it? It counts for nothing; it is just decoration. Man’s faith is truly pathetic! And what is pathetic about it? Even when he does understand the truth, he does not put it into practice. Even when he thoroughly understands the problem, he does not take responsibility for it; he knows that it is his responsibility, but he does not put his heart into it. If you do not take on the responsibilities that are within your grasp, what is the value of those meager responsibilities that you do undertake? What effect do they have? You are just making a token effort, saying things for the sake of it. You do not put your heart into it, much less all your energy. This is not performing your duty to an acceptable standard, there is no loyalty involved; you are just living by the sweat of your brow, getting by as a follower of God. Is there any significance to faith like this? Such faith is so paltry—what is it worth? When you perform your duty, you must pay a price. You must take it seriously. What does it mean to take it seriously? Taking it seriously does not mean putting in a little effort or suffering some physical torment. What is key is that there is God in your heart, and a burden. In your heart, you must

weigh the importance of your duty, and then carry this burden and responsibility in all you do and put your heart into it. You must make yourself worthy of the mission God has given you, as well as everything God has done for you, and His hopes for you. Only doing so is being serious. There is no use in you going through the motions; you may trick people, but you cannot fool God. If there is no real price and no loyalty when you perform your duty, then it is not up to standard. If you do not take your faith in God and performance of your duty seriously; if you always go through the motions and are perfunctory in your actions, like an unbeliever working for their boss; if you just make a token effort, muddling through each day as it comes, ignoring messes when you see them, seeing a spill and not cleaning it up, and indiscriminately dismissing everything that is not to your own benefit—then is this not trouble? How could someone like this be a member of God’s household? Such people are outsiders; they are not of the house of God. In your heart, you are clear about whether you are being true, being serious, when you perform your duty, and God keeps account, too. So, have you ever taken the performance of your duty seriously? Have you ever taken it to heart? Have you treated it as your responsibility, your obligation? Have you taken ownership of it? Have you ever spoken up when you have discovered a problem when performing your duty? If you have never spoken up after discovering a problem, nor even thought to, if you are disinclined to concern yourself with such things, and think the less trouble the better—if that is the principle you take toward them, then you are not performing your duty; you are living by the sweat of your brow, you are doing service. Service-doers do not belong to the house of God. They are employees; after finishing their work they take their money and leave, each goes their own way and becomes a stranger to the other. That is their relationship with the house of God. Members of the house of God are different: They take pains over everything in God’s house, they take responsibility, their eyes see what needs doing in God’s house and they keep those tasks in mind, they remember everything they think and see, they are emburdened, they have a sense of responsibility—these are members of God’s house. Have you reached this point? (No.) Then you still have a long way to go, so you must keep pursuing! If you do not consider yourself a member of God’s house and eliminate yourself, then how does God look upon you? God does not treat you as an outsider; it is you who put yourself beyond His door. So, objectively speaking, what kind of person are you exactly? You are not in His house. Does this have anything to do with what God says or determines? It

is you who have placed your end and position outside the house of God—who else is there to blame?

Excerpted from “Performing Duty Well Requires a Conscience, at the Very Least” in Records of Christ’s

Talks

For some people, no matter what issue they might encounter when performing their duties, they do not seek the truth, and they always act according to their own thoughts, notions, imaginings, and desires. They are constantly satisfying their own selfish desires, and their corrupt dispositions are always in control over their actions. Though they may complete the duties to which they have been assigned, they do not gain any truth. So, what are such people relying on when performing their duties? They are relying neither on the truth nor on God. That bit of truth that they do understand has not taken up sovereignty in their hearts; they are relying on their own gifts and abilities, on whatever knowledge that they have acquired, and on their talents, as well as on their own willpower or good intentions, to complete these duties. This is a different sort of nature, is it not? Though you may sometimes rely on your naturalness, imagination, notions, knowledge, and learning to fulfill your duty, no issues of principle emerge in some of the things you do. On the surface, it looks as though you have not taken the wrong path, but there is one thing that cannot be overlooked: During the process of performing your duty, if your notions, imaginings, and personal desires never change and are never replaced with the truth, and if your actions and deeds are never done in accordance with the truth principle, then what will the final outcome be? You will become a service-doer. This is precisely what was written in the Bible: “Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name? and in Your name have cast out devils? and in Your name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess to them, I never knew you: depart from Me, you that work iniquity” (Mat 7:22–23). Why does God call these people who exert effort and who render service, “you that work iniquity”? There is one point we can be sure on, and that is that no matter what duties or work these people do, their motivations, impetus, intentions, and thoughts arise entirely from their selfish desires, are totally based on their own ideas and personal interests, and their considerations and plans completely revolve around their reputation, status, vanity, and future prospects. Deep down, they possess no truth, nor do they act in accordance with the truth principle. Thus, what is crucial for you to seek now? (We should

seek the truth, and perform our duties in accordance with God's will and requirements.) What specifically should you do when performing your duties in accordance with God's requirements? With regard to your intentions and ideas when doing something, you must learn how to discern whether or not they accord with the truth, as well as whether your intentions and ideas are geared toward fulfilling your own selfish desires or the interests of God's house. If your intentions and ideas accord with the truth, then you can do your duty in line with your thinking; however, if they do not accord with the truth, then you must quickly turn around and abandon that path. That path is not right, and you cannot practice that way; if you continue to walk that path, then you will end up committing evil.

Excerpted from "How to Experience God's Words in One's Duties" in Records of Christ's Talks

3. What are the differences between the outcomes of service-doers and God's people?

Relevant Words of God:

Right now, most humans (meaning all but the firstborn sons) are in this condition. I have pointed out these things with such clarity, yet these people have no reaction and still care for their fleshly enjoyments. They eat and then they sleep; they sleep and then they eat. They do not ponder My words. Even when they are energized, it is only for a while; afterward, they are still the same as they were, completely unchanged, as though they had not listened to Me at all. These are the typical, useless humans who have no burdens; they are the most obvious of freeloaders. At a later date, I will forsake them one by one; do not worry! One by one, I will send them back to the bottomless pit. The Holy Spirit has never worked on such people, and everything that they do flows from the gifts they have received. When I speak of gifts, I mean that these are people with no life, who are My service-doers; I do not want any of them, and I will eliminate them (but as of right now, they are still a little bit useful). You who are service-doers, listen! Do not think My using you means that I favor you; it is not so simple. If you want Me to favor you, then you must be someone of whom I approve and whom I perfect personally. This is the kind of person whom I love. Even if people say that I have made a mistake, I will never renege. Do you know this? Those who render service are but cattle and horses; how can

they be My firstborn sons? Would that not be nonsense? Would it not be a violation of the laws of nature? Whosoever has My life and My quality, those ones are My firstborn sons. This is a reasonable thing; no one can refute it. It must be so; otherwise, there would be no one who could play this role, and no one who could substitute for it. This is not a matter acted upon from emotion, for I am the righteous God Himself; I am the holy God Himself. I am the majestic, unoffendable God Himself!

Excerpted from “Chapter 102” of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh

When God’s work is finished, if a person has gotten rid of the title of “service-doer,” shrugged this appellation off, and left this condition behind, this is a cause for celebration, is it not? What does this mean? It means that this person, in God’s eyes, is no longer a layperson or an unbeliever; they are now a member of God’s house and kingdom. A member of God’s house and kingdom—where does this title come from? How do people obtain it? It comes from having paid a price and, through understanding the truth, you have pursued the truth and arrived at a certain level of change in your disposition; you can now submit to God and revere Him, and you have become a member of His house. Like Job and Peter, you no longer have to undergo Satan’s persecution and corruption. You are able to live freely in God’s house and in His kingdom, and you no longer need to fight against your corrupt disposition; you are, in God’s eyes, a true object of creation and a genuine human. This means that the days of hardship suffered by a person who has been corrupted by Satan are completely over; now is the time of peace, joy, and happiness, in which a person can live in the light of the Creator’s countenance and live alongside God. This is something to celebrate, is it not? (Yes.) However, those other people, in the end, have still not cast off the appellation of “service-doers,” and in that moment when God’s work is concluded, they have still not rid themselves of the title of “service-doers”—that “crown of laurels” that they wear upon their heads. What does this mean? It means they will remain laypeople; it means that in God’s eyes, they will still be unbelievers. Why does it mean these two things? The reason lies in the fact that those people do not practice the truth, have not achieved a change in disposition, and cannot submit to God, let alone revere Him; as a result, they will have no part to play in God’s house and kingdom. Having no part there, where will they abide? They will abide outside of God’s kingdom. Such people will still be called “service-doers,” which means they will not be seen by God to be His followers and that they have not become members

of His house. It also means they can never be God's followers, and He does not recognize them; they can never again gain His blessings or grace. Of course, it also means they will never have a chance to share in the good blessings of God's kingdom with Him or gain peace and joy. Such opportunities will be gone. So, for them, will this be a joyful moment to be celebrated, or a tragic one? It will be a tragic one. As for how they will be treated outside of God's house and kingdom while bearing that title of "service-doers," that is something that will come after, and we will not talk about it for now. In short, the way they will be treated will be enormously different from how the people in God's kingdom will be treated—it will be different in terms of status and the treatment they will receive, and in all other aspects. Does the fact that these people have not gained the truth or achieved a change in disposition in the time God has worked and brought salvation to humanity not make them pitiable? They are so pitiable! These are some things that have been said about the title of "service-doers."

Excerpted from "For Leaders and Workers, Choosing a Path Is of Utmost Importance (17)" in Records of
Christ's Talks

Service-doers, too, must be loyal. Regardless of your origins or why God selected you, you must be loyal to God, to any commissions God entrusts to you, and to the work for which you are responsible and the duties you perform. For service-doers who are capable of being loyal and satisfying God, what will their outcomes be? They will be able to remain. Is it a blessing to be a service-doer who remains? What does it mean to remain? What is the significance of this blessing? In status, they seem unlike God's chosen ones; they seem different. But in fact, is what they enjoy in this life not the same as that of God's chosen ones? At the very least, it is the same in this lifetime. You do not deny this, do you? ... If you can be a loyal service-doer, are able to serve right up to the very end and can fulfill the commission entrusted to you by God, then you will live a life of value. If you can do this, you will be able to remain. If you put in a bit more effort, if you try a bit harder, can redouble your endeavors to know God, can speak a little about knowing God, can bear testimony to Him, and, moreover, if you can understand something of His will, can cooperate in God's work, and can be somewhat mindful of God's intentions, then you, as a service-doer, will experience a change in fortune. And what will this change in fortune be? You will no longer simply be able to remain. Depending on your conduct and your personal aspirations and pursuits, God will make you one of the chosen ones. This will be your change in

fortune. For service-doers, what is the best thing about this? It is that they can become God's chosen. If they do so, it means that they will no longer be reincarnated as animals the way unbelievers are. Is that good? It is, and it is also good news: It means that service-doers can be molded. It is not the case that for a service-doer, once God has predestined them to serve, they will do so forever; that is not necessarily so. God will handle them and respond to them in a way that befits this person's individual conduct.

However, there are service-doers who are unable to serve to the very end; there are those who, during their service, give up halfway and forsake God, as well as people who commit multiple wrongdoings. There are even those who cause tremendous harm and bring tremendous losses to God's work, and there are even service-doers who curse God and so on. What do these irremediable consequences indicate? Any such evil acts will signify the termination of their services. Because your conduct during your service has been overly poor and because you have gone too far, once God sees that your service is not up to standard, He will strip you of your eligibility to serve. He will no longer allow you to serve; He will remove you from before His very eyes and from the house of God. Is it that you do not want to serve? Are you not constantly wanting to do evil? Are you not consistently unfaithful? Well then, there is an easy solution: You will be stripped of your eligibility to serve. To God, stripping a service-doer of their eligibility to serve means that this service-doer's end has been proclaimed, and they will no longer be eligible to serve God. God has no further need of this person's service, and no matter what nice things they might say, those words will be in vain. When things have gotten to this point, the situation will have become irremediable; service-doers like these will have no way back. And how does God deal with service-doers such as this? Does He merely stop them from serving? No. Does He merely prevent them from remaining? Or, does He put them to one side and wait for them to make a turn-around? He does not. God is not so loving when it comes to service-doers, truly. If a person has this kind of attitude in their service to God, God will, as a result of this attitude, strip them of their eligibility to serve, and will once more toss them back among the unbelievers. And what is the fate of a service-doer who has been tossed back among the unbelievers? It is the same as that of the unbelievers: They will be reincarnated as an animal and receive the same punishment in the spiritual world as an unbeliever. Moreover, God will not take any personal interest in this person's punishment, for such a person no longer has any relevance to God's work. This is not only the end of their life of faith in God, but also

the end of their own fate, as well as the proclamation of their fate. Thus, if service-doers serve poorly, they will have to bear the consequences themselves. If a service-doer is incapable of serving to the very end, or is stripped of their eligibility to serve midway, then they will be thrown among the unbelievers—and if this happens, such a person will be dealt with in the same way as livestock, in the same way as people without intellect or rationality. When I put it like that, you can understand, yes?

Excerpted from “God Himself, the Unique X” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

In the future, the people who will survive in a state of rest will all have endured the day of tribulation and will also have borne witness for God; they will all be people who have fulfilled their duties and who have deliberately submitted to God. Those who merely wish to use the opportunity to do service with the intention of avoiding practicing the truth will not be allowed to remain. God has appropriate standards for the arrangement of the outcome of every individual; He does not simply make these decisions according to one’s words and conduct, nor does He make them based on how one acts during a single period of time. He will absolutely not be lenient with regard to one’s wicked conduct due to their past service for Him, nor will He spare one from death because of any one-time expense for God. No one can evade retribution for their wickedness, and no one can cover up their evil behavior and thereby evade the torments of destruction. If people can truly fulfill their own duty, it means that they are eternally faithful to God and not seeking rewards, regardless of whether they receive blessings or suffer misfortune. If people are faithful to God when they see blessings, but lose their faithfulness when they cannot see any blessings, and if, in the end, they are still unable to bear witness for God or fulfill the duties incumbent upon them, then they will still be objects of destruction despite their having once previously rendered faithful service to God. In short, wicked people cannot survive through eternity, nor can they enter into rest; only the righteous are the masters of rest.

Excerpted from “God and Man Will Enter Into Rest Together” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

4. Why do some who have forsaken everything and expended for God become service-doers?

Relevant Words of God:

For some people, no matter what issue they might encounter when performing their duties, they do not seek the truth, and they always act according to their own thoughts, notions, imaginings, and desires. They are constantly satisfying their own selfish desires, and their corrupt dispositions are always in control over their actions. Though they may complete the duties to which they have been assigned, they do not gain any truth. So, what are such people relying on when performing their duties? They are relying neither on the truth nor on God. That bit of truth that they do understand has not taken up sovereignty in their hearts; they are relying on their own gifts and abilities, on whatever knowledge that they have acquired, and on their talents, as well as on their own willpower or good intentions, to complete these duties. This is a different sort of nature, is it not? Though you may sometimes rely on your naturalness, imagination, notions, knowledge, and learning to fulfill your duty, no issues of principle emerge in some of the things you do. On the surface, it looks as though you have not taken the wrong path, but there is one thing that cannot be overlooked: During the process of performing your duty, if your notions, imaginings, and personal desires never change and are never replaced with the truth, and if your actions and deeds are never done in accordance with the truth principle, then what will the final outcome be? You will become a service-doer. This is precisely what was written in the Bible: “Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name? and in Your name have cast out devils? and in Your name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess to them, I never knew you: depart from Me, you that work iniquity” (Mat 7:22–23). Why does God call these people who exert effort and who render service, “you that work iniquity”? There is one point we can be sure on, and that is that no matter what duties or work these people do, their motivations, impetus, intentions, and thoughts arise entirely from their selfish desires, are totally based on their own ideas and personal interests, and their considerations and plans completely revolve around their reputation, status, vanity, and future prospects. Deep down, they possess no truth, nor do they act in accordance with the truth principle. Thus, what is crucial for you to seek now? (We should seek the truth, and perform our duties in accordance with God’s will and requirements.) What specifically should you do when performing your duties in accordance with God’s requirements?

With regard to your intentions and ideas when doing something, you must learn how to discern whether or not they accord with the truth, as well as whether your intentions and ideas are geared toward fulfilling your own selfish desires or the interests of God's house. If your intentions and ideas accord with the truth, then you can do your duty in line with your thinking; however, if they do not accord with the truth, then you must quickly turn around and abandon that path. That path is not right, and you cannot practice that way; if you continue to walk that path, then you will end up committing evil.

Excerpted from "How to Experience God's Words in One's Duties" in Records of Christ's Talks

Whatever sort of talents, gifts, or skills one has, if they simply take action and exert themselves in performing their duty, and, no matter what they do, rely on their imaginings or notions, or on their own instincts as they exert themselves, and never seek the will of God, and there is not any concept or need in their heart that says, "I must put the truth into practice. I am performing my duty"; and their sole impetus is to do their job well and complete their tasks, then are they not someone who lives entirely by their gifts, talents, abilities, and skills? Are there many such people? In faith, they think only of exerting themselves, selling their own labor, and selling their own skills. Particularly when God's house gives people general work to do, most will take such a point of view in doing it. All they do is exert themselves. Sometimes that means using their mouth to speak a bit; sometimes it means using their hands and physical strength; and sometimes it means using their legs to run about. Why is it said that relying on those things to live is using one's strength, rather than putting the truth into practice? When someone has accepted a task given to them by God's house, they think only of how to complete it as soon as possible, so that they can give an account to their leaders and gain their praise. They might lay out a step-by-step plan, and they may appear quite earnest, but they focus only on completing the task so that others may see, or when they are doing it, they set their own standards to judge their performance, based on how they can act such that they might arrive at happiness and contentment, and achieve the level of perfection they strive for. No matter what standards they set for themselves, if they are unconnected to the truth, and they do not seek the truth, or to understand and confirm what God asks of them before taking action, instead acting blindly, in bewilderment, then what they are doing is mere exertion. They are acting according to their own wishes, by dint of their own mind or their gifts, or on strength of their own abilities

or skills. What is the consequence of acting this way? The task may have been accomplished, and perhaps no one found fault with it, and you may feel very pleased—but, in the course of doing it, firstly, you did not understand God’s will, and secondly, you did not act with all your heart, all your mind, and all your strength—you did not put your whole heart into it. If you had sought the truth principles and sought the will of God, then you would have accomplished nine-tenths of the task, and you would also have been able to enter into the truth reality and to understand correctly that what you were doing was in accord with God’s will. If you acted carelessly and haphazardly, however, though the task was done, you would not know in your heart how well it was done. You would have no benchmark, and you would not know whether it accorded with God’s will or with the truth. Therefore, to describe any performance of duty in such a state, two words will suffice—exerting yourself.

Excerpted from “Exactly What People Have Been Relying on to Live” in Records of Christ’s Talks

In what aspects of fulfilling your duty do you suffer? Also, in what aspects do you come up short? (We don’t contemplate enough, and we don’t know how to pray and seek with God.) What is the problem that causes you to come up short in this regard? Of all the things I mentioned previously—putting all your heart, mind, soul, and strength into loving God—you only put forth your strength; you have not yet succeeded in applying all your heart, mind, and soul. You have not achieved these three aspects. You only know to put your strength into your duty. What sort of person are you in God’s eyes? (A service-doer.) Do you wish to be a service-doer? You have no wish to be a service-doer, and yet you are rendering service—and what is more, you take delight in it and never get tired of it. This is the sort of path you are on. You do not wish to be a service-doer, yet you actively render service—is this not a contradiction? Why has this come about? It is due to the sort of path you are on, which determines what goal you will ultimately reach. In colloquial terms, this means that “you reap what you sow.” The path you walk is that of a service-doer, and the path you have chosen is that of a service-doer, so this means you will end up rendering service. Because you always concern yourself with putting forth strength, and are not willing to expend any energy or spare any thought, do not want to put your heart, mind, and soul into loving God who is your Lord, the result you attain in the end can only be that you put your strength to use; as a result, you end up rendering service. There is no contradiction here. What is the contradiction? It is that people do not wish to be service-

doers, and when they hear someone label them thusly, they become unhappy. They think, “Isn’t that slander against me? Doesn’t that underestimate me? It shows a bias toward others, doesn’t it? I’ve devoted so much of my effort and strength. How can I be a service-doer?” You are correct; you have exerted that much strength—and that makes you pure service-doer. You must think about how to not merely exert strength, but to also put your entire heart into it. Reach for this as a standard. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, and soul. What should you use them toward? You should devote all your heart, mind, and soul toward doing your duty well, and in this way, you will become a good person in God’s eyes.

Excerpted from “Having a Human Likeness Requires Fulfilling Your Duty Properly With All Your Heart, Mind, and Soul” in Records of Christ’s Talks

What is practicing the truth? When you do a certain thing—when you complete a task or perform a duty—to speak of the thing itself, how is it done in a way that is practicing the truth, and how is it done in a way that is not practicing the truth? Not practicing the truth bears no relation to the truth. You may be performing your duty, but it has little to do with the truth; it is only a kind of good behavior, and can also be said to be a good deed, but there is still some distance between this and practicing the truth. They are different. So, on what basis can they be differentiated? When you are doing this thing, you maintain a certain scope and certain rules. One of these is that you do not cause losses to the interests of God’s house; another is that you rush around a bit more, and that you suffer a bit, failing to eat and sleep at a regular time. You have accomplished all these things, and, if no strict criteria are applied to you, your duty may yet be done satisfactorily. However, there is another thing: Have you unearthed and discovered which corrupt dispositions are within you when you do this thing? That is, have you unearthed and discovered what ideas you have and what things there are within you with which God is unsatisfied when you encounter this issue? Through performing this duty and doing this thing, do you come to a new understanding of yourself, and have you found any truth that you should put into practice and enter? (That seldom happens. Sometimes, I merely come to a superficial understanding of my arrogance, and then I take it no further.) Then the majority of the time you have a formulaic and theoretical understanding, no real understanding. (Yes. Sometimes, I keep on busily doing my duty, but then, when I become quiet, my heart feels empty.) That is what it is not to possess any truth. If you do not pursue the truth, then, even if you have not

done anything terribly wrong or wicked, and you have not violated the main principles, and externally, you seem like a good person with some humanity, you are still not practicing the truth, nor have you gained any truth. Your “not having done anything wrong” and appearing on the outside to be someone with humanity do not amount to being in accordance with the truth or practicing the truth. There is a gap, a difference, between this and practicing the truth. Therefore, many people believe in God, and after a period of time they find that they have become people who just exert effort. When they first started, they did not plan on believing this way, so how did they become someone who just does things through physical exertion? What is the implied meaning of “doing things through physical exertion”? It means to render service, to have become a tool. Why have you become people who render service? Do you wish to render service in this way? When you started to believe, you did not plan on rendering service; your plan was: “I must believe in earnest, I must understand the truth, and, in the end, I must rise up to heaven. At the very least I must not die.” And, after believing for a while, you then thought, “I must fear God and shun evil, and I must obey God.” But how have you unknowingly become people who exert themselves? It is because you can never enter into the truth in the environments God arranges for you or during the performing of your duties, and you are always using your physical exertions as a substitute for doing your duty—that is the reason.

Excerpted from “What Is Practicing the Truth?” in Records of Christ’s Talks

When man measures others, he does so according to their contribution. When God measures man, He does so according to man’s nature. Among those who seek life, Paul was someone who did not know his own substance. He was by no means humble or obedient, nor did he know his essence, which was in opposition to God. And so, he was someone who had not undergone detailed experiences, and was someone who did not put the truth into practice. Peter was different. He knew his imperfections, weaknesses, and his corrupt disposition as a creature of God, and so he had a path of practice through which to change his disposition; he was not one of those who only had doctrine but possessed no reality. Those who change are new people who have been saved, they are those who are qualified in pursuing the truth. People who do not change belong to those who are naturally obsolete; they are those who have not been saved, that is, those who are detested and rejected by God. They will not be remembered by God no matter how great their work. When you compare this with your own pursuit, whether you are

ultimately the same kind of person as Peter or Paul should be self-evident. If there is still no truth in what you seek, and if even today you are still as arrogant and insolent as Paul, and are still as glib and boastful as him, then you are without doubt a degenerate who fails. If you seek the same as Peter, if you seek practices and true changes, and are not arrogant or willful, but seek to perform your duty, then you will be a creature of God who can achieve victory. Paul did not know his own essence or corruption, much less did he know his own disobedience. He never mentioned his despicable defiance of Christ, nor was he overly regretful. He only offered a brief explanation and, deep down in his heart, he did not completely submit to God. Though he fell on the road to Damascus, he did not look deep within himself. He was content merely to keep working, and he did not consider knowing himself and changing his old disposition to be the most crucial of issues. He was satisfied with merely speaking the truth, with providing to others as a salve for his own conscience, and with no longer persecuting Jesus' disciples to console himself and forgive himself for his past sins. The goal that he pursued was nothing more than a future crown and transitory work, the goal he pursued was abundant grace. He did not seek sufficient truth, nor did he seek to progress deeper into the truth which he had previously not understood. His knowledge of himself can therefore be said to be false, and he did not accept chastisement or judgment. That he was able to work does not mean he possessed a knowledge of his own nature or essence; his focus was on outward practices only. What he strived for, moreover, was not change, but knowledge. His work was completely the result of the appearance of Jesus on the road to Damascus. It was not something he had resolved to do originally, nor was it work that occurred after he had accepted the pruning of his old disposition. No matter how he worked, his old disposition did not change, and so his work did not atone for his past sins but merely played a certain role among the churches of the time. For someone such as this, whose old disposition did not change—that is to say, who did not gain salvation, and was even more without the truth—he was absolutely incapable of becoming one of those accepted by the Lord Jesus.

Excerpted from "Success or Failure Depends on the Path That Man Walks" in *The Word Appears in the*

Flesh

5. What conditions must service-doers fulfill to become God's people?

Relevant Words of God:

Service-doing means that you do whatever you want to, at least, provided that what you do does not offend God's disposition. As long as nobody investigates your actions and as long as what you do is passable, then that is good enough. You do not concern yourself with changes of disposition, with doing things in accordance with the truth principles, with satisfying God's will, and even less with how to submit to God's orchestrations and arrangements, or with how to do your duty well and give an account of it to God. You pay no mind to any of these things, and this is what is called service-doing. Service-doing is about exerting oneself with all that you have and working as though you were a slave, from morning until night. If you ask such a person, "All these years of bitter, hard work that you have immersed yourself in, what has it all been for?" then they will reply, "Why, so that I may gain blessings." If you ask them whether their disposition has had some change as a result of all of their years of believing in God, whether they have become certain of God's existence, whether they have some degree of true understanding or experience of the Creator's orchestrations and arrangements, the answer to all of these will be a categorical "No," and they will be unable to speak about any of these things. When there has been no improvement or progression in any of the indicators relating to changes in disposition, such a person just constantly renders service. Supposing a person does service for many years and, without realizing it, comes to understand that they possess a corrupt disposition, that they often rebel against God, that they often utter complaints, that they often are unable to obey God, that they are deeply corrupted, that no matter how God tells them to submit to Him they are unable to do so. They attempt to restrain themselves but this does not work, and neither does cursing themselves or swearing oaths. In the end, they discover: "Man truly does possess a corrupt disposition, and that is why he is able to rebel against God. Whenever something happens people always have their own desires, and they are always researching God's orchestrations and arrangements. Although they are willing to exert themselves, the moment something implicates their disposition and their wild ambitions and desires, intentions and wishes, they are unable to forsake them or let them go. They always want to do things in a way that satisfies themselves. This is me, and I am truly a handful to manage! What can be done?" If they have begun to ponder these things, then they already have some small understanding of human ways. If at some time people who are engaged in service-doing

are able to take up the real work, are able to focus their minds upon changes of disposition, gain understanding that in fact they also have a corrupt disposition, that they too are arrogant and unable to submit to God, and that it will not do to continue in this way; when the time comes that they are able to think of these things, then they will have begun to turn themselves around and there is hope that their disposition might change and that they might attain salvation. Suppose that someone never thinks of these things, and all they know is how to labor, thinking that finishing the work in their hands is all that is required to complete God's commission, and that once they have finished exerting themselves they will have properly performed their duty, never thinking about what God's requirements are, about what the truth is, or about whether they may be counted as someone who obeys God—they never ponder these things. Can someone who approaches their duty in such a way attain salvation? The answer is no. They have not set foot upon the path to attaining salvation or on the right track of belief in God, nor have they established proper relations with God, and yet still they exert themselves and engage in service-doing in the house of God. This kind of person does service in the house of God, and God looks after and protects them, but He does not plan to save them, nor does He deal with them and prune them, nor judge and chastise them, nor subject them to trials or refinement; He only allows them to gain some measure of blessings in this lifetime, and nothing more. If a time comes when these people know to reflect on these things and understand the sermons they hear, they will realize: "So, this is what believing God is all about. Well then, I must seek to attain salvation. If I don't, and instead settle for rendering service, then that will have nothing to do with belief in God." They then ponder: "What aspects of a corrupt disposition do I possess? What exactly is this thing, this corrupt disposition? No matter what, first I must submit to God!" These things relate to the truth and to changes of disposition, and there is hope for them.

Excerpted from "Only by Seeking the Principles of the Truth Can One Perform Their Duty Well" in Records
of Christ's Talks

Prior to understanding God's words, the truth, and God's will, and prior to developing even a shred of reverence for God, the role that every person plays can only be that of a service-doer, and nothing else. That is, you are one whether you want to be one or not; you cannot escape this appellation. Some people say, "But I've believed in God my entire life; it's been several decades since I started believing in Jesus. Am I seriously still just a service-doer?" What do you

think about this question? Whom are you asking? You need to ask yourself this: Do you understand God's will yet? Are you currently just exerting some effort, or are you practicing the truth? Have you set foot upon the path to pursuing and understanding the truth? Have you entered the truth reality? Do you revere God in your heart? If you are in possession of these qualities, can stand firm when encountering God's trials, and are able to fear God and shun evil, then of course you are no longer a service-doer. If, however, you are not in possession of these qualities, then you are without a doubt still a service-doer. This is inescapable, and it is also inevitable. Some people say, "I've believed in God for more than thirty years; I became one of His followers from the moment He came to do work as flesh incarnate and uttered the very first word. I was one of the first people to experience God's work, and was also among the first to personally hear God speak His words. After all these years, I am still following God and believing in God. Through all the persecution I have been through, through my being arrested several times and all of the dangers I have experienced, God has always protected me and led me through to the other side. He never abandoned me. Now I'm still performing my duty, and my condition is getting better and better, my faith continues to grow, and I don't have the slightest doubt when it comes to God. Am I really still just a service-doer?" Whom are you asking? Do you not think you are asking the wrong person? This is not a question you should ask. Given that you have been a believer for so many years, you should by now have a clear idea of what exactly it is that you are. Since you have believed for so many years, how can you not know whether you are still a service-doer or not? Why do you not ask whether or not you possess truth reality? Have you given rise to reverence for God? Have you shown any evidence of having shunned evil? God has worked for so many years and uttered so many words; how many have you gained? How much have you entered? How much have you accepted of God's pruning and dealing with you, and of the trials and refinement He has put you through? When accepting these things, have you stood testimony? Can you testify to God? If you were to encounter trials of the sort Job underwent, would you deny God? Just how much faith do you have in God, anyway? Is that faith of yours simply a matter of believing, or is it true faith? Ask yourself these questions. If you do not even know the answer to these questions, then you are muddle-headed. I think you are just someone who parrots the words and actions of others, and are not even worthy of being called a service-doer.

When people enter God’s house and they do not understand the truth, but only have various aspirations or develop some resolve to cooperate, the role they can fulfill during this period can only be that of service-doers. “Rendering service” is not a very nice-sounding phrase, of course. To put it another way, it means people serve and toil for the work of God’s management plan, meaning that they exert themselves for it. They do not comprehend or understand anything, but have a few skills and gifts, and are able to learn and pass on what others say and take on some work of general affairs, but when it comes to the various aspects of specific work of God’s salvation and management of humanity, as well as the various aspects of work related to the truth, they cannot dedicate any effort or cooperate at all; they merely put forth a bit of effort and say a few things while doing some work of general affairs, and do some peripheral service-related work. If this is how the essence of people’s duty, or of the roles they play and the work they do in God’s house is, then they will have a hard time shrugging off the title of “service-doers.” Why will they have a hard time shrugging it off? Does it not have to do with what God defines this title to mean? It is quite easy for people to put forth some effort, and do things by their innate abilities, gifts, and intelligence. However, living by the truth, entering the truth reality, acting in accordance with God’s will—these things are very strenuous; they require time, they require people to lead, they require enlightenment from God, and they require God’s discipline. Moreover, they require the coming of God’s words of judgment and chastisement. Thus, during the time it takes to reach this goal, what most people are capable of doing and providing is limited to those handful of things: Fulfilling the role of objects for God to speak to; possessing certain gifts and having some use in God’s house; thinking the way normal humanity thinks, and being able to grasp and carry out whatever jobs are allocated to you; being equipped with certain skills and able to play to your strengths in whatever job you are given to do in God’s house; and, most importantly, having an aspiration to listen and submit. When doing service in God’s house, and when exerting effort for God’s work, if you have that little bit of an inclination to listen and submit, you will be unable to run away or stir up trouble; rather, you will do your best to restrain yourself and do fewer bad deeds and more good ones. This is the state and condition of most people, is it not? Of course, out of all of you, only a very

tiny minority have actually left this condition, this category, behind. So what do those very few people possess? They have come to understand the truth, they possess truth reality and when encountering a problem, they are able to pray and seek God's will, and to act in accordance with the truth principles. Their aspiration to listen and submit is no longer limited to a mere resolution to do so; they are already capable of taking the initiative to put God's words into practice and act in accordance with His requirements. When running up against a problem, they have reverence for God, they do not speak or act rashly, but are careful and prudent. Especially when they are facing being pruned and dealt with in a way they do not personally agree with, they can still keep from passing judgment on God, and resistance does not arise in them. Deep down, in the depths of their hearts, they harbor genuine acceptance when it comes to God's identity, status, and essence. Are there differences between these people and service-doers? (Yes.) What differences are there? First of all, they understand the truth; second, they can put some truths into practice; third, they have some knowledge of God; fourth, their listening and submission are no longer mere aspirations, but have transformed into a kind of subjective attitude—that is, they have achieved true submission; and fifth—and this is the most important difference, as well as the most precious—they have developed reverence for God. People in possession of these things can be said to have already gotten rid of the title of “service-doers.” When looking at their various aspects of entry, as well as their attitude toward the truth and the extent of their knowledge of God, these people are no longer simply doing service for a certain part of the business of God's house, and have graduated beyond just being called upon to do some simple job. That is, these people have not come just to get a one-off reward, and were not recruited just to do some temp work on a trial basis while under observation to see whether or not they can do the job in the long term. Thus, these people have already shed this title, this appellation, of “service-doers.”

Excerpted from “For Leaders and Workers, Choosing a Path Is of Utmost Importance (17)” in Records of Christ's Talks

When God's work is finished, if a person has gotten rid of the title of “service-doer,” shrugged this appellation off, and left this condition behind, this is a cause for celebration, is it not? What does this mean? It means that this person, in God's eyes, is no longer a layperson or an unbeliever; they are now a member of God's house and kingdom. A member of God's house

and kingdom—where does this title come from? How do people obtain it? It comes from having paid a price and, through understanding the truth, you have pursued the truth and arrived at a certain level of change in your disposition; you can now submit to God and revere Him, and you have become a member of His house. Like Job and Peter, you no longer have to undergo Satan's persecution and corruption. You are able to live freely in God's house and in His kingdom, and you no longer need to fight against your corrupt disposition; you are, in God's eyes, a true object of creation and a genuine human. This means that the days of hardship suffered by a person who has been corrupted by Satan are completely over; now is the time of peace, joy, and happiness, in which a person can live in the light of the Creator's countenance and live alongside God. This is something to celebrate, is it not? (Yes.) ... Some people have said, "As soon as You mention the term 'service-doer,' I feel resistant; that is the only attitude I have. If You make me be a service-doer, I won't be willing and I won't be happy. If You say I'm not a service-doer, and call me one of God's people instead, then even if I were the least of them, that would be fine. I'll be fine just as long as You don't call me a service-doer. Throughout my entire life, this is the only pursuit I have ever had, and the only ideal; all I look forward to is getting rid of the title 'service-doer.' This isn't much to ask." What do you think of people like this? Is this the attitude of one who pursues the truth? (No.) What sort of attitude is this? It is a negative attitude, is it not? (Yes.) You do not need to try hard to rid yourself of the title of "service-doer," because it was given to you based on the degree to which you have progressed through life. You cannot decide this for yourself based on what you want; it does not depend on what a person wants, but on what path a person is on and whether or not that person has achieved a change in disposition. If your goal is merely to seek to rid yourself of the title of "service-doer," then you will never get rid of it. I will tell you the truth: You will have it for the rest of your life. If you concentrate instead on pursuing the truth, and can achieve a change in disposition, then this title will gradually disappear. Thus, looking at it in light of these two points, did God force this title of "service-doers" on people? (No.) Absolutely not! It is not a title that was forced by God on humanity, nor is it a code word or a term of address or a designation. It is based on the degree to which people have progressed in life throughout the process of their life progression. However far your life has progressed, and however much your disposition has transformed, that is how much you have shed the title of "service-doer." If, one day, you get to where you can

revere God and submit to Him, then you will no longer wear that title even if you want to. This is based on a person's pursuit, on their attitude toward the truth, and on the path they are on.

Excerpted from "For Leaders and Workers, Choosing a Path Is of Utmost Importance (17)" in Records of Christ's Talks

Service-doers, too, must be loyal. Regardless of your origins or why God selected you, you must be loyal to God, to any commissions God entrusts to you, and to the work for which you are responsible and the duties you perform. For service-doers who are capable of being loyal and satisfying God, what will their outcomes be? They will be able to remain. Is it a blessing to be a service-doer who remains? What does it mean to remain? What is the significance of this blessing? In status, they seem unlike God's chosen ones; they seem different. But in fact, is what they enjoy in this life not the same as that of God's chosen ones? At the very least, it is the same in this lifetime. You do not deny this, do you? ... If you can be a loyal service-doer, are able to serve right up to the very end and can fulfill the commission entrusted to you by God, then you will live a life of value. If you can do this, you will be able to remain. If you put in a bit more effort, if you try a bit harder, can redouble your endeavors to know God, can speak a little about knowing God, can bear testimony to Him, and, moreover, if you can understand something of His will, can cooperate in God's work, and can be somewhat mindful of God's intentions, then you, as a service-doer, will experience a change in fortune. And what will this change in fortune be? You will no longer simply be able to remain. Depending on your conduct and your personal aspirations and pursuits, God will make you one of the chosen ones. This will be your change in fortune. For service-doers, what is the best thing about this? It is that they can become God's chosen. If they do so, it means that they will no longer be reincarnated as animals the way unbelievers are. Is that good? It is, and it is also good news: It means that service-doers can be molded. It is not the case that for a service-doer, once God has predestined them to serve, they will do so forever; that is not necessarily so. God will handle them and respond to them in a way that befits this person's individual conduct.

Excerpted from "God Himself, the Unique X" in The Word Appears in the Flesh

IX. Principles of Practicing the Truth

1. What is practicing the Truth?

Relevant Words of God:

What is the most important thing in practicing the truth? Is it not that you must first grasp the principles? What are the principles? The principles are the practical side of the truth. When you read a sentence of God's words, you think it is the truth, but you do not grasp the principles within it; you feel the sentence is correct, but you do not know in what way it is practical, or what state it is meant to address. You cannot grasp its principles or its path of practice. To you, this truth you perceive is merely doctrine. However, once you grasp the truth reality of that sentence, as well as what God's requirements are—if you truly understand these things, and are able to pay the price and put them into practice—then you will gain that truth. As you gain that truth, little by little, your corrupt disposition is resolved, and that truth is worked into you. When you are able to put the reality of the truth into practice, and when your performance of your duty, your every action, and your conduct as a person are based in the principles of practice of this truth, are you not then changed? Above all, you have become someone who is in possession of truth reality. Is someone who is in possession of truth reality not the same as someone who acts with principles? And is someone who acts with principles not the same as someone who is in possession of the truth? Is someone who is in possession of the truth not also able to conform to God's will? That is how these things relate.

Excerpted from God's Fellowship

Why is it said that God's words are a beacon for people? It is because they are not spoken in vain; they are not some kind of theory or high-sounding words, nor are they some sort of argument. They are there for you to implement, to put into practice. When you encounter problems, and have no idea what to do and lack a path for practice, you think of what requirements are made by God's words. After mulling His words over, you find a way forward and understand their meaning. Then, you can practice in accordance with His will. By practicing in this way, you gain confirmation, and discover that it brings you spiritual peace and enjoyment; this is edifying for others as well. In the process of putting God's words into practice, you gain some enlightenment as well as some experience and learning; you are awakened to certain

things. You come to realize what God means by saying these words and getting people to do things in a certain way. You locate the relevant principles of practice, and you come to know the origin and significance of God's utterance of these words. This is understanding the truth. Once you have understood the truth, you will no longer be confused or find it difficult to get involved; you will have a path of practice. What is meant by having a path to put God's words into practice? It means you comprehend the principles of practice behind them; you understand what states God is referring to, and you know how you should practice. God's words may look simple to you, but in fact, they tell you how you should live, what you should do when you encounter an issue, and how you should resolve any difficulties you might come across. They are the truth. They can become your path, allowing you to approach issues with wisdom and principles, and have a path of practice. If you have a path to follow in performing your duty or in other matters, and if you have principles in how you handle things and know God's will, then this shows that you understand the truth and that you understand His words.

Excerpted from "Having a Human Likeness Requires Fulfilling Your Duty Properly With All Your Heart, Mind, and Soul" in Records of Christ's Talks

Many people have certain outward behaviors, such as being able to cast aside their families and careers and fulfill their duties, and therefore they believe they are practicing the truth. However, God does not recognize that they are practicing the truth. If everything you do has a personal motive behind it and is adulterated, then you are not practicing the truth; you are simply exhibiting superficial conduct. Strictly speaking, your conduct will probably be condemned by God; it will not be praised or remembered by Him. Dissecting this further, you are doing evil and your conduct is in opposition to God. From the outside, you are not interrupting or disturbing anything and you have not done real damage or violated any truth. It appears to be logical and reasonable, yet the essence of your actions pertains to doing evil and resisting God. Therefore, you should determine whether there has been a change in your disposition and whether you are putting the truth into practice by looking at the motives behind your actions in light of God's words. It does not depend on a human view of whether your actions conform to the human imagination and human intentions, or whether they are suited to your taste; such things are not important. Rather, it depends on God saying whether or not you are conforming to His will, whether or not your actions possess truth reality, and whether

or not they meet His requirements and standards. Only measuring yourself against God's requirements is accurate. Transformation in disposition and putting the truth into practice are not as simple and easy as people imagine. Do you understand this now? Do you have any experience with this? When it comes to a problem's essence, you might not understand it; your entry has been overly superficial. You run about all day long, from dawn until dusk, rising early and going to bed late, yet you have not achieved transformation in your life disposition, and you cannot grasp what such a transformation involves. This means your entry is too shallow, does it not? Regardless of how long you have believed in God, you might not sense the essence and deep things to do with achieving transformation in disposition. How do you know whether God praises you or not? At the very least, you will feel exceptionally steadfast regarding everything that you do, and you will feel the Holy Spirit guiding and enlightening you and working in you while you are fulfilling your duties, doing any work in God's house, or ordinarily. Your conduct will fit hand-in-hand with God's words, and once you have gained a certain degree of experience, you will feel that how you acted in the past was relatively suitable. If, however, after gaining experience for a period of time, you feel that some of the things you did in the past were not suitable, and you are dissatisfied with them, and feel that indeed there was no truth in the things you did, then this proves that everything you did was done in resistance to God. It is evidence that your service was full of rebelliousness, resistance, and human ways of acting.

Excerpted from "What Should Be Known About Transforming One's Disposition" in Records of Christ's Talks

Exactly what are the criteria for putting the truth into practice? How is whether you are putting the truth into practice measured and defined? How does God determine whether you are someone who accepts His words upon hearing them? He looks at whether, during the time that you have believed in Him and listened to sermons, there has been any change in your internal state, in your disobedience toward Him, and in the essence of the various aspects of your corrupt disposition. He looks at whether you have replaced these with the truth, and at whether you have changed in your external behavior and actions or in the essence of your corrupt disposition deep within your heart. God measures you according to these things. Having listened to sermons and eaten and drunk of God's words for all these years, are your changes just superficial, or essential? Have there been changes in your disposition? Have there been

changes in your misconceptions about God, your disobedience toward God, and in how you approach the commissions and duties that God entrusts to you? Has there been a reduction in your disobedience against God? When something happens and you are revealed to be disobedient, are you able to reflect upon yourself? Are you capable of obedience? Have you become more loyal to the commissions and duties that God entrusts to you, and is this loyalty pure? During the time that you have been listening to sermons, have your motives, ambitions, desires, and intentions been cleansed? Are these not criteria for measurement? Then there are also your misconceptions about God: Do you still cling to your original notions, vague and abstract imaginings, and conclusions? Do you still have complaints and other negative emotions? Have there been changes in terms of these things? If there has not been any change in these aspects, then what kind of person are you? This proves one fact: You are not someone who practices the truth.

Excerpted from “Only by Practicing God’s Words Can One Achieve a Change in Disposition” in Records of
Christ’s Talks

If you believe in God but do not pursue the truth, then you could believe for ten years without experiencing any change. In the end, you will think that this is precisely what it means to believe in God; you will think it is pretty much the same as how you were living in the world previously, and that being alive is meaningless. This truly shows that without the truth, life is empty. You may be able to speak some words of doctrine, but you will still feel uncomfortable and uneasy. If people have some knowledge of God, know how to live a meaningful life, and can do some things that satisfy God, then they will feel that this is real life, that only by living in this way will their lives have meaning, and that they have to live this way in order to bring a little satisfaction to God and feel gratified. If they can consciously satisfy God, put the truth into practice, forsake themselves, abandon their own ideas, and be obedient and considerate toward God’s will—if they are able to do all these things consciously—then this is what it means to accurately put the truth into practice, and to genuinely put the truth into practice, and this is very unlike their previous reliance on their imaginations and their sticking to doctrines and rules. In actual fact, it is exhausting to do anything when they do not understand the truth, exhausting to adhere to doctrines and rules, and exhausting to have no goals and to be doing things blindly. Only with the truth can they be free—this is no lie—and with it, they can do things

easily and happily. Those who possess this sort of state are people who possess the truth; they are the ones whose dispositions have been transformed.

Excerpted from “Only by Pursuing the Truth Can One Achieve a Change in Disposition” in Records of Christ’s Talks

2. What is rule-following? What are the differences between rule-following and practicing the truth?

Relevant Words of God:

What man must achieve now is in line with the real state of man today, according to the caliber and actual stature of present-day man, and it does not require that you follow rules. This is so that changes may be achieved in your old nature, and in order that you may cast aside your notions. Do you think the commandments are rules? They are, it can be said, normal requirements of man. They are not rules that you must follow. Take prohibiting smoking, for example—is that a rule? It is not a rule! It is required by normal humanity; it is not a rule, but something stipulated for the whole of mankind. Today, the dozen or so commandments that have been set forth are also not rules; they are what is required to achieve normal humanity. People did not possess or know of such things in the past, and so people are required to achieve them today, and such things do not count as rules. Laws are not the same as rules. The rules that I speak of are in reference to ceremonies, formalities or the deviant and erroneous practices of man; they are the rules and regulations that are of no help to man, no benefit to him; they form a course of action that holds no meaning. This is the epitome of rules, and such rules must be discarded, for they offer no benefit to man. It is that which is of benefit to man that must be put into practice.

Excerpted from “The Vision of God’s Work (1)” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

How many religious practices do you observe? How many times have you rebelled against the word of God and gone your own way? How many times have you put God’s word into practice because you are truly considerate of His burdens and seek to satisfy His will? You should understand the word of God and put it into practice accordingly. Be principled in all

your actions and deeds, though this does not mean abiding by rules or doing something grudgingly just for show; rather, it means practicing the truth and living by the word of God. Only practice such as this satisfies God. Any course of action that pleases God is not a rule, but the practice of truth. Some people have a penchant for drawing attention to themselves. In the presence of their brothers and sisters, they might say they are indebted to God, but behind their backs, they do not practice the truth and act entirely differently. Are these not religious Pharisees? A person who truly loves God and possesses the truth is one who is loyal to God but does not outwardly show off as such. Such a person is willing to practice the truth when situations arise, and does not speak or act in a way that goes against their conscience. This sort of person demonstrates wisdom when matters arise, and is principled in his or her deeds regardless of the circumstances. This kind of person can provide true service. There are some who often pay lip service to their indebtedness to God; they spend their days with brows locked in worry, putting on an affected air and pretending to be pitiable. How despicable! If you were to ask them, “Can you tell me about how you are indebted to God?” then they would be rendered speechless. If you are loyal to God, then do not talk outwardly about it; instead, demonstrate your love for God by way of actual practice, and pray to Him with a true heart. Those who just deal with God verbally and perfunctorily are all hypocrites!

Excerpted from “In Faith, One Must Focus on Reality—Engaging in Religious Ritual Is Not Faith” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Most people believe that a normal spiritual life necessarily involves praying, singing hymns, eating and drinking the words of God or pondering His words, regardless of whether such practices actually have any effect or lead to true understanding. These people focus on following superficial procedures without any thought to their results; they are people who live in religious rituals, not people who live within the church, and much less are they people of the kingdom. Their prayers, hymn singing, and eating and drinking of God’s words are all just rule-following, done out of compulsion and to keep up with trends, not out of willingness nor from the heart. However much these people pray or sing, their efforts will bear no fruit, for what they practice is just the rules and rituals of religion; they are not actually practicing God’s words. They focus only on making a fuss over how they practice, and they treat God’s words as rules to follow. Such people are not putting God’s words into practice; they are just gratifying the flesh, and

performing for other people to see. These religious rules and rituals are all human in origin; they do not come from God. God does not follow rules, nor is He subject to any law. Rather, He does new things every day, accomplishing practical work. Like people in the Three-Self Church, who limit themselves to practices such as attending morning services every day, offering evening prayers and prayers of gratitude before meals, and giving thanks in all things—however much they do and for however long they do it, they will not have the work of the Holy Spirit. When people live amidst rules and have their hearts fixed on methods of practice, the Holy Spirit cannot work, because their hearts are occupied by rules and human notions. Thus, God is unable to intervene and work on them, and they can only continue living under the control of laws. Such people are forever incapable of receiving God's praise.

Excerpted from "Regarding a Normal Spiritual Life" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

In the past, there were a lot of deviations and even absurdities in the ways people experienced. They simply did not understand the standards of God's requirements, so there were many areas in which people's experiences went awry. What God requires of man is for them to be able to live out normal humanity. For example, it is all right for people to follow modern conventions with regard to food and clothing, to wear a suit and a tie, to learn a bit about modern art, and in their spare time they can enjoy arts, culture and entertainment. They can take some memorable photos, they can read and gain some useful knowledge, and have a relatively good living environment. These are all things that befit a life of normal humanity, and yet people see them as things detested by God and they hold themselves back from doing them. Their practice consists of merely following a few rules, which leads to a life that is as dull as ditchwater and entirely devoid of meaning. In fact, God has never demanded that people do things in this way. People all wish to curtail their own dispositions, praying unceasingly within their spirits to be closer to God, their minds constantly mulling over what God intends, their eyes constantly observing this or that, in great fear that their connection to God will somehow be severed. These are all conclusions that people have come to on their own; they are rules set by people for themselves. If you do not know your own nature essence and you do not understand what level your own practice can reach, then you will have no way to be certain exactly what standards God requires of man, and neither will you have an accurate path of practice. Since you cannot understand what it is exactly that God requires of man, your mind is

always churning, you rack your brains analyzing God's intentions and fumble about searching for some way to be moved and enlightened by the Holy Spirit. As a result, you develop some ways of practice that you believe to be suitable. You simply have no idea what it is exactly that God requires of man; you just blithely carry out your own set of practices, caring little about the outcome and even less about whether there are deviations or errors in your practice. In this way, your practice naturally lacks accuracy and is unprincipled. What it particularly lacks are normal human reason and conscience, as well as God's commendation and the corroboration of the Holy Spirit. It becomes entirely too easy to simply take your own road. This kind of practice is just following rules or intentionally taking up more of a burden in order to restrict yourself and control yourself. Yet you think that you have your practice down to a tee, not knowing that the majority of your practice consists of unnecessary processes or observances. There are many who practice like this for years with basically no change in their dispositions, no new understanding, and no new entry. They unknowingly recommit the same old mistakes and give full play to their brutish natures, even to the point where there are many times when they commit unreasonable, inhumane acts, and behave in ways that leave people scratching their heads and completely baffled. Could such people be said to have experienced dispositional transformation?

Excerpted from "Practice (1)" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

What is the standard that determines whether someone is practicing the truth? It is that they have come to possess truth reality. What is the standard that determines whether one is in possession of truth reality? This depends on the attitude you have in your heart toward God when you encounter issues, and whether you have an accurate or deeper knowledge and measure of yourself. Some people always talk about superficial, general things when they encounter issues, which shows that they are not in possession of truth reality. Are those who are not in possession of truth reality capable of practicing the truth when they encounter an issue? No, they are not. They may perhaps say: "I have encountered this issue and I'll just obey God." So why do you have to obey God in this issue? The principle that you follow is correct, but you may perhaps behave according to your feelings, which is a way of doing things that you have measured and determined yourself. You say, "I only obey God; I don't say or do anything else," but in your heart, you are always thinking, "What's all this about? What God did is wrong." You do not understand why God has acted in such a way, yet you keep telling yourself to obey, while,

actually, there is no true obedience in your heart. You merely appear externally not to say or do anything, as if you are obedient, when, in fact, such obedience is mere rule-following, not practicing the truth. You must reverse the course of that disobedient corrupt disposition within you and say: “I see and understand this issue. I understand God’s heart. I know why God wants to do this. Whether I suffer, or I’m weak, or I fall and can’t get up, or I’m sad, I will obey God, for I know that what God does is good, that everything God does is correct, and that God cannot do anything wrong.” This is different from saying “I’ll just obey God” without any intention of actually doing so. On the surface, that “obedience” is not expressed in any disobedient way—but within your heart, there are turbulent storms, and a heap of misunderstandings of God and grievances against Him. This is, in fact, a boil hidden within you—although your skin is fine on the outside, there is a sickness within that will burst forth sooner or later. It does not matter how many years you have obeyed or how many times you have obeyed in this way; in the end, you still do not have true belief in God, nor do you have a true understanding of Him. And what does this mean? It means that you obey by following rules, and, no matter how many times you obey, you are only following rules; your corrupt disposition has not changed or been resolved. You must gain knowledge of your own corrupt disposition through the issues you encounter, and you must have understanding, knowledge of, and consideration toward what God does, so that you can achieve true obedience, that is, willing obedience. Only by reaching this level will you have a true change in your disposition.

Excerpted from “What Is Practicing the Truth?” in Records of Christ’s Talks

3. How should one practice the truth in order to enter truth reality?

Relevant Words of God:

What is the most important thing in practicing the truth? Is it not that you must first grasp the principles? What are the principles? The principles are the practical side of the truth. When you read a sentence of God’s words, you think it is the truth, but you do not grasp the principles within it; you feel the sentence is correct, but you do not know in what way it is practical, or what state it is meant to address. You cannot grasp its principles or its path of practice. To you, this truth you perceive is merely doctrine. However, once you grasp the truth reality of that

sentence, as well as what God's requirements are—if you truly understand these things, and are able to pay the price and put them into practice—then you will gain that truth. As you gain that truth, little by little, your corrupt disposition is resolved, and that truth is worked into you. When you are able to put the reality of the truth into practice, and when your performance of your duty, your every action, and your conduct as a person are based in the principles of practice of this truth, are you not then changed? Above all, you have become someone who is in possession of truth reality. Is someone who is in possession of truth reality not the same as someone who acts with principles? And is someone who acts with principles not the same as someone who is in possession of the truth? Is someone who is in possession of the truth not also able to conform to God's will? That is how these things relate.

Excerpted from God's Fellowship

Whichever aspect of the truth reality you have heard, if you hold yourself up against it, implement these words in your own life, and incorporate them into your own practice, then you will definitely gain something, and you are bound to change. If you simply stuff these words into your belly and memorize them in your brain, then you will never change. Whilst listening to the sermons, you should ponder thusly: "What sort of state are these words referring to? What aspect of essence are they referring to? In what matters should I apply this aspect of the truth? Whenever I do something related to this aspect of the truth, am I practicing in accordance with it? And when I'm putting it into practice, is my state in keeping with these words? If not, then should I seek, fellowship, or wait?" Do you practice in this manner in your lives? If you do not, then your life is without God and without the truth. You live according to letters and doctrines or according to your own interests, confidence, and enthusiasm. Those who do not possess the truth as reality are those who have no reality, and people who do not have God's words as their reality are people who have not entered His words. Do you understand what I am saying? It is best if you are, but regardless of what your understanding of them is, and of how much you have comprehended of what you have heard, the crucial thing is that you are able to introduce what you have grasped into your life and put it into practice. Only then will your stature be able to grow, and only then will changes occur in your disposition.

Excerpted from "The Most Fundamental Practice of Being an Honest Person" in Records of Christ's Talks

Entering into the truth reality is not a simple matter. The key is to focus on seeking the truth and putting the truth into practice. You have to hold these things in your heart every day. Regardless of what problems you face, do not always protect your own interests; rather, learn to seek the truth and self-reflect. No matter what corruptions are revealed in you, you cannot let them go unchecked; it is best if you can reflect upon and recognize your corrupt essence. If, in everyday situations, your thoughts dwell on how to resolve your corrupt disposition, how to practice the truth, and what the truth principles are, then you are capable of learning how to use the truth to resolve your problems in accordance with God's words. In doing so, you will gradually enter reality. If your mind is filled with thoughts of how to attain a higher position, or what to do in front of others to get them to admire you, then you are on the wrong path. It means you are doing things for Satan; you are rendering service. If your mind is filled with thoughts of how to change so that you will be more and more like a human, be in line with God's intentions, be capable of submitting to Him and revering Him, and show restraint and accept His scrutiny in everything you do, then your condition will get better and better. This is what it means to be one who lives before God. As such, there are two paths: One merely emphasizes behavior, fulfilling one's own ambitions, desires, intents, and plans; this is living before Satan and living under its domain. The other path emphasizes how to satisfy God's will, enter the truth reality, submit to God, and have no misconceptions or disobedience toward Him, so that one reveres God and performs one's duty well. This is what it means to live before God.

Excerpted from "Only by Practicing the Truth Can One Possess Normal Humanity" in Records of Christ's Talks

People who truly expend themselves for God lay out their entire being before Him; they genuinely submit to all of His utterances, and are able to put His words into practice. They make God's words the foundation of their existence, and they are able to search earnestly within God's words to find out which parts to practice. Such are people who truly live before God. If what you do is beneficial for your life, and through the eating and drinking of His words you can meet your inner needs and inadequacies so that your life disposition is transformed, then this will satisfy God's will. If you act in accordance with God's requirements, and if you do not satisfy the flesh but instead satisfy His will, then in this you will have entered the reality of His words. When talking about entering the reality of God's words more realistically, it means you can

perform your duty and meet God's requirements. Only these sorts of practical actions can be called entering the reality of His words. If you are able to enter this reality, then you will possess the truth. This is the beginning of entering reality; you must first undertake this training, and only then will you be able to enter even deeper realities.

Excerpted from "Those Who Truly Love God Are Those Who Can Submit Absolutely to His Practicality" in
The Word Appears in the Flesh

Since people began to believe in God, they have harbored many incorrect intentions. When you are not putting the truth into practice, you feel that all your intentions are correct, but when something happens to you, you will see that there are many incorrect intentions within you. Thus, when God makes people perfect, He causes them to realize that there are many notions within them that are obstructing their knowledge of God. When you recognize that your intentions are wrong, if you are able to stop practicing according to your notions and intentions, and are able to bear testimony to God, and stand firm in your position in all that happens to you, this proves that you have rebelled against the flesh. When you rebel against the flesh, there will inevitably be a battle within you. Satan will try and make people follow it, will try and make them follow the notions of the flesh and uphold the interests of the flesh—but God's words will enlighten and illuminate people within, and at this time it is up to you whether you follow God or follow Satan. God asks people to put the truth into practice primarily to deal with the things inside them, to deal with their thoughts and notions that are not after God's heart. The Holy Spirit touches people in their hearts and enlightens and illuminates them. So behind everything that happens is a battle: Every time people put the truth into practice, or put the love of God into practice, there is a great battle, and though all may seem well with their flesh, in the depths of their hearts a life-and-death battle will, in fact, be going on—and only after this intense battle, after a tremendous amount of reflection, can victory or defeat be decided. One does not know whether to laugh or cry. Because many of the intentions within people are wrong, or else because much of God's work is at odds with their notions, when people put the truth into practice, a great battle is waged behind the scenes. Having put this truth into practice, behind the scenes, people will have shed countless tears of sadness before finally making up their mind to satisfy God. It is because of this battle that people endure suffering and refinement; this is true suffering. When the battle comes upon you, if you are able to truly stand on the side of God,

you will be able to satisfy God. While practicing the truth, it is inevitable that one will suffer inside; if, when they put the truth into practice, everything within people were right, then they would not need to be made perfect by God, and there would be no battle, and they would not suffer. It is because there are many things within people that are not fit for use by God, and because there is much of the rebellious disposition of the flesh, that people need to learn the lesson of rebelling against the flesh more profoundly. This is what God calls the suffering that He asked man to undergo with Him. When you encounter difficulties, hurry up and pray to God: “O God! I wish to satisfy You, I wish to endure the final hardship to satisfy Your heart, and regardless of how great the setbacks I encounter, still I must satisfy You. Even if I have to give up my whole life, still I must satisfy You!” With this resolve, when you pray thus, you will be able to stand firm in your testimony. Each time they put the truth into practice, each time they undergo refinement, each time they are tried, and each time God’s work comes upon them, people have to endure extreme pain. All of this is a test for people, and so within all of them there is a battle. This is the actual price that they pay. Reading more of God’s words and running about more is a portion of that price. It is what people ought to do, it is their duty, and the responsibility that they should fulfill, but people must put aside that within them which needs to be put aside. If you do not, then no matter how great your external suffering, no matter how much you run around, all will be in vain! Which is to say, only the changes within you can determine whether your external hardship is of value. When your internal disposition has changed and you have put the truth into practice, then all your external suffering will gain God’s approval; if there has been no change in your internal disposition, then no matter how much suffering you endure or how much you run about on the outside, there will be no approval from God—and hardship that is not confirmed by God is in vain. Thus, whether the price you have paid is approved by God is determined by whether or not there has been a change in you, and by whether or not you put the truth into practice and rebel against your own intentions and notions to attain the satisfaction of God’s will, the knowledge of God, and loyalty to God. No matter how much you run about, if you have never known to rebel against your own intentions, but only to seek external actions and fervency, and never pay any attention to your life, then your hardship will have been in vain. If, in a certain environment, you have something you want to say, but inside you feel that saying it is not right, that saying it does not benefit your brothers and sisters and may hurt them, then you will not say it, preferring to be pained within, for these

words are incapable of meeting God's will. At this time, there will be a battle inside you, but you will be willing to suffer pain and give up that which you love. You will be willing to endure this hardship to satisfy God, and although you will suffer pain inside, you will not pander to the flesh, and God's heart shall have been satisfied, and so you will also be comforted inside. This is truly paying a price, and is the price desired by God. If you practice in this way, God will surely bless you; if you cannot achieve this, then no matter how much you understand, or how well you can speak, it will all be for nothing! If, on the road to loving God, you are able to stand on the side of God when He does battle with Satan, and you do not turn back to Satan, then you will have achieved the love of God, and you will have stood firm in your testimony.

Excerpted from "Only Loving God Is Truly Believing in God" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

In summary, taking Peter's path in one's faith means to walk the path of pursuing the truth, which is also the path of truly getting to know oneself and changing one's disposition. Only by walking the path of Peter will one be on the path of being perfected by God. One must be clear on how, exactly, to walk Peter's path, as well as how to put it into practice. First, one must put aside one's own intentions, improper pursuits, and even family and all things of one's own flesh. One must be wholeheartedly devoted; that is, one must completely devote oneself to the word of God, focus on eating and drinking of God's words, concentrate on the search for the truth and the search for God's intentions in His words, and try to grasp God's will in everything. This is the most fundamental and vital method of practice. This was what Peter did after seeing Jesus, and it is only by practicing in this way that one can achieve the best results. Wholehearted devotion to the words of God primarily involves seeking the truth, seeking God's intentions within His words, focusing on grasping the will of God, and understanding and obtaining more truth from God's words. When reading His words, Peter was not focused on understanding doctrines, much less was he focused on obtaining theological knowledge; instead, he concentrated on comprehending the truth and grasping God's will, as well as achieving an understanding of His disposition and His loveliness. Peter also attempted to understand the various corrupt states of man from God's words, as well as man's corrupt nature and actual shortcoming, thus meeting all aspects of God's requirements of man in order to satisfy Him. Peter had so many correct practices that abided by the words of God; this was most in line with God's will, and it was the best way a person could cooperate while experiencing God's work.

When experiencing the hundreds of trials from God, Peter examined himself strictly against every word of God’s judgment of man, every word of God’s revelation of man, and every word of His demands of man, and strived to fathom the meaning of those words. He tried in earnest to ponder and memorize every word that Jesus said to him, and achieved very good results. Through this manner of practicing, he was able to achieve an understanding of himself from God’s words, and he not only came to understand the various corrupt states of man, but also came to understand man’s essence, nature, and various shortcomings. This is what it means to truly understand oneself. From God’s words, Peter not only achieved a true understanding of himself, but from the things expressed in God’s words—God’s righteous disposition, what He has and is, God’s will for His work, His demands of mankind—from these words he came to know God completely. He came to know God’s disposition, and His essence; he came to know and understand what God has and is, as well as God’s loveliness and God’s demands for man. Although God did not speak back then as much as He does today, results in these aspects were nevertheless achieved in Peter. This was a rare and precious thing. Peter went through hundreds of trials, but did not suffer in vain. He not only came to understand himself from the words and the work of God, but he also came to know God. In addition, he particularly focused on God’s requirements of mankind within His words. In whichever aspects man should satisfy God to be in line with God’s will, Peter was able to put forth great effort in these aspects and achieve full clarity; this was extremely beneficial with regard to his own entry. No matter what God spoke of, as long as those words could become his life and they belonged to the truth, Peter was able to carve them into his heart to ponder and appreciate them frequently. After hearing the words of Jesus, he was able to take them to heart, which shows that he was especially focused on God’s words, and he truly achieved results in the end. That is, he was able to freely put the words of God into practice, accurately practice the truth and be in line with God’s will, act entirely in accordance with God’s intention, and give up his own personal opinions and imaginations. In this way, Peter entered into the reality of God’s words.

Excerpted from “How to Walk the Path of Peter” in Records of Christ’s Talks

X. Truths of Obedience to God

1. What is obedience to God? What are the specific manifestations of obedience to God?

Relevant Words of God:

Submission to the work of God must be real and actual, and it must be lived out. Superficial submission alone cannot receive God's praise, and merely obeying the superficial aspects of God's word, without seeking change in one's disposition, is not after God's heart. Obedience to God and submission to the work of God are one and the same. Those who submit only to God but not to His work cannot be deemed obedient, much less those who do not truly submit but are outwardly sycophantic. Those who truly submit to God are all able to gain from the work and achieve understanding of the disposition and work of God. Only such people truly submit to God. Such people are able to gain new knowledge, and undergo new changes, from new work. Only these people are praised by God, only these people are perfected, and only these are the ones whose dispositions have changed. Those who are praised by God are those who gladly submit to God, and to His word and work. Only such people are in the right, only such people sincerely want God, and sincerely seek God.

Excerpted from "Those Who Obey God With a True Heart Shall Surely Be Gained by God" in The Word
Appears in the Flesh

During God's time in the flesh, the submission He requires of people does not involve refraining from making judgments or resisting, as they imagine; rather, He requires that people use His words as their principle to live by and the foundation of their survival, that they absolutely put the essence of His words into practice, and that they completely satisfy His will. One aspect of requiring people to submit to God incarnate refers to putting His words into practice, while another aspect refers to being able to submit to His normality and practicality. These must be both absolute. Those who can achieve both of these aspects are all those who harbor genuine love for God in their hearts. They are all people who have been gained by God, and they all love God as they love their own lives.

Excerpted from "Those Who Truly Love God Are Those Who Can Submit Absolutely to His Practicality" in
The Word Appears in the Flesh

So what should people's attitude be toward these three things: God, His incarnate flesh, and the truth? (Listening and obeying.) That is right. Nothing is more simple—being able to listen and obey. After listening, you must accept in your heart. If you are unable to accept something, you must keep seeking until you can accept it, then as soon as you accept it, you must obey. What does it mean to obey? It means to carry out. Do not dismiss things after hearing them; outwardly, you promise to do them and you note them down, you commit them to writing, you hear them with your ears—but they are absent from your heart, and when the time comes to act, you do whatever you wish, putting what you wrote down to the back of your mind and treating it as unimportant. This is not obeying. True obedience means listening and understanding with your heart, it means genuine acceptance, accepting as a task, as a command, as an obligatory command and responsibility. It is not only a case of accepting something in your heart; you must turn it into concrete action. The path that you walk, and the objective and direction that you run toward, are the requirements that you have heard from God; and what is done by your hand, desired by your heart, and thought by your mind, and the price you pay, are for the sake of what God asks of you. This is “carrying out.” What is the implied meaning of obedience? Executing, carrying out, making something into reality. You note down on paper what God says and asks, recording it in writing, but it is not in your heart, and when the time comes to act, you do whatever you wish. Outwardly, it looks like you have done it, but you did so according to your own principles. Is this obedience? Is this listening? (No.) What is it? It is called contempt for the truth, it is the blatant violation of principle, it is disregard for the arrangements of God's house; this is not obedience, it is rebellion.

Excerpted from “For Leaders and Workers, Choosing a Path Is of Utmost Importance (24)” in Records of Christ's Talks

The work done by God differs from period to period. If you are of great obedience to God's work in one phase, but in the next phase your obedience toward His work is poor, or you are incapable of obedience, then God shall desert you. If you keep pace with God as He takes this step, then you must continue to keep pace when He ascends the next; only then will you be someone who is obedient to the Holy Spirit. Since you believe in God, you must remain constant in your obedience. You cannot simply obey when you please and disobey when you do not. This kind of obedience is not praised by God. If you cannot keep pace with the new work I fellowship,

and continue to hold on to the former sayings, then how can there be progress in your life? God's work is to supply you through His words. When you obey and accept His words, the Holy Spirit shall surely work in you. The Holy Spirit works exactly as I speak; do as I have said, and the Holy Spirit will promptly work in you. I release a new light for you to behold, bringing you into the light of the present, and when you walk into this light, the Holy Spirit shall immediately work in you. There are some who may be recalcitrant, saying, "I simply will not carry out what You say." In which case, I tell you that you have now come to the end of the road; you are dried up, and have no more life. Thus, in experiencing the transformation of your disposition, nothing is more crucial than keeping pace with the present light. The Holy Spirit not only works in certain people who are used by God, but, furthermore, in the church. He could be working in anyone. He may work in you during the present time, and you will experience this work. During the next period, He may work in someone else, in which case you must haste to follow; the more closely you follow the present light, the more your life can grow. No matter what manner of person someone is, if the Holy Spirit works in them, then you must follow. Take in their experiences through your own, and you will receive even higher things. In so doing you will progress more quickly. This is the path of perfection for man and the means by which life grows.

Excerpted from "Those Who Obey God With a True Heart Shall Surely Be Gained by God" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

If people can let go of religious notions, they will not use their minds to measure the words and work of God today, and instead will obey directly. Even though God's work today is manifestly unlike that of the past, you are yet able to let go of the views of the past and obey the work of God today directly. If you are capable of understanding that you must give pride of place to the work of God today, regardless of how God worked in the past, then you are someone who has let go of their notions, who obeys God, and who is able to obey the work and words of God and follow His footsteps. In this, you will be someone who truly obeys God. You do not analyze or scrutinize the work of God; it is as if God has forgotten His previous work, and you, too, have forgotten it. The present is the present, and the past is the past, and since today, God has put aside that which He did in the past, you should not dwell on it. Only such a person is one who obeys God completely and has let go of their religious notions completely.

Excerpted from “Only Those Who Know the Work of God Today May Serve God” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

When Noah did as God instructed, he did not know what God’s intentions were. He did not know what God wanted to accomplish. God had only given him a command and instructed him to do something, and without much explanation, Noah went ahead and did it. He did not try to secretly figure out God’s intentions, nor did he resist God or show insincerity. He just went and did it accordingly with a pure and simple heart. Whatever God had him do, he did, and obeying and listening to God’s word underpinned his belief in what he did. That was how straightforwardly and simply he dealt with what God entrusted. His essence—the essence of his actions was obedience, not second-guessing, not resisting, and moreover, not thinking of his own personal interests or his gains and losses. Further, when God said He would destroy the world with a flood, Noah did not ask when or ask what would become of things, and he certainly did not ask God how He was going to destroy the world. He simply did as God instructed. However God wanted it to be made and made with what, he did exactly as God asked and also commenced action immediately. He acted according to God’s instructions with an attitude of wanting to satisfy God. Was he doing it to help himself avoid the disaster? No. Did he ask God how much longer it would be before the world was to be destroyed? He did not. Did he ask God or did he know how long it would take to build the ark? He did not know that either. He simply obeyed, listened, and acted accordingly.

Excerpted from “God’s Work, God’s Disposition, and God Himself I” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

In the Age of Law, God said He would give Abraham a son. What did Abraham say to that? He said nothing—he believed that what God said would be done. This was Abraham’s attitude. Did he make any judgment? Did he scoff? Did he do anything furtive? (No.) This is called obedience; it is called keeping fast to one’s place, keeping fast to one’s duty. As for his wife, Sarah—was she not different from Abraham? What was her attitude toward God? She questioned, scoffed, disbelieved—and she judged, and she engaged in petty maneuvering, giving Abraham her handmaiden as a concubine, which gave rise to so many absurdities in the end. This came from the will of man. Sarah did not keep fast to her own place, and there arose in her questions of God and disbelief in Him. What was the cause of her disbelief? It had several causes

and contexts, one being that Abraham was by then quite old, another being that she was herself also quite aged and unable to bear children. These together made her believe that what God said was an impossible thing—a trick played on children. She did not accept and believe what God said as the truth but took it as a lie or jest. Is this the right attitude? To take God's words as the lies of a trickster—is this the attitude with which one should treat the Lord of creation? (No.) And so, because she took God's words in jest, as the lies of a trickster, and not as the truth, and because she did not believe what God said or what He was going to do, there ensued a series of consequences, all of which came from the will of man and Sarah's disbelief. In essence, she was saying, "Can God do this thing? If He cannot, I must take action to help fulfill these words of God." Within her, there were misunderstandings, judgments, speculations, and questions, all of which combined to affect an act of rebellion against God by a person with a corrupt disposition. Abraham did not do these things, so this blessing was bestowed on him. God saw Abraham's heart of reverence for Him, his loyalty, and his attitude, and God would deliver a son unto him that he would be the father of many nations. This is what was promised Abraham and His special treatment of Sarah. Obedience is therefore very important. Is there questioning within obedience? If there is, does it count as true obedience? If there is analysis and judgment within it, does it count? (No.) Less still does it count if one tries to find faults. What, then, is manifested and exposed—and what is the behavior—within obedience that fully proves it to be true? (Belief.) True belief is one thing. One must correctly understand what God says and does, and confirm that all God does is right and the truth; there is no need to question it, nor to ask others about it, and there is no need to weigh it up and consider it or analyze it in one's own heart. This is one aspect of obedience. Believe that everything God does is correct. When a person does something, we may look at which person did it, at their background and character. These things require analysis. If, on the other hand, something comes from God and is done by Him, we must cover our mouths at once—do not question it and do not raise queries, but accept it in its entirety. And what is to be done next? There are some truths herein that people do not quite understand, and they are at a distance from God. Though they believe and are capable of submission and of recognizing that this thing was done by God, their recognition of this fact is yet of a somewhat doctrinal nature, and they are unsettled at heart. At such times, a person must seek, asking, "What truth is there in this? Where is the error in my thinking? How did I become distanced from God? Which of my own views are in conflict with what God says?" Being

able to seek such answers is an attitude and practice of obedience. There are those who say they are obedient, and then, when something later befalls them, say, “Who knows what God does? We created beings can’t interfere. Let God do whatever He wants!” Is this obedience? What kind of attitude is this? It is an aversion to taking responsibility; it is a lack of concern for what God does; it is cold indifference. Abraham was able to obey because he observed several principles, and he was resolved in his belief that what God says will be done and will be fulfilled, without a doubt. He therefore had no questions, he did not make any assessment, nor did he engage in any petty maneuvering. That is how he behaved.

Excerpted from “The Attitude Man Should Have Toward God” in Records of Christ’s Talks

To man, God does much that is incomprehensible and even unbelievable. When God wishes to orchestrate someone, this orchestration is often at odds with man’s notions and incomprehensible to him, yet it is precisely this dissonance and incomprehensibility that are God’s trial and test of man. Abraham, meanwhile, was able to demonstrate obedience to God within himself, which was the most fundamental condition of his being able to satisfy God’s requirement. Only then, when Abraham was able to obey God’s requirement, when he offered up Isaac, did God truly feel reassurance and approval toward mankind—toward Abraham, whom He had chosen. Only then was God sure that this person whom He had chosen was an indispensable leader who could undertake His promise and His subsequent management plan. Though it was but a trial and a test, God felt gratified, He felt man’s love for Him, and He felt comforted by man as never before. At the moment that Abraham lifted up his knife to slay Isaac, did God stop him? God did not let Abraham sacrifice Isaac, for God simply had no intention of taking Isaac’s life. Thus, God stopped Abraham just in time. For God, Abraham’s obedience had already passed the test, what he did was sufficient, and God had already seen the outcome of what He intended to do. Was this outcome satisfactory to God? It can be said that this outcome was satisfactory to God, that it was what God wanted, and was what God had longed to see. Is this true? Although, in different contexts, God uses different ways of testing each person, in Abraham God saw what He wanted, He saw that Abraham’s heart was true, and that his obedience was unconditional. It was precisely this “unconditional” that God desired.

Excerpted from “God’s Work, God’s Disposition, and God Himself II” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

In his belief in God, Peter sought to satisfy God in everything, and sought to obey all that came from God. Without the slightest complaint, he was able to accept chastisement and judgment, as well as refinement, tribulation and going without in his life, none of which could alter his love for God. Was this not the ultimate love for God? Was this not the fulfillment of the duty of a creature of God? Whether in chastisement, judgment, or tribulation, you are always capable of achieving obedience unto death, and this is what should be achieved by a creature of God, this is the purity of the love for God. If man can achieve this much, then he is a qualified creature of God, and there is nothing which better satisfies the desire of the Creator. Imagine that you are able to work for God, yet you do not obey God, and are incapable of truly loving God. In this way, not only will you not have fulfilled the duty of a creature of God, but you will also be condemned by God, for you are someone who does not possess the truth, who is incapable of obeying God, and who is disobedient to God. You only care about working for God, and do not care about putting the truth into practice or knowing yourself. You do not understand or know the Creator, and do not obey or love the Creator. You are someone who is innately disobedient to God, and so such people are not beloved by the Creator.

Excerpted from “Success or Failure Depends on the Path That Man Walks” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Bearing a resounding witness for God primarily relates to whether or not you have an understanding of the practical God, and to whether or not you are able to submit before this person who is not only ordinary, but normal, and submit even unto death. If, by way of this submission, you truly bear witness for God, that means you have been obtained by God. If you can submit unto death and, before Him, be free of complaints, not make judgments, not slander, not have any notions, and not have any ulterior motives, then in this way God will gain glory. Submission before a regular person who is looked down upon by man, and being able to submit unto death without any notions—this is true testimony. The reality that God requires people to enter into is that you are able to obey His words, put them into practice, bow down in front of the practical God and know your own corruption, open up your heart in front of Him, and, ultimately, be gained by Him through these words of His. God gains glory when these utterances conquer you and make you fully obedient to Him; through this, He shames Satan and completes His work. When you do not have any notions about the practicality of God incarnate—that is,

when you have stood firm in this trial—then you have borne this witness well. If there comes a day when you have a full understanding of the practical God and can submit unto death like Peter did, then you will be gained and perfected by God. Anything God does that is not in line with your notions is a trial for you. If God’s work were in line with your notions, it would not require you to suffer or be refined. It is because His work is so practical and not in line with your notions that it requires you to let go of such notions. This is why it is a trial for you. It is because of God’s practicality that all people are in the midst of trials; His work is practical, not supernatural. By fully understanding His practical words and His practical utterances without any notions, and being able to genuinely love Him as His work grows ever more practical, you will be gained by Him. The group of people whom God will gain are those who know God; that is, those who know His practicality. Furthermore, they are those who are able to submit to God’s practical work.

Excerpted from “Those Who Truly Love God Are Those Who Can Submit Absolutely to His Practicality” in
The Word Appears in the Flesh

2. Why can man not obey God?

Relevant Words of God:

The source of man’s opposition and rebelliousness against God is his corruption by Satan. Because of Satan’s corruption, man’s conscience has grown numb; he is immoral, his thoughts are degenerate, and he has a backward mental outlook. Before he was corrupted by Satan, man naturally followed God and obeyed His words after hearing them. He was naturally of sound sense and conscience, and of normal humanity. After being corrupted by Satan, man’s original sense, conscience, and humanity grew dull and were impaired by Satan. Thus, he has lost his obedience and love toward God. Man’s sense has become aberrant, his disposition has become the same as that of an animal, and his rebelliousness toward God is ever more frequent and grievous. Yet man still neither knows nor recognizes this, and merely opposes and rebels blindly. Man’s disposition is revealed in expressions of his sense, insight, and conscience; because his sense and insight are unsound, and his conscience has grown supremely dull, thus his disposition is rebellious against God. If man’s sense and insight cannot change, then changes

in his disposition are out of the question, as is conforming to God's will. If man's sense is unsound, then he cannot serve God and is unfit for use by God. "Normal sense" refers to obeying and being faithful to God, to yearning for God, to being absolute toward God, and to having a conscience toward God. It refers to being of one heart and mind toward God, and not deliberately opposing God. Having an aberrant sense is not like this. Since man was corrupted by Satan, he has come up with notions about God, and he has had no loyalty to God or yearning for Him, to say nothing of a conscience toward God. Man deliberately opposes God and passes judgments on Him, and, furthermore, hurls invective at Him behind His back. Man passes judgment on God behind His back, with clear knowledge that He is God; man has no intention of obeying God, and merely makes blind demands and requests of Him. Such people—people who have aberrant sense—are incapable of knowing their own despicable behavior or of regretting their rebelliousness. If people are capable of knowing themselves, then they have regained a little of their sense; the more rebellious against God people who cannot yet know themselves are, the less are they sound of sense.

Excerpted from "To Have an Unchanged Disposition Is to Be in Enmity to God" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

If you are unable to accept the new light from God, and cannot understand all that God does today and you do not seek it, or else you doubt it, pass judgment on it, or scrutinize and analyze it, then you have no mind to obey God. If, when the light of the here and now appears, you still treasure the light of yesterday and oppose God's new work, then you are nothing more than an absurd one—you are one of those who deliberately oppose God. The key to obeying God is appreciating the new light, and being able to accept it and put it into practice. This alone is true obedience. Those who lack the will to yearn for God are incapable of intentionally submitting to Him, and can only oppose God as a result of their satisfaction with the status quo. That man cannot obey God is because he is possessed by what came before. The things that came before have given people all manner of notions and imaginings about God, and these have become the image of God in their minds. Thus, what they believe in are their own notions, and the standards of their own imagination. If you measure the God who does actual work today against the God of your own imagination, then your faith comes from Satan, and is tainted by your own preferences—God does not want this kind of faith. Regardless of how lofty their

credentials, and regardless of their dedication—even if they have devoted a lifetime of efforts to His work, and have martyred themselves—God does not approve of anyone with faith such as this. He merely bestows upon them a little grace and allows them to enjoy it for a time. People such as this are incapable of putting the truth into practice. The Holy Spirit does not work within them, and God will eliminate each of them in turn. Young and old alike, those who do not obey God in their faith and have the wrong intentions are those who oppose and interrupt, and such people will unquestionably be eliminated by God.

Excerpted from “In Your Faith in God You Should Obey God” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

In measuring whether or not people can obey God, the key thing to look at is whether they desire anything extravagant from God, and whether or not they have ulterior motives. If people are always making demands of God, it proves that they are not obedient to Him. Whatever happens to you, if you cannot receive it from God, cannot seek the truth, are always speaking from your own subjective reasoning and always feeling that only you are right, and are even still capable of doubting God, then you will be in trouble. Such people are the most arrogant and rebellious to God. People who always make demands of God can never truly obey Him. If you make demands of God, this proves that you are making a deal with God, that you are choosing your own thoughts, and acting according to your own thoughts. In this, you betray God, and are without obedience. To make demands of God is senseless; if you truly believe that He is God, then you will not dare to make demands of Him, nor will you be qualified to make demands of Him, whether they be reasonable or not. If you have true faith, and believe that He is God, then you will have no choice but to worship and obey Him. People today not only have a choice, but even demand that God act in accordance with their own thoughts. They choose their own thoughts and ask that God act according to them, and they do not require themselves to act according to God's thoughts. Thus, there is no true faith within them, nor is there any essence to their faith. When you are able to make fewer demands of God, your true faith and your obedience will grow, and your sense of reason will also become comparatively normal. It is often the case that the more inclined to reason people are, and the more justification they give, the harder they are to deal with. Not only do they have many demands, but they also take a mile when given an inch. When satisfied in one area, they then make demands in another, they have to be satisfied in all areas, and if they are not, they start complaining, and write themselves off

as hopeless. Later they feel indebted and regretful, and they weep bitter tears, and want to die. What is the use in that? Can this solve the problem? And so, before something happens, you must dissect your own nature—what things are within it, what you like, and what you wish to achieve with your demands. Some people, believing they possess some caliber and gifts, always want to be leaders, and to rise above others, and so they demand God use them. And if God does not use them, they say: “God, why don’t You favor me? Make great use of me, I guarantee I will expend myself for You.” Are such motivations right? It is a good thing to expend for God, but their willingness to expend for God takes second place; in their hearts, what they like is status—that is what they focus on. If you are truly able to obey, then you will follow Him with one heart and mind regardless of whether He uses you or not, and will be able to expend for Him regardless of whether or not you have any status. Only then will you possess sense and be someone who obeys God.

Excerpted from “People Make Too Many Demands of God” in Records of Christ’s Talks

Arrogance is the root of man’s corrupt disposition. The more arrogant people are, the more liable they are to resist God. How serious is this problem? Not only do people with arrogant dispositions consider everyone else beneath them, but, worst of all, they are even condescending toward God. Even though, externally, some people might appear to believe in God and follow Him, they do not treat Him as God at all. They always feel that they possess the truth and think the world of themselves. This is the essence and root of the arrogant disposition, and it comes from Satan. Therefore, the problem of arrogance must be resolved. Feeling that one is better than others—that is a trivial matter. The critical issue is that one’s arrogant disposition prevents one from submitting to God, His rule, and His arrangements; such a person always feels inclined to compete with God for power over others. This sort of person does not revere God in the slightest, to say nothing of loving God or submitting to Him. People who are arrogant and conceited, especially those who are so arrogant as to have lost their sense, cannot submit to God in their belief in Him, and even exalt and bear testimony for themselves. Such people resist God the most. If people wish to get to where they revere God, then they must first resolve their arrogant dispositions. The more thoroughly you resolve your arrogant disposition, the more reverence you will have for God, and only then can you submit to Him and be able to obtain the truth and know Him.

How do especially opinionated people generally act? They first decide, first formulate projects and plans, and even use some human methods to meticulously plan and strategize, and do preliminary tasks. What do they think, and what is their state? They have an absolute plan and objective. So in terms of revering God and submitting to God, what state are they in? When people become too opinionated, they forget God, and forget their submission to God. Once the incident has passed or they have hit a wall, or they have not succeeded in what they were trying to do, only then do they realize that they did not submit to God and did not pray to God. This shows that God is not in their hearts, and that they always just do what they want to do. Thus, regardless of whether you are doing the work of God's house, fulfilling your duty, or handling external affairs, or taking care of your private affairs in life, you must maintain in your heart the principles of action. There is a state you must possess. What state is this? "No matter what happens, before it happens, I must think in my heart, 'I must pray. I should submit to God and His rule. Everything is orchestrated by God. When something happens, I should seek God's intention. I must have this attitude; I cannot be making my own plans.'" As people experience things this way for a long period of time, they unconsciously start to see God's rule in many things. If you always have your own projects, plans, hopes, selfish motives, and desires, then, without even knowing it, you will not be able to see what God does. What will happen most of the time is that God will be hidden from you. Don't you like doing these things? Don't you have plans? You have a brain, education, and knowledge; you are capable and you have means, you can do things yourself, you are fine by yourself, you do not need God. This is why God says, "Go ahead and do it yourself. Whether you succeed or not is your responsibility; I do not need to bother with you anymore." When people are never able to experience God's rule, never able to see God's hand, never able to sense the Holy Spirit's enlightenment or illumination, nor feel God's guidance, what happens to them after a long period of time? All manner of aftermath effects befall them. What effects? When people act this way over a long period of time, a kind of inertia takes form. Whenever they encounter something, they first think of a way to handle it themselves; their first thoughts are of their own objectives, intentions, plans, and whether or not it will benefit them. They habitually and directly embark upon that path. "If it can benefit

me, I'll do it; if it cannot, then I won't." They think and act in this way. Over time, how does God treat such people? God pays no heed to them; He sets them aside.

Excerpted from "The Principles of Practice Concerning Submission to God" in Records of Christ's Talks

Submission is the most difficult lesson to learn. When something is in line with your notions, you accept it and submit to it; you feel pretty good, thinking that it is very in line with your taste when it is to your advantage. Once you begin submitting, everything starts to go smoothly for you; deep down, you feel steadfast, peaceful, blameless, happy, and joyful. However, being submissive when things do not conform to your notions is as hard to swallow for you as gulping down sand; it is upsetting, distressing, and painful. You have your reasons, but you cannot voice them, and you have to hold in your emotions. You feel completely wronged, but have no one to tell about it. "So what should I do? What He said is right. His position is higher than mine. So how can I not listen? I might as well accept it. I need to be more careful next time and not stick my neck out anymore. Nothing good comes from sticking your neck out. Whoever takes a step forward gets dealt with. I won't move forward again; I'll just let things proceed naturally, and keep as low a profile as possible. Submitting is not easy. It's so hard! The flame of my enthusiasm has been doused by a bucket of cold water. You can't blame me for this; I started out all innocent and open, but then I kept being dealt with. I don't want to be this sort of person anymore; conducting myself like that is exhausting. I will just take a step back from now on, and not reveal to anyone how I feel internally anymore or tell anyone who asks; I'll just hold it all in." What sort of an attitude is this? This is just going from one extreme to the other. What is the ultimate goal of making a person learn how to be submissive? No matter how much injustice you have suffered, how much sweat and effort you have put in, or how much your reputation, vanity, and honor have been damaged, these things are, in fact, secondary; the most important thing is to turn your state around. What state? Whether people are in a state whereby they make mistakes or in a state whereby they do not make mistakes, they usually harbor a kind of hardness and rebelliousness in the depths of their hearts. Moreover, a sort of human logical thinking exists within them that says, "As long as my actions and intentions are right, You should not deal with me, and it is okay for me not to submit." They do not mention whether what they have done conforms to the truth or what consequences it leads to. They believe, "As long as I have a good heart and don't have malicious intentions, You should accept me." This is

human reasoning, is it not? This is human reasoning, and there is no submission. You regard your own reasoning as the truth and treat the truth as superfluous. You think that only that which accords with your own reasoning is the truth, and that anything at odds with your own reasoning is not the truth. Anyone who thinks this way is most absurd, arrogant, and self-righteous. What kind of states can lessons in submission help people to resolve? To achieve submission, do they need a certain level of rationality? Regardless of whether we have done right or wrong in a matter, as long as God is dissatisfied, we should listen to God and use God's words as the standard. This would be rational, right? This is the sense that human beings should possess; it is the first thing they should equip themselves with. We should not take into account how much we have suffered, what our intentions and purposes were, or what our reasons were at the time. Since God is not satisfied and we have not met God's requirements, and given that God is the truth, we must listen to God and not try to reason with Him or argue. If you possess such rationality, you will be able to submit; that is, if, regardless of your circumstances, you neither rebel against God nor reject His requirements of you, and if you do not analyze whether His requirements are right or wrong, then your human state of hardness and rebelliousness and your propensity to reason your way out will be resolved. Do these states not exist within everyone? These states often emerge in people, and they think, "As long as my way accords with logical thinking, Your way should not be right, so it's reasonable and fair for me to not obey You." This is a common state for people, but if you are equipped with this sort of rationality, you will be able to effectively resolve this kind of state in part.

Excerpted from "The Five States Necessary to Be on the Right Track in One's Faith" in Records of Christ's

Talks

Since you believe in God, you must put faith in all of the words of God and in all of His work. Which is to say, since you believe in God, you must obey Him. If you are unable to do this, then it does not matter whether you believe in God or not. If you have believed in God for many years, and yet have never obeyed Him, and do not accept the entirety of His words, and instead ask that God submit to you and act according to your notions, then you are the most rebellious of all, you are a nonbeliever. How could such people be able to obey the work and words of God that do not conform to the notions of man? Most rebellious of all are those who intentionally defy and resist God. They are the enemies of God, the antichrists. Theirs is always an attitude

of hostility toward the new work of God; they never have the slightest inclination to submit, nor have they ever gladly submitted or humbled themselves. They exalt themselves before others and never submit to anyone. Before God, they consider themselves the best at preaching the word, and the most skillful in working on others. Never do they discard the “treasures” in their possession, but treat them as family heirlooms for worship, for preaching about to others, and they use them to lecture those fools who idolize them. There are indeed a certain number of people like this in the church. It can be said that they are “indomitable heroes,” generation after generation sojourning in the house of God. They take preaching the word (doctrine) to be their highest duty. Year after year, generation after generation, they go about vigorously enforcing their “sacred and inviolable” duty. None dare touch them; not a single person dares openly reproach them. They become “kings” in the house of God, running rampant as they tyrannize others from age to age. This pack of demons seeks to join hands and demolish My work; how can I allow these living devils to exist before My eyes? Even those who are only half obedient cannot carry on until the end, much less these tyrants without the slightest obedience in their hearts!

Excerpted from “Those Who Obey God With a True Heart Shall Surely Be Gained by God” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

3. Why are those who disobey God unable to be saved?

Relevant Words of God:

Why do you believe in God? Most people are confounded by this question. They always have two entirely different viewpoints about the practical God and the God in heaven, which shows that they believe in God not in order to obey Him, but to receive certain benefits, or to escape the suffering that disaster brings; only then are they somewhat obedient. Their obedience is conditional; it is for the sake of their own personal prospects, and forced upon them. So, just why do you believe in God? If it is solely for the sake of your prospects and your fate, then it would be better if you did not believe at all. Belief such as this is self-deception, self-reassurance, and self-admiration. If your faith is not built upon the foundation of obedience to God, then you will ultimately be punished for opposing Him. All those who do not seek

obedience to God in their faith oppose Him. God asks that people seek the truth, that they thirst for His words, eat and drink His words, and put them into practice, so that they may achieve obedience to God. If these are your true intentions, then God will surely raise you up, and will surely be gracious toward you. This is undoubtable and unchangeable. If your intention is not to obey God, and you have other aims, then all that you say and do—your prayers before God, and even your every action—will be in opposition to Him. You may be soft-spoken and mild-mannered, your every action and expression may look proper, and you may appear to be one who obeys, but when it comes to your intentions and your views about faith in God, everything you do is in opposition to God; everything you do is evil. People who appear as obedient as sheep, but whose hearts harbor evil intentions, are wolves in sheep's clothing. They directly offend God, and God will not spare a single one of them. The Holy Spirit will reveal each and every one of them and show everybody that all those who are hypocrites will, with certainty, be detested and rejected by the Holy Spirit. Worry not: God will reckon with and dispose of every last one of them in turn.

Excerpted from "In Your Faith in God You Should Obey God" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Since you believe in God, you must put faith in all of the words of God and in all of His work. Which is to say, since you believe in God, you must obey Him. If you are unable to do this, then it does not matter whether you believe in God or not. If you have believed in God for many years, and yet have never obeyed Him, and do not accept the entirety of His words, and instead ask that God submit to you and act according to your notions, then you are the most rebellious of all, you are a nonbeliever. How could such people be able to obey the work and words of God that do not conform to the notions of man? Most rebellious of all are those who intentionally defy and resist God. They are the enemies of God, the antichrists. Theirs is always an attitude of hostility toward the new work of God; they never have the slightest inclination to submit, nor have they ever gladly submitted or humbled themselves. They exalt themselves before others and never submit to anyone. Before God, they consider themselves the best at preaching the word, and the most skillful in working on others. Never do they discard the "treasures" in their possession, but treat them as family heirlooms for worship, for preaching about to others, and they use them to lecture those fools who idolize them. There are indeed a certain number of people like this in the church. It can be said that they are "indomitable heroes," generation after

generation sojourning in the house of God. They take preaching the word (doctrine) to be their highest duty. Year after year, generation after generation, they go about vigorously enforcing their “sacred and inviolable” duty. None dare touch them; not a single person dares openly reproach them. They become “kings” in the house of God, running rampant as they tyrannize others from age to age. This pack of demons seeks to join hands and demolish My work; how can I allow these living devils to exist before My eyes? Even those who are only half obedient cannot carry on until the end, much less these tyrants without the slightest obedience in their hearts!

Excerpted from “Those Who Obey God With a True Heart Shall Surely Be Gained by God” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The key to obeying God is appreciating the new light, and being able to accept it and put it into practice. This alone is true obedience. Those who lack the will to yearn for God are incapable of intentionally submitting to Him, and can only oppose God as a result of their satisfaction with the status quo. That man cannot obey God is because he is possessed by what came before. The things that came before have given people all manner of notions and imaginings about God, and these have become the image of God in their minds. Thus, what they believe in are their own notions, and the standards of their own imagination. If you measure the God who does actual work today against the God of your own imagination, then your faith comes from Satan, and is tainted by your own preferences—God does not want this kind of faith. Regardless of how lofty their credentials, and regardless of their dedication—even if they have devoted a lifetime of efforts to His work, and have martyred themselves—God does not approve of anyone with faith such as this. He merely bestows upon them a little grace and allows them to enjoy it for a time. People such as this are incapable of putting the truth into practice. The Holy Spirit does not work within them, and God will eliminate each of them in turn. Young and old alike, those who do not obey God in their faith and have the wrong intentions are those who oppose and interrupt, and such people will unquestionably be eliminated by God. Those who are without the slightest obedience to God, who merely acknowledge His name, and have some sense of God’s kindness and loveliness, yet do not keep pace with the steps of the Holy Spirit, and do not obey the present work and words of the Holy Spirit—such people live amid the grace of God, and will not be gained or made perfect by Him. God makes people perfect through their

obedience, through their eating, drinking, and enjoying of God's words, and through the suffering and refinement in their lives. Only through faith such as this can people's dispositions change, and only then can they possess the true knowledge of God. Not being satisfied with living amid God's grace, actively yearning and searching for the truth, and seeking to be gained by God—this is what it means to consciously obey God and this is precisely the kind of faith that He wants. People who do nothing more than enjoy God's grace cannot be made perfect or changed; and their obedience, piety, love, and patience are all superficial. Those who only enjoy God's grace cannot truly know God, and even when they do know God, their knowledge is superficial, and they say things like "God loves man," or "God is compassionate toward man." This does not represent the life of man, and does not show that people truly know God. If, when God's words refine them, or when His trials come upon them, people are unable to obey God—if, instead, they become doubtful, and fall down—then they are not in the least bit obedient. Within them, there are many rules and restrictions about faith in God; old experiences that are the result of many years of faith, or various doctrines based upon the Bible. Could people such as this obey God? These people are full of human things—how could they obey God? Their "obedience" is according to personal preference—would God want obedience like this? This is not obedience to God, but adherence to doctrine; it is self-satisfaction and self-appeasement. If you say that this is obedience to God, do you not blaspheme against Him? You are an Egyptian Pharaoh. You commit evil, and you expressly engage in the work of opposing God—is this how God wants you to serve? You'd best hasten to repent, and try to gain some self-awareness. Failing that, you would be better off just walking away; that would do you more good than your professed service to God. You would not interrupt and disturb; you would know your place, and live well—would that not be better? And you would not be punished for opposing God!

Excerpted from "In Your Faith in God You Should Obey God" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

In his belief in God, Peter sought to satisfy God in everything, and sought to obey all that came from God. Without the slightest complaint, he was able to accept chastisement and judgment, as well as refinement, tribulation and going without in his life, none of which could alter his love for God. Was this not the ultimate love for God? Was this not the fulfillment of the duty of a creature of God? Whether in chastisement, judgment, or tribulation, you are always capable of achieving obedience unto death, and this is what should be achieved by a creature of

God, this is the purity of the love for God. If man can achieve this much, then he is a qualified creature of God, and there is nothing which better satisfies the desire of the Creator. Imagine that you are able to work for God, yet you do not obey God, and are incapable of truly loving God. In this way, not only will you not have fulfilled the duty of a creature of God, but you will also be condemned by God, for you are someone who does not possess the truth, who is incapable of obeying God, and who is disobedient to God. You only care about working for God, and do not care about putting the truth into practice or knowing yourself. You do not understand or know the Creator, and do not obey or love the Creator. You are someone who is innately disobedient to God, and so such people are not beloved by the Creator.

Excerpted from "Success or Failure Depends on the Path That Man Walks" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The standard by which humans judge other humans is based on their behavior; those whose conduct is good are righteous, while those whose conduct is abominable are wicked. The standard by which God judges humans is based on whether their essence submits to Him or not; one who submits to God is a righteous person, while one who does not is an enemy and a wicked person, regardless of whether this person's behavior is good or bad and regardless of whether their speech is correct or incorrect. Some people wish to use good deeds to obtain a good destination in the future, and some people wish to use fine words to acquire a good destination. Everyone mistakenly believes that God determines people's outcomes after watching their behavior or after listening to their speech; many people therefore wish to take advantage of this to deceive God into granting them a momentary favor. In the future, the people who will survive in a state of rest will all have endured the day of tribulation and will also have borne witness for God; they will all be people who have fulfilled their duties and who have deliberately submitted to God. Those who merely wish to use the opportunity to do service with the intention of avoiding practicing the truth will not be allowed to remain. God has appropriate standards for the arrangement of the outcome of every individual; He does not simply make these decisions according to one's words and conduct, nor does He make them based on how one acts during a single period of time. He will absolutely not be lenient with regard to one's wicked conduct due to their past service for Him, nor will He spare one from death because of any one-time expense for God. No one can evade retribution for their

wickedness, and no one can cover up their evil behavior and thereby evade the torments of destruction. If people can truly fulfill their own duty, it means that they are eternally faithful to God and not seeking rewards, regardless of whether they receive blessings or suffer misfortune. If people are faithful to God when they see blessings, but lose their faithfulness when they cannot see any blessings, and if, in the end, they are still unable to bear witness for God or fulfill the duties incumbent upon them, then they will still be objects of destruction despite their having once previously rendered faithful service to God. In short, wicked people cannot survive through eternity, nor can they enter into rest; only the righteous are the masters of rest.

Excerpted from “God and Man Will Enter Into Rest Together” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

4. How should one obey God? With what principles of practice should one obey God?

Relevant Words of God:

People cannot change their own disposition; they must undergo the judgment and chastisement, and suffering and refinement, of God’s words, or being dealt with, disciplined, and pruned by His words. Only then can they achieve obedience and faithfulness to God, and no longer be perfunctory toward Him. It is under the refinement of God’s words that people’s dispositions change. Only through the exposure, judgment, discipline, and dealing of His words will they no longer dare to act rashly but instead will become steady and composed. The most important point is that they are able to submit to God’s current words, and to His work, even if it is not in line with human notions, they are able to put these notions aside and willingly submit.

Excerpted from “People Whose Dispositions Have Changed Are Those Who Have Entered Into the Reality of God’s Words” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

During God’s time in the flesh, the submission He requires of people does not involve refraining from making judgments or resisting, as they imagine; rather, He requires that people use His words as their principle to live by and the foundation of their survival, that they absolutely put the essence of His words into practice, and that they completely satisfy His will. One aspect of requiring people to submit to God incarnate refers to putting His words into

practice, while another aspect refers to being able to submit to His normality and practicality. These must be both absolute. Those who can achieve both of these aspects are all those who harbor genuine love for God in their hearts. They are all people who have been gained by God, and they all love God as they love their own lives.

Excerpted from “Those Who Truly Love God Are Those Who Can Submit Absolutely to His Practicality” in
The Word Appears in the Flesh

Listening to the word of God and obeying God’s requirements is man’s heaven-sent vocation; what God says is no business of man. No matter what God says, what God asks of man, the identity, essence, and status of God do not change—He is always God. When you have no doubt that He is God, your only responsibility, the only thing you should do, is to listen to what He says; this is the path of practice. A creature of God should not study, analyze, explore, reject, contradict, disobey, or deny the words of God; this is abhorred by God, and not what He wishes to see in man. So just what is the path of practice? It is actually very simple: Learn to listen, listen with your heart, accept with your heart, understand and comprehend with your heart, and then go and do, carry out, and execute with your heart. What you hear and comprehend in your heart is closely connected to what you put into practice. Do not separate the two; everything—what you practice, what you obey, what you do by your own hand, everything you run around for—is connected to what you hear and comprehend in your heart, and in this, you will achieve obedience to the words of the Creator. This is the path of practice.

Excerpted from “For Leaders and Workers, Choosing a Path Is of Utmost Importance (24)” in Records of
Christ’s Talks

The only attitude that a created being should have to its Creator is one of obedience, one of unconditional obedience. This is something that some people today may be unable to accept. They say, “How can this be unconditional? God’s words always have to be reasonable, and He always has to have a reason for doing things. God always has to give people a way to survive, He always has to act reasonably and fairly, and He cannot ignore human feelings.” If you are able to utter these words, and you in fact think this way, well, you are far from being able to obey God. While man is provided for and watered by the word of God, man is in fact preparing for a single thing. What might that thing be? It is ultimately to be able to achieve unconditional,

absolute submission to God, at which point, you, this creation, will have reached the standard required. Sometimes, God deliberately does things that are at odds with your notions, which go against what you want, or which even appear to go against principles, or against human feelings, humanity, or sentiments, leaving you unable to accept them and unable to understand. Whichever way you look at it, it does not seem right, you simply cannot accept it, and you feel that what He has done is simply unreasonable. So what is God's purpose in doing these things? It is to test you. You need not discuss the hows and whys of what God has done; all you need do is maintain your faith that He is the truth, and recognize that He is your Creator, that He is your God. This is higher than all truth, higher than all worldly wisdom, than man's so-called morality, ethics, knowledge, education, philosophy or traditional culture, and it is even higher than affection or comradeship or so-called love between people—it is higher than absolutely anything else. If you cannot understand this, then sooner or later, when something happens to you, you are liable to rebel against God and go astray, before finally repenting and recognizing the meaning of the work that God performs on you, or, even worse, you might trip and fall because of it. It would not be frightening that God judged you, nor would it be frightening that He cursed you or chastised you—so what would be frightening? It would be frightening if He said, "I won't save a person like you; I give up!" In that case, you would be done for. Therefore, people should not split hairs by saying, "These words—judgment and chastisement—are fine, but these ones—cursing, destruction, condemnation—wouldn't that mean the end of me? What kind of created being could I be after that? Fine; I quit. And You can go ahead and stop being my God." If you decide to abandon God, without having stood testimony, then He truly might decide He does not want you anymore. Have you considered this before? Regardless of how long a person has believed in God, how long the road they have traveled along, how much work they have done and how many duties they have performed, this time has all been preparing them for a single thing: for you to ultimately be able to achieve unconditional, absolute submission to God. So what does "unconditional" mean? It means ignoring your personal justifications, ignoring your objective reasoning, and not bickering over anything: You are a created being, and you are not worthy. When you bicker with God, you are in the wrong position; when you attempt to justify yourself to God, once again, you are in the wrong position; when you argue with God, when you want to ask the reason why, to figure out what is actually happening, if you cannot obey without first understanding, and will only submit once everything is clear to you, you are once again in

the wrong position. When the position you are in is wrong, is your obedience to God absolute? Are you or are you not a created being in God's mind? Are you treating God as God should be treated? As the Lord of all creation? No, you are not, in which case God does not recognize you. What things can enable you to achieve absolute, unconditional obedience to God? How can this be experienced? On the one hand, a bit of the conscience and sense of normal humanity is required; on the other, as you fulfill your duties, each and every aspect of the truth must be understood so that you may understand God's will. Sometimes, man's caliber falls short, and man does not have the strength or the energy to understand all truths. There is one thing, however: Regardless of the environment, people, events, and things that come upon you and that God has arranged, you must always have an obedient attitude. Do not ask the reason why—you must have this attitude. If even this attitude is beyond you, and you are perpetually ready with "I have to consider whether what God is doing is really righteous. They say God is love, well let's see if there is love in what He is doing with me, and if this is actually love," if you are always examining whether what God is doing satisfies all standards, looking at whether what God is doing is what you like, or even whether it complies with what you believe to be the truth, then your position is wrong, and this will bring you trouble.

Excerpted from "For Leaders and Workers, Choosing a Path Is of Utmost Importance (9)" in Records of Christ's Talks

What is the practical side of an attitude of submission? It is this: You must bring yourself to accept God's words. When your life entry is shallow, and you have not yet achieved having stature, and your knowledge of truth reality is not yet deep enough, but, even in such circumstances, you are still able to follow God and submit to Him—that is the attitude. Before you can achieve total submission, you must first adopt an attitude of submission, which is an attitude of accepting that God's words are right, of taking God's words as the truth and as the principles of practice, and of being able to uphold them as rules, even when you do not have a good grasp of the principles. That is a kind of attitude. Because, as of now, your disposition has not yet changed, your being able to achieve this, and to seem to God to have such an attitude and such a mentality, and to say, "I don't care what God does and I don't understand many truths. All I know is that what God tells me to do, I do. I don't have a bag of tricks that'll help me look into what God says, and that's not what I'm supposed to do"—that is a kind of

submissive mentality. There are a few people who say, “That won’t do. What if He’s wrong?” Can God be wrong? You say, “Whether what God does is right or wrong, I’m not responsible for that. I just listen, submit, accept, and follow God. That’s what a created being should do.” That is the sort of mentality with which one should submit, and only people possessed of such a mentality can gain the truth. If you do not have this mentality, but say, “I don’t let anyone pull the wool over my eyes. No one’s going to fool me. I’m too shrewd to be tricked by those words and made to submit to anything; it won’t work. Whatever comes my way, I have to look into it and analyze it. When I myself am able to accept something and understand it, that’s when I’ll submit”—is that an attitude of submission? It is not an attitude of submission; it is a lack of a submissive mentality, with no intention in one’s heart to submit. “God? I’ll still have to look into God. Even kings and queens get the same treatment from me. What You’re saying is useless. It’s true that I am a created being, but I’m no dummy—so don’t treat me like one.” It is over for them; they lack the conditions to accept the truth. Does such a person possess rationality? (No.) They are a beast! Without this sort of rationality, a person cannot achieve submission. To achieve submission, one must first be possessed of a submissive mentality.

Excerpted from “Only by Resolving One’s Notions Can One Enter the Right Track of Believing in God (3)”
in Records of Christ’s Talks

A lot of times, when faced with something that happens, people do not actually know the proper principles of practice, nor do they understand the proper direction to practice. However, this involves an issue of attitude and state, and these are the most fundamental things people should possess. That is, you might not know how to do something, and have not heard anyone say how it should be done; it might be a matter that is not quite in line with your imagination or notions. It also might not be very much in accord with your taste. Deep down, you harbor a few misgivings and feel a bit upset—but what should you do about this issue? There is a most simple method of practice, and that is to start by submitting. Submission is not an external way of doing things or saying things, nor is it rhetoric. It involves a certain kind of state. Can what people say, do, and think, as well as their attitudes and what states they are in, be considered genuine submission? (When we are being pruned and dealt with, we should not try to reason our way out or justify ourselves.) This is one aspect of the state. Do not try to reason your way out, and do not justify yourself. However, when you feel terribly wronged but you do not say

anything on the spot about it, and then end up talking about it privately, is this a submissive attitude? (No.) So what exactly is a submissive attitude? First of all, one must have a positive attitude; that is, do not try to analyze what is right and what is wrong, but instead just accept what has happened. People say, “You did that thing wrong.” Though you may not understand it, you can accept it and admit that you made a mistake. Acceptance is, first and foremost, a positive attitude. Additionally, there is another attitude, on the negative side, and that is to not resist in the first place. In how many different ways can this lack of resistance manifest? Do not try to reason your way out, and do not voice your objective excuses. If you say that something happened because of such-and-such reason, and that so-and-so is to blame, is this not you trying to reason your way out? Is this not resistance? Do not refuse, do not resist, and do not try to reason your way out. Even if you have your excuses, are they the truth? That is just human objective reasoning; it is not the truth. Right now, this is not about your objective excuses—why this happened or what led to it happening. Rather, it is about the fact that the nature of what happened does not conform to the truth. If your understanding reaches this level, then you will genuinely be able to accept it and then can truly stop resisting. Having this attitude to begin with is very crucial. Some people, after having been pruned and dealt with, think to themselves, “What happened is not just my fault, so how come all the responsibility has been pushed onto me? Where did everyone else go? Why doesn’t anyone around speak on my behalf? They let me bear all the responsibility on my own. It just goes to show, ‘Everyone reaps the benefits but only one person takes the blame.’ I’m so unlucky! How is it that all these bad things keep happening to me, and good things never do?” What kind of emotion is this? This is resistance. Even though, on the surface, such people have nodded their heads, admitted that they were wrong, and accepted responsibility, in their hearts they still complain: “They can deal with me if they must, but what they said was so harsh; they criticized me in front of all those people. I feel mortified. They would not even treat me like a human being! I just made a small mistake; that’s all. Why do they have to keep going on and on about it?” Such people resist, reject, stubbornly cause confrontations, are unreasonable, and make excuses. With such emotions and thoughts, one cannot possess a genuinely submissive attitude.

Excerpted from “The Five States Necessary to Be on the Right Track in One’s Faith” in Records of Christ’s

Talks

Whatever you do, you must learn to seek and obey the truth in it. So long as you act in accordance with the truth, you are acting correctly. Even if it was a child who proposed it, or the most inconspicuous young brother or young sister, so long as what they say conforms to the truth, then what you are doing will have a good outcome, and it will conform to God's will. The handling of a matter depends on your impulse and your principles for handling it. If your principles arise from man's will; if they arise from human thoughts, notions, or imaginings; or if they arise from human emotions and points of view, then your handling of the matter will be wrong, because its source will be wrong. When your views are based on the principles of the truth, and you handle matters in accordance with the truth principles, then you are sure to handle the matter at hand correctly. Sometimes, other people will be unable to accept your handling of the matter at the moment, and, at such times, they may seem to have their own notions, or their hearts will be ill at ease. After a while, however, you will be proven right. Matters that conform to God's will look better over time; the outcome of matters that do not conform to God's will, however—matters that accord with man's will and are man-made—grow worse over time, and will all be proven so. When you act, do not concern yourself with whose way should or should not guide you, and do not make assumptions. First of all, you should seek and pray, and then feel your way forward, and fellowship with everyone together. What is the purpose of fellowship? It enables one to do things in precise accordance with God's will, and to act in line with God's will. This is a somewhat grand way of putting it; let us say it enables one to handle affairs in precise accordance with the truth principles —this is somewhat more practical. If you can achieve this, that will do.

Excerpted from "The Path to Resolving a Corrupt Disposition" in Records of Christ's Talks

When confronting real-life problems, how should you know and understand God's authority and His sovereignty? When you are faced with these problems and do not know how to understand, handle, and experience them, what attitude should you adopt to demonstrate your intention to submit, your desire to submit, and the reality of your submission to God's sovereignty and arrangements? First you must learn to wait; then you must learn to seek; then you must learn to submit. "Waiting" means waiting for the time of God, awaiting the people, events, and things that He has arranged for you, waiting for His will to reveal itself gradually to you. "Seeking" means observing and understanding God's thoughtful intentions for you

through the people, events, and things that He has laid out, understanding the truth through them, understanding what humans must accomplish and the ways they must adhere to, understanding what results God means to achieve in humans and what accomplishments He means to attain in them. “Submitting,” of course, refers to accepting the people, events, and things that God has orchestrated, accepting His sovereignty and, through it, coming to know how the Creator dictates man’s fate, how He supplies man with His life, how He works the truth within man. All things under God’s arrangements and sovereignty obey natural laws, and if you resolve to let God arrange and dictate everything for you, you should learn to wait, you should learn to seek, and you should learn to submit. This is the attitude every person who wants to submit to God’s authority must adopt, the basic quality every person who wants to accept God’s sovereignty and arrangements must possess. To hold such an attitude, to possess such a quality, you must work harder. This is the only way you can enter into the true reality.

Excerpted from “God Himself, the Unique III” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

If you believe in God’s sovereignty, then you have to believe that everyday occurrences, be they good or bad, do not happen at random. It is not that someone is deliberately being hard on you or targeting you; this was all arranged by God. Why does God orchestrate all these things? It is not to reveal you for who you are or to expose you; exposing you is not the end goal. The goal is to perfect you and save you. How does God do that? He starts by making you aware of your own corrupt disposition, of your nature and essence, of your shortcomings, and of what you lack. Only by knowing these things and having a clear understanding of them can you pursue the truth and gradually cast off your corrupt disposition. This is God providing you with an opportunity. You have to know how to seize this opportunity, and you should not butt heads with God. In particular, when faced with the people, matters, and things that God arranges around you, do not constantly feel that things are not as you wish them to be; do not constantly wish to escape them or always blame and misunderstand God. If you are constantly doing those things, then you are not experiencing God’s work, and that will make it very difficult for you to enter truth reality. Whatever you encounter that you cannot fully understand, when a difficulty arises, you must learn to submit. You should begin by coming before God and praying more. That way, before you know it, a shift will occur in your internal state, and you will be able to seek the truth to resolve your problem. As such, you will be able to experience God’s work. As

this happens, truth reality will be wrought within you, and this is how you will progress and undergo a transformation of the state of your life. Once you have undergone this change and possess this truth reality, you will also possess stature, and with stature comes life.

Excerpted from “To Gain the Truth, You Must Learn From the People, Matters, and Things Around You” in

Records of Christ’s Talks

Man’s corrupt disposition hides within their every thought and idea, within the motives behind their every action; it hides in every viewpoint man has about anything and within every opinion, understanding, viewpoint and desire they have in their approach to all God does. It is concealed within these things. And what does God do? How does God approach these things of man? He arranges environments to expose you. He will not only expose you, but He will also judge you. When you reveal your corrupt disposition, when you have thoughts and ideas that defy God, when you have states and viewpoints that contend with God, when you have states whereby you misunderstand God, or resist and oppose Him, God will rebuke you, judge you and chastise you, and He will sometimes even punish you and discipline you. What is the aim of disciplining and rebuking you? It is to make you understand that what you think are the notions of man, and that they are wrong; your motivations are born of Satan, they originate from human will, they do not represent God, they are incompatible with God, they cannot fulfill God’s intentions, they are disgusting and hateful to God, they incite His wrath, and even arouse His cursing. After realizing this, you are able to change your motivations. And how are they changed? First of all, you must submit to the way God treats you, and submit to the environments and people, matters, and things that He sets out for you; do not pick holes, do not make objective excuses, and do not shirk your responsibilities. Secondly, seek the truth that people should practice and enter when God does what He does. God asks that you understand these things. He wants you to recognize your corrupt dispositions and satanic essence, for you to be able to submit to the environments He arranges for you and, ultimately, for you to be able to practice what He requires of you in accordance with His will, and to be able to meet His will. Then you will have passed the test. Once you stop resisting and opposing, what are these soon replaced with? You are able to obey, and no longer argue. When God says, “Get you behind Me, Satan,” you reply, “If God says I am Satan, I am Satan. Though I don’t understand what I’ve done wrong, or why God says I am Satan, if He wishes me to get behind Him, I shall not hesitate.

I must seek the will of God.” When God says the nature of your actions is satanic, you say, “I recognize whatever God says, I accept it all.” What attitude is this? This is obedience. Is it obedience when you are able to reluctantly accept God saying you are the devil Satan, but cannot accept it—and are incapable of obeying—when He says you are a beast? Obedience means total compliance, acceptance, not arguing and not setting terms. It means not analyzing cause and effect, regardless of objective reasons, and only concerning yourself with acceptance. When people have attained obedience such as this, they are close to true faith in God. The more God acts, the greater your sense that all is ruled by God, and then the more you will feel, “Everything God does is good, none of it is bad. I must not pick and choose, but should obey. My responsibility, my obligation, my duty—it is to obey; this is what I should do as a creature of God. If I can’t even obey God, then what am I? I am a beast, I am the devil!” Does this not show that you now have true faith? Once you have gotten to this point, you will be without taint, and so it will be easy for God to use you, and it will also be easy for you to submit to the orchestrations of God—and will it not then be easy for God to bless you? Thus, there are many lessons to be learned from obedience.

Excerpted from “Only Being Truly Obedient Is a Real Belief” in Records of Christ’s Talks

In his belief in God, Peter sought to satisfy God in everything, and sought to obey all that came from God. Without the slightest complaint, he was able to accept chastisement and judgment, as well as refinement, tribulation and going without in his life, none of which could alter his love for God. Was this not the ultimate love for God? Was this not the fulfillment of the duty of a creature of God? Whether in chastisement, judgment, or tribulation, you are always capable of achieving obedience unto death, and this is what should be achieved by a creature of God, this is the purity of the love for God. If man can achieve this much, then he is a qualified creature of God, and there is nothing which better satisfies the desire of the Creator. Imagine that you are able to work for God, yet you do not obey God, and are incapable of truly loving God. In this way, not only will you not have fulfilled the duty of a creature of God, but you will also be condemned by God, for you are someone who does not possess the truth, who is incapable of obeying God, and who is disobedient to God. You only care about working for God, and do not care about putting the truth into practice or knowing yourself. You do not

understand or know the Creator, and do not obey or love the Creator. You are someone who is innately disobedient to God, and so such people are not beloved by the Creator.

Excerpted from "Success or Failure Depends on the Path That Man Walks" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

There is a fundamental principle of the Lord of creation's treatment of created beings, which is also the highest principle. How He treats created beings is completely based on His management plan and on His requirements; He does not need to consult any single person, nor does He need to get any single person to agree with Him. Whatever He ought to do and however He ought to treat people, He does, and, no matter what He does or how He treats people, it all accords with the principles by which the Lord of creation works. As a created being, the only thing to do is submit; there should not be any other choice. What does this show? It shows that the Lord of creation will always be the Lord of creation; He has the power and the qualifications to orchestrate and rule over any created being as He pleases, and does not need a reason to do so. This is His authority. There is not one among the beings of creation who, insofar as they are created beings, has the power or is qualified to pass judgment on how the Creator should act or on whether what He does is right or wrong, nor is any created being qualified to choose whether they should be ruled over, orchestrated, or disposed of by the Lord of creation. Likewise, not a single created being has the qualifications to choose how they are ruled over and disposed of by the Lord of creation. This is the highest truth. No matter what the Lord of creation has done to His created beings, and no matter how He has done it, the humans He created should do only one thing: Seek, submit, know, and accept this fact put in place by the Lord of creation. The final result will be that the Lord of creation will have accomplished His management plan and completed His work, having caused His management plan to progress without any obstructions; meanwhile, because the created beings have accepted the Creator's rule and arrangements, and submitted to His rule and arrangements, they will have gained the truth, understood the Creator's will, and come to know His disposition. There is yet another principle I must tell you: No matter what the Creator does, no matter how He manifests, and no matter whether what He does is a great deed or a small one, He is still the Creator; whereas all mankind, which He created, regardless of what they have done, and regardless of how talented or favored they might be, remain created beings. As for created humanity, no matter how much grace and how many

blessings they have received from the Creator, or how much mercy, lovingkindness, or benevolence, they should not believe themselves to stand apart from the masses, or think they can be on equal footing with God and that they have become highly ranked among created beings. Regardless of how many gifts God has bestowed on you, or how much grace He has given you, or how kindly He has treated you, or whether He has given you a few special talents, none of these are your assets. You are a created being, and you will thus forever be a created being. You must never think, “I am a little darling in the hands of God. He would not raise a hand to me. God’s attitude toward me will always be one of love, care, and gentle caresses, with warm whispers of comfort and encouragement.” To the contrary, in the eyes of the Creator, you are the same as all other created beings; God can use you as He wishes, and can also orchestrate you as He wishes, and He can arrange as He wishes for you to play every role among all sorts of people, events, and things. This is the knowledge people should have, and the good sense that they should possess.

Excerpted from “Only by Seeking the Truth Can One Know God’s Deeds” in Records of Christ’s Talks

XI. Truths of Fearing God and Shunning Evil

1. What is it to fear God and shun evil? How is fearing God and shunning evil manifested?

Relevant Words of God:

What is to fear God? And how can one shun evil?

“To fear God” does not mean nameless fright and horror, nor to evade, nor to put at a distance, nor is it idolization or superstition. Rather, it is admiration, esteem, trust, understanding, caring, obedience, consecration, love, as well as unconditional and uncomplaining worship, requital, and submission. Without genuine knowledge of God, humanity will not have genuine admiration, genuine trust, genuine understanding, genuine caring or obedience, but only dread and unease, only doubt, misunderstanding, evasion, and avoidance; without genuine knowledge of God, humanity will not have genuine consecration and requital; without genuine knowledge of God, humanity will not have genuine worship and submission, only blind

idolization and superstition; without genuine knowledge of God, humanity cannot possibly act in accordance with the way of God, or fear God, or shun evil. Conversely, every activity and behavior in which man engages will be filled with rebellion and defiance, with slanderous imputations and maligning judgments about Him, and with evil conduct running contrary to the truth and to the true meaning of God's words.

Once humanity has genuine trust in God, they will be genuine in following Him and depending on Him; only with real trust in and dependence on God can humanity have genuine understanding and comprehension; along with real comprehension of God comes real caring for Him; only with genuine caring for God can humanity have genuine obedience; only with genuine obedience to God can humanity have genuine consecration; only with genuine consecration to God can humanity have requital that is unconditional and without complaint; only with genuine trust and dependence, genuine understanding and caring, genuine obedience, genuine consecration and requital, can humanity truly come to know God's disposition and essence, and to know the identity of the Creator; only when they have truly come to know the Creator can humanity awaken in themselves genuine worship and submission; only when they have real worship for and submission to the Creator will humanity be able truly to put aside their evil ways, that is to say, to shun evil.

This constitutes the whole process of "fearing God and shunning evil," and is also the content in its entirety of fearing God and shunning evil. This is the path that must be traversed in order to attain fearing God and shunning evil.

Excerpted from "Knowing God Is the Path to Fearing God and Shunning Evil" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Exactly what sort of path is the way of fearing God and shunning evil? It involves seeking to submit to God, and submitting to Him completely and absolutely. It involves being genuinely afraid and fearful of God, without any elements of deception, resistance, or rebellion. It is being completely pure of heart and absolutely loyal and obedient toward God. This loyalty and obedience must be absolute, not relative; it is not dependent upon time or place, or how old one is. This is the way of fearing God and shunning evil. While walking this path of seeking, you will gradually come to know God and experience His deeds; you will feel His care and protection, sense the truth of His existence, and feel His sovereignty. Only then will you finally really feel

God's existence in all things, as well as sense His presence beside you; only then will you have this kind of realization. If you do not seek this sort of way, then you will never gain knowledge of these things.

Excerpted from "Man Is the Greatest Beneficiary of God's Management Plan" in Records of Christ's Talks

We will start by looking at Job's home life, at what his normal conduct was like during his life. This will tell us about his principles and objectives in life, as well as about his personality and pursuit. ...Where the Bible describes the feasting of Job's sons and daughters, there is no mention of Job; it is said only that his sons and daughters often ate and drank together. In other words, he did not hold feasts, nor did he join his sons and daughters in eating extravagantly. Though affluent and possessed of many assets and servants, Job's life was not a luxurious one. He was not beguiled by his superlative living environment, and he did not, because of his wealth, gorge himself on the enjoyments of the flesh or forget to offer burnt offerings, and much less did it cause him to gradually shun God in his heart. Evidently, then, Job was disciplined in his lifestyle, was not greedy or hedonistic as a result of God's blessings to him, and he did not fixate upon quality of life. Instead, he was humble and modest, he was not given to ostentation, and he was cautious and careful before God. He often gave thought to God's graces and blessings, and was continually fearful of God. In his daily life, Job often rose early to offer burnt offerings for his sons and daughters. In other words, not only did Job himself fear God, but he also hoped that his children would likewise fear God and not sin against God. Job's material wealth held no place within his heart, nor did it replace the position held by God; whether for his own sake or his children's, Job's daily actions were all connected to fearing God and shunning evil. His fear of Jehovah God did not stop at his mouth, but was something he put into action and reflected in each and every part of his daily life. This actual conduct by Job shows us that he was honest, and was possessed of an essence that loved justice and things that were positive. That Job often sent and sanctified his sons and daughters means he did not sanction or approve of his children's behavior; instead, in his heart he was frustrated with their behavior, and condemned them. He had concluded that the behavior of his sons and daughters was not pleasing to Jehovah God, and thus he often called on them to go before Jehovah God and confess their sins. Job's actions show us another side of his humanity, one in which he never walked with those who often sinned and offended God, but instead shunned and avoided them.

Even though these people were his sons and daughters, he did not forsake his own principles of conduct because they were his own kin, nor did he indulge their sins because of his own sentiments. Rather, he urged them to confess and gain Jehovah God's forbearance, and he warned them not to forsake God for the sake of their own greedy enjoyment. The principles of how Job treated others are inseparable from the principles of his fear of God and shunning of evil. He loved that which was accepted by God, and loathed that which repulsed God; he loved those who feared God in their hearts, and loathed those who committed evil or sinned against God. Such love and loathing was demonstrated in his everyday life, and was the very uprightness of Job seen by God's eyes. Naturally, this is also the expression and living out of Job's true humanity in his relations with others in his daily life, about which we must learn.

Excerpted from "God's Work, God's Disposition, and God Himself II" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

After God said to Satan, "All that he has is in your power; only on himself put not forth your hand," Satan departed, soon after which Job came under sudden and fierce attacks: First, his oxen and donkeys were plundered and some of his servants killed; next, his sheep and some more servants were consumed in fire; after that, his camels were taken and even more of his servants were murdered; finally, his sons' and daughters' lives were taken away. This string of attacks was the torment suffered by Job during the first temptation. As commanded by God, during these attacks Satan only targeted Job's property and his children, and did not harm Job himself. Nevertheless, Job was instantly transformed from a rich man possessed of great wealth to someone who had nothing. No one could have withstood this astonishing surprise blow or properly reacted to it, yet Job demonstrated his extraordinary side. The Scriptures provide the following account: "Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down on the ground, and worshipped." This was Job's first reaction after hearing that he had lost his children and all of his property. Above all, he did not appear surprised, or panic-stricken, much less did he express anger or hate. You see, then, that in his heart he had already recognized that these disasters were not an accident, or born from the hand of man, much less were they the arrival of retribution or punishment. Instead, the trials of Jehovah had come upon him; it was Jehovah who wished to take his property and children. Job was very calm and clear-headed then. His perfect and upright humanity enabled him to rationally and naturally make accurate judgments and decisions about the disasters that had befallen him, and in consequence, he

behaved with unusual calm: “Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down on the ground, and worshipped.” “Rent his mantle” means that he was unclothed, and possessed of nothing; “shaved his head” means he had returned before God as a newborn infant; “fell down on the ground, and worshipped” means he had come into the world naked, and still without anything today, he was returned to God as if a newborn baby. Job’s attitude toward all that befell him could not have been achieved by any creature of God. His faith in Jehovah went beyond the realm of belief; this was his fear of God, his obedience to God; he was not only able to give thanks to God for giving to him, but also for taking from him. Furthermore, he was able to take it upon himself to return to God all that he owned, including his life.

Job’s fear and obedience toward God is an example to mankind, and his perfection and uprightness were the peak of the humanity that ought to be possessed by man. Though he did not see God, he realized that God truly existed, and because of this realization he feared God, and due to his fear of God, he was able to obey God. He gave God free rein to take whatever he had, yet he was without complaint, and fell down before God and told Him that, at this very moment, even if God took his flesh, he would gladly allow Him to do so, without complaint. His entire conduct was due to his perfect and upright humanity. This is to say, as a result of his innocence, honesty, and kindness, Job was unwavering in his realization and experience of God’s existence, and upon this foundation he made demands of himself and standardized his thinking, behavior, conduct and principles of actions before God in accordance with God’s guidance of him and the deeds of God that he had seen among all things. Over time, his experiences caused in him a real and actual fear of God and made him shun evil. This was the source of the integrity to which Job held firm. Job was possessed of an honest, innocent, and kind humanity, and he had actual experience of fearing God, obeying God, and shunning evil, as well as the knowledge that “Jehovah gave, and Jehovah has taken away.” Only because of these things was he able to stand firm in his testimony amid such vicious attacks by Satan, and only because of them was he able to not disappoint God and to provide a satisfactory answer to God when God’s trials came upon him.

Excerpted from “God’s Work, God’s Disposition, and God Himself II” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

When his wife advised him to curse God and die, her meaning was: “Your God treats you thus, so why not curse Him? What are you doing still living? Your God is so unfair to you, yet

still you say ‘blessed be the name of Jehovah.’ How could He bring disaster upon you when you bless His name? Hurry up and forsake the name of God, and follow Him no more. Then, your troubles will be over.” At this moment, there was produced the testimony that God wished to see in Job. No ordinary person could bear such testimony, nor do we read of it in any of the stories of the Bible—but God had seen it long before Job spoke these words. God merely wished to use this opportunity to allow Job to prove to all that God was right. Faced with the advice of his wife, Job not only did not give up his integrity or renounce God, but he also said to his wife: “Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?” Do these words carry great weight? Here, there is only one fact capable of proving the weight of these words. The weight of these words is that they are approved of by God in His heart, they are what was desired by God, they are what God wanted to hear, and they are the outcome that God yearned to see; these words are also the marrow of Job’s testimony. In this, Job’s perfection, uprightness, fear of God, and shunning of evil were proven. The preciousness of Job lay in how, when he was tempted, and even when his whole body was covered with sore boils, when he endured the utmost torment, and when his wife and kinfolk advised him, he still uttered such words. To put it in another way, in his heart he believed that, no matter what temptations, or however grievous the tribulations or torment, even if death was to come upon him, he would not renounce God or spurn the way of fearing God and shunning evil. You see, then, that God held the most important place in his heart, and that there was only God in his heart. It is because of this that we read such descriptions of him in the Scriptures as: In all this did not Job sin with his lips. Not only did he not sin with his lips, but in his heart he did not complain about God. He did not say hurtful words about God, nor did he sin against God. Not only did his mouth bless the name of God, but in his heart he also blessed the name of God; his mouth and heart were as one. This was the true Job seen by God, and this was the very reason why God treasured Job.

Excerpted from “God’s Work, God’s Disposition, and God Himself II” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

2. What is the relationship between fearing God and shunning evil and being saved?

Relevant Words of God:

In their faith, if people wish to attain salvation, the crux of the matter is whether they are God-fearing and whether He has a place in their hearts. If your heart is incapable of living before Him, or if there is no normal relationship between you and God, then you will never be saved. Your path to salvation will be blocked; you will have reached a dead end. Your belief in God will be useless if it exists in name only, and it will not matter how much doctrine you are able to speak, how much you have suffered, or how great your natural gifts are. God will say, “Depart from Me, you evildoer.” You will have been classed as an evildoer. You have no connection to God; He is not your Ruler, He is not your Creator, He is not your God, He is not the One you worship, and He is not the One you follow. You follow Satan and demons. You are your own lord. Ultimately, people like you will be eliminated, detested, rejected, and punished by God. He does not save such people. Only when people accept that God is their Lord and Ruler, only when they accept that He is the truth and the source of man’s way and life, and only when all that they do and the path that they walk are connected to the truth, to God, to submission before Him, and to following His way—only then will they be saved. Otherwise, they shall be condemned by God. Is it alright for people to hope to just get lucky? Is it okay for them to always cling to their own notions? Is it okay for them to constantly hold on to vague and abstract imaginings? (No.) Do not think you can just get lucky; if you want to attain salvation in your faith in God, there is no other path to take. ...

What impressions you after having listened to these sermons does not matter; when all is said and done, the only right path is the path that makes you fear God and shun evil. If you believe in God but your faith has nothing to do with Him, if He is not your Lord and not your Creator, if you do not accept that He is the Ruler of your fate, do not submit to all that is set out for you by Him, do not accept the fact that He is the truth, then your dream of salvation is in tatters. If you walk this path, then you are on the path of destruction. Suppose what you focus on, pursue, and pray and supplicate for each day gives you an increasing sense that you should submit to the Creator, that God is your Lord. And suppose you gladly accept and obey His sovereignty and orchestration for you, submitting to what God arranges for you ever more gladly, your state becoming increasingly normal, your relationship with God becoming ever closer, your love for Him ever purer, and you then have ever fewer extravagant desires, complaints, and misunderstandings toward God, you commit less and less evil, increasingly shunning it, and your fear of God becomes ever more genuine. Now what would this mean? It

would mean that you have set foot upon the path of salvation. If you think that there is nothing wrong with what you seek, and that the path you are following is the right one, but then, after all your seeking, you have not been disciplined by God and cannot sense His judgment and chastisement, unwilling to be examined by Him and wishing to be your own boss, then this is not the right path. If, the more you seek, the greater your sense that you must live before God at every moment, and you are fearful that one day you will do something wrong, that as soon as you are not careful you might offend God and be in trouble, and will then surely be forsaken by Him, and that there is nothing more terrifying than this, and you feel that when people believe in God, they must not stray from Him, and that if they do stray from His discipline, dealing, pruning, judgment, and chastisement, then it will be the same as losing the care and protection of God—if you realize these things, you will then pray to God and say, “O God! I beg You to judge and chastise me, to reprimand and discipline me, to scrutinize me at all times, to grant me reverence for You, and to make me shun evil.” What do you think of this path? This is the right path.

Excerpted from “Only by Constantly Living Before God Can One Walk the Path to Salvation” in Records of
Christ’s Talks

Everything that God does is necessary and possessed of extraordinary significance, for all that He does in man concerns His management and the salvation of mankind. Naturally, the work that God did in Job is no different, even though Job was perfect and upright in the eyes of God. In other words, regardless of what God does or the means by which He does it, regardless of the cost, regardless of His objective, the purpose of His actions does not change. His purpose is to work God’s words into man, as well as God’s requirements and will for man; in other words, it is to work into man all that God believes to be positive in accordance with His steps, enabling man to understand God’s heart and comprehend God’s essence, and allowing man to obey God’s sovereignty and arrangements, thus allowing man to attain fear of God and shunning of evil—all of this is one aspect of God’s purpose in all He does. The other aspect is that, because Satan is the foil and service object in God’s work, man is often given to Satan; this is the means God uses to allow people to see in Satan’s temptations and attacks the wickedness, ugliness, and contemptibility of Satan, thus causing people to hate Satan and be able to know and recognize that which is negative. This process allows them to gradually free themselves from Satan’s

control and accusations, interference, and attacks—until, thanks to God’s words, their knowledge and obedience of God, and their faith in God and fear of Him, they triumph over the attacks and accusations of Satan; only then will they have been completely delivered from the domain of Satan. People’s deliverance means that Satan has been defeated, it means that they are no longer the food in Satan’s mouth—instead of swallowing them, Satan has relinquished them. This is because such people are upright, because they have faith, obedience, and fear toward God, and because they completely break with Satan. They bring shame upon Satan, they make a coward of Satan, and they utterly defeat Satan. Their conviction in following God, and obedience to and fear of God defeat Satan, and make Satan completely give them up. Only people such as this have truly been gained by God, and it is this which is God’s ultimate objective in saving man. If they wish to be saved, and wish to be completely gained by God, then all those who follow God must face temptations and attacks both great and small from Satan. Those who emerge from these temptations and attacks and are able to fully defeat Satan are those who have been saved by God. This is to say, those who have been saved unto God are those who have undergone God’s trials, and who have been tempted and attacked by Satan an untold number of times. Those who have been saved unto God understand God’s will and requirements, and are able to acquiesce to God’s sovereignty and arrangements, and they do not forsake the way of fearing God and shunning evil amid Satan’s temptations. Those who are saved unto God possess honesty, they are kindhearted, they differentiate between love and hate, they have a sense of justice and are rational, and they are able to care for God and treasure all that is of God. Such people are not bound, spied upon, accused, or abused by Satan; they are completely free, they have been completely liberated and released. Job was just such a man of freedom, and this is precisely the significance of why God had handed him over to Satan.

Excerpted from “God’s Work, God’s Disposition, and God Himself II” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

God is meant to be revered and obeyed, because His being and His disposition are not the same as those of a created being and are above those of a created being. God is self-existent and everlasting, He is a non-created being, and only God is worthy of reverence and obedience; man is not qualified for this. So, all who have experienced His work and truly known Him feel reverence toward Him. However, those who do not let go of their notions about Him—those who simply do not regard Him as God—have no reverence toward Him, and though they follow

Him, they are not conquered; they are disobedient people by nature. What He means to achieve by working thus is for all created beings to have hearts of reverence for the Creator, worship Him, and submit to His dominion unconditionally. This is the final result that all His work is meant to achieve. If people who have experienced such work do not revere God, even slightly, and if their past disobedience does not change at all, then they are sure to be eliminated. If a person's attitude toward God is only to admire Him or to show Him respect from a distance, and not to love Him in the slightest, then this is the result at which a person without a heart of love for God has arrived, and that person lacks the conditions to be perfected. If so much work is unable to obtain a person's true love, then that person has not gained God and does not genuinely pursue the truth. A person who does not love God does not love the truth and thus cannot gain God, much less receive God's approval. Such people, however they experience the work of the Holy Spirit, and however they experience judgment, are unable to revere God. These are people whose nature is unchangeable and who have extremely wicked dispositions. All who do not revere God are to be eliminated, to be objects of punishment, and to be punished just like those who do evil, to suffer even more than those who have done unrighteous things.

Excerpted from "God's Work and Man's Work" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

3. How can one come to fear God and shun evil?

Relevant Words of God:

A genuine created being must know who the Creator is, what man's creation is for, how to carry out the responsibilities of a created being, and how to worship the Lord of all creation, must understand, grasp, know, and care for the Creator's intentions, wishes, and demands, and must act in accordance with the way of the Creator—fear God and shun evil.

What is to fear God? And how can one shun evil?

"To fear God" does not mean nameless fright and horror, nor to evade, nor to put at a distance, nor is it idolization or superstition. Rather, it is admiration, esteem, trust, understanding, caring, obedience, consecration, love, as well as unconditional and uncomplaining worship, requital, and submission. Without genuine knowledge of God, humanity will not have genuine admiration, genuine trust, genuine understanding, genuine caring or obedience, but only dread

and unease, only doubt, misunderstanding, evasion, and avoidance; without genuine knowledge of God, humanity will not have genuine consecration and requital; without genuine knowledge of God, humanity will not have genuine worship and submission, only blind idolization and superstition; without genuine knowledge of God, humanity cannot possibly act in accordance with the way of God, or fear God, or shun evil. Conversely, every activity and behavior in which man engages will be filled with rebellion and defiance, with slanderous imputations and maligning judgments about Him, and with evil conduct running contrary to the truth and to the true meaning of God's words.

Once humanity has genuine trust in God, they will be genuine in following Him and depending on Him; only with real trust in and dependence on God can humanity have genuine understanding and comprehension; along with real comprehension of God comes real caring for Him; only with genuine caring for God can humanity have genuine obedience; only with genuine obedience to God can humanity have genuine consecration; only with genuine consecration to God can humanity have requital that is unconditional and without complaint; only with genuine trust and dependence, genuine understanding and caring, genuine obedience, genuine consecration and requital, can humanity truly come to know God's disposition and essence, and to know the identity of the Creator; only when they have truly come to know the Creator can humanity awaken in themselves genuine worship and submission; only when they have real worship for and submission to the Creator will humanity be able truly to put aside their evil ways, that is to say, to shun evil.

This constitutes the whole process of "fearing God and shunning evil," and is also the content in its entirety of fearing God and shunning evil. This is the path that must be traversed in order to attain fearing God and shunning evil.

Excerpted from "Knowing God Is the Path to Fearing God and Shunning Evil" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Though God's essence contains an element of love, and He is merciful toward each and every person, people have overlooked and forgotten the fact that His essence is one of dignity as well. That He has love does not mean that people can offend Him freely, without inciting in Him feelings or a reaction, nor does the fact that He has mercy mean that He has no principles in how He treats people. God is alive; He genuinely exists. He is neither an imagined puppet

nor any other object. Given that He does exist, we should carefully listen to the voice of His heart at all times, pay close attention to His attitude, and come to understand His feelings. We should not use human imaginings to define God, nor should we impose human thoughts or wishes on Him, making God treat people in a human manner based on human imaginings. If you do this, then you are angering God, tempting His wrath, and challenging His dignity! Thus, once you have come to understand the severity of this matter, I urge each and every one of you to be cautious and prudent in your actions. Be cautious and prudent in your speech, as well—with regard to how you treat God, the more cautious and prudent you are, the better! When you do not understand what God's attitude is, refrain from speaking carelessly, do not be careless in your actions, and do not apply labels casually. Even more importantly, do not come to any arbitrary conclusions. Instead, you should wait and seek; these actions, too, are an expression of fearing God and shunning evil.

Excerpted from "How to Know God's Disposition and the Results His Work Shall Achieve" in The Word
Appears in the Flesh

First of all, we know that God's disposition is majesty and wrath; He is not a sheep to be slaughtered by anyone, much less a puppet to be controlled by people however they want. He is also not a bunch of empty air to be bossed around. If you truly believe that God exists, then you should have a God-fearing heart, and you should know that His essence is not one to be angered. This anger may be caused by a word, or perhaps a thought, or perhaps some kind of vile behavior, or perhaps even by mild behavior—behavior that is passable in the eyes and ethics of humans; or, perhaps it is provoked by a doctrine or a theory. However, once you have angered God, your opportunity is lost, and your end days have arrived. This is a terrible thing! If you do not understand that God must not be offended, then maybe you are not afraid of Him, and perhaps you are routinely offending Him. If you do not know how to fear God, then you are unable to fear God, and you will not know how to put yourself on the path of walking in God's way—fearing God and shunning evil. Once you become aware, and are conscious that God must not be offended, you will know what it is to fear God and shun evil.

Excerpted from "How to Know God's Disposition and the Results His Work Shall Achieve" in The Word
Appears in the Flesh

God is a living God, and just as people behave differently in different situations, His attitude toward these behaviors differs because He is neither a puppet nor is He a bunch of empty air. Getting to know God's attitude is a worthy pursuit for humankind. People should learn how, by knowing God's attitude, they can little by little attain knowledge of God's disposition and come to understand His heart. When you gradually come to understand God's heart, you will not feel that fearing Him and shunning evil is such a difficult thing to accomplish. Moreover, when you do understand God, you will not be as likely to draw conclusions about Him. Once you have stopped drawing conclusions about God, you will be less likely to offend Him, and without your realizing it, God will lead you to gain knowledge of Him; this will fill your heart with reverence for Him. You will then stop defining God by way of the doctrines, letters, and theories you have mastered. Instead, by constantly seeking out God's intentions in all things, you will unconsciously become a person who is after God's heart.

Excerpted from "How to Know God's Disposition and the Results His Work Shall Achieve" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Every sentence I have spoken contains within it the disposition of God. You would do well to ponder My words carefully, and you will surely profit greatly from them. The essence of God is very difficult to grasp, but I trust that you all have at least some idea about the disposition of God. I hope, then, that you will show Me and do more of that which does not offend the disposition of God. Then will I be reassured. For example, keep God in your heart at all times. When you act, do so according to His words. Seek out His intentions in all things, and refrain from doing that which disrespects and dishonors God. Even less should you put God in the back of your mind to fill the future void in your heart. If you do this, you will have offended the disposition of God. Again, supposing you never make blasphemous remarks or complaints against God throughout your life, and again, supposing you are able to discharge properly all that He has entrusted to you and also to submit to all His words throughout your life, then you will have avoided transgressing against the administrative decrees. For example, if you have ever said, "Why do I not think that He is God?" "I think that these words are nothing more than some enlightenment of the Holy Spirit," "In my opinion, not everything God does is necessarily right," "The humanity of God is not superior to mine," "The words of God are simply not believable," or other such judgmental remarks, then I exhort you to confess and repent your

sins more often. Otherwise, you will never have a chance at forgiveness, for you offend not a man, but God Himself. You may believe that you are judging a man, but the Spirit of God does not consider it that way. Your disrespect of His flesh is equal to disrespecting Him. This being so, have you not offended God's disposition? You must remember that all that is done by the Spirit of God is done in order to safeguard His work in the flesh and in order that this work be done well. If you neglect this, then I say that you are someone who will never be able to succeed in believing in God. For you have provoked the wrath of God, and so He shall use fitting punishment to teach you a lesson.

Excerpted from "It Is Very Important to Understand God's Disposition" in The Word Appears in the Flesh

I exhort you to get a better understanding of the content of the administrative decrees, and to make an effort to know the disposition of God. If not, you will find it difficult to keep your lips sealed, your tongues will wag too freely with high-sounding talk, and you will unwittingly offend the disposition of God and fall into the darkness, losing the presence of the Holy Spirit and the light. Because you are unprincipled in your actions, because you do and say that which you should not, you shall receive a fitting retribution. You should know that though you are unprincipled in word and deed, God is highly principled in both. The reason you receive retribution is because you have offended God, not a person. If, in your life, you commit many offenses against the disposition of God, then you are bound to become a child of hell. To man it may appear that you have only committed a few deeds that are at odds with the truth, and nothing more. Are you aware, however, that in the eyes of God you are already someone for whom there is no more sin offering? Because you have violated the administrative decrees of God more than once and have, moreover, shown no sign of repentance, there is no other recourse but for you to plunge into hell, where God punishes man. A small number of people, while following God, committed some deeds that violated principles, but after being dealt with and given guidance, they gradually discovered their own corruption, thereafter entered on the right track of reality, and they remain well-grounded today. Such people are those who shall remain in the end. Nevertheless, it is the honest that I seek; if you are an honest person and someone who acts according to principle, then you can be a confidant of God. If in your actions you do not offend the disposition of God, and seek the will of God, and have a heart of reverence toward God, then your faith is up to the standard. Whoever does not revere God and does not

have a heart that trembles in fear is highly likely to violate the administrative decrees of God. Many serve God on the strength of their passion but have no understanding of the administrative decrees of God, still less any inkling of the implications of His words. And so, with their good intentions, they often wind up doing things that disrupt God's management. In serious cases, they are thrown out, deprived of any further chance of following Him, and are cast into hell, all association with God's house at an end. These people work in the house of God on the strength of their ignorant good intentions, and end by angering God's disposition. People bring their ways of serving officials and lords to the house of God and try to put them into play, vainly thinking that they can be applied with effortless ease here. Never do they imagine that God has not the disposition of a lamb, but that of a lion. Therefore, those associating with God for the first time are unable to communicate with Him, for the heart of God is unlike that of man. Only after you understand many truths can you continuously come to know God. This knowledge is not made up of words and doctrines but can be used as a treasure by means of which you enter into close confidence with God, and as proof that He delights in you. If you lack the reality of knowledge and are not equipped with the truth, then your passionate service can only bring upon you the loathing and abhorrence of God.

Excerpted from "Three Admonitions" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

In every age, while working among humans, God bestows some words upon them and tells them of some truths. These truths serve as the way people should adhere to, the way they should walk in, the way that enables them to fear God and shun evil, and the way that people should put into practice and adhere to in their lives and over the course of their life journeys. It is for these reasons that God expresses these utterances to humanity. These words that come from God should be adhered to by people, and to adhere to them is to receive life. If a person does not adhere to them, does not put them into practice, and does not live out God's words in their life, then this person is not putting the truth into practice. Furthermore, if people are not putting the truth into practice, then they are not fearing God and shunning evil, nor can they satisfy God. People who are incapable of satisfying God cannot receive His praise, and such people have no outcome.

Excerpted from "How to Know God's Disposition and the Results His Work Shall Achieve" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Walking in God's way is not about observing superficial rules; rather, it means that when you are faced with a problem, you view it first and foremost as a situation that has been arranged by God, a responsibility He has bestowed upon you, or a task that He has entrusted to you. When facing this problem, you should even see it as a trial God has put to you. When you encounter this problem, you must have a standard in your heart, and you must think that this matter has come from God. You must think about how to deal with it in such a way that you can fulfill your responsibility while remaining loyal to God, as well as how to do it without infuriating Him or offending His disposition. ... in order to keep to God's way, we cannot let go of anything that happens either to us or around us, even the little things; whether we think we should pay attention to it or not, as long as any matter is facing us, we must not let it go. All things that happen should be viewed as tests God has given us. What do you think about this way of looking at things? If you have this kind of attitude, then it confirms one fact: Deep down, you fear God and are willing to shun evil. If you have this desire to satisfy God, then what you put into practice will not be far off meeting the standard of fearing God and shunning evil.

Excerpted from "How to Know God's Disposition and the Results His Work Shall Achieve" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

What is the primary thing one should understand when pursuing life entry? It is that in all the words spoken by God, no matter their topic, one should locate what He requires of people and His standards for them, and seek out a path of practice therein. Measure your conduct and perspective in life against them, as well as every regard of your states and expressions. More importantly, measure yourself against these things to determine what you should do, how to satisfy God's will in the course of performing your duties, and how you can act in complete accordance with God's requirements. Be a person with truth reality; do not be someone who merely arms themselves with letters and doctrines and religious theories. Do not feign spirituality; do not be a fake spiritual person. You must focus on practice, and on using God's words as a basis for evaluating your state and to reflect on it, and then change the viewpoints and attitudes with which you treat every sort of situation. Ultimately, you will be able to revere God in every situation, and you will no longer act rashly, follow your own ideas, do things according to your desires, or live within a corrupt disposition. Instead, all your actions and

words will be based on God's words and on the truth; as such, you will gradually develop a heart of reverence for God. A heart of reverence for God arises while one is pursuing the truth; it does not come from restraint. All restraint gives rise to is one type of behavior; it is an external limitation. Genuine reverence for God comes over the course of one's belief in Him, from understanding the truth, practicing in accordance with the truth, gradually and increasingly reducing one's corrupt disposition, and improving one's states, bit by bit, so that one can come frequently before God. This is a process that gives rise to genuine reverence. When that time comes, you will know what it is to revere God, and you will feel inside the sort of attitude and the sort kind of state one must have, and the sort of disposition one must possess, before they have true reverence for God and demonstrate their reverence for Him.

Excerpted from "Only Those Who Practice the Truth Are God-Fearing" in Records of Christ's Talks

You must often come before God, eat and drink and ponder His words, and accept His discipline and guidance of you. You must be able to submit to all the environments, people, things, and matters that God has arranged for you, and when it comes to matters you cannot quite fathom, you must frequently pray while seeking the truth; only by understanding God's will can you find a way forward. You must be in reverence of God, and do cautiously what you should do; you must often be at peace before God, and not be dissolute. At the very least, when something happens to you, your first reaction should be to calm yourself, and then pray immediately. By praying, waiting, and seeking, you will attain an understanding of God's will. This is an attitude that shows reverence toward God, is it not? If, deep down, you revere God and submit to God, and can be quiet before God and grasp His will, then by cooperating and practicing this way, you can be protected. You will not encounter temptation, or do things that interrupt God's management work, nor will you go so far as to provoke God's loathing. With a God-fearing heart, you will be afraid of offending God; the moment you are faced with temptation, you will live before Him, trembling with dread, and hope that in all things you will be able to submit to Him and satisfy Him. Only by practicing like this, frequently living in such a state, and frequently being at peace before God will you be able to distance yourself from temptation and evil without even having to think about it.

Excerpted from "Only by Constantly Living Before God Can One Walk the Path to Salvation" in Records of

Christ's Talks

Job had not seen the face of God or heard the words spoken by God, and much less had he personally experienced the work of God, yet his fear of God and his testimony during his trials are witnessed by all, and they are loved, delighted in, and commended by God, and people envy, and admire them, and even more than that, sing their praises. There was nothing great or extraordinary about his life: Just like any ordinary person, he lived an unremarkable life, going out to work at sunrise and returning home to rest at sunset. The difference is that during the several unremarkable decades of his life, he gained an insight into the way of God, and realized and understood the great power and sovereignty of God as no other person ever had. He was no cleverer than any ordinary person, his life was not especially tenacious, nor, moreover, did he have invisible special skills. What he did possess, though, was a personality that was honest, kind-hearted, and upright, a personality which loved fairness, righteousness, and positive things—none of these things are possessed by the majority of ordinary people. He differentiated between love and hate, had a sense of justice, was unyielding and persistent, and paid meticulous attention to detail in his thinking. Thus, during his unremarkable time on earth he saw all the extraordinary things that God had done, and he saw the greatness, holiness, and righteousness of God, he saw God's concern, graciousness, and protection for man, and he saw the honorableness and authority of the supreme God. The first reason why Job was able to gain these things that were beyond any normal person was because he had a pure heart, and his heart belonged to God, and was led by the Creator. The second reason was his pursuit: his pursuit of being impeccable and perfect, and of being someone who complied with the will of Heaven, who was loved by God, and who shunned evil. Job possessed and pursued these things while being unable to see God or hear the words of God; though he had never seen God, he had come to know the means by which God rules over all things, and he understood the wisdom with which God does so. Though he had never heard the words spoken by God, Job knew that the deeds of rewarding man and taking from man all come from God. Although the years of his life were no different from those of any ordinary person, he did not allow the unremarkableness of his life to affect his knowledge of God's sovereignty over all things, or to affect his following of the way of fearing God and shunning evil. In his eyes, the laws of all things were full of God's deeds, and God's sovereignty could be seen in any part of a person's life. He had not seen God, but he was able to realize that God's deeds are everywhere, and during his unremarkable time

on earth, in every corner of his life he was able to see and realize the extraordinary and wondrous deeds of God, and he could see the wondrous arrangements of God. The hiddenness and silence of God did not hinder Job's realization of God's deeds, nor did they affect his knowledge of God's sovereignty over all things. His life was the realization, during his everyday life, of the sovereignty and arrangements of God, who is hidden among all things. In his everyday life he also heard and understood the voice of God's heart and the words of God, who is silent among all things yet expresses the voice of His heart and His words by governing the laws of all things. You see, then, that if people have the same humanity and pursuit as Job, then they can gain the same realization and knowledge as Job, and can acquire the same understanding and knowledge of God's sovereignty over all things as Job. God had not appeared to Job or spoken to him, but Job was able to be perfect and upright, and to fear God and shun evil. In other words, without God having appeared to or spoken to man, God's deeds among all things and His sovereignty over all things are sufficient for man to become aware of God's existence, power, and authority, and God's power and authority are enough to make man follow the way of fearing God and shunning evil.

Excerpted from "God's Work, God's Disposition, and God Himself II" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

When people experience God's work, their first knowledge of Him is that He is unfathomable, wise, and wonderful, and they unconsciously revere Him and feel the mystery of the work He does, which is beyond the ken of man's mind. People want only to be able to meet His requirements, to satisfy His desires; they do not wish to exceed Him, because the work He does goes beyond man's thinking and imagination and could not be done by man in His stead. Even man himself does not know his own inadequacies, yet God has forged a new path and has come to bring man into a newer and more beautiful world, and so mankind has made new progress and has had a new start. What people feel for God is not admiration, or rather, is not only admiration. Their deepest experience is awe and love; their feeling is that God is indeed wonderful. He does work that man is unable to do and says things that man is unable to say. People who have experienced God's work always have an indescribable feeling. People of deep enough experience can understand the love of God; they can feel His loveliness, that His work is so wise, so wonderful, and thereby is infinite power generated among them. It is not fear or occasional love and respect, but a deep sense of God's compassion for man and tolerance of him.

However, people who have experienced His chastisement and judgment sense His majesty and that He tolerates no offense. Even people who have experienced much of His work are unable to fathom Him; all who truly revere Him know that His work is not in line with people's notions but always goes against their notions. He does not need people to admire him wholly or present the appearance of submission to Him; rather, they should achieve true reverence and true submission. In so much of His work, anyone with true experience feels reverence for Him, which is higher than admiration. People have seen His disposition due to His work of chastisement and judgment, and they therefore revere Him in their hearts. God is meant to be revered and obeyed, because His being and His disposition are not the same as those of a created being and are above those of a created being. God is self-existent and everlasting, He is a non-created being, and only God is worthy of reverence and obedience; man is not qualified for this. So, all who have experienced His work and truly known Him feel reverence toward Him. However, those who do not let go of their notions about Him—those who simply do not regard Him as God—have no reverence toward Him, and though they follow Him, they are not conquered; they are disobedient people by nature. What He means to achieve by working thus is for all created beings to have hearts of reverence for the Creator, worship Him, and submit to His dominion unconditionally. This is the final result that all His work is meant to achieve.

Excerpted from "God's Work and Man's Work" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

4. Why can one come to fear God and shun evil only by knowing God?

Relevant Words of God:

If you do not understand the disposition of God, then it will be impossible for you to do the work you should do for Him. If you do not know the essence of God, then it will be impossible for you to have reverence and fear toward Him; instead, there will be only heedless perfunctoriness and prevarication, and moreover, incorrigible blasphemy. Although understanding God's disposition is indeed important, and knowing God's essence cannot be overlooked, no one has ever thoroughly examined or delved into these issues. It is plain to see that you have all dismissed the administrative decrees I have issued. If you do not understand the disposition of God, then you will be very likely to offend His disposition. Offending His

disposition is tantamount to provoking the ire of God Himself, in which case the ultimate fruit of your actions will be the violation of the administrative decrees. Now you should realize that when you know God's essence, so too can you understand His disposition—and when you understand His disposition, so too will you have understood the administrative decrees. Needless to say, much of what is contained within the administrative decrees touches upon the disposition of God, but not all of His disposition is expressed within the administrative decrees; hence, you must go a step further in developing your understanding of God's disposition.

Excerpted from "It Is Very Important to Understand God's Disposition" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Coming to know the essence of God is no trifling matter. You must understand His disposition. In this way, you will, gradually and unknowingly, come to know the essence of God. When you have entered into this knowledge, you will find yourself stepping into a higher and more beautiful state. In the end, you will come to feel ashamed of your hideous soul, and, moreover, will feel that there is nowhere to hide from your shame. At that time, there will be less and less in your conduct to offend the disposition of God, your heart will come closer and closer to that of God, and a love for Him will gradually grow in your heart. This is a sign of mankind entering a beautiful state. But as yet, you have not attained this. As you all rush about for the sake of your destiny, who has any interest in trying to know the essence of God? Should this continue, you will unknowingly transgress against the administrative decrees, for you understand far too little of the disposition of God. So is not what you do now laying down a foundation for your offenses against the disposition of God? That I ask you to understand the disposition of God is not at odds with My work. For if you transgress against the administrative decrees often, who among you will escape punishment? Would My work then not have been entirely in vain? Therefore, I still ask that, in addition to scrutinizing your own conduct, you be cautious in the steps you take. This is the higher demand that I make of you, and I hope that you will all consider it carefully and give it your earnest regard. Should a day come when your actions provoke Me to a towering rage, then the consequences will be yours alone to consider, and there will be no one else to bear the punishment in your place.

Excerpted from "It Is Very Important to Understand God's Disposition" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

What does it mean to know God? It means being able to comprehend His joy, anger, sorrow, and happiness; this is knowing God. You claim that you have seen Him, yet you do not understand His joy, anger, sorrow, and happiness and you do not understand His disposition. You also understand neither His righteousness nor His mercifulness, nor do you know what He likes or what He loathes. This is not knowledge of God. Therefore, some people can follow God but are not necessarily capable of truly believing in Him; herein lies the difference. If you know God, understand Him, and are able to comprehend some of His will, then you can truly believe in Him, truly submit to Him, truly love Him, and truly worship Him. If you do not understand these things, then you are just a follower who runs along and goes with the flow. That cannot be called true submission or true worship. How does true worship come about? Without exception, all who genuinely know God worship and revere Him whenever they see Him; they are all compelled to bow down and worship Him. At present, while God incarnate is at work, the more understanding people have of His disposition and of what He has and is, the more they will treasure these things and the more they will revere Him. Generally, the less understanding people have, the more careless they are, and so they treat God as human. If people really knew and saw God, they would tremble with fear. “He that comes after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear”—why did John say this? Though deep down he did not have a very profound understanding, he knew that God is awe-inspiring. How many people these days are capable of revering God? If they do not know His disposition, then how can they revere God? People neither know Christ’s essence nor understand God’s disposition, much less are they able to truly worship God. If they see only the ordinary and normal outward appearance of Christ, yet do not know His essence, then it is easy for them to treat Christ as just an ordinary man. They may adopt an irreverent attitude toward Him and can cheat Him, resist Him, disobey Him, and cast judgment on Him. They can be self-righteous and not take His words seriously; they can even give rise to notions, condemnations, and blasphemy against God. To resolve these issues, one must know Christ’s essence and divinity. This is the main aspect of knowing God; it is what everyone who believes in the practical God must enter and achieve.

Excerpted from “How to Know God Incarnate” in Records of Christ’s Talks

God's possessions and being, God's essence, God's disposition—all has been made known in His words to humankind. When he experiences God's words, man will in the process of putting them into practice come to understand the purpose behind the words God speaks, and to understand the source and background of God's words, and to understand and appreciate the intended effect of God's words. For humanity, these are all things that man must experience, grasp, and attain in order to attain truth and life, grasp God's intentions, become transformed in his disposition, and become able to obey God's sovereignty and arrangements. At the same time that man experiences, grasps, and attains these things, he will gradually have gained an understanding of God, and at this time he will also have gained different degrees of knowledge about Him. This understanding and knowledge does not come out of something man has imagined or composed, but rather from what he appreciates, experiences, feels, and confirms within himself. Only after appreciating, experiencing, feeling, and confirming these things does man's knowledge of God acquire content; only the knowledge that man obtains at this time is actual, real, and accurate, and this process—of attaining genuine understanding and knowledge of God through appreciating, experiencing, feeling, and confirming His words—is no other than true communion between man and God. In the midst of this kind of communion, man comes truly to understand and comprehend God's intentions, comes truly to understand and know God's possessions and being, comes truly to understand and know God's essence, comes gradually to understand and know God's disposition, arrives at real certainty about, and a correct definition of, the fact of God's dominion over all creation, and gains an essential bearing on and knowledge of God's identity and position. In the midst of this kind of communion, man changes, step by step, his ideas about God, no longer imagining Him out of thin air, or giving rein to his own suspicions about Him, or misunderstanding Him, or condemning Him, or passing judgment on Him, or doubting Him. Thus, man will have fewer disputes with God, he will have fewer conflicts with God, and there will be fewer occasions on which man rebels against God. Conversely, man's caring for and obedience to God will grow greater, and his reverence for God will become more real and more profound. In the midst of such communion, man will not only attain the provision of truth and the baptism of life, but he will at the same time also attain true knowledge of God. In the midst of such communion, man will not only be transformed in his disposition and receive salvation, but he will at the same time also garner the true reverence and worship of a created being toward God.

Excerpted from “Knowing God Is the Path to Fearing God and Shunning Evil” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

“Fearing God and shunning evil” and knowing God are indivisibly connected by a myriad threads, and the connection between them is self-evident. If one wishes to attain to shunning evil, one must first have real fear of God; if one wishes to attain to real fear of God, one must first have real knowledge of God; if one wishes to attain to knowledge of God, one must first experience God’s words, enter into the reality of God’s words, experience God’s chastening and discipline, His chastisement and judgment; if one wishes to experience God’s words, one must first come face to face with God’s words, come face to face with God, and ask God to provide opportunities to experience God’s words in the form of all sorts of environments involving people, events, and objects; if one wishes to come face to face with God and with God’s words, one must first possess a simple and honest heart, readiness to accept the truth, the will to endure suffering, the resolution and the courage to shun evil, and the aspiration to become a genuine created being.... In this way, going forward step by step, you will draw ever closer to God, your heart will grow ever more pure, and your life and the value of being alive will, along with your knowledge of God, become ever more meaningful and wax ever more radiant. Until, one day, you will feel that the Creator is no longer a riddle, that the Creator has never been hidden from you, that the Creator has never concealed His face from you, that the Creator is not at all far from you, that the Creator is no longer the One that you constantly long for in your thoughts but that you cannot reach with your feelings, that He is really and truly standing guard to your left and right, supplying your life, and controlling your destiny. He is not on the remote horizon, nor has He secreted Himself high up in the clouds. He is right by your side, presiding over your all, He is everything that you have, and He is the only thing you have. Such a God allows you to love Him from the heart, cling to Him, hold Him close, admire Him, fear to lose Him, and be unwilling to renounce Him any longer, disobey Him any longer, or any longer to evade Him or put Him at a distance. All you want is to care for Him, obey Him, requite all that He gives you, and submit to His dominion. You no longer refuse to be guided, provided for, watched over, and kept by Him, no longer refuse what He dictates and ordains for you. All you want is to follow Him, walk along by His side, all you want is to accept Him as your one and only life, to accept Him as your one and only Lord, your one and only God.

XII. Truths of Dispositional Change

1. What is change in one’s disposition? How is it manifested?

Relevant Words of God:

What does a transformation in disposition mean? It happens when a lover of the truth, while experiencing God’s work, accepts the judgment and chastisement of His words and undergoes all manner of suffering and refinement. Such a person is cleansed of the satanic poisons within him, and completely breaks free of his corrupt dispositions, so that he can submit to God’s words and all of His orchestrations and arrangements, never again to rebel against Him or resist Him. This is a transformation in disposition. ... A transformation in disposition means that a person, because he loves and can accept the truth, finally comes to know his disobedient nature that is in opposition to God; he understands that man is corrupted too deeply, he recognizes man’s absurdness and deceitfulness, he recognizes man’s poorness and pitifulness, and finally comes to understand man’s nature essence. Knowing all this, he becomes able to deny and forsake himself completely, live by God’s word, and practice the truth in all things. This is someone who knows God; this is someone whose disposition has transformed.

Excerpted from “How to Know Man’s Nature” in Records of Christ’s Talks

Transformation in disposition mainly refers to the transformation of a person’s nature. The things of a person’s nature cannot be seen from external behaviors; they are directly related to the worth and significance of his existence. That is, they directly involve a person’s outlook on life and his values, the things in the depths of his soul, and his essence. If a person cannot accept the truth, he will undergo no transformation in these aspects. Only by experiencing God’s work, fully entering the truth, changing one’s values and one’s outlooks on existence and life, aligning one’s views with God’s, and becoming capable of completely submitting to and being devoted

to God, can one's disposition be said to have transformed. You may appear to put forth some effort, you may be resilient in the face of hardship, you may be able to carry out work arrangements from the Above, or you may be able to go wherever you are told to go, but these are but minor changes of behavior and are not enough to count as the transformation of your disposition. You may be able to run down many paths, suffer many hardships, and endure great humiliation; you may feel very close to God, and the Holy Spirit may do some work on you. However, when God asks you to do something that does not conform to your notions, you still might not submit; rather, you might look for excuses, rebelling against and resisting God, even to the point that you criticize and protest against Him. This would be a serious problem! It would show that you still have a nature that resists God, and that you have not undergone any transformation whatsoever.

Excerpted from "What Should Be Known About Transforming One's Disposition" in Records of Christ's
Talks

Transformation in one's disposition is not a change in behavior, nor is it a feigned outward change or a temporary alteration made out of zeal; rather, it is a genuine transformation of disposition that brings about a change in behavior. Such a change in behavior is not the same as changes exhibited in a person's outward behavior and actions. Transformation of disposition means that you have understood and experienced the truth, and that the truth has become your life. In the past, you understood the truth of this matter, but you were unable to put it into practice; truth was merely a doctrine to you that did not stick. Now that your disposition has transformed, you not only understand truth, but you also practice in accordance with it. You are now able to let go of the things you were fond of in the past, the things you used to be willing to do, your imaginings, and your notions. You are now able to let go of the things you were not able to let go of in the past. This is transformation of disposition, and it is also the process of transforming your disposition.

Excerpted from "What Should Be Known About Transforming One's Disposition" in Records of Christ's
Talks

In seeking to change your disposition, you must reach a certain stage in your understanding of yourself whereby you can discover the satanic poisons that lie within your own nature. You

must know what it means to defy God, as well as what it means to rebel against God, and you must learn how to conduct yourself in conformity with the truth in all matters. You must also gain some understanding of God's will and His requirements of humanity. You must be possessed of conscience and reason before God, you must not speak boastfully or cheat God, and you must no longer do anything to resist God. As such, you will have changed your disposition. Those whose dispositions have transformed feel reverence for God deep in their hearts, and their rebelliousness against God gradually lessens. Moreover, in the fulfilling of their duties, they no longer need others to worry about them, nor does the Holy Spirit always need to do disciplining work on them. They basically can submit to God, and the truth is present in their views on things. This all amounts to having become compatible with God.

Excerpted from "Only by Pursuing the Truth Can One Achieve a Change in Disposition" in Records of
Christ's Talks

People's dispositions change with the current words of the Holy Spirit; if you always cling to your old experiences and rules of the past, then your disposition cannot change. If the Holy Spirit's words of today ask that all people enter into a life of normal humanity but you remain fixated on external things, and are confused about reality and do not take it seriously, then you are someone who has failed to keep up with the work of the Holy Spirit, someone who has not entered upon the path of the Holy Spirit's guidance. Whether or not your disposition can change depends upon whether or not you keep up with the Holy Spirit's current words and whether or not you have true knowledge. This is unlike what you understood before. The change in your disposition that you understood before was that you, who are quick to judge, have ceased to speak thoughtlessly through God's discipline; but that is just one aspect of the change. Right now, the most critical point is following the guidance of the Holy Spirit: Follow whatever God says, and obey whatever He says. People cannot change their own disposition; they must undergo the judgment and chastisement, and suffering and refinement, of God's words, or being dealt with, disciplined, and pruned by His words. Only then can they achieve obedience and faithfulness to God, and no longer be perfunctory toward Him. It is under the refinement of God's words that people's dispositions change. Only through the exposure, judgment, discipline, and dealing of His words will they no longer dare to act rashly but instead will become steady and composed. The most important point is that they are able to submit to God's

current words, and to His work, even if it is not in line with human notions, they are able to put these notions aside and willingly submit. In the past, talk of changes in disposition mainly referred to being able to forsake oneself, to allowing the flesh to suffer, disciplining one's body, and ridding oneself of fleshly preferences—which is one kind of change in disposition. Today, everyone knows that the real expression of change in disposition is obeying the current words of God and truly knowing His new work. In this way, people's prior understanding of God, which was colored by their own notions, can be expunged, and they can attain true knowledge of and obedience to God—only this is a genuine expression of a change in disposition.

Excerpted from “People Whose Dispositions Have Changed Are Those Who Have Entered Into the Reality of God's Words” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Changes in disposition have a characteristic, which is being able to submit to what is right and in line with the truth. No matter who gives you suggestions—whether they are young or old, whether you get along well, and whether the relationship between you is good or bad—as long as they say something that is correct and in line with the truth, and also is beneficial to the work of God's house, then you can listen, adopt it, and accept it, and not be impacted by any other factors. This is the first aspect of that characteristic. First of all, you can accept the truth, as well as things that are correct and in line with the truth. Another aspect is being able to seek the truth whenever you encounter a problem. You must not only be able to accept the truth; you must also be able to seek it. For example, if you encounter a new problem that no one can fathom, then you can seek the truth and see what you should do or practice to bring the matter in line with the truth principles and meet God's requirements. Yet another aspect is gaining the ability to be considerate of God's will. How should you be considerate of His will? This depends on what duty you are performing and what requirements He has of it. You must grasp this principle: Carry out your duty according to God's requirements, and fulfill it to His satisfaction. You must also understand God's will and what the desired result of your duty is, and you must be able to act with responsibility and faithfulness. All of these are ways to be considerate of God's will. If you do not know how to be considerate of God's will in the thing that you are currently doing, then you must do some seeking in order to accomplish that and to satisfy Him. If you can put these three principles into practice, measure how well you are actually living by them, and find a path of practice, then you will be handling matters in a principled manner.

Regardless of what you might encounter, and no matter what problems you might have to deal with, you must always search for the right principles to practice by, what details these each include, and how they should be practiced so that you will not be violating the principles. Once you have a clear understanding of these things, you will naturally be able to practice the truth.

Excerpted from “Only by Putting the Truth Into Practice Can One Cast off the Shackles of a Corrupt Disposition” in Records of Christ’s Talks

People can behave well, but that does not necessarily mean they are possessed of the truth. Having fervor can only make them abide by doctrine and follow rules; those who are without the truth have no way of resolving essential problems, nor can doctrine take the truth’s place. People who have experienced a change in their dispositions are different; they have understood the truth, they are discerning on all issues, they know how to act in accordance with God’s will, how to act in accordance with the truth principle, and how to act to satisfy God, and they understand the nature of the corruption they exhibit. When their own ideas and notions are revealed, they are able to be discerning and forsake the flesh. This is how a change in disposition is expressed. The main thing about people who have undergone a change in disposition is that they have come to clearly understand the truth, and when carrying things out, they put the truth into practice with relative accuracy and they do not exhibit corruption as often. Generally, those whose dispositions have transformed appear to be particularly reasonable and discerning, and due to their understanding of the truth, they do not exhibit as much self-righteousness or arrogance. They can see through and discern much of the corruption that has been revealed in them, so they do not give rise to arrogance. They are able to have a measured grasp on what man’s place is, on how to behave reasonably, on how to be dutiful, on what to say and what not to say, and on what to say and what to do to which people. This is why it is said that people like these are relatively reasonable. Those who have undergone a change in their dispositions truly live out a human likeness, and they possess the truth. They are always able to speak and see things in accordance with the truth, and they are principled in everything they do; they are not subject to the influence of any person, matter, or thing, and they all have their own views and can uphold the truth principle. Their dispositions are relatively stable, they do not blow hot and cold, and no matter what their circumstances, they understand how to do their duties properly and how to behave to God’s satisfaction. Those whose dispositions have actually changed are

not focused on what to do to make themselves look good on a superficial level; they have gained internal clarity on what to do to satisfy God. Therefore, from the outside, they may not seem to be so enthusiastic or to have done anything very great, but everything they do is meaningful, is valuable, and yields practical results. Those whose dispositions have changed are certain to possess a lot of truth, and this can be confirmed by their perspectives on things and their principled actions. Those who do not possess the truth have absolutely not achieved any change in disposition. A change in disposition does not mean having a mature and seasoned humanity; it primarily refers to instances in which some of the satanic poisons within a person's nature change as a result of attaining knowledge of God and an understanding of the truth. That is to say, those satanic poisons are cleansed, and the truth expressed by God takes root within such people, becomes their life, and becomes the very foundation of their existence. Only then do they become new people and, as such, experience a transformation of disposition. A transformation in disposition does not mean that people's outer dispositions are meeker than before, that they used to be arrogant but now can communicate reasonably, or that they used to listen to no one but now can listen to others; such external changes cannot be said to be transformations in disposition. Of course, transformations in disposition do include such states and expressions, but the most crucial ingredient is that internally, their life has changed. The truth expressed by God becomes their very life, the satanic poisons within have been eliminated, and their perspectives have completely changed—and none of them is in line with that of the world. These people can see the schemes and poisons of the great red dragon clearly for what they are; they have grasped the true essence of life. Thus, their life values have changed, and this is the most fundamental sort of transformation, as well as the essence of a change in disposition.

Excerpted from "The Difference Between External Changes and Changes in Disposition" in Records of
Christ's Talks

When people experience until the day their outlook on life and the meaning, the basis of their existence have entirely changed, when they have been altered to their very bones and have become someone else, is this not incredible? This is a great change, an earth-shattering change. Only when you become disinterested in the fame and fortune, status, money, pleasure, power and glory of the world, and can easily forgo them, will you have the likeness of a human being.

Those who will ultimately be made complete are a group such as this; they live for the truth, live for God, and live for that which is just. This is the likeness of a true human being.

Excerpted from “One Must Understand That There Are Similarities and Differences Among People’s Natures” in Records of Christ’s Talks

2. What are the differences between dispositional change and good behavior?

Relevant Words of God:

Transformation in disposition mainly refers to the transformation of a person’s nature. The things of a person’s nature cannot be seen from external behaviors; they are directly related to the worth and significance of his existence. That is, they directly involve a person’s outlook on life and his values, the things in the depths of his soul, and his essence. If a person cannot accept the truth, he will undergo no transformation in these aspects. Only by experiencing God’s work, fully entering the truth, changing one’s values and one’s outlooks on existence and life, aligning one’s views with God’s, and becoming capable of completely submitting to and being devoted to God, can one’s disposition be said to have transformed. You may appear to put forth some effort, you may be resilient in the face of hardship, you may be able to carry out work arrangements from the Above, or you may be able to go wherever you are told to go, but these are but minor changes of behavior and are not enough to count as the transformation of your disposition. You may be able to run down many paths, suffer many hardships, and endure great humiliation; you may feel very close to God, and the Holy Spirit may do some work on you. However, when God asks you to do something that does not conform to your notions, you still might not submit; rather, you might look for excuses, rebelling against and resisting God, even to the point that you criticize and protest against Him. This would be a serious problem! It would show that you still have a nature that resists God, and that you have not undergone any transformation whatsoever.

Excerpted from “What Should Be Known About Transforming One’s Disposition” in Records of Christ’s Talks

What do you know about changes in disposition? The essences of changes in disposition and changes in behavior are different, and changes in practice are also different—they are all different in essence. Most people place special emphasis on behavior in their belief in God, as a result of which certain changes occur in their behavior. After they have begun to believe in God, they stop contending with others, insulting and fighting with people, smoking and drinking, and stealing any public property—whether it be but a nail or a plank of wood—and they even go so far as to not take it to the courts whenever they suffer losses or are wronged. Without doubt, they do indeed undergo some behavioral changes. Because, once they believe in God, accepting the true way makes people feel especially good, and because they have also now tasted the grace of the work of the Holy Spirit, they are particularly fervent, and there is even nothing that they cannot forsake or suffer. Nevertheless, after having believed for three, five, ten, or thirty years, because there has been no change in their life dispositions, they end up sliding back into old ways; their arrogance and haughtiness grow more pronounced, they begin to compete for power and profit, they covet the church’s money, they do anything that serves their own interests, they crave status and pleasures, and they have become parasites of God’s house. In particular, most of those who serve as leaders are abandoned by people. And what do these facts prove? Mere behavioral changes are unsustainable; if there is no alteration in people’s life dispositions, then sooner or later, their vicious sides will show themselves. Because the source of the changes in their behavior is fervor, coupled with some work by the Holy Spirit at the time, it is extremely easy for them to become fervent or to exhibit temporary kindness. As the unbelievers say, “Doing one good deed is easy; what’s hard is doing a lifetime of good deeds.” People are incapable of doing good deeds throughout their entire lives. One’s behavior is directed by the life; whatever one’s life is, so is one’s behavior, and only that which is revealed naturally represents the life, as well as one’s nature. Things that are fake cannot last. When God works to save man, it is not to adorn man with good behavior—the purpose of God’s work is to transform people’s dispositions, to make them reborn into new people. Thus, God’s judgment, chastisement, trials, and refinement of man all serve to change his disposition so that he may achieve absolute submission and devotion to God, and come to worship Him normally. This is the aim of God’s work. Behaving well is not the same as submitting to God, much less does it equal being compatible with Christ. Changes in behavior are based on doctrine and born of fervor; they are not based upon true knowledge of God or upon the truth, much less do they rest

upon guidance from the Holy Spirit. Even though there are times when some of what people do is directed by the Holy Spirit, this is not an expression of the life, much less is it the same as knowing God; no matter how good a person's behavior is, it does not prove that they have submitted to God or that they put the truth into practice. Behavioral changes are but a momentary illusion; they are but manifestations of zealousness. They cannot be counted as expressions of the life.

Excerpted from "The Difference Between External Changes and Changes in Disposition" in Records of
Christ's Talks

People can behave well, but that does not necessarily mean they are possessed of the truth. Having fervor can only make them abide by doctrine and follow rules; those who are without the truth have no way of resolving essential problems, nor can doctrine take the truth's place. People who have experienced a change in their dispositions are different; they have understood the truth, they are discerning on all issues, they know how to act in accordance with God's will, how to act in accordance with the truth principle, and how to act to satisfy God, and they understand the nature of the corruption they exhibit. When their own ideas and notions are revealed, they are able to be discerning and forsake the flesh. This is how a change in disposition is expressed. The main thing about people who have undergone a change in disposition is that they have come to clearly understand the truth, and when carrying things out, they put the truth into practice with relative accuracy and they do not exhibit corruption as often. Generally, those whose dispositions have transformed appear to be particularly reasonable and discerning, and due to their understanding of the truth, they do not exhibit as much self-righteousness or arrogance. They can see through and discern much of the corruption that has been revealed in them, so they do not give rise to arrogance. They are able to have a measured grasp on what man's place is, on how to behave reasonably, on how to be dutiful, on what to say and what not to say, and on what to say and what to do to which people. This is why it is said that people like these are relatively reasonable. Those who have undergone a change in their dispositions truly live out a human likeness, and they possess the truth. They are always able to speak and see things in accordance with the truth, and they are principled in everything they do; they are not subject to the influence of any person, matter, or thing, and they all have their own views and can uphold the truth principle. Their dispositions are relatively stable, they do not blow hot and

cold, and no matter what their circumstances, they understand how to do their duties properly and how to behave to God's satisfaction. Those whose dispositions have actually changed are not focused on what to do to make themselves look good on a superficial level; they have gained internal clarity on what to do to satisfy God. Therefore, from the outside, they may not seem to be so enthusiastic or to have done anything very great, but everything they do is meaningful, is valuable, and yields practical results. Those whose dispositions have changed are certain to possess a lot of truth, and this can be confirmed by their perspectives on things and their principled actions. Those who do not possess the truth have absolutely not achieved any change in disposition. A change in disposition does not mean having a mature and seasoned humanity; it primarily refers to instances in which some of the satanic poisons within a person's nature change as a result of attaining knowledge of God and an understanding of the truth. That is to say, those satanic poisons are cleansed, and the truth expressed by God takes root within such people, becomes their life, and becomes the very foundation of their existence. Only then do they become new people and, as such, experience a transformation of disposition. A transformation in disposition does not mean that people's outer dispositions are meeker than before, that they used to be arrogant but now can communicate reasonably, or that they used to listen to no one but now can listen to others; such external changes cannot be said to be transformations in disposition. Of course, transformations in disposition do include such states and expressions, but the most crucial ingredient is that internally, their life has changed. The truth expressed by God becomes their very life, the satanic poisons within have been eliminated, and their perspectives have completely changed—and none of them is in line with that of the world. These people can see the schemes and poisons of the great red dragon clearly for what they are; they have grasped the true essence of life. Thus, their life values have changed, and this is the most fundamental sort of transformation, as well as the essence of a change in disposition.

Excerpted from "The Difference Between External Changes and Changes in Disposition" in Records of
Christ's Talks

Achieving transformation in one's disposition is not a simple matter; it does not mean just having a few changes in behavior, gaining some knowledge of the truth, being able to talk a bit about one's experience with every aspect of the truth, or changing some or becoming a little

obedient after being disciplined. These things do not constitute transformation in one's life disposition. Why do I say this? Though you may be able to put a few things aside, what you are practicing has not yet reached the level of truly putting the truth into practice. Or, perhaps because you are in a suitable environment for a while, and a favorable situation, or your current circumstances have compelled you, you behave in this way. In addition, when your state of mind is stable and the Holy Spirit is at work, you are able to practice. If you were undergoing trials, and suffering through them like Job did, or like Peter whom God asked to die, would you be able to say, "Even if I died after getting to know You, it would be alright"? Transformation in disposition does not happen overnight, and once you understand the truth you cannot necessarily put it into practice within every environment. This involves man's nature. Sometimes it might seem as though you are putting the truth into practice, but in reality, the nature of your actions does not show that you are doing so. Many people have certain outward behaviors, such as being able to cast aside their families and careers and fulfill their duties, and therefore they believe they are practicing the truth. However, God does not recognize that they are practicing the truth. If everything you do has a personal motive behind it and is adulterated, then you are not practicing the truth; you are simply exhibiting superficial conduct. Strictly speaking, your conduct will probably be condemned by God; it will not be praised or remembered by Him. Dissecting this further, you are doing evil and your conduct is in opposition to God. From the outside, you are not interrupting or disturbing anything and you have not done real damage or violated any truth. It appears to be logical and reasonable, yet the essence of your actions pertains to doing evil and resisting God. Therefore, you should determine whether there has been a change in your disposition and whether you are putting the truth into practice by looking at the motives behind your actions in light of God's words. It does not depend on a human view of whether your actions conform to the human imagination and human intentions, or whether they are suited to your taste; such things are not important. Rather, it depends on God saying whether or not you are conforming to His will, whether or not your actions possess truth reality, and whether or not they meet His requirements and standards. Only measuring yourself against God's requirements is accurate. Transformation in disposition and putting the truth into practice are not as simple and easy as people imagine. Do you understand this now? Do you have any experience with this? When it comes to a problem's essence, you might not understand it; your entry has been overly superficial. You run about all

day long, from dawn until dusk, rising early and going to bed late, yet you have not achieved transformation in your life disposition, and you cannot grasp what such a transformation involves. This means your entry is too shallow, does it not? Regardless of how long you have believed in God, you might not sense the essence and deep things to do with achieving transformation in disposition.

Excerpted from “What Should Be Known About Transforming One’s Disposition” in Records of Christ’s
Talks

At what stage are you now? That is, you have already come to know your point of view is wrong, but you can still rely on your point of view to live, and you use it to measure God’s work and to pass judgment on and give thought to all God does, His sovereignty, and the circumstances He puts in place for you, and you can treat God’s sovereignty by means of your point of view and your methods. Is this practicing the truth? Is this result one that is achieved after one’s disposition is changed? No, it is not. You now merely acknowledge that God’s words are good and right, and, to look at your outward behavior, you do not do things that go against the truth, much less do you do things that pass judgment on God’s work. You are also able to submit to the work arrangements of God’s house. Such a person has gone from being an unbeliever to a follower of God with the decency of a saint. You go from someone who lives decidedly by Satan’s philosophies for living, and by Satan’s concepts, principles, and knowledge to someone who, having heard God’s words, feels they are good, right, and the truth, who wants to live by God’s words, and who has come to accept God’s words and take them as their life. It is that sort of process—nothing more. So, during this period, your behavior and ways of doing things will certainly undergo some changes and will certainly be wholly different from before. No matter in what way they differ, however, nor how many things are different, what manifests in you is, to God, no more than changes in your behavior and methods, changes in your thinking and points of view, changes in your innermost desires, and changes in your aspirations—nothing more than this. You may now be able, with an effort, to offer your life for God, but you cannot achieve absolute obedience to God in a matter you find particularly distasteful. This is the difference between a change in behavior and a change in disposition. Perhaps, your kind heart enables you to behave in such a way as to lay down your life for God at once, saying, “I’m ready and willing to give up my life’s blood. In this life, I have no regrets and no complaints!

I've given up on marriage, on worldly prospects, on all glory and riches, and I accept these circumstances that God has laid out. I can withstand and take all the ridicule and slander of the world." Yet all God has to do is lay out circumstances that do not fit your notions and you then shout at Him and resist Him. This is the difference between a change in behavior and a change in disposition. It is also possible that you can lay down your life for God and give up the people and things you love most, or the thing with which your heart can bear least to part—but when you are called to say an honest word to God and be an honest person, you find it quite difficult and cannot do it. This is the difference between a change in behavior and a change in disposition. Then again, perhaps you do not crave fleshly comfort in this life, neither eating fine food nor wearing fine clothes, each day working yourself ragged and to exhaustion. You can withstand all manner of pain brought to you by the flesh, but, when God's arrangements do not accord with your notions, you cannot understand, and when you cannot understand, grievances against God arise in you, misunderstandings about Him arise in you, and at such a time, the relationship between you and God will grow increasingly strained until you wish to shun and betray Him and are unable to submit completely. This is the difference between a change in behavior and a change in disposition. You can give up your life for God, so why can you not say an honest word to Him? You can lay aside everything outside of yourself, so why can you not be singularly loyal to the commission and task God has given you? You can give up your life for God, so why, when you reveal your feelings and uphold your relations with others, can you not take a stand to uphold God's work and His interests? You have made a vow before God to expend yourself for Him your whole life and to accept whatever suffering comes your way, so why does one instance of being dismissed from your duty make you sink so much into negativity that you cannot crawl back out for many days? Your heart is full of resistance and grievance and misunderstanding—it is all negative. What is going on? This is the difference between a change in behavior and a change in disposition.

Excerpted from "Only by Resolving One's Notions Can One Enter the Right Track of Believing in God (3)"

in Records of Christ's Talks

What was the basis on which people used to live? All people live for themselves. Every man for himself and the devil take the hindmost—this is the summation of human nature. People believe in God for their own sakes; they abandon things, expend themselves for Him, and are

faithful to Him, but still they do all these things for their own sakes. In sum, it is all done for the purpose of gaining blessings for themselves. In society, everything is done for personal benefit; believing in God is solely done to gain blessings. It is for the sake of gaining blessings that people forsake everything and can withstand much suffering: This is all empirical evidence of man's corrupt nature. However, those who have undergone a change in disposition are different; they believe that how to live meaningfully, how to fulfill a person's duties in order to be worthy of being called human, how to worship God, and how to satisfy and submit to God—all of this—is the foundation of what it means to be human, and is an obligation that is ordained by Heaven and acknowledged by earth. Otherwise, they would not be worthy of being called human; their lives would be empty and meaningless. They feel that people should live in order to satisfy God, to perform their duties well, and to live lives of meaning, so that even when it is their time to die, they will feel content and not have the slightest regret, and that they have not lived in vain. In comparing these two different situations, one can see that the latter is one of a person whose disposition has transformed, and because his life disposition has transformed, his outlook on life has certainly changed, too. Now having different values, he will never again live for himself, and he will never again believe in God for the purpose of gaining blessings. Such a person will be able to say, "If I die after having gotten to know God, then what is death to me? If I can know God, then I will be able to live a meaningful life, and then I will not have lived in vain, nor will I die with any regrets; I will have no complaints." Is this not a changed outlook on life? Therefore, the main cause of a change in one's life disposition is possessing the truth within and having knowledge of God; one's outlook on life is therefore changed, and one's values are different from before. The transformation starts from within, and from one's life; it is certainly not a mere external change. Some new believers, after they have begun to believe in God, leave the secular world behind. When they later encounter unbelievers, these believers have little to say, and they rarely contact their unbelieving relatives and friends. The unbelievers say, "This person has changed." The believer then thinks, "My disposition really has transformed; these unbelievers are saying I've changed." Has such a person's disposition, in fact, actually transformed? What he manifests are merely external changes. There has been no real change in his life, and his satanic nature remains rooted within him, completely untouched. Sometimes, people are gripped by fervor because of the work of the Holy Spirit; some external changes might occur, and they might do a few good deeds. However, this is not the same as achieving a

transformation of disposition. If you do not possess the truth and your view of things has not changed, even to the point of being no different from that of unbelievers, and if your values and outlook on life have not altered, either, and if you do not even have reverence for God—which is the very least that you should possess—then you are nowhere close to having achieved a change in disposition.

Excerpted from “The Difference Between External Changes and Changes in Disposition” in Records of
Christ’s Talks

3. How should one pursue the truth in order to achieve change in their disposition and perfection?

Relevant Words of God:

In the pursuit of change in one’s life disposition, the path of practice is simple. If, in your practical experience, you are able to follow the current words of the Holy Spirit and experience God’s work, then your disposition is capable of change. If you follow whatever the Holy Spirit says, and seek whatever the Holy Spirit says, then you are someone who obeys Him, and there will be a change in your disposition. People’s dispositions change with the current words of the Holy Spirit; if you always cling to your old experiences and rules of the past, then your disposition cannot change. If the Holy Spirit’s words of today ask that all people enter into a life of normal humanity but you remain fixated on external things, and are confused about reality and do not take it seriously, then you are someone who has failed to keep up with the work of the Holy Spirit, someone who has not entered upon the path of the Holy Spirit’s guidance. Whether or not your disposition can change depends upon whether or not you keep up with the Holy Spirit’s current words and whether or not you have true knowledge. This is unlike what you understood before. The change in your disposition that you understood before was that you, who are quick to judge, have ceased to speak thoughtlessly through God’s discipline; but that is just one aspect of the change. Right now, the most critical point is following the guidance of the Holy Spirit: Follow whatever God says, and obey whatever He says. People cannot change their own disposition; they must undergo the judgment and chastisement, and suffering and refinement, of God’s words, or being dealt with, disciplined, and pruned by His words. Only

then can they achieve obedience and faithfulness to God, and no longer be perfunctory toward Him. It is under the refinement of God's words that people's dispositions change. Only through the exposure, judgment, discipline, and dealing of His words will they no longer dare to act rashly but instead will become steady and composed. The most important point is that they are able to submit to God's current words, and to His work, even if it is not in line with human notions, they are able to put these notions aside and willingly submit. In the past, talk of changes in disposition mainly referred to being able to forsake oneself, to allowing the flesh to suffer, disciplining one's body, and ridding oneself of fleshly preferences—which is one kind of change in disposition. Today, everyone knows that the real expression of change in disposition is obeying the current words of God and truly knowing His new work. In this way, people's prior understanding of God, which was colored by their own notions, can be expunged, and they can attain true knowledge of and obedience to God—only this is a genuine expression of a change in disposition.

Excerpted from “People Whose Dispositions Have Changed Are Those Who Have Entered Into the Reality of God's Words” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

If you wish to be purified of corruption and undergo a change in your life disposition, then you must have a love for the truth and the ability to accept the truth. What does it mean to accept the truth? Accepting the truth indicates that no matter what sort of corrupt disposition you have, or which of the great red dragon's poisons are in your nature, you acknowledge it when it is revealed by God's words, and submit to these words; you accept them unconditionally, without making any excuses or trying to pick and choose, and you come to know yourself based on what He says. This is what it means to accept God's words. No matter what He says, no matter how much His utterances might pierce your heart, and no matter what words He uses, you can accept them as long as what He says is the truth, and you can acknowledge them as long as they conform to reality. You can submit to God's words regardless of how deeply you understand them, and you accept and submit to the light that is revealed by the Holy Spirit and fellowshiped by your brothers and sisters. When such a person has pursued the truth to a certain point, he can obtain the truth and achieve a transformation of his disposition.

Excerpted from “How to Know Man's Nature” in *Records of Christ's Talks*

In believing in God, if people desire transformation of their disposition, then they must not detach themselves from real life. In real life, you must know yourself, forsake yourself, practice the truth, as well as learn the principles, common sense, and rules of self-conduct in all things before you are able to achieve gradual transformation. If you only focus on the theoretical knowledge and only live among religious ceremonies without going deep into reality, without entering into real life, then you will never enter into reality, you will never know yourself, the truth, or God, and you will forever be blind and ignorant. God's work of saving people is not to allow them to live normal human lives after a short period of time, nor is it to transform their erroneous notions and doctrines. Rather, His purpose is to change people's old dispositions, to change the entirety of their old way of life, and to change all of their outdated ways of thinking and mental outlook. Focusing only on church life will not change people's old life habits or change the old ways in which they have lived for a long time. No matter what, people must not become detached from real life. God asks that people live out normal humanity in real life, not just in church life; that they live out the truth in real life, not just in church life; and that they fulfill their functions in real life, not just in church life. To enter into reality, one must turn everything toward real life. If, in believing in God, people cannot come to know themselves through entry into real life, and if they cannot live out normal humanity in real life, then they will become failures. Those who disobey God are all people who cannot enter into real life. They are all people who speak of humanity, but live out the nature of demons. They are all people who speak of the truth, but live out doctrines instead. Those who cannot live out the truth in real life are those who believe in God, but are detested and rejected by Him. You have to practice your entry in real life, know your own deficiencies, disobedience, and ignorance, and know your abnormal humanity and weaknesses. That way, your knowledge will be integrated into your actual condition and difficulties. Only this kind of knowledge is real and can allow you to truly grasp your own condition and achieve dispositional transformation.

Excerpted from "Discussing Church Life and Real Life" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Transformation of disposition means that you have understood and experienced the truth, and that the truth has become your life. In the past, you understood the truth of this matter, but you were unable to put it into practice; truth was merely a doctrine to you that did not stick. Now that your disposition has transformed, you not only understand truth, but you also practice

in accordance with it. You are now able to let go of the things you were fond of in the past, the things you used to be willing to do, your imaginings, and your notions. You are now able to let go of the things you were not able to let go of in the past. This is transformation of disposition, and it is also the process of transforming your disposition. It might sound quite simple, but in fact, someone who is in the midst of this process must suffer many hardships, overcome his body, and forsake aspects of the flesh that are part of his nature. Such a person must also undergo dealing and pruning, chastisement and judgment, and trials and refinement. Only after experiencing all of this can a person somewhat understand his own nature. Having some understanding of it, though, does not mean that one is able to change immediately; one must endure hardships in the process. Likewise, can you just begin practicing straightaway after gaining some understanding of a matter? You cannot begin practicing immediately. While you are possessed of understanding, others prune you and deal with you, and then your environment compels you and forces you to act in accordance with the truth principles. Sometimes people are unwilling to go through this, saying, "Why can't I do it that way? Do I have to do it this way?" Others say, "If you believe in God, then you should do it this way. Doing it this way is in accordance with truth." When people reach a certain point at which they have experienced some trials and ended up understanding God's will and some truths, then they will be somewhat happy and willing to act in accordance with the truth principles. At the outset, people are reluctant to practice the truth. Take devotedly fulfilling one's duties as an example: You have some understanding of fulfilling your duties and being devoted to God, and you also understand the related truths, but when will you be able to completely devote yourself to God? When will you be able to fulfill your duties in both name and deed? This will require a process. During this process, you could suffer many hardships. Some people might deal with you, and others might criticize you. Everyone's eyes will be fixed on you, and only then will you begin to realize that you are in the wrong and that you are actually the one who has done poorly, that lacking devotion in the fulfillment of your duty is unacceptable, and that you must not be careless or perfunctory. The Holy Spirit will enlighten you from within, and reproach you when you make a mistake. During this process, you will understand some things about yourself, and will know that you are too impure, you harbor too many personal motives, and have too many immoderate desires when fulfilling your duties. Once you have understood the essence of these things, you can come before God in prayer and truly repent; in this way, you can be cleansed of

those impurities. If, in this manner, you frequently seek the truth to resolve your own practical problems, you will gradually set foot upon the right path of faith. The more someone's corrupt disposition is purified, the more their life disposition will transform.

Excerpted from "What Should Be Known About Transforming One's Disposition" in Records of Christ's
Talks

The greater God's refinement, the more people's hearts are able to love God. The torment in their hearts is of benefit to their lives, they are more able to be at peace before God, their relationship with God is closer, and they are better able to see God's supreme love and His supreme salvation. Peter experienced refinement hundreds of times, and Job underwent several trials. If you wish to be made perfect by God, you too must undergo refinement hundreds of times; only if you go through this process and rely upon this step will you be able to satisfy God's will and be made perfect by God. Refinement is the best means by which God makes people perfect; only refinement and bitter trials can bring out the true love for God in people's hearts. Without hardship, people lack true love for God; if they are not tested within, if they are not truly subjected to refinement, then their hearts will always be floating around outside. Having been refined to a certain point, you will see your own weaknesses and difficulties, you will see how much you are lacking and that you are unable to overcome the many problems you encounter, and you will see how great is your disobedience. Only during trials are people able to truly know their real states; trials make people better able to be perfected.

Excerpted from "Only by Experiencing Refinement Can Man Possess True Love" in The Word Appears in
the Flesh

In summary, taking Peter's path in one's faith means to walk the path of pursuing the truth, which is also the path of truly getting to know oneself and changing one's disposition. Only by walking the path of Peter will one be on the path of being perfected by God. One must be clear on how, exactly, to walk Peter's path, as well as how to put it into practice. First, one must put aside one's own intentions, improper pursuits, and even family and all things of one's own flesh. One must be wholeheartedly devoted; that is, one must completely devote oneself to the word of God, focus on eating and drinking of God's words, concentrate on the search for the truth and the search for God's intentions in His words, and try to grasp God's will in everything. This

is the most fundamental and vital method of practice. This was what Peter did after seeing Jesus, and it is only by practicing in this way that one can achieve the best results. Wholehearted devotion to the words of God primarily involves seeking the truth, seeking God's intentions within His words, focusing on grasping the will of God, and understanding and obtaining more truth from God's words. When reading His words, Peter was not focused on understanding doctrines, much less was he focused on obtaining theological knowledge; instead, he concentrated on comprehending the truth and grasping God's will, as well as achieving an understanding of His disposition and His loveliness. Peter also attempted to understand the various corrupt states of man from God's words, as well as man's corrupt nature and actual shortcoming, thus meeting all aspects of God's requirements of man in order to satisfy Him. Peter had so many correct practices that abided by the words of God; this was most in line with God's will, and it was the best way a person could cooperate while experiencing God's work. When experiencing the hundreds of trials from God, Peter examined himself strictly against every word of God's judgment of man, every word of God's revelation of man, and every word of His demands of man, and strived to fathom the meaning of those words. He tried in earnest to ponder and memorize every word that Jesus said to him, and achieved very good results. Through this manner of practicing, he was able to achieve an understanding of himself from God's words, and he not only came to understand the various corrupt states of man, but also came to understand man's essence, nature, and various shortcomings. This is what it means to truly understand oneself. From God's words, Peter not only achieved a true understanding of himself, but from the things expressed in God's words—God's righteous disposition, what He has and is, God's will for His work, His demands of mankind—from these words he came to know God completely. He came to know God's disposition, and His essence; he came to know and understand what God has and is, as well as God's loveliness and God's demands for man. Although God did not speak back then as much as He does today, results in these aspects were nevertheless achieved in Peter. This was a rare and precious thing. Peter went through hundreds of trials, but did not suffer in vain. He not only came to understand himself from the words and the work of God, but he also came to know God. In addition, he particularly focused on God's requirements of mankind within His words. In whichever aspects man should satisfy God to be in line with God's will, Peter was able to put forth great effort in these aspects and achieve full clarity; this was extremely beneficial with regard to his own entry. No matter what

God spoke of, as long as those words could become his life and they belonged to the truth, Peter was able to carve them into his heart to ponder and appreciate them frequently. After hearing the words of Jesus, he was able to take them to heart, which shows that he was especially focused on God's words, and he truly achieved results in the end. That is, he was able to freely put the words of God into practice, accurately practice the truth and be in line with God's will, act entirely in accordance with God's intention, and give up his own personal opinions and imaginations. In this way, Peter entered into the reality of God's words. Peter's service came in line with God's will primarily because he had done this.

Excerpted from "How to Walk the Path of Peter" in Records of Christ's Talks

What Peter sought was to come to know himself and see what had been revealed in him through the refinement of God's words and within the various trials that God provided for him. When he truly came to understand himself, Peter realized just how deeply corrupt humans are, how worthless and unworthy of serving God they are, and that they do not deserve to live before Him. Peter then fell prostrate before God. Ultimately, he thought, "Knowing God is the most precious thing! If I died before knowing Him, it would be such a pity; I feel that knowing God is the most important, most meaningful thing there is. If man does not know God, then he does not deserve to live and has no life." By the time Peter's experience had reached this point, he had grown fairly knowledgeable with regard to his own nature and gained a relatively good understanding of it. Although he perhaps would not have been able to thoroughly explain it in terms that would accord with what people nowadays imagine, Peter had indeed reached this state. Therefore, the path of pursuing life and attaining perfection by God involves gaining a deeper understanding of one's own nature from within God's utterances, as well as comprehending the aspects of one's nature and accurately describing it in words. To thoroughly understand one's old life—the life of that old satanic nature—means to have achieved the results that God requires. If your knowledge has not yet reached this point, but you claim to know yourself and say that you have gained life, then are you not simply bragging? You do not know yourself, nor do you know what you are in front of God, whether you have truly met the standards of being human, or how many satanic elements you still have within you. You are still unclear about who you belong to, and you do not even have any self-knowledge—so how can you possess reason in front of God? When Peter was pursuing life, he focused on understanding

himself and transforming his disposition over the course of his trials, and he strove to know God, and in the end, he thought, “People must seek an understanding of God in life; knowing Him is the most critical thing. If I do not know God, then I cannot rest in peace when I die. Once I know Him, if God then has me die, then I will still feel most gratified to do so; I will not complain in the slightest, and my entire life will have been fulfilled.” Peter was not able to gain this level of understanding or reach this point immediately after he had begun to believe in God; he first had to undergo a great many trials. His experience had to reach a certain milestone, and he had to completely understand himself, before he could sense the value of knowing God. Therefore, the path Peter took was one of gaining life and of being perfected; this was the aspect upon which his specific practice was primarily focused.

Excerpted from “How to Walk the Path of Peter” in Records of Christ’s Talks

If, in man’s belief in God, he is not serious about matters of life, does not pursue entry into the truth, does not pursue changes in his disposition, much less pursue a knowledge of the work of God, then he cannot be made perfect. If you wish to be made perfect, then you must understand God’s work. In particular, you must understand the significance of His chastisement and judgment, and why this work is carried out upon man. Are you able to accept? During chastisement of this kind, are you able to achieve the same experiences and knowledge as Peter? If you pursue knowledge of God and of the work of the Holy Spirit, and if you pursue changes in your disposition, then you have the opportunity to be made perfect.

For those who are to be made perfect, this step of work of being conquered is indispensable; only once man has been conquered can he experience the work of being made perfect. There is no great value to only performing the role of being conquered, which will not render you fit for use by God. You will have no means of playing your part in spreading the gospel, for you do not pursue life, and do not pursue change and renewal in yourself, and so you have no actual experience of life. During this step-by-step work, you once acted as a service-doer and as a foil, but if ultimately you do not pursue to be Peter, and your pursuit is not according to the path by which Peter was made perfect, then, naturally, you will not experience changes in your disposition. If you are someone who pursues being made perfect, then you will have borne testimony, and you will say: “In this step-by-step work of God, I have accepted God’s work of chastisement and judgment, and though I have endured great suffering, I have come to know

how God makes man perfect, I have gained the work done by God, I have had the knowledge of the righteousness of God, and His chastisement has saved me. His righteous disposition has come upon me and brought me blessings and grace; it is His judgment and chastisement that has protected and purified me. If I had not been chastised and judged by God, and if the harsh words of God had not come upon me, I could not have known God, and nor could I have been saved. Today I see: As a creature, not only does one enjoy all things made by the Creator, but, more importantly, all creatures should enjoy the righteous disposition of God and His righteous judgment, because God's disposition is worthy of man's enjoyment. As a creature that has been corrupted by Satan, one should enjoy God's righteous disposition. In His righteous disposition there is chastisement and judgment, and, moreover, there is great love. Although I am incapable of completely gaining God's love today, I have had the good fortune to see it, and in this I have been blessed." This is the path walked by those who experience being made perfect, and this is the knowledge of which they speak. Such people are the same as Peter; they have the same experiences as Peter. Such people are also those who have gained life, who possess the truth. When they experience until the very end, during God's judgment they will surely completely rid themselves of the influence of Satan, and be gained by God.

Excerpted from "The Experiences of Peter: His Knowledge of Chastisement and Judgment" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

XIII. Identifying Various Notions and Imaginings

1. What are notions and imaginings? What is the root cause of notions and imaginings?

Relevant Words of God:

God Himself is life, and the truth, and His life and truth coexist. Those who are incapable of gaining the truth shall never gain life. Without the guidance, support, and provision of the truth, you shall only gain letters, doctrines, and, above all, death. God's life is ever-present, and His truth and life coexist. If you cannot find the source of truth, then you will not gain the nourishment of life; if you cannot gain the provision of life, then you will surely have no truth,

and so apart from imaginations and notions, the entirety of your body shall be nothing but your flesh—your stench-ridden flesh. Know that the words of books do not count as life, the records of history cannot be feted as the truth, and the regulations of the past cannot serve as an account of words presently spoken by God. Only that which is expressed by God when He comes to earth and lives among man is the truth, life, God’s will, and His current way of working.

Excerpted from “Only Christ of the Last Days Can Give Man the Way of Eternal Life” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

You have believed in God for all these years, and though you understand some truths, inside each of you are your own interpretations, beliefs, and imaginings—and they all contravene and contradict the intentions of God and the truth. These things are people’s notions. Everything that is at odds with the truth belongs to the notions and imaginings of man. So how do the notions of man come about? There are many different causes. Partly it is the dissemination and inculcation of knowledge; so, too, is there the creeping influence of traditional culture and the impact of social trends and certain family teachings. Overall, man has been influenced and indoctrinated by the wicked society of Satan; this is the root cause of his notions.

Excerpted from “Only by Resolving One’s Notions Can One Enter the Right Track of Believing in God (1)” in *Records of Christ’s Talks*

All those various fallacies that lack a pure understanding of the words of God are religious notions; they are deviant and erroneous understandings. The greatest skill of religious figures is taking the words of God understood in the past and measuring the words of God today against them. If, when serving the God of today, you cling to the things revealed by the Holy Spirit’s enlightenment in the past, then your service will cause disruption, and your practice will be outdated, nothing more than religious ceremony. If you believe that those who serve God must outwardly be humble and patient, among other qualities, and if you put this kind of knowledge into practice today, then such knowledge is a religious notion; such practice has become a hypocritical performance. The phrase “religious notions” refers to things that are outmoded and obsolete (including the understanding of words previously spoken by God and light directly revealed by the Holy Spirit), and if they are put into practice today, then they disrupt God’s

work and bring no benefit to man. If people are unable to purge those things from themselves that belong to religious notions, then these things will become a great hindrance to their serving God. People with religious notions have no way of keeping up with the steps of the Holy Spirit's work—they fall one step behind, then two. This is because these religious notions cause man to become extraordinarily self-righteous and arrogant. God feels no nostalgia for what He said and did in the past; if something is obsolete, He eliminates it. Are you truly unable to let go of your notions? If you cling to the words that God spoke in the past, does this prove that you know the work of God? If you are unable to accept the light of the Holy Spirit today, and instead cling to the light of the past, can this prove that you follow the footsteps of God? Are you still unable to let go of religious notions? If that is the case, then you will become someone who opposes God.

Excerpted from "Only Those Who Know the Work of God Today May Serve God" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Because there are always new developments in God's work, there is work that becomes obsolete and old as new work arises. These different types of work, old and new, are not contradictory, but complementary; each step follows from the last. Because there is new work, the old things must, of course, be eliminated. For example, some of the long-established practices and habitual sayings of man, coupled with man's many years of experience and teachings, have formed all manner and form of notions in the mind of man. That God has yet fully to reveal His true face and inherent disposition to man, along with the spread, over many years, of traditional theories from ancient times have been yet more propitious to man's formation of such notions. It may be said that, over the course of man's belief in God, the influence of various notions has led to the continual formation and evolution of all sorts of notional understandings of God in people, which has caused many religious people who serve God to become His enemies. So, the stronger people's religious notions are, the more they oppose God, and the more they are the enemies of God. The work of God is always new and never old; it never forms doctrine, instead changing continually and being renewed to a greater or lesser extent. Working in this way is an expression of the inherent disposition of God Himself. It is also the inherent principle of God's work, and one of the means by which God accomplishes His management. If God did not work in this way, man would not change or be able to know God, and Satan would not be defeated. Thus, in His work, changes continually occur that appear

erratic, but which are actually periodic. The way in which man believes in God, however, is quite different. He clings to old, familiar doctrines and systems, and the older they are, the more palatable they are to him. How could the foolish mind of man, a mind that is as intransigent as stone, accept so much unfathomable new work and words of God? Man abhors the God who is always new and never old; he likes only the old God, who is long of tooth, white of hair, and stuck in place. Thus, because God and man each have their own likes, man has become the enemy of God. Many of these contradictions still exist even today, at a time when God has been doing new work for almost six thousand years. They are, then, beyond remedy. Perhaps it is because of the stubbornness of man, or the inviolability of God's administrative decrees by any man—but those clergymen and women cling still to moldy old books and papers, while God carries on with His uncompleted work of management, as if He had no one by His side. Though these contradictions make enemies of God and man, and are even irresolvable, God pays them no heed, as if they were at once there and not there. Man, however, still sticks by his beliefs and notions, and never lets go of them. Yet one thing is self-evident: Even though man does not deviate from his stance, God's feet are always moving, and He is always changing His stance according to the environment. In the end, it is man who will be defeated without a fight. God, meanwhile, is the greatest enemy of all His defeated foes, and is also the champion of mankind, defeated and undefeated alike. Who can compete with God and be victorious? Man's notions seem to come from God because many of them were born in the wake of God's work. However, God does not forgive man because of this, nor, moreover, does He pour praise on man for producing batch after batch of products "for God" in the wake of His work that are outside of His work. Instead, He is extremely disgusted by man's notions and old, pious beliefs, and does not even have a mind to acknowledge the date on which these notions first emerged. He does not accept at all that these notions are caused by His work, for the notions of man are spread by man; their source is the thoughts and mind of man—not God, but Satan. God's intention has always been for His work to be new and alive, not old and dead, and what He has man adhere to varies with the age and period, and is not everlasting and immutable. This is because He is a God who causes man to live and be new, rather than a devil who causes man to die and be old. Do you still not understand this? You have notions about God and are incapable of letting go of them because you are close-minded. It is not because there is too little sense within God's work, nor because the work of God diverges from human wishes, nor, moreover, is it because God is

always negligent in His duties. You cannot let go of your notions because you are too lacking in obedience, and because you have not the slightest likeness of a created being; it is not because God is making things difficult for you. You caused all of this, and it bears no relation at all to God; all suffering and misfortune is created by man. God's thoughts are always good: He does not wish to cause you to produce notions, but wishes for you to change and be renewed as the ages pass. Yet you do not know what is good for you, and are always either scrutinizing or analyzing. It is not that God is making things difficult for you, but that you have no reverence for God, and your disobedience is too great. A tiny created being, daring to take some trivial part of that which was previously given by God, then turning around and using it to attack God—is this not the disobedience of man? Humans, it is fair to say, are utterly unqualified to express their views before God, and less still are they qualified to parade around their worthless, stinking, rotten, flowery language as they wish—to say nothing of those moldy notions. Are they not even more worthless?

Excerpted from “Only Those Who Know the Work of God Today May Serve God” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The work of God is always moving forward, and though the purpose of His work does not change, the method by which He works constantly changes, which means that those who follow God are constantly changing, too. The more work God does, the more thorough man's knowledge of God is. Corresponding changes occur, too, in man's disposition in the wake of God's work. However, it is because the work of God is ever-changing that those who do not know the work of the Holy Spirit and those absurd people who do not know the truth start to resist God. Not ever does the work of God conform to the notions of man, for His work is always new and never old, and never does He repeat old work, but rather forges ahead with work never done before. As God does not repeat His work, and man invariably judges God's current work by the work He did in the past, it has become exceedingly difficult for God to carry out each stage of work of the new age. Man has far too many difficulties! He is too conservative in his thinking! No one knows the work of God, yet everyone delimits it. When he leaves God, man loses life, truth, and God's blessings, yet neither does he accept life nor truth, much less the greater blessings God bestows upon mankind. All men wish to gain God, yet are unable to tolerate any changes in God's work. Those who do not accept God's new work believe that the

work of God is immutable, that it forever remains at a standstill. In their belief, all that is needed to gain eternal salvation from God is to observe the law, and as long as they repent and confess their sins, the will of God will always be satisfied. They are of the opinion that God can only be the God under the law and the God who was nailed to the cross for man; it is their opinion, too, that God should not and cannot exceed the Bible. It is precisely these opinions that have shackled them firmly to the laws of old and nailed them to dead rules. There are even more who believe that whatever the new work of God might be, it has to be substantiated by prophecies, and that in each stage of such work, all those who follow Him with a “true” heart must also be shown revelations; if not, such work could not be the work of God. It is already no easy task for man to come to know God. Taken in addition to man’s absurd heart and his rebellious nature of self-importance and self-conceit, it becomes all the more difficult for him to accept God’s new work. Man neither gives careful consideration to the new work of God, nor accepts it with humility; instead, he adopts an attitude of contempt as he awaits revelations and guidance from God. Is this not the behavior of those who rebel against and resist God? How can such people gain God’s approval?

Excerpted from “How Can Man Who Has Delimited God in His Notions Receive the Revelations of God?” in
The Word Appears in the Flesh

2. What notions does man harbor about God and God’s work?

Relevant Words of God:

All men wish to see the true countenance of Jesus, and all desire to be with Him. I do not think that any brother or sister would say that they do not wish to see or to be with Jesus. Before you have seen Jesus—before you have seen the incarnate God—you are likely to entertain all sorts of ideas, for example, about Jesus’ appearance, His way of speaking, His way of life, and so on. But once you have really seen Him, your ideas will swiftly change. Why is this? Do you wish to know? Man’s thinking cannot be overlooked, which is true—but more than that, the essence of Christ does not brook alteration by man. You think Christ an immortal or a sage, but no one considers Him a normal man possessed of divine essence. As such, many of those who yearn day and night to see God are actually enemies of God, and are incompatible with Him. Is

this not a mistake on the part of man? Even now you still think that your belief and loyalty are enough to make you worthy of beholding the countenance of Christ, but I exhort you to equip yourselves with more things that are practical! For in the past, present, and future, many of those who come in contact with Christ have failed or will fail; they all play the role of the Pharisees. What is the reason for your failure? It is precisely because there is in your notions a God who is lofty and deserving of admiration. But the truth is not as man wishes. Not only is Christ not lofty, but He is particularly small; not only is He a man, but He is an ordinary man; not only can He not ascend to heaven, but He cannot even move about freely on earth. And this being so, people treat Him as they would an ordinary man; they treat Him casually when they are with Him, and speak to Him heedlessly, all the while still waiting for the coming of the “true Christ.” You take the Christ that has already come for an ordinary man, and His words for those of an ordinary man. For this reason, you have not received anything from Christ, and have instead completely exposed your own ugliness to the light.

Excerpted from “Those Who Are Incompatible With Christ Are Surely Opponents of God” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Throughout many years of work, you have seen many truths, but do you know what My ears have heard? How many among you are willing to accept the truth? You all believe you are willing to pay the price for the truth, but how many of you have truly suffered for the truth? There is nothing but unrighteousness in your hearts, which makes you think that everyone, no matter who they are, is equally deceitful and crooked—to the point that you even believe that God incarnate could, like a normal person, be without a kind heart or benevolent love. More than that, you believe that a noble character and a merciful, benevolent nature exist only within the God in heaven. You believe that such a saint does not exist, that only darkness and evil reign on earth, while God is something with which people entrust their longing for the good and beautiful, a legendary figure fabricated by them. In your minds, the God in heaven is very upstanding, righteous, and great, worthy of worship and admiration; this God on earth, meanwhile, is but a substitute, and an instrument, of the God in heaven. You believe this God could not be the equal of the God in heaven, much less be mentioned in the same breath as Him. When it comes to the greatness and honor of God, they belong to the glory of the God in heaven, but when it comes to the nature and the corruption of man, they are attributes in which the God

on earth has a part. The God in heaven is eternally lofty, while the God on earth is forever insignificant, weak, and incompetent. The God in heaven is not given to emotion, only righteousness, while the God on earth only has selfish motives and is without any fairness or reason. The God in heaven has not the slightest crookedness and is forever faithful, while the God on earth always has a dishonest side. The God in heaven loves man dearly, while the God on earth shows man inadequate care, even neglecting him entirely. This erroneous knowledge has long been kept within your hearts and may also be perpetuated in the future. You regard all deeds of Christ from the standpoint of the unrighteous and evaluate all His work, as well as His identity and essence, from the perspective of the wicked. You have made a grave mistake and done that which has never been done by those coming before you. That is, you serve only the lofty God in heaven with a crown upon His head, and never attend to the God whom you regard as so insignificant that He is invisible to you. Is this not your sin? Is this not a classic example of your offense against the disposition of God? You worship the God in heaven. You adore lofty images and esteem those distinguished for their eloquence. You are gladly commanded by the God that fills your hands with riches, and crave the God who can fulfill your every desire. The only One you do not worship is this God who is not lofty; the only thing you hate is association with this God whom no man can regard highly. The only thing you are unwilling to do is to serve this God who has never given you a single penny, and the only One who is unable to make you yearn for Him is this unlovely God. This kind of God cannot enable you to broaden your horizons, to feel as if you have found a treasure, much less fulfill what you wish. Why, then, do you follow Him? Have you given thought to questions like this? What you do does not merely offend this Christ; more importantly, it offends the God in heaven. This is not, I think, the purpose of your faith in God!

Excerpted from "How to Know the God on Earth" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Some people say, "I can't accept it when Christ says I'm bad. I'd only accept it if the God in heaven said there was something bad about me. The incarnate God has normal humanity; His judgments can often be wrong, and much of what He does is not 100% correct. There are some questions over whether He could be mistaken in His assessment and condemnation of people, or in how He handles and makes arrangements for them. So I'm not afraid what Christ—the God on earth—says about me, for He cannot condemn me or determine my end." Do such

people exist? They certainly do! When I deal with them, they say, “The God in heaven is righteous!” When I handle them, they say, “I believe in God, not some person!” They use these words to rebuff Me. And what are these words? They are a denial of God and Christ. What they mean is, “This is not up to You, but the God of heaven.” In their notions and in their understanding of God, these people will never realize the connection between the incarnate Christ and the God in heaven—what the relationship is between the flesh and the Spirit in heaven. In their eyes, this small person on earth will always be just a person, and no matter how many truths this person expresses, how many sermons He preaches, He is still a human; even if He makes some people complete, and brings them salvation, He will still be on earth, He will still be a person, and incapable of transcending the God in heaven. Thus, these people believe that faith in God must be the faith in the God in heaven; to them, only belief in the God in heaven is the true belief in God. They believe however they wish. They believe in whatever makes them happy, and God is whatever they imagine Him to be. They follow their own imagination when it comes to the incarnate Christ, too: “If this God on earth were a little nicer to me, if He were pleasing to me, then I would respect Him, and love Him. If He isn’t good to me, if He has a problem with me, if He has a bad attitude toward me, and always prunes and deals with me, then He is not my God; I choose to believe in the God in heaven.” People with this attitude are not in the minority. They include you, too, for I have already encountered such people. When all is well, they are pretty nice to Me, and attentive in their service, but as soon as I handle them, they turn against Me. So when they are being good to God, do they really believe that this is God, and Christ? No: What they are eyeing up is the identity and status of God, their every move is nothing more than fawning over the status and identity of God. In their minds, the invisible God in heaven they believe in will always be the true God; no matter how many truths this God on earth expresses, how edifying and beneficial He is to man, the mere fact that He lives amid normal humanity and is of a fleshly body means that, regardless of how they flatter, serve, and respect Him, in their hearts these people still believe that the God in heaven is the only true God. What do you think of this view? It is fair to say that such a view exists deep in many people’s hearts, that it is buried deep in their subconscious. At the same time as accepting the provision of Christ, and all of the sermons preached by Christ and words spoken by Him, they are also studying, questioning, and observing Christ—whilst also looking forward to when the righteous God in heaven comes to pass judgment on all they have done. And why

do they wish the God in heaven to pass judgment on them? Because their notions and imaginings give free rein to their desire that the God in heaven—the God of their imagination—shall behave toward them as they wish, whereas the God on earth will not do that; the God on earth only speaks the truth, speaks the words of God, and talks about how to behave toward people and handle them according to principle. They think, “The God in heaven’s love of man is selfless, unconditional, and without limit, whereas as soon as you say or do something and the God on earth finds out, He uses you as a teaching material in His sermons and begins dissecting you—so people must be careful of Him, they must keep themselves hidden from Him, and they can’t let Him know when something’s up.” What do you say, am I not able to dissect the things you try to keep from Me? I do not need to dissect your actions; I dissect your dispositions and your states, and I do not have to rely on those things to speak the truth, give sermons, and make people understand the truth. In the eyes of some nonbelievers, this flesh, this God, is not aware of anything He does not see with His own eyes, even that which involves the truth. Which is to say, He does not know the things people do that are directed by their corrupt essences, and so knows nothing of their corrupt essences. This is what people believe in their notions. Their attitude toward Christ is always one of studying, doubt, and even disbelief. At the same time, they measure Christ using the standards by which normal people are measured, by that which is attainable and understandable to ordinary people.

Excerpted from “Only by Resolving One’s Notions Can One Enter the Right Track of Believing in God (1)” in
Records of Christ’s Talks

Most people who believe in God regard Him as a bunch of empty air and as something which seems to exist one minute and not the next. Why do I put it like that? Because whenever you encounter a problem, you do not know God’s will. Why do you not know His will? Not just now, but from start to finish, you do not know God’s attitude toward this problem. You cannot fathom it and do not know what God’s attitude is, but have you given it much thought? Have you sought to know it? Have you fellowshiped about it? No! This confirms a fact: The God of your belief has no connection to the God of reality. In your belief in God, you ponder only your own intentions and those of your leaders; you merely give thought to the superficial and doctrinal meaning of God’s words, without truly trying to know or seek God’s will at all. Is this not the case? The essence of this matter is quite terrible! After so many years, I have seen many

people who believe in God. What has their belief transformed God into in their minds? Some people believe in God as if He were just a bunch of empty air. These people have no answer to questions of God's existence, because they can neither feel nor sense either His presence or His absence, let alone see it clearly or understand it. Subconsciously, these people think that God does not exist. Others believe in God as if He were a man. These people think that He is unable to do all of the things that they, too, are unable to do, and that He should think however they think. Their definition of God is "an invisible and untouchable person." There is also a group of people who believe in God as if He were a puppet; these people believe that God has no emotions. They think God is a clay statue, and that when faced with an issue, God has no attitude, viewpoint, or ideas; they believe He is at humankind's mercy. People simply believe however they want to believe. If they make Him great, then He is great; if they make Him small, then He is small. When people sin and need God's mercy, tolerance, and love, they assume God should extend His mercy. These people invent a "God" in their own minds, and then make this "God" fulfill their demands and satisfy all of their desires. No matter when or where, and no matter what such people do, they will adopt this fancy in their treatment of God and in their faith. There are even those who, having aggravated God's disposition, still believe He can save them, because they assume that God's love is boundless and His disposition is righteous, and that no matter how much a person offends God, He will not remember any of it. They think that since human faults, human trespasses, and human disobedience are momentary expressions of a person's disposition, God will give people chances, and be tolerant and patient with them; they believe that God will still love them as before. Thus, they maintain high hopes for attaining salvation. In fact, no matter how people believe in God, as long as they are not pursuing the truth, He will hold a negative attitude toward them. This is because over the course of your faith in God, though you have taken the book of God's words and seen it as a treasure, and study and read it every day, yet you set the real God aside. You regard Him as mere empty air, or as just a person—and some of you regard Him as no more than a puppet. Why do I put it this way? I do so because the way I see it, whether you are faced with a problem or encounter some circumstance, those things that exist in your subconscious, those things that you give rise to internally, have never had any connection with God's words or with pursuing the truth. You only know what you yourself are thinking, what your own viewpoint is, and then you force your own ideas and opinions onto God. In your mind they become God's viewpoints, and you make

of these viewpoints standards that you unwaveringly uphold. Over time, proceeding like this takes you farther and farther away from God.

Excerpted from “How to Know God’s Disposition and the Results His Work Shall Achieve” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Until His 6,000-year management plan comes to a close—before He reveals the outcome of each category of man—God’s work on earth will be for the sake of salvation; its purpose is purely to make those who love Him complete—thoroughly so—and to bring them into submission under His dominion. No matter how God saves people, it is all done by making them break away from their old satanic nature; that is, He saves them by having them seek life. If they do not do so, then they will have no way to accept God’s salvation. Salvation is the work of God Himself, and the seeking for life is something that man must take on in order to accept salvation. In the eyes of man, salvation is the love of God, and the love of God cannot be chastisement, judgment, and curses; salvation must contain love, compassion, and, moreover, words of solace, as well as boundless blessings bestowed by God. People believe that when God saves man, He does so by moving them with His blessings and grace, so that they can give their hearts to God. That is to say, His touching man is His saving them. This sort of salvation is done by striking a deal. Only when God grants them a hundredfold will man come to submit before God’s name and strive to do well for Him and bring Him glory. This is not what God intends for mankind. God has come to work on earth in order to save corrupt mankind; there is no falsehood in this. If there were, He would certainly not have come to do His work in person. In the past, His means of salvation involved showing the utmost love and compassion, such that He gave His all to Satan in exchange for the whole of mankind. The present is nothing like the past: The salvation bestowed upon you today occurs at the time of the last days, during the classification of each according to kind; the means of your salvation is not love or compassion, but chastisement and judgment, in order that man may be more thoroughly saved. Thus, all that you receive is chastisement, judgment, and merciless smiting, but know this: In this heartless smiting there is not the slightest punishment. Regardless of how harsh My words might be, what befall you are but a few words that might appear utterly heartless to you, and no matter how angry I might be, what rain upon you are still words of teaching, and I do not mean to harm you or put you to death. Is this not all fact? Know that nowadays, whether it be

righteous judgment or heartless refinement and chastisement, everything is for the sake of salvation. Regardless of whether today each is classified according to kind or the categories of man are laid bare, the purpose of all of God's words and work is to save those who truly love God. Righteous judgment is brought to purify man, and heartless refinement is done to cleanse them; harsh words or chastening are both done to purify and are for the sake of salvation.

Excerpted from "You Should Put Aside the Blessings of Status and Understand God's Will to Bring Salvation to Man" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

What notions are there within your heart that govern your behavior? When something happens to you that is not to your liking, these notions naturally appear, and make you complain to God, argue and compete with God, and they bring about a rapid transformation in your relationship with God: You suddenly go from feeling you love God and are faithful to Him, and wanting to devote your whole life to Him, as you did at the start, to not wanting to be faithful to God, to not wanting to perform your duty, and you regret your belief in God, you regret having chosen this path, and even complain about being chosen by God. What notions are able to suddenly cause such a major change in your relationship with God? (When God arranges a situation to test me, and I feel there is a chance I might have no outcome, I form notions about God. I feel that as long as I do not forsake God in my faith, He will not abandon me.) That is one kind of notion. Do you often have such notions? What is your understanding of being abandoned by God? Believing that if God leaves you, God does not want you and will not save you, is a kind of notion. So how does such a notion come about? Does it come from your imagination, or does it have a basis? How do you know God gives you no outcome? Did God tell you personally? Such thoughts have been delineated by you, yes? Now you know that this is a notion; the key question is how to solve it. The simplest way is this: Since you know it is a notion, you must put it to one side and seek the truth, and see what God asks of you. When your own notions run contrary to what God asks, and you realize this but still cling to them, then you will have no entry into life; your stature is too poor. Furthermore, people are especially sensitive toward their own end and destination, and toward adjustments of their duty and being replaced in their duty. Some people frequently jump to an erroneous conclusion about such things, thinking that as soon as they are replaced in their duty and they have no status anymore, or God says He does not like or want them anymore, then it's over for them. This is the conclusion they

come to. They believe there is no point in believing in God, and believe that, since their end is set in stone and they are not wanted by God, there is no meaning to living. Others, hearing such thoughts, think them reasonable and dignified—but what kind of mentality is this, actually? It is rebelliousness against God, it is defeatism. What is the essence of their defeatism? It is ignorance of how God treats people. Does God know when people abandon themselves to despair? How does God treat such people? Some people say, “God has paid such a painstaking price for man, He has done much work in every person, and exerted much effort; it is not easy for God to choose and save a person. God will be so hurt if this person abandons themselves to despair, and will hope each day that they can pick themselves up.” This is the meaning on a superficial level, but in fact, it is also a notion of man. God takes a certain attitude toward such people: If you abandon yourself to despair and do not try to move forward, He says you can stay where you are if you want; He will not pressure you. If you say, “I still wish to perform the duty of a created being, to do all I can to practice as God asks, and to satisfy the will of God. I will do everything within my power and capabilities; I will not give up on what God asks of me,” God says that if you are willing to live in this way, then continue following, but you must do as God asks; God’s standards of requirements and principles do not change. What do these words mean? They mean that only people can abandon themselves; God would never abandon someone. For anyone who is able to ultimately attain salvation and behold God, who creates a normal relationship with God, and who can come before God, this is not something that can be achieved after failing or being pruned and dealt with a single time, or after being judged and chastised a single time. Before Peter was made perfect, he was refined hundreds of times. Of those who remain after serving to the very end, there will not be one who has only experienced trials and refinement eight or ten times before making it to the end. Is this not the love of God? This is God’s attitude toward man.

Excerpted from “Only by Resolving One’s Notions Can One Enter the Right Track of Believing in God (1)” in

Records of Christ’s Talks

How do people’s notions about God’s work come about? Some come from people’s previous comprehension of faith, and some come from their own imaginings about the work of God. For example, people started out imagining God’s work of judgment as a big white throne in the sky, with God upon the throne judging all peoples. Today, everyone knows that such imaginings are

unrealistic—such things are impossible. Whatever the case, people have many imaginings about God's work, management, and treatment of man, and most of these imaginings come from human predilections. Why do I say this? Because people do not want to suffer. They always want to achieve success in their faith in God with ease, accept God's work, enjoy His grace, receive His blessings, and then enter the kingdom of heaven. How wonderful! The most common and indulgent idea that corrupt mankind has about the work of God is entering the kingdom of heaven sitting upon a palanquin. Moreover, when people encounter the work of God, most of the time they are incapable of understanding it; they do not know the truth it contains, or what God's aim is in doing this work, and why God behaves toward man thus. For example, I have previously described God's love using the words "vast" and "immense," but I think it likely you have never understood just what I meant by these two words. What was My aim in using these two words? It was to get everyone's attention, so that you would go and reflect on them. Superficially, these words seem almost empty. They do have a certain meaning, but no matter how much thought people give them, all they can come up with is, "Vast—it means as boundless as the sky; it is saying that God's heart is boundless, there is no limit to His love!" God's love is not the kind of love that can be imagined by the mind of man. People are incapable of imagining this love, they must not use learning and knowledge to interpret this word, but must use another method to appreciate and experience it. Ultimately, you come to sense truly that the love of God is different to the love spoken of by worldly people, that the true love of God is unlike anything else, unlike the love understood by all mankind. So just what is this love of God? First you must not approach it with the notions and imaginings of man. Take a mother's love, for example: A mother's love toward her children is unconditional, it is protective and warm. Right now, does the love of God for man that you feel have the same level of sensation and meaning as a mother's love? (Yes.) Then this is a problem—it is wrong. You must distinguish God's love from the love of parents, of a husband, wife, or children, of your kin, from the concern of friends, and come to know the love of God anew. Just what is the love of God? The love of God is without emotion and is unaffected by relationships of blood. It is love pure and simple. So how should people understand the love of God? Why have we come to discuss the love of God? The love of God is embodied in the work of God, so that people acknowledge it, accept it, and experience it, and ultimately realize that this is the love of God, and acknowledge that these are not empty words, nor some form of behavior on the part of God, but

the truth. When you accept it as the truth, you are able to recognize this aspect of God's essence from it. If you treat it as some form of behavior, you will have difficulty recognizing it. What is meant by "behavior"? Take mothers, for example: They give their youth, their blood, their sweat and tears to bring up their children, they give them whatever they want, regardless of whether they have done right or wrong, or what path they take. A mother gives selflessly, never teaching, helping or guiding the child about walking the right path, only indiscriminately caring for, loving and protecting them, to the extent that ultimately, the child cannot tell right from wrong. This is the love of a mother or any kind of love born of the hot blood, emotions, and fleshly relationships of man. The love of God, meanwhile, is exactly the opposite: If God loves you, He expresses this by often chastening and disciplining you, by pruning and dealing with you. This might make things uncomfortable for you, your days may pass amid chastening and discipline, but once you have experienced this, you will discover that you have learned much, that you can have discernment and are wise when it comes to interacting with other people, and also that you have come to understand some truths. If the love of God were like the love of a mother or father, as you imagine it to be, if He were so scrupulous in His care, and invariably indulgent, could you gain these things? You could not. And so, people must approach what is manifested of the love of God in His work from the perspective of the truth, and within this, they must seek the truth. If they do not seek the truth, how could someone who is corrupt conjure, out of thin air, an understanding of what God's love is, what the aim of His work in man is, and where His thoughtful intentions lie? People would never understand these things. This relates to one part of God's work, one aspect of God's essence that people are most likely to misunderstand, and have the most difficulty comprehending and appreciating; it is what people can engage with profoundly, empathetically, and practically. Generally speaking, love means giving people what they like, not giving them something bitter when they want something sweet, or giving something bitter to them in order to treat an illness; in brief, it involves the selfishness, the emotions and hot blood, of man; it involves one aspect of aims and motivations. But no matter what God does in you, even if you misunderstand Him, and even complain about Him in your heart, God shall, with unflagging patience, continue to work in you. What is God's ultimate aim in acting thus? He uses this method to awaken you, or so that there might come a day when you understand God's will—but when God sees that outcome, He has actually gained nothing. And why do I say this? Because your all comes from God. God does not need to gain anything. All

He needs is for you to properly follow and enter in accordance with what He requires while He performs His work, to ultimately be able to live out truth reality, to live with the likeness of man, and no longer be deceived, misled, and tempted by Satan, to be able to turn your back on Satan, to obey and fear God, so that God gains you, and His great work is done. This is the love of God, and the work of God. Is there this level of meaning to your understanding of God's love as vast and immense? (No.) Your understanding has not reached that point. Even when someone breaks God's heart, and others think there is no way God could save them, what is God's attitude when they reflect on themselves, repent, and put aside the evil in their hands and accept His salvation? God welcomes them just as before; as long as people take the right path, God will not hold them to account. This is the love of God. What notion of man must be remedied here? People must leave behind the various notions they have about how God loves man. Leaving them behind is easy; changing is not. When something actually happens to you, it is not easy to make you put aside your notions and accept this way in which God loves you. This requires people to seek the truth when something happens to them, to actually experience and feel God's love.

Excerpted from "Only by Resolving One's Notions Can One Enter the Right Track of Believing in God (1)" in
Records of Christ's Talks

Today, you must dissect what notions about God's work are, and which ones there are, and above all, you must sum up the various imaginings, resistance, and demands you have about the work of God, the sovereignty and arrangements of God, and about the way in which God works—these things stand in the way of your obedience to the orchestrations and arrangements of God, and cause you to misunderstand and resist everything that God has done in you. Such notions are very serious, and worth dissecting. For example, some people say, "God says He doesn't like me, so maybe He won't save me." Is this not a notion? Such notions must be resolved, because these kinds of notions can stop you from moving forward, they can paralyze you, and cause you to give in to despair, and can even make you forsake God. In some churches, some people have been deceived by antichrists and the wicked who cause disruptions. Is this good or bad? Is this the love of God, or is it God toying with people and exposing them? This is not clear to you, yes? God employs all things and all matters in His service to perfect and save those whom He wishes to save; those who truly seek and practice the truth shall ultimately gain

the truth, while some who do not seek the truth complain and say, “It isn’t right for God to work like this. Such wrongs I have suffered! I came close to leaving with the antichrists. If this was truly the act of God, how could He make people leave with the antichrists?” That you did not leave is proof of God’s salvation of you; those who did have been exposed and eliminated. So are the disruptions caused by these antichrists and wicked people in the churches a good thing or a bad thing? When they are exposed, you will be able to tell them for what they really are, after which they will be purged from the church and your stature will grow, and when you encounter such people again, you will reject them before they show their true colors. This is a good thing. God works in extraordinary ways, ways that are beyond the imagination of normal people. So why did I use those words to define the work of God? Because corrupt mankind does not understand these things; the truth, the way God works, the wisdom of God’s battle with Satan—people understand none of these things, and the whole of mankind draws a blank. So why do people still have their own ideas? Because they study things, or else have their own predilections, which lead to them having ideas. The Creator working thus is, for the people of today, the first time since the creation of heaven and earth: He acts in plain view of all mankind, openly revealing His management plan, and implementing and putting it into effect among mankind for the first time. Mankind’s perceptions concerning God’s mentality, God’s essence, and God’s way of working are inherently blank; these things are alien to them, and so it is very normal for people to have notions in this area. But being normal does not mean that these notions are right; no matter how normal they are, they should and must be addressed, for no matter how normal these notions are, they are antithetical to and incompatible with the Creator. Ultimately, what should mankind do? People should accept and obey, from which they will achieve change, and gain the truth, and satisfy the requirements of the Creator.

Excerpted from “Only by Resolving One’s Notions Can One Enter the Right Track of Believing in God (1)” in

Records of Christ’s Talks

Some people believe that, so long as their aspirations are good and positive and proactive, the Creator should fulfill them, and that they should not be deprived of the right to strive toward a beautiful life. This is a notion. Does the Creator’s fulfillment accord with man’s wishes, with his hopes, with his imaginings? It does not. In what way, then, does the Creator act? Regardless of who you are, what you have planned, how perfect and honorable your imaginings are, or to

what extent they match the reality of your life, God does not look at any of these things, nor does He involve Himself with them; rather, things are accomplished, orchestrated, and arranged according to God's ordained methods and laws. This is God's righteous disposition. Some people think, "After the countless hardships I've experienced in my life, aren't I entitled to a good life? When I come before the Creator, won't I have the capital to request and aspire toward a beautiful life and a beautiful destination?" Is this not a human notion? What are such notions and human-engendered ways of thinking to God? They are unreasonable demands. How do such unreasonable demands come about? (People do not know God's authority.) That people do not know God's authority is an objective reason; the subjective reason is that they have a rebellious disposition. Is the life the Creator arranges for people one of hardship, or is it happy and carefree? (One of hardship.) The majority of people live lives of hardship, with too many difficulties and too much pain. What is the Creator's purpose in these arrangements, and what is their significance? In one sense, such arrangements are meant to allow people to experience and know God's sovereignty, arrangements, and authority; in another sense, His primary purpose is to let people experience what life really is, and thereby to realize that man's destiny is controlled in God's hand, and is neither decided by any person nor changed in the wake of changes in people's subjective will. Whatever the Creator does and whatever sort of life or fate He has arranged for people, He makes them reflect on life and on what man's destiny really is, and, as they reflect on all these things, He makes them come before God. When God expresses the truth and tells people what all this is, He makes people come before Him, accept what God says, experience what God says, understand what the relationship really is between all God says and all the things people experience in their real lives. He lets people verify the practicality, accuracy, and validity of these truths, after which man gains them and acknowledges that he is controlled in the hand of the Creator, and that his destiny is ruled and arranged by God. Once man has understood all this, he will no longer have any impractical plans for his life, and he will not plan to go against the wishes of the Creator nor what He has ordained and arranged; rather, he will have an increasingly accurate assessment and understanding, or a comprehension and plan, of how his life should be lived and the road he should take.

Excerpted from "Only by Resolving One's Notions Can One Enter the Right Track of Believing in God (2)"

in Records of Christ's Talks

God made man with free will. Man has a brain, thoughts, and ideas. After being corrupted by Satan, man became immersed in the sounds and sights of this world, and, after being educated by their parents, influenced by their families, and educated by society, many things arise in man's thoughts—things that are born of man's heart, which all come forth naturally. How are these things that come forth naturally within man formed? Firstly, a person must have the ability to give thought to problems—this is the foundation one must have to be able to give rise to these things. Then, through environmental influences—such as being educated by one's family and society—as well as being impelled by one's own corrupt dispositions and ambitions and desires, these things gradually take shape. How are such formed thoughts and ideas, whether they accord with reality or are hollow, treated by God? Does He condemn them? He does not, nor does He remove such thoughts from people. People have a notion: They imagine that with a gentle touch of God's great, formless hand, their thinking will be changed. Is this notion not vague, supernatural, and hollow? This is a notion people have of how God works. In the depths of their hearts, people often have fantasies of God's work and the methods of His work, though they do not give voice to them. People imagine the Creator coming softly next to man and, with a wave of His great hand and a puff of His magical breath, or by thinking a thought, the negative things inside man will disappear in an instant, with the wordless silence of a great wind blowing away a cloud. How does God treat these ideas of man, these things to which man's mind gives rise? God does not resolve them with supernatural, hollow methods, but by laying out man's environment. What sort of environment does He lay out? It is not a hollow thing—God does not do anything supernatural, breaking all the laws. Rather, He lays out an environment that compels a person to understand the matter and to reflect unceasingly, after which God makes use of all manner of people, events, and things to light that person's way, whereupon that person comes to an understanding. God makes them understand these things according to their destiny, by adding a few incidents to the course of their destiny. What are man's notions in this? Supernatural, hollow, vague, discordant with reality—that is, divorced from reality. Say, for instance, someone is hungry and would like to eat. There are those who would say, "If God were truly at work, all He'd have to do would be to breathe on me and I'd be full, and I'd stay full for a year or two. Wouldn't that be nice?" Is this not unrealistic? If you told God you were hungry, what would God say? God would tell you to find some food—He would

tell you to eat. If you said you had no food and could not cook, what would God do? He would tell you to learn to cook. This is the practical side of God's work. When you encounter something obscure to you, by no longer giving hollow prayers or relying vaguely and self-assuredly on God, when you no longer consign your hopes to such things, you will then know what it is you should do—you will know your duty, your responsibility, and your obligation.

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God speaks with man face-to-face and tells him what he should and should not do, what road he should take, how he should obey God, the principles he should enter in each part of His work. God clearly tells man all these things, yet man often waits still, anticipating that God will tell him what His meaning really is by means other than His words, hoping to be able to attain previously unimaginable results and hoping to witness miracles. Is this not man's notion? What does God do, in fact? When God uses clear language to tell man how to act, how to live, how to obey Him, and how to experience every manner of event, if man still does not understand, God does nothing more beside laying out an environment, giving man some special enlightenment, or having man undergo some special experiences. That is the end of what God can, should, and is willing to do. There are those who ask, "Doesn't God want every person to be saved and not want anyone to suffer perdition? If God used such a method to act, how many people would be able to be saved?" In response, God would ask, "How many people heed My words and follow My way?" There are as many as there are—this is God's view and the method of His work. He does no more. What is man's notion of this matter? "God takes pity on this mankind; He's concerned for this mankind and will take responsibility unto the end. If man follows Him unto the end, he'll inevitably be saved." God has told you all these truths. If, in the end, you still say you do not understand His will and you do not know how to practice, then these are mutinous words. God should abandon such people. It is absolutely a human notion to describe or illustrate the realness of God's glory in terms of numbers of people, degree of power, or racial diversity. In the Bible, in both the Old and New Testaments, how many were there, in total, who were saved and made perfect? That is, who was able to fear God and shun evil in the end? (Job and Peter.) They were the only two. As God sees it, to fear Him and shun evil is, in fact, to meet the standard of knowing Him, of knowing the Creator. People like Abraham and Noah were

righteous in God's eyes, but they were still a level beneath Job and Peter. Of course, God did not do so much work then. He did not provide for people as He does now, nor did He speak so many clear words, nor did He do the work of salvation on such a large scale. He may not have gained many people, but this is not a bad thing. What aspect of the Creator's disposition can be seen in this? God hopes to gain many people, but if many people cannot, in fact, be gained—if this humanity cannot be gained by God during His work of salvation—then God would rather abandon them and discard them. This is how the Creator sees it. In this regard, what demands or notions does man have of God? "It is You who saves me, so You are responsible unto the end, and You promised me blessings, so You should give them to me and let me gain them." Within man, there is many a "must"—many demands—and this is one notion among them. Others say, "God does such great work—a six-thousand-year management plan—and, in the end, He only gained two people. What a shame. Weren't His actions in vain?" Man thinks it ought not to be so, but God is happy to gain even two people. God's real purpose is not merely to gain those two, but to gain more than that, and if people do not understand, and they all misunderstand and resist God, then God would rather not have them. That is His disposition. Some people say, "That won't do. Wouldn't Satan be laughing then?" Satan may be laughing, but is it not God's vanquished enemy all the same? God has still gained mankind—several among them who can forsake Satan and not suffer its control. God has gained true created beings. Are those who have not been gained by God then taken captive by Satan? You have not been made perfect—do you follow Satan? (No.) It is God's glory that none of those whom He has not gained follow Satan. Some people say, "If God doesn't want me, I still won't follow Satan. Even if it offered me blessings, I wouldn't take them." Does God not thus gain glory? People have notions about the number of people God gains or the scale with which He gains them; they believe God should not gain only those few. That man can give rise to such notions is because, in one regard, man cannot fathom the mind of God, the Creator, and cannot understand the sort of person He wants—there is always a distance between man and God; in another regard, to have such notions is a way for man to comfort himself and set himself free so far as his own destiny and future are concerned. Man believes, "God has gained so few people—how glorious it would be for Him to gain us all! If God didn't discard a single person, but conquered everyone, and everyone was made perfect in the end, and the talk of God's choosing people didn't come to naught, nor did His work of management, then wouldn't Satan be humiliated all the more?"

Wouldn't God gain greater glory? Wouldn't it be strong evidence of Satan's defeat? Three birds with one stone!" Man does know the score, does he not? That he can say this is partly because he does not know the Creator and partly because he has his own selfish motive: He is worried about his future, so he hitches it to the Creator's glory, and thus his heart feels at ease. Man has selfish motives, and is there not something of rebelliousness in them? Is there not a demand made of God? There is within it an unvoiced resistance against God that says, "You have chosen us, led us, labored so much on us, bestowed Your life and Your entirety upon us, bestowed Your words and truth upon us, and had us follow You all these years. What a loss it would be if You couldn't gain us in the end." Such an excuse is an attempt to blackmail God, to obligate Him to gain man. Therein lie man's demands, as well as his imaginings and notions: God does such great work, so He must gain however many people. Whence this "must"? It comes from man's notions and imaginings, his unreasonable demands, and his vainglorious heart, along with some admixture of his hard and ferocious disposition.

Excerpted from "Only by Resolving One's Notions Can One Enter the Right Track of Believing in God (2)"
in Records of Christ's Talks

Once one believes in God, they have a vague imagining of reverence and esteem for Him. They believe He is almighty, omnipotent, and, since He has chosen a group of people from among this corrupt humanity, He will certainly make them complete. We, therefore, are bound to be blessed, as a matter of certainty. Does such "certainty" not have a mentality of trying one's luck behind it? To wish to gain God's approval without pursuing the truth or undergoing God's judgment and chastisement is the attitude man ought least to hold. Do not adopt a mentality of trying your luck—luck is the great enemy. What sort of mindset is trying one's luck? What states, thoughts, ideas and notions, attitudes, and views might a person have that show their actions and the pit of their heart to be harboring a luck-based mentality? You can only change when you know these things; if you do not know they still exist within you, how could you change? How could you resolve them? What, then, is a mentality of trying one's luck? "I believe in God. I've left my family and quit my job. No matter what, I've suffered and sweated and toiled, and if I follow through to the end, I might become one of the overcomers, one of the saved, one of the blessed, one of the people of God's kingdom." This is a mentality of trying one's luck. Is such not in every person's heart? The majority of those who leave everything behind and come to

God's house to perform their duty full-time have something of this sort of mentality. Is a mentality of trying one's luck not a sort of notion? (It is.) Why do I say it is a sort of notion? Because, when you have not understood or comprehended the intention and the attitude the Lord of creation has toward this matter, you just subjectively think good thoughts and subjectively pursue, and that is how you approach it. It is a sort of notion. To the Lord of creation, is such a notion not a kind of blackmail? Is it not an unreasonable demand? It is as if to say, "Since I've followed You, and since I've left everything behind and come to Your house to perform my duty full-time, I must count as someone who has submitted to the arrangements of the Lord of creation, right? So, can I have a promising future now? My future shouldn't be obscure—it should be plain to see." This is a mindset of trying one's luck. How is such a mindset resolved? In one respect, one must know God's disposition. Everyone fundamentally understands what I am saying now. "So that's what God thinks. That's God's view and His attitude. So, what should we do?" People should put aside their mentality of trying their luck. To put aside this mentality, is it enough to say, "I've put it aside and won't have such thoughts anymore. I'll treat my duty seriously, take responsibility, and work harder"? It is not so simple—when one develops a mentality of trying their luck, there emerge in them some thoughts and practices, and, more than that, some dispositions will be revealed. These things should be resolvable. Some say, "If I've understood God's will and attitude, aren't I rid of the mentality of trying my luck?" What sort of talk is that? It is ignorant of spiritual matters; it is hollow talk. How, then, is this problem resolved? You must consider, "What should I do if God takes everything away from me? Are these things I devote to God and expend for Him given willingly, or are they attempts to barter with Him? It's not good if I'm attempting to barter with Him. I'll have to pray and change that." In addition, as one practices and as one performs their duty, they should understand which truth principles they do not understand, what they do that goes against God's requirements and His will, what sort of path is the wrong one and the path of disaster, and what sort of path is the one that can meet with God's approval. In terms of the mindset of trying one's luck, what else is there? There are people who, having come down with a serious illness, are saved by God and are ill no longer. They think, "All of you believe in God to chase after blessings. I'm different. It was God's great love that brought me here; He gave me special circumstances and special experiences that led me to believe in Him, so He loves me more than He loves you, and, in the end, I will have a greater chance to survive than you." They

think they have an extraordinary, special relationship with God—that they are different from ordinary people. Because of their special experience, they feel themselves to be extraordinary and uncommon, and they therefore maintain a kind of certainty that they will succeed. They define themselves as assuredly different from others, and are assured of their ability to survive—this, too, is a mentality of trying one’s luck. There are others who have taken on an important duty and whose status is high. They suffer a bit more than others, are pruned and dealt with a bit more than others, keep themselves a bit busier than others, and speak a bit more than others. They think, “I’ve been put in an important position by God and by His house and I am in favor with my brothers and sisters. What an honor this is. Doesn’t this mean I’ll be blessed before others?” This, too, is a mentality of trying one’s luck, and it is a kind of notion.

Excerpted from “Only by Resolving One’s Notions Can One Enter the Right Track of Believing in God (2)”

in Records of Christ’s Talks

People say that God is a righteous God, and that as long as man follows Him to the very end, He will surely be impartial toward man, for He is most righteous. If man follows Him to the very end, could He cast man aside? I am impartial toward all men, and judge all men with My righteous disposition, yet there are suitable conditions to the requirements I make of man, and that which I require must be accomplished by all men, regardless of who they are. I care not how your qualifications are, or how long you have held them; I care only whether you walk in My way, and whether or not you love and thirst for the truth. If you lack the truth, and instead bring shame upon My name, and do not act according to My way, merely following without care or concern, then at that time I will strike you down and punish you for your evil, and what will you have to say then? Will you be able to say that God is not righteous? Today, if you have complied with the words I have spoken, then you are the kind of person whom I approve. You say you have always suffered whilst following God, that you have followed Him through thick and thin, and have shared with Him the good times and the bad, but you have not lived out the words spoken by God; you wish only to run about for God and expend yourself for God each day, and have never thought to live out a life of meaning. You also say, “In any case, I believe God is righteous. I have suffered for Him, run around for Him, and devoted myself for Him, and I have worked hard despite not receiving any recognition; He is sure to remember me.” It is true that God is righteous, yet this righteousness is untainted by any impurities: It contains

no human will, and it is not tainted by the flesh, or by human transactions. All who are rebellious and in opposition, all who are not in compliance with His way, will be punished; none is forgiven, and none is spared! Some people say, "Today I run around for You; when the end comes, can You give me a little blessing?" So I ask you, "Have you complied with My words?" The righteousness that you speak of is based on a transaction. You think only that I am righteous and impartial toward all men, and that all those who follow Me to the very end are sure to be saved and gain My blessings. There is inner meaning to My words that "all those who follow Me to the very end are sure to be saved": Those who follow Me to the very end are the ones who will be fully gained by Me, they are those who, after being conquered by Me, seek the truth and are made perfect. What conditions have you achieved? You have only achieved following Me to the very end, but what else? Have you complied with My words? You have accomplished one of My five requirements, yet you have no intention of accomplishing the remaining four. You have simply found the simplest, easiest path, and pursued it with an attitude of just hoping to get lucky. Toward such a person as you My righteous disposition is one of chastisement and judgment, it is one of righteous retribution, and it is the righteous punishment of all evildoers; all those who do not walk in My way will surely be punished, even if they follow to the very end. This is the righteousness of God. When this righteous disposition is expressed in the punishment of man, man will be dumbfounded, and feel regret that, whilst following God, he did not walk in His way. "At that time, I only suffered a little whilst following God, but did not walk in the way of God. What excuses are there? There is no option but to be chastised!" Yet in his mind he is thinking, "Anyway, I have followed to the very end, so even if You chastise me, it can't be too severe a chastisement, and after exacting this chastisement You will still want me. I know You are righteous, and will not treat me that way forever. After all, I'm not like those who will be wiped out; those who are to be wiped out will receive a heavy chastisement, whereas my chastisement will be lighter." Righteous disposition is not as you say. It is not the case that those who are good at confessing their sins are dealt with leniently. Righteousness is holiness, and is a disposition that is intolerant of offense by man, and all that is filthy and has not changed is the target of God's disgust. God's righteous disposition is not law, but administrative decree: It is administrative decree within the kingdom, and this administrative decree is the righteous punishment of anyone who does not possess the truth and has not changed, and there is no margin for salvation. For when each man is classified according to kind, the good will be

rewarded and the evil will be punished. It is when the destination of man will be made clear; it is the time that the work of salvation will come to an end, after which, the work of saving man will no longer be done, and retribution will be brought upon every one of those who commit evil.

Excerpted from “The Experiences of Peter: His Knowledge of Chastisement and Judgment” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

3. What harm and consequences will ensue if notions and imaginings remain unresolved?

Relevant Words of God:

People’s notions may have no effect on what they eat or how they sleep, and they may not impact their normal human lives, but they do exist in people’s minds and in their thoughts, they cling to people like a shadow, following them around all the time. Unless you constantly remove them, they will constantly control your behavior and thinking, they will control your judgment, they will control your knowledge of God, and they will control your relationship with God. Notions are a major problem. People having notions about God is like a wall standing between them and God, one that stops them from seeing the true face of God, that stops them from seeing the true disposition and true essence of God—for people live among their notions, and among their imaginings, and they use their notions to determine whether God is right or wrong, and to measure, condemn, and judge all that God does. What kind of state are people often plunged into by doing this? Can people truly submit to God when they live among their notions? Can they have true faith in God? No, they cannot. Even when they do submit a little, it is according to their own notions and imaginings. As soon as someone submits according to their notions and imaginings, it becomes tainted with personal things that are of Satan and the outside world, and that are at odds with the truth. The problem of people’s notions about God is a serious one; it is a major issue between man and God that urgently needs to be resolved. Everyone who comes before God brings notions, they bring all manner of suspicions about God. So, too, can it be said that they bring myriad misunderstandings about God in the face of all that God bestows upon them, in the face of His arrangements and orchestrations. And what

kind of relationship with God are they then faced with? People constantly misunderstand God, they are constantly suspicious of God, and they constantly use their own standards to measure whether God is right or wrong, to measure each of His words and work. What is this behavior? They are rebelling against, opposing, condemning, blaspheming against, passing judgment on, competing with—and, in more serious cases, “dueling” with—God. At the most grievous extent, people’s notions render them incapable of accepting the true God Himself, of accepting and obeying the truth, and so they are liable to deny the existence of God and forsake the God they follow. This is a frightening problem.

Excerpted from “Only by Resolving One’s Notions Can One Enter the Right Track of Believing in God (1)” in
Records of Christ’s Talks

Know that you oppose God’s work, or use your own notions to measure the work of today, because you do not know the principles of God’s work, and because you do not take the work of the Holy Spirit seriously enough. Your opposition to God and obstruction of the work of the Holy Spirit is caused by your notions and inherent arrogance. It is not because God’s work is wrong, but because you are naturally too disobedient. After finding their belief in God, some people cannot even say with certainty where man came from, yet they dare to make public speeches appraising the rights and wrongs of the Holy Spirit’s work. They even lecture the apostles who have the Holy Spirit’s new work, passing comment and speaking out of turn; their humanity is too low, and there is not the slightest sense in them. Will the day not come when such people are rejected by the work of the Holy Spirit, and burned by the fires of hell? They do not know the work of God, but instead criticize His work, and also try to instruct God how to work. How can such unreasonable people know God? Man comes to know God during the process of seeking and experiencing; it is not through criticizing at whim that man comes to know God through the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit. The more accurate people’s knowledge of God becomes, the less they oppose Him. In contrast, the less people know of God, the more likely they are to oppose Him. Your notions, your old nature, and your humanity, character and moral outlook are the “capital” with which you resist God, and the more corrupt, degraded and low you become, the more you are the enemy of God. Those who are possessed of strong notions and who have a self-righteous disposition are even more in enmity of God incarnate; such

people are the antichrists. If your notions are not rectified, then they will always be against God; you will never be compatible with God, and will always be apart from Him.

... Man thinks that his notions are right and without error, and he thinks that these notions come from God. Today, when man witnesses the work of God, he lets loose notions that have built up over many years. The imaginings and ideas of the past have become an obstruction to the work of this stage, and it has become difficult for man to let go of such notions and to refute such ideas. The notions toward this step-by-step work of many of those who have followed God until today have become ever more grievous, and these people have gradually formed a stubborn enmity to the God incarnate. The source of this hatred lies in the notions and imaginings of man. The notions and imaginings of man have become the enemy of the work of today, work which is at odds with the notions of man. This has happened precisely because facts do not allow man to give free rein to his imagination, and, moreover, cannot be easily refuted by man, and the notions and imaginings of man do not brook the existence of facts, and, furthermore, because man does not give thought to the correctness and veracity of facts, and merely single-mindedly lets loose his notions and employs his own imagination. This can only be said to be the fault of the notions of man, and cannot be said to be a fault of the work of God. Man may imagine whatever he wishes, but he may not freely dispute any stage of God's work or any bit of it; the fact of God's work is inviolable by man.

Excerpted from "Knowing the Three Stages of God's Work Is the Path to Knowing God" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

If you use your own notions to measure and delimit God, as if God were an unchanging statue of clay, and if you completely delimit God within the parameters of the Bible and contain Him within a limited scope of work, then this proves that you have condemned God. Because the Jews in the age of the Old Testament took God to be an idol of fixed form that they held in their hearts, as if God could only be called the Messiah, and only He who was called the Messiah could be God, and because humanity served and worshiped God as if He were a (lifeless) clay statue, they nailed the Jesus of that time to the cross, sentencing Him to death—the guiltless Jesus was thus condemned to death. God was innocent of any offense, yet man refused to spare Him, and insisted on sentencing Him to death, and so Jesus was crucified. Man always believes that God is unchanging, and defines Him on the basis of one single book, the Bible, as though

man has a perfect understanding of God's management, as though man holds all that God does in the palm of his hand. People are absurd in the extreme, arrogant in the extreme, and they all have a flair for hyperbole. No matter how great your knowledge of God, I still say that you do not know God, that you are someone who opposes God the most, and that you have condemned God, because you are utterly incapable of obeying the work of God and walking the path of being made perfect by God. Why is God never satisfied with the actions of man? Because man does not know God, because he has too many notions, and because his knowledge of God in no way agrees with reality, but instead monotonously repeats the same theme without variation and uses the same approach for every situation. And so, having come to earth today, God is once more nailed to the cross by man.

Excerpted from "The Wicked Will Surely Be Punished" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

If people's notions and imaginings are not addressed, it becomes easy for them to do things that cause interruptions and interference. In more serious cases, people's notions can produce in them all manner of resistance to the incarnation of God, which makes you question Christ and become unable to accept Him, whilst also affecting your acceptance of the truth and entry into truth reality. In even more serious cases, people's various notions about the work of God cause them to deny the work of God, the ways in which God works, and the sovereignty and arrangements of God—in which case they have no hope of salvation whatsoever. No matter which aspect of God people have notions about, behind these notions lurk corrupt dispositions, which can cause these corrupt dispositions to become worse, giving people even more of a pretext to approach the work of God, God Himself, and the disposition of God using their own corrupt dispositions. And does this not encourage them to resist God with their corrupt dispositions? This is the consequence of notions for man.

Excerpted from "Only by Resolving One's Notions Can One Enter the Right Track of Believing in God (1)" in

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That man cannot obey God is because he is possessed by what came before. The things that came before have given people all manner of notions and imaginings about God, and these have become the image of God in their minds. Thus, what they believe in are their own notions, and the standards of their own imagination. If you measure the God who does actual work today

against the God of your own imagination, then your faith comes from Satan, and is tainted by your own preferences—God does not want this kind of faith. Regardless of how lofty their credentials, and regardless of their dedication—even if they have devoted a lifetime of efforts to His work, and have martyred themselves—God does not approve of anyone with faith such as this. He merely bestows upon them a little grace and allows them to enjoy it for a time. People such as this are incapable of putting the truth into practice. The Holy Spirit does not work within them, and God will eliminate each of them in turn.

Excerpted from “In Your Faith in God You Should Obey God” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

When God becomes flesh and comes to work among men, all behold Him and hear His words, and all see the deeds that God works from within His body of flesh. At that moment, all man’s notions become foam. As for those who have seen God appearing in the flesh, they shall not be condemned if they willingly obey Him, whereas those who purposefully stand against Him shall be deemed an opponent of God. Such people are antichrists, enemies who willfully stand against God. Those who harbor notions regarding God but are still ready and willing to obey Him will not be condemned. God condemns man on the basis of man’s intentions and actions, never for his thoughts and ideas. If He were to condemn man on the basis of his thoughts and ideas, then not a single person would be able to escape from the wrathful hands of God. Those who willfully stand against the incarnate God shall be punished for their disobedience. With regard to these people that willfully stand against God, their opposition stems from the fact that they harbor notions about God, which leads them in turn into actions that disrupt God’s work. These people intentionally resist and destroy the work of God. They do not merely have notions about God, but they also engage in activities that disrupt His work, and for this reason people of this kind shall be condemned. Those who do not willfully disrupt God’s work shall not be condemned as sinners, because they are able to willingly obey and not engage in activities that cause disruption and disturbance. People like this shall not be condemned. However, when people have experienced God’s work for many years, if they continue to harbor notions about God and remain unable to know the work of the incarnate God, and if, no matter how many years they have experienced His work, they continue to be filled with notions about God and are still unable to come to know Him, then even if they do not engage in disruptive activities, their hearts are nevertheless filled with many notions about God, and even if these

notions do not become apparent, people like this are of no help whatsoever to the work of God. They are unable to spread the gospel for God or stand witness to Him. People like this are good-for-nothings and imbeciles. Because they do not know God and are moreover wholly incapable of casting away their notions about Him, they are therefore condemned. It can be said like this: It is normal for novices in the faith to hold notions about God or to know nothing of Him, but for one who has believed in God for many years and experienced a good deal of His work, it would not be normal for such a person to continue to hold notions, and it would be even less normal for someone like this to have no knowledge of God. It is because this is not a normal state that they are condemned. These abnormal people are all garbage; they are the ones who oppose God the most and who have enjoyed the grace of God for nothing. All such people shall be eliminated in the end!

Excerpted from “All People Who Do Not Know God Are People Who Oppose God” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

4. How does one resolve their notions and imaginings about God?

Relevant Words of God:

People’s notions must be resolved using the truth; they cannot be simply put aside with a man-made solution—it is not that easy. People have no commitment to righteous matters, but are liable to cling to notions or heretical and absurd things, which they find hard to put aside. What is the cause of this? It is because they have satanic corrupt dispositions. Whether people’s notions are large or small, serious or not, if they do not have a corrupt disposition, these notions are easy to solve. Notions, at the end of the day, are just a way of thinking. But because of people’s corrupt dispositions, such as hardness, wickedness and arrogance, notions become a fuse which causes people to resist, misinterpret, and even pass judgment on God. They might not say it, but their behavior shows that they resist and do not accept your perspective. Governed by a corrupt disposition, they cling to their notions—this is caused by their disposition. And so, as notions are solved, so too are people’s corrupt dispositions. If people’s corrupt dispositions are solved, then many of their immature, childish thoughts—even the notions that have already taken shape—are not an issue for them; they are just thoughts, and

do not affect the performance of your duty, or your obedience to God. Notions and corrupt dispositions are connected. Sometimes a notion is in your heart, but it does not direct your actions. When it does not infringe upon your immediate interests, you ignore it. Ignoring it, however, does not mean there is not a corrupt disposition within your notion, and when something happens that is in conflict with your notions, you cling to them with a certain attitude, an attitude dominated by your disposition. This disposition could be hardness, it could be arrogance, and it could be viciousness; you shoot your mouth off to God, saying, “My point of view has been academically ratified many times. People have held such views for thousands of years, so why shouldn’t I? If You are not right, how can You still say it is the truth, and above all else? My perspective is the highest of all mankind!” One notion can lead to you behaving like this, to such bluster. What causes this? It is caused by corrupt dispositions. The relationship between notions and people’s corrupt dispositions is great, and their notions must be resolved. Once people’s notions about faith in God have been addressed, it becomes easy for them to submit to the work arrangements of the house of God, and so they perform their duty more smoothly, they are not side-tracked, they do not meddle or interrupt, and they do not do anything that brings shame upon God.

Excerpted from “Only by Resolving One’s Notions Can One Enter the Right Track of Believing in God (1)” in
Records of Christ’s Talks

I say all these words to you today so that you may know, so that this knowledge may lead you to a newer, accurate knowledge; I also say these words in order to eradicate the old notions and the old way of knowing in you, so that you may possess new knowledge. If you truly eat and drink My words, then your knowledge will change considerably. As long as you eat and drink God’s words with a heart of obedience, then your perspective will be reversed. As long as you are able to accept the repeated chastisements, your old mentality will gradually change. As long as your old mentality is thoroughly replaced with the new, your practice will also change accordingly. In this way, your service will become increasingly on-target, increasingly able to fulfill God’s will. If you can change your life, your knowledge of human life, and your many notions about God, then your naturalness will gradually diminish. This, and nothing short of this, is the effect when God conquers people, it is the change that occurs in people.

Excerpted from “The Inside Truth of the Work of Conquest (3)” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

When people give rise to misunderstandings and notions about God, they first must acknowledge that God is the truth and that people do not have the truth, and it is certainly they who are mistaken. Is this a kind of formality? If you only adopt this practice as a formality, superficially, then can you come to know your own mistakes? Never. It takes several steps. First, you must determine whether your actions are in line with principles. Do not look at your intents at first; there are times when your intents are correct but the principles you practice are wrong. Why do I say the principles you practice are wrong? You may have sought, but perhaps you have no understanding at all of what principles are; perhaps you have not sought at all, and have based your actions solely on your good intentions and enthusiasm, and on your imagination and experience, and you have therefore made a mistake. Can you imagine that? When you fail to anticipate something, you make a mistake—and have you not then been exposed? Once you are exposed, if you keep competing with God, then how are you mistaken? Your greatest mistake was not that you did something wrong and violated the principles, thereby causing a loss or other consequences, but that, having done something wrong, you yet persist and cannot acknowledge your error; you still resisted God with your notions and imaginings, denying that His work was right. This was your greatest and most serious mistake. Why would such a state in a person be one of resistance to God? Whether or not people recognize that everything God does and His sovereignty are right, and what their significance is, if they cannot first recognize that they themselves are wrong, then their state is one of resistance against God. What is to be done to rectify this state? Seeking God's will, as has been mentioned, is not so practical for people. Some say, "If seeking isn't so practical, then does that mean it isn't necessary, and that there's no need to seek what can be sought and understood? I can just skip that step." Will this do? Is one who acts in this manner not beyond saving? Such people are really skewed and erroneous in their interpretations. Seeking God's will is a somewhat roundabout task for people; if they wish to take a more realistic shortcut, then they should start by denying themselves, setting themselves aside, knowing that their actions are wrong and not in line with the truth, and then seeking the truth principle. These are the steps. They may seem simple, yet putting them into practice presents many difficulties, for humans have corrupt dispositions as well as all manner of imaginings, all manner of demands, and they have desires, as well, all of which

interfere with people denying themselves and setting themselves down. These are not easy things to do.

Excerpted from “Only by Resolving One’s Notions Can One Enter the Right Track of Believing in God (3)”

in Records of Christ’s Talks

When something happens to you that has no bearing on your notions, you are able to carry on eating and drinking the words of God and performing your duty as normal. But when something happens that conflicts with your notions, and goes beyond them, and that causes contradictions to arise, how do you resolve them? Do you give free rein to your notions and let them run their course, or do you deal with them, try to contain them, and forsake them? There are some people who have notions when they encounter an issue, who not only do not put them aside, but seek out others to spread them to. They look for a chance to give vent to these notions, so that others can have these notions, too. Some try to justify themselves: “You say that everything God does has meaning, but as far as I can tell, there is no meaning in what happened. This is at odds with the truth, and when I encounter things that are at odds with the truth, I have to say something, I have to stand up for righteousness!” Is such behavior appropriate? What should you do to follow the right path? There are some people with notions who think things over and realize that their relationship with God is not normal, that misunderstandings about God have arisen within them, and their having such notions is a serious problem. They think that, if their notions are not solved, they could be in a lot of danger, and they may become liable to resist, doubt, and even turn their back on God. They therefore pray to God, and put aside their notions. First they refute their own fallacious viewpoints, and then they seek the truth. As a result, as time goes by, though they may not have fully dissected their notions, or completely put them aside and resolved them, the truth directs their thoughts and behavior from within, and it also guides them in their performance of their duty, so their duty is not affected. It may be that a day comes when something happens to them and their notions are resolved. Is this not the correct way to practice? Some people may be somewhat disgruntled with an arrangement God has made for them, or with something God has done, which engenders notions in them, and they subsequently become apathetic about performing their duty, and do not perform it properly. They constantly exist in a kind of negative state, with resistance, dissatisfaction, and resentment in their hearts. Is such behavior correct? Are such

things easy to solve? Say, for example, you think yourself very smart, and then I say you are foolish and do not understand spiritual matters. Hearing this makes you angry and antagonistic: “No one would dare say I do not understand spiritual matters. Today is the first time I’ve heard that. I cannot accept these words. Could I lead the church if I did not understand spiritual matters? Could I do such great work?” A conflict arises, yes? So what should be done? Is it easy for people to reflect on themselves when such things happen to them? What kind of people are able to reflect on themselves? People who accept and seek the truth. First, you must refute yourself. Even if you lack an accurate knowledge of yourself, and cannot sense whether you are right or wrong, or you have some degree of ignorance, as soon as you hear God say that you are foolish and do not understand spiritual matters, though you are not aware of it yourself, this is God’s definition regarding your nature essence—you must embrace these words as the truth, and apply them to yourself, even if you think differently. Afterward, while working and interacting with others, through comparing yourself with them, you see that not only do you not understand spiritual matters, but you are also very ignorant. Having discovered that you have a serious problem, are you not able to completely accept what God said? You must accept these words. First accept them as a rule, a definition, or a concept, and then think of a way to apply it to yourself in your actual life, think of a means to know and experience it. As time goes on, you will come to have the correct evaluation of yourself. Will you then still have misunderstandings about God? When there is no disagreement between you and God on this matter, will you still be capable of objecting to God’s assessment of you? You will accept it and cease to disobey. If you are able to accept the truth and fully understand this matter, you will take a step forward; if you do not accept it, you will forever remain stuck where you are, and will not make any progress.

Excerpted from “Only by Resolving One’s Notions Can One Enter the Right Track of Believing in God (1)” in

Records of Christ’s Talks

God’s salvation of man is not just empty words. He expresses all these truths in order to address the things of corrupt mankind that are at odds with the truth—their notions, imaginings, knowledge, philosophies, traditional culture, etc.—and, by dissecting these things, to make man understand what constitutes positive things, what constitutes negative things, which things come from God, which things come from Satan, what the truth is, and what the philosophies

and logic of Satan are. When people are able to see these things for what they really are, they will naturally choose to pursue the correct path of life, and they are able to practice the truth, to do as God asks, and discern negative things. This is what God asks of man, and so, too, is it the standard by which He perfects and saves people. Some people say, “God dissects man’s notions, but I have no notions. People who have notions are usually wily old foxes, or else theologians and hypocritical Pharisees. I’m not like that.” What is the problem here? They do not know themselves. No matter what is fellowshipped to them, they are incapable of applying it to themselves, thinking that they are not like that. This is ignorance, and they have no understanding of spiritual things. Are you able to think in this way? Today, most people do not think like that. They have heard many sermons, they sense that everyone has corruptions and notions that are passive and negative, and that there is nothing shameful in dissecting them; after dissecting them, furthermore, they believe that it will help others develop discernment, and they themselves will grow, and be able to understand the truth more quickly. For this reason they are all able to openly dissect themselves. Well, in that case, what is the aim of dissecting notions? It is to put aside these notions, to address misunderstandings between man and God, and then enable people to focus on what God asks of man, to know how to enter onto the path of salvation, and to know what to do to practice the truth. Ultimately, by continually practicing in this way, the intended effect is achieved: On the one hand, people will come to understand the will of God and become able to submit to God, and on the other, they will have the immunity to reject and resist many negative things, such as wicked notions and imaginings, and things that arise from knowledge. When faced with a religious intellectual, a theologian, or a religious pastor or elder, you can see through them as soon as you start to talk with them, and are able to use the truth to refute their myriad notions, imaginings, heresies, and fallacies. This shows that you are able to identify negative things, that you have understood some truths, that you are possessed of a certain stature, and so are not intimidated when faced with these religious leaders and figures. The knowledge, the learning, and the philosophies they talk about—even all of their ideologies and theories—are untenable, for you have seen through the letters and doctrine, the notions and imaginings, of religion, and the things of religion can deceive you no longer. But you are not there yet. When you encounter these religious fraudsters and Pharisees, or anyone with a little status, you are intimidated; you know what they are saying is wrong, that it consists of notions and imaginings, born of knowledge, but you do not know

how to repudiate it, you do not know from where to start dissecting it, or which words to expose these people with. Does this not show that you still have not understood the truth? So you must equip yourselves with the truth and learn to dissect yourselves. When you have understood the truth, you will be able to see through other people, but if you do not understand the truth, you will never see through them. To see through people and things, you must understand the truth; without the truth as your foundation, as your life, you will not be able to deeply penetrate anything.

When people have resolved various notions and imaginings, they have knowledge and experience of God's words, and at the same time they have also entered the reality of God's words. In the process of entering the reality of God's words, the various notions and imaginings that arise in people are resolved, one-by-one, and there is a change in people's knowledge of God's work, God's essence, and the various attitudes God has toward people. How is this change brought about? It is brought about when people put aside their various notions and imaginings, when they put aside the various ideas and perspectives that come from knowledge, philosophy, traditional culture or the outside world, and instead accept the various points of view that come from God and that are connected to the truth. And so, when people accept the words of God as their life, they also enter into the reality of God's words, and are able to regard and think about questions using the truth, and resolve issues using the truth; these are the changes that resolving notions brings to people's lives and their existence. When people achieve such changes, their relationship with God becomes one of created beings and Creator. In relationships at this level, there is no competition, no temptation, and very little rebellion; people are much more obedient, understanding, worshipful, faithful, and honest toward God, and they truly fear God. But resolving people's notions is a very painful process. People must deny themselves, they must put aside their notions, put aside the things they believe to be right, put aside the things that they cling to, put aside the things they have believed to be correct and which they have pursued and longed for their whole lives. This means that people must forsake themselves, must put aside the knowledge, philosophies—even their way of existence—that were learned from the world of Satan, and replace them with another way of living, the foundation and the root of existence of which is the truth. As such, people must endure great suffering. Such suffering may not be physical illness or the hardship and difficulties of daily life, but it may come from a change in all types of views of different things and of mankind in your

heart, or it may even come from a change in the various aspects of the knowledge you have of God, which turns upside down your knowledge and view of the world, human existence, mankind, and even God.

Excerpted from “Only by Resolving One’s Notions Can One Enter the Right Track of Believing in God (1)” in

Records of Christ’s Talks

XIV. On the Work of the Holy Spirit and the Work of Evil Spirits

1. What is the work of the Holy Spirit? What are the manifestations of the work of the Holy Spirit?

Relevant Words of God:

The work of the Holy Spirit is a form of proactive guidance and positive enlightenment. It does not allow people to be passive. It brings them solace, gives them faith and resolve, and enables them to pursue being made perfect by God. When the Holy Spirit works, people are able to enter actively; they are not passive or forced, but act at their own initiative. When the Holy Spirit works, people are glad and willing, willing to obey and happy to humble themselves. Even though they are pained and fragile inside, they have the resolve to cooperate; they suffer gladly, they are able to obey, and they are untainted by human will, untainted by the thinking of man, and certainly they are untainted by human desires and motivations. When people experience the work of the Holy Spirit, they are especially holy inside. Those who are possessed of the work of the Holy Spirit live out the love of God and the love of their brothers and sisters; they delight in the things that delight God and loathe the things that God loathes. People who are touched by the work of the Holy Spirit have normal humanity, and they constantly pursue the truth and are possessed of humanity. When the Holy Spirit works within people, their condition becomes better and better, and their humanity becomes more and more normal, and though some of their cooperation may be foolish, their motivations are right, their entry is positive, they do not try to cause disruption, and there is no malevolence within them. The work of the Holy Spirit is normal and real, the Holy Spirit works in man according to the rules of the normal life of man, and He carries out enlightenment and guidance within people according to the actual pursuit

of normal people. When the Holy Spirit works in people, He guides and enlightens them according to the needs of normal people. He provides for them according to their needs, and He positively guides and enlightens them according to what they lack, and according to their deficiencies. The Holy Spirit's work is to enlighten and guide people in real life; only if they experience God's words in their actual lives are they able to see the work of the Holy Spirit. If, in their everyday lives, people are in a positive state and have a normal spiritual life, then they are possessed of the work of the Holy Spirit. In such a state, when they eat and drink the words of God, they have faith; when they pray, they are inspired; when they come up against something, they are not passive; and as things happen, they are able to see the lessons within those things that God requires them to learn. They are not passive or weak, and although they have real difficulties, they are willing to obey all the arrangements of God.

Excerpted from "The Work of the Holy Spirit and the Work of Satan" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

When people's conditions are normal, then their spiritual lives and their lives in the flesh are normal and their reason is normal and orderly. When they are in this condition, what they experience and come to know within themselves can generally be said to come from being touched by the Holy Spirit (having insights or possessing some simple knowledge when they eat and drink the words of God, or being faithful in some things, or having the strength to love God in some things—this all comes from the Holy Spirit). The Holy Spirit's work in man is especially normal; man is incapable of feeling it, and it seems to come through man himself, although it is in fact the work of the Holy Spirit. In daily life, the Holy Spirit does work both great and small in everyone, and it is just the extent of this work that varies. Some people are of good caliber, and they understand things quickly, and the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit is especially great within them. Meanwhile, some people are of poor caliber, and it takes them longer to understand things, but the Holy Spirit touches them inside and they, too, are able to achieve faithfulness to God—the Holy Spirit works in all those who pursue God. When, in daily life, people do not oppose or rebel against God, do not do things that are at odds with the management of God and do not interfere with the work of God, then in each one of them the Spirit of God works to a greater or lesser extent; He touches them, enlightens them, gives them faith, gives them strength, and moves them to enter proactively, not being lazy or coveting the

enjoyments of the flesh, willing to practice the truth, and longing for the words of God. All of this is work that comes from the Holy Spirit.

Excerpted from “The Work of the Holy Spirit and the Work of Satan” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

When the Holy Spirit works to enlighten people, He generally gives them knowledge of God’s work, and of their true entry and true state. He also allows them to understand God’s urgent intentions and His requirements for man today, so that they have the resolve to sacrifice everything to satisfy God, love God even if they meet with persecution and adversity, and stand witness for God even if it means shedding their blood or giving their life, and do so without regret. If you have this kind of resolve, it means you have the stirrings and work of the Holy Spirit—but know that you are not possessed of such stirrings at every passing moment. Sometimes at meetings when you pray and eat and drink God’s words, you can feel extremely moved and inspired. It feels so new and fresh when others share some fellowship on their experience and understanding of God’s words, and your heart is perfectly clear and bright. This is all the work of the Holy Spirit. If you are a leader and the Holy Spirit gives you exceptional enlightenment and illumination when you go down to the church to work, gives you insight into the problems that exist within the church, allows you to know how to share fellowship on the truth to resolve them, makes you incredibly earnest, responsible and serious in your work, all of this is the work of the Holy Spirit.

Excerpted from “Practice (1)” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

Sometimes, when you are enjoying the words of God, your spirit is touched, and you feel that you cannot help but love God, that there is great strength within you, and that there is nothing that you cannot put aside. If you feel like this, then you have been touched by the Spirit of God, and your heart has wholly turned to God, and you will pray to God and say: “O God! We truly have been predestined and chosen by You. Your glory gives me pride, and it feels glorious for me to be one of Your people. I will expend anything and give anything to do Your will, and will devote all my years, and an entire lifetime of efforts, to You.” When you pray like this, there will be unending love and true obedience toward God in your heart. Have you ever had such an experience as this? If people are often touched by the Spirit of God, then they are especially willing to devote themselves to God in their prayers: “O God! I wish to behold Your day of glory,

and I wish to live for You—nothing is more worthy or meaningful than to live for You, and I have not the slightest desire to live for Satan and the flesh. You raise me up by enabling me to live for You today.” When you have prayed in this way, you will feel that you cannot help but give your heart to God, that you must gain God, and that you would hate to die without having gained God while you are alive. Having spoken such a prayer, there will be an inexhaustible strength within you, and you will not know from where it comes; in your heart there will be limitless power, and you will have a sense that God is so lovely, and that He is worth loving. This is when you will have been touched by God. All those who have had such an experience have been touched by God. For those who are often touched by God, changes occur in their lives, they are able to make their resolution and are willing to completely gain God, the love for God in their hearts is stronger, their hearts have completely turned to God, they hold no regard for family, the world, entanglements, or their future, and they are willing to devote a lifetime of efforts to God. All those who have been touched by the Spirit of God are people who pursue the truth, and who have hope of being made perfect by God.

Excerpted from “Know God’s Newest Work and Follow His Footsteps” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

When people’s state is not normal, they are forsaken by the Holy Spirit; in their minds they are prone to complaining, their motivations are wrong, they are lazy, they indulge in the flesh, and their hearts rebel against the truth. All of this comes from Satan. When people’s conditions are not normal, when they are dark inside and have lost their normal reason, have been forsaken by the Holy Spirit, and are unable to feel God within themselves, this is when Satan is working within them. If people always have strength within them and always love God, then generally, when things happen to them, those things come from the Holy Spirit, and whomever they meet, the meeting is the result of the arrangements of God. This is to say that when you are in a normal condition, when you are within the great work of the Holy Spirit, then it is impossible for Satan to make you waver. Upon this foundation it can be said that everything comes from the Holy Spirit, and although you may have incorrect thoughts, you are able to renounce them and you do not follow them. All this comes from the work of the Holy Spirit. In what situations does Satan interfere? It is easy for Satan to work within you when your conditions are not normal, when you have not been touched by God and are without the work of God, when you are dry and barren inside, when you pray to God but grasp nothing, and when you eat and drink the

words of God but are not enlightened or illuminated. In other words, when you have been abandoned by the Holy Spirit and you cannot feel God, then many things happen to you that come from the temptation of Satan. As the Holy Spirit works, Satan also is working all the while. The Holy Spirit touches the inside of man, while at the same time Satan interferes in man. However, the work of the Holy Spirit takes the leading position, and people whose conditions are normal can triumph; this is the triumph of the work of the Holy Spirit over the work of Satan. While the Holy Spirit works, a corrupt disposition still exists within people; however, during the Holy Spirit's work, it is easy for people to discover and recognize their rebelliousness, motivations, and adulterations. Only then do people feel remorse and grow willing to repent. As such, their rebellious and corrupt dispositions are gradually cast away within God's work. The work of the Holy Spirit is especially normal; as He works in people, they still have troubles, they still weep, they still suffer, they are still weak and there is still much that is unclear to them, yet in this state they are able to stop themselves from regressing, and they can love God, and although they weep and are distressed, they are still able to praise God; the work of the Holy Spirit is especially normal, not the slightest bit supernatural. Most people believe that, as soon as the Holy Spirit begins to work, changes occur in people's state and the things that are substantive to them are removed. Such beliefs are fallacious. When the Holy Spirit works within man, the passive things of man are still there and his stature remains the same, but he gains the illumination and enlightenment of the Holy Spirit and so his state becomes more proactive, the conditions within him become normal, and he changes rapidly.

Excerpted from "The Work of the Holy Spirit and the Work of Satan" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Sometimes God gives you a certain type of feeling, a feeling that causes you to lose your inner enjoyment and lose God's presence, such that you are plunged into darkness. This is a type of refinement. Whenever you do anything, it always goes awry, or you hit a wall. This is God's discipline. Sometimes, when you do something that is disobedient and rebellious toward God, nobody else may know of it—but God does. He will not let you off, and He will discipline you. The work of the Holy Spirit is very detailed. He very carefully observes people's every word and action, their every act and move, and their every thought and idea so that people can gain internal awareness of these things. You do something once and it goes awry, you do something again and it still goes awry, and gradually you will come to understand the work of the Holy

Spirit. Through many times of being disciplined, you will know what to do to be in line with God's will and what is not in line with His will. In the end, you will have accurate responses to the Holy Spirit's guidance from within you.

Excerpted from "Those Who Are to Be Made Perfect Must Undergo Refinement" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

What effects are achieved by the work of the Holy Spirit? You may be foolish, and you may be devoid of discernment, but the Holy Spirit has but to work and there will be faith in you, and you will feel always that you cannot love God enough. You will be willing to cooperate, no matter how great the difficulties ahead. Things will happen to you and it will not be clear to you whether they come from God or from Satan, but you will be able to wait, and you will be neither passive nor remiss. This is the normal work of the Holy Spirit. When the Holy Spirit works within you, you still encounter real difficulties: Sometimes you will be brought to tears, and sometimes there will be things that you are incapable of overcoming, but this is all just a phase of the ordinary work of the Holy Spirit. Although you did not overcome those difficulties, and although at the time you were weak and full of complaints, afterward you were still able to love God with absolute faith. Your passiveness cannot prevent you from having normal experiences, and regardless of what other people say, and how others attack you, still you are able to love God. During prayer, you always feel that in the past you were so indebted to God, and you resolve to satisfy God and renounce the flesh whenever you encounter such things again. This strength shows that the work of the Holy Spirit is within you. This is the normal state of the work of the Holy Spirit.

Excerpted from "The Work of the Holy Spirit and the Work of Satan" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The Holy Spirit has a path to walk in each person, and gives each person the opportunity to be perfected. Through your negativity you are made to know your own corruption, and then by throwing off negativity you will find a path to practice; these are all ways in which you are perfected. Further, through the continuous guidance and illumination of some positive things inside of you, you will proactively fulfill your function, grow in insight and gain discernment. When your conditions are good, you are especially willing to read the word of God, and especially willing to pray to God, and can relate the sermons you hear to your own state. At such

times God enlightens and illuminates you within, making you realize some things of the positive aspect. This is how you are perfected in the positive aspect. In negative states, you are weak and passive; you feel that you do not have God in your heart, yet God illuminates you, helping you find a path to practice. Coming out of this is attainment of perfection in the negative aspect.

Excerpted from “Only Those Who Focus on Practice Can Be Perfected” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

God does not repeat His work, He does not do work that is not realistic, He does not make excessive requirements of man, and He does not do work that is beyond the sense of man. All the work He does is within the scope of man’s normal sense, and does not exceed the sense of normal humanity, and His work is done according to man’s normal requirements. If it is the work of the Holy Spirit, people become ever more normal, and their humanity becomes ever more normal. People gain an increasing knowledge of their corrupt satanic disposition, and of the substance of man, and they also gain an ever greater longing for the truth. That is to say, the life of man grows and grows, and the corrupt disposition of man becomes more and more capable of change—all of which is the meaning of God becoming the life of man.

Excerpted from “Only Those Who Know God and His Work Can Satisfy God” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

2. Which people can obtain the work of the Holy Spirit? Which people cannot?

Relevant Words of God:

God works in those who pursue and treasure His words. The more you treasure God’s words, the more His Spirit will work in you. The more a person treasures God’s words, the greater their chance of being perfected by God. God perfects those who truly love Him, and He perfects those whose hearts are at peace before Him. To treasure all of God’s work, to treasure God’s enlightenment, to treasure God’s presence, to treasure God’s care and protection, to treasure how God’s words become your reality and provide for your life—all this accords best with God’s heart. If you treasure God’s work, that is, if you treasure all the work that He has done upon you, then He will bless you and cause all that is yours to multiply. If you do not treasure God’s words, He will not work in you, but He will only grant you paltry grace for your

faith, or bless you with scant wealth and your family with scant safety. You should strive to make God's words your reality, and be able to satisfy Him and be after His own heart; you should not merely strive to enjoy His grace. Nothing is more important for believers than to receive God's work, gain perfection, and become those who do God's will. This is the goal you should pursue.

Excerpted from "God Perfects Those Who Are After His Own Heart" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

God's work is to supply you through His words. When you obey and accept His words, the Holy Spirit shall surely work in you. The Holy Spirit works exactly as I speak; do as I have said, and the Holy Spirit will promptly work in you. I release a new light for you to behold, bringing you into the light of the present, and when you walk into this light, the Holy Spirit shall immediately work in you. There are some who may be recalcitrant, saying, "I simply will not carry out what You say." In which case, I tell you that you have now come to the end of the road; you are dried up, and have no more life. Thus, in experiencing the transformation of your disposition, nothing is more crucial than keeping pace with the present light. The Holy Spirit not only works in certain people who are used by God, but, furthermore, in the church. He could be working in anyone. He may work in you during the present time, and you will experience this work. During the next period, He may work in someone else, in which case you must haste to follow; the more closely you follow the present light, the more your life can grow. No matter what manner of person someone is, if the Holy Spirit works in them, then you must follow. Take in their experiences through your own, and you will receive even higher things. In so doing you will progress more quickly. This is the path of perfection for man and the means by which life grows.

Excerpted from "Those Who Obey God With a True Heart Shall Surely Be Gained by God" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The work of the Holy Spirit is always moving forward, and all those who are in the stream of the Holy Spirit should also be progressing deeper and changing, step-by-step. They should not stop at a single stage. Only those who do not know the work of the Holy Spirit would remain amongst His original work, and not accept the new work of the Holy Spirit. Only those who are disobedient would be incapable of gaining the Holy Spirit's work. If the practice of man does not keep pace with the new work of the Holy Spirit, then the practice of man is surely severed

from the work of today and is surely incompatible with the work of today. Such outdated people as these are simply incapable of accomplishing God's will, much less could they become people who will ultimately stand testimony to God. The entire management work, furthermore, could not be concluded amongst such a group of people. For those who once held to the law of Jehovah, and those who once suffered for the cross, if they cannot accept the stage of work of the last days, then all that they did will have been in vain, and useless. The clearest expression of the Holy Spirit's work is in embracing the here and now, not clinging to the past. Those who have not kept up with the work of today, and who have become separated from the practice of today, are those who oppose and do not accept the work of the Holy Spirit. Such people defy the present work of God. ... Those who are outside the stream of the Holy Spirit always think they are right, but in fact, God's work in them ceased long ago, and the work of the Holy Spirit is absent from them. The work of God was long since transferred to another group of people, a group on whom He intends to complete His new work. Because those in religion are incapable of accepting God's new work, and hold only to the old work of the past, thus God has forsaken these people, and does His new work on the people who accept this new work. These are people who cooperate in His new work, and only in this way can His management be accomplished. The management of God is always moving forward, and the practice of man is always ascending higher. God is always working, and man is always in need, such that both reach their zenith and God and man achieve complete union. This is the expression of the accomplishment of God's work, and it is the final outcome of God's entire management.

... All those who are within the stream of the Holy Spirit are possessed of the presence and discipline of the Holy Spirit, and those who are not within the stream of the Holy Spirit are under the command of Satan, and without any of the work of the Holy Spirit. People who are in the stream of the Holy Spirit are those who accept the new work of God, and who cooperate in the new work of God. If those who are within this stream are incapable of cooperating, and unable to put into practice the truth required by God during this time, then they will be disciplined, and at worst will be forsaken by the Holy Spirit. Those who accept the new work of the Holy Spirit, will live within the stream of the Holy Spirit, and they will receive the care and protection of the Holy Spirit. Those who are willing to put the truth into practice are enlightened by the Holy Spirit, and those who are unwilling to put the truth into practice are disciplined by the Holy Spirit, and may even be punished. Regardless of what kind of person they are, provided

that they are within the stream of the Holy Spirit, God will take responsibility for all those who accept His new work for the sake of His name. Those who glorify His name and are willing to put His words into practice will receive His blessings; those who disobey Him and do not put His words into practice will receive His punishment.

Excerpted from “God’s Work and Man’s Practice” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

God having spoken so much, you should do your utmost to eat and drink His words, and then, without you realizing it, you will come to understand, and without you realizing it, the Holy Spirit will enlighten you. When the Holy Spirit enlightens man, it is often without man’s awareness. He enlightens and guides you when you thirst and seek. The principle by which the Holy Spirit works is centered around the words of God that you eat and drink. All those who place no importance on the words of God and are always of a different attitude toward His words—believing, in their befuddled thinking, it a matter of indifference whether they read His words or not—are those who do not possess reality. Neither the Holy Spirit’s work nor His enlightenment can be seen in such a person. People like this are merely coasting along, pretenders without true qualifications, like Mr. Nanguo of the parable.^[a]

Excerpted from “The Age of Kingdom Is the Age of Word” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

What kind of person does the Holy Spirit enlighten? Those who are of keen and subtle intellect. When they are given a feeling or an enlightenment, they can sense that this is the work of the Holy Spirit, and that it is God doing it. Sometimes, they can tell as soon as they are being reproached by the Holy Spirit, and so they rein themselves in. These are the people whom the Holy Spirit enlightens. If someone is careless and does not understand spiritual things, they will not realize when they are being given a feeling. They are heedless of the work of the Holy Spirit, and so the Holy Spirit will not try to enlighten them again. If they remain unreceptive even after three or four attempts, the Holy Spirit will no longer work on them. Why is it that some people feel dark, depressed, deflated, bereft of the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit within themselves the further they go? There is nothing but lifeless things, lifeless doctrines, within them, so how could they possibly feel energized? People do not last for long by only relying on their enthusiasm. You must understand the truth to have strength. Therefore, in your faith in God, you must be of subtle intellect, you must take God’s words seriously, and focus on knowing

yourself. You must understand the will of God through understanding the truth, through knowing and experiencing; only then will you gain the work of the Holy Spirit. The work of the Holy Spirit is extraordinarily practical. Some people have the capability to understand the truth, yet they have no personal experience of the work of the Holy Spirit. Going forward, you must focus on the subtlest of feelings, and the subtlest of light. Each time something happens to you, you should observe it and approach it from the perspective of the truth, and in so doing, you will gradually set foot upon the right track.

Excerpted from "See All Things Through the Eyes of Truth" in Records of Christ's Talks

If in people's belief in God, they do not give their heart to Him and if their heart is not in Him and they do not treat His burden as their own, then everything they do is an act of cheating God, an act typical of religious people, and cannot receive God's praise. God cannot gain anything from this kind of person; this kind of person can only serve as a foil to God's work, like a decoration in the house of God, something superfluous and useless. God does not make use of this kind of person. In such a person, not only is there no opportunity for the work of the Holy Spirit, there is not even any value in their being perfected. This type of person is, in truth, a walking corpse. Such people have nothing that can be used by the Holy Spirit, but on the contrary, all of them have been appropriated and deeply corrupted by Satan. God will weed these people out. Currently, in making use of people the Holy Spirit not only employs those parts of them that are desirable in order to get things done, He also perfects and changes their undesirable parts. If your heart can be poured into God and remain quiet before Him, then you will have the opportunity and the qualifications to be used by the Holy Spirit, to receive the enlightenment and illumination of the Holy Spirit, and even more, you will have the opportunity for the Holy Spirit to make good your shortcomings. When you give your heart to God, on the positive side, you can attain deeper entry and attain a higher plane of insight; on the negative side, you will have more understanding of your own faults and shortcomings, you will be more eager to seek to satisfy God's will, and you will not be passive, but will actively enter in. Thus, you will become a correct person. Assuming your heart is able to remain quiet before God, the key to whether or not you receive praise from the Holy Spirit, and whether or not you please God, is whether you can actively enter in. When the Holy Spirit enlightens a person and makes use of them, it never makes them negative but always makes them actively

progress. Even though this person has weaknesses, they can avoid basing the way they live their lives on those weaknesses. They can avoid delaying growth in their life, and continue to seek to satisfy God's will. This is a standard. If you can attain this, it is sufficient proof that you have obtained the presence of the Holy Spirit. If a person is always negative, and if, even after receiving enlightenment and coming to know themselves, they remain negative and passive and unable to stand up and act in concert with God, then this type of person just receives the grace of God, but the Holy Spirit is not with them. When a person is negative, this means that their heart has not turned to God and their spirit has not been moved by God's Spirit. This should be understood by all.

Excerpted from "It Is Very Important to Establish a Normal Relationship With God" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Deep down, people harbor a few bad states—negativity, weakness, and depression or fragility; or a persistent base intent; or always being in the thrall of worrying about prestige, selfish desires, and their own benefits; or they think themselves of poor caliber and are in possession of certain negative states. When you live constantly within these states, it is very difficult for you to gain the work of the Holy Spirit. If you have difficulty gaining the Holy Spirit's work, you will contain very few positive things within you, and it will be hard for you to gain the truth. People always rely on their willpower to exercise restraint, holding back in this way and that, but they still cannot free themselves from those negative or adverse states. Part of this is due to human reasons; people cannot find a path of practice that suits them. Another reason—and this, too, is a major one—is that people always fall into these negative, sinking, degenerate states, and the Holy Spirit does not work. Even if He occasionally gives them enlightenment, He does not do major work in them. Thus, it takes people great effort to take action, and it is difficult for them to see and understand anything. It is hard for you to obtain enlightenment and illumination, and very hard to have light, because too many negative and adverse things have occupied all the space within you. If one cannot be enlightened by the Holy Spirit, and is unable to gain the work of the Holy Spirit, then one cannot leave these states or transform these negative states; the Holy Spirit does not work, and you cannot find a path forward. For both these reasons, it is difficult for you to attain a positive, normal state. Even though you can endure a lot and work hard at fulfilling your duties, and even though you have expended great

effort and are able to abandon your home and occupation, and completely let go of everything, your inner state has still not actually changed. Too many entanglements still hold you captive from practicing the truth and from entering truth reality. Various things fill the space within you: Personal notions, imaginings, knowledge, and philosophies for living, as well as negative things, selfish desires and self-interests, concerns about prestige, and disputes with others. People have nothing positive within them. Their heads are full of negative and adverse thoughts; this is a fact that no one can deny. Their hearts have been filled and occupied by satanic things. If you do not eradicate these things, if you cannot free yourself of these states, if you cannot transform into the genuine likeness of a child—innocent, lively, guileless, authentic, and pure—and come into God’s presence, and if you do not come before Him, then it will be very difficult for you to gain the truth.

Excerpted from “Give Your True Heart to God, and You Can Obtain the Truth” in Records of Christ’s Talks

The work of the Holy Spirit has its principles, and it is conditional. In what kind of person does the Holy Spirit typically work? What must a person possess to obtain the work of the Holy Spirit? In one’s faith, one must clearly understand that to obtain the work of the Holy Spirit, at the very least one must have a conscience and an honest heart, and one’s conscience must have elements of honesty. Only once you have an honest heart—as well as the conscience and reason that one’s humanity must possess—can the Holy Spirit work on you. People always say that God looks deeply into one’s heart and observes everything. However, people never know why some never gain enlightenment from the Holy Spirit, why they can never obtain grace, why they never have joy, why they are always negative and depressed, and why they are incapable of being positive. Take a look at their states. It is certain that not one of these people has a functioning conscience or an honest heart. Those who have peace and joy, who are always active and improving in the performance of their duties, who always gain something, who always have understanding, and who always get something from their efforts after a period of time—is what they gain achieved by their imagination? Are those things learned from studying books? How are they gained? Can the Holy Spirit’s work be gotten rid of? (No.) The work of the Holy Spirit is the main thing. When you possess an honest heart, and the conscience and reason that are the prerequisites of one’s humanity, God will observe you. Have you figured out a pattern of how the Holy Spirit works? The Holy Spirit usually works on those whose hearts are honest,

and He works when people get into trouble and are seeking the truth. God will not pay heed to those who have no shred of human reason or conscience. If someone is very honest but, for a period of time, his heart is turned away from God, he has no desire to improve, he falls into a negative state and does not come out of it, when he does not pray or seek the truth to resolve his state, and he does not cooperate, then the Holy Spirit will not work in him during such occasional darkening of his state or his temporary degeneration. How, then, can someone without the consciousness of humanity be worked in by the Holy Spirit? That is even more impossible. What, then, should such people do? Is there a way for them to follow? They must genuinely repent and be honest people. How can one be an honest person? First, your heart must open up to God, and you must seek truth from God; once you understand the truth, you must then practice it. You must then submit to God's arrangements and allow God to take charge of you. Only in this way will you be praised by God. You must first set aside your own prestige and vanity, and forgo your own interests. Try to set them aside first of all, and once you have set them aside, put your entire body and soul into your duty and into the work of testifying for God, and then see how God guides you, see whether peace and joy arise within you, whether you have this confirmation. You must first genuinely repent, surrender yourself, open your heart to God, and set aside the things that you treasure. If you continue to hold on to them while making requests of God, will you be able to gain the work of the Holy Spirit? The work of the Holy Spirit is conditional, and God is a God who hates evil and who is holy. If people always hold on to these things, constantly closing themselves off to God and rejecting God's work and guidance, then God will stop working on them. It is not that God must work within every person, or that He will force you to do this or that. He does not coerce you. The work of evil spirits is to force humans to do this and that, and even to possess and control people. The Holy Spirit works especially gently; He moves you, and you do not feel it. You simply feel as though you have unconsciously come to understand or realize something. This is how the Holy Spirit moves people, and, if they submit, they will find themselves able to truly repent.

Excerpted from "Give Your True Heart to God, and You Can Obtain the Truth" in Records of Christ's Talks

Footnotes:

a. The original text does not contain the phrase "of the parable."

3. How can one obtain the work of the Holy Spirit?

Relevant Words of God:

Right now, the path taken by the Holy Spirit is the current words of God. As such, if people are to set foot upon the path of the Holy Spirit, they must obey, and eat and drink, the current words of God incarnate. The work He does is the work of words; everything begins from His words, and all is built upon His words, upon His current words. Whether being certain about the incarnate God, or knowing the incarnate God, each requires spending more effort on His words. If not, people can accomplish nothing and will be left with nothing. Only by building upon the foundation of eating and drinking God's words, and thereby coming to know Him and to satisfy Him, can people gradually build a normal relationship with God. For man, there is no better cooperation with God than eating and drinking His words and putting them into practice. Through such practice they are best able to stand firm in their testimony of God's people. When people understand and are able to obey the essence of God's current words, they live on the path of being guided by the Holy Spirit, and have set foot on the right track of God's perfection of man.

Excerpted from "People Whose Dispositions Have Changed Are Those Who Have Entered Into the Reality of God's Words" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

God's work is to supply you through His words. When you obey and accept His words, the Holy Spirit shall surely work in you. The Holy Spirit works exactly as I speak; do as I have said, and the Holy Spirit will promptly work in you. I release a new light for you to behold, bringing you into the light of the present, and when you walk into this light, the Holy Spirit shall immediately work in you. There are some who may be recalcitrant, saying, "I simply will not carry out what You say." In which case, I tell you that you have now come to the end of the road; you are dried up, and have no more life. Thus, in experiencing the transformation of your disposition, nothing is more crucial than keeping pace with the present light. The Holy Spirit not only works in certain people who are used by God, but, furthermore, in the church. He could be working in anyone. He may work in you during the present time, and you will experience this work. During the next period, He may work in someone else, in which case you must haste

to follow; the more closely you follow the present light, the more your life can grow. No matter what manner of person someone is, if the Holy Spirit works in them, then you must follow. Take in their experiences through your own, and you will receive even higher things. In so doing you will progress more quickly. This is the path of perfection for man and the means by which life grows.

Excerpted from “Those Who Obey God With a True Heart Shall Surely Be Gained by God” in The Word
Appears in the Flesh

God works in those who pursue and treasure His words. The more you treasure God’s words, the more His Spirit will work in you. The more a person treasures God’s words, the greater their chance of being perfected by God. God perfects those who truly love Him, and He perfects those whose hearts are at peace before Him. To treasure all of God’s work, to treasure God’s enlightenment, to treasure God’s presence, to treasure God’s care and protection, to treasure how God’s words become your reality and provide for your life—all this accords best with God’s heart. If you treasure God’s work, that is, if you treasure all the work that He has done upon you, then He will bless you and cause all that is yours to multiply. If you do not treasure God’s words, He will not work in you, but He will only grant you paltry grace for your faith, or bless you with scant wealth and your family with scant safety. You should strive to make God’s words your reality, and be able to satisfy Him and be after His own heart; you should not merely strive to enjoy His grace. Nothing is more important for believers than to receive God’s work, gain perfection, and become those who do God’s will. This is the goal you should pursue.

Excerpted from “God Perfects Those Who Are After His Own Heart” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

If you live within the words of God, then the Holy Spirit will have an opportunity to perform His work; if you live under Satan’s influence, then you will give the Holy Spirit no such opportunity. The work that the Holy Spirit performs on men, the light that He shines on them, and the confidence that He gives to them last for only a moment; if people are not careful and do not pay attention, then the work of the Holy Spirit will pass them by. If men live within the words of God, then the Holy Spirit will be with them and perform work on them. If men do not live within the words of God, then they live in Satan’s bonds. If men live with corrupt dispositions, then they do not have the presence or the work of the Holy Spirit. If you live within

the boundaries of the words of God, and if you live in the state that God requires, then you are one who belongs to Him, and His work will be performed on you; if you are not living within the boundaries of God's requirements, but living instead under the domain of Satan, then you are decidedly living within Satan's corruption. Only by living within the words of God and giving your heart to Him can you meet His requirements; you must do as God says, making His utterances the foundation of your existence and the reality of your life; only then will you belong to God. If you actually practice in accordance with God's will, He will perform work on you, and you will then live under His blessings, in the light of His countenance; you will grasp the work that the Holy Spirit performs and feel the joy of God's presence.

Excerpted from "Escape From the Influence of Darkness, and You Will Be Gained by God" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The Holy Spirit works by this principle: Through people's cooperation, through them actively praying, searching and coming closer to God, results can be achieved and they can be enlightened and illuminated by the Holy Spirit. It is not the case that the Holy Spirit acts unilaterally, or that man acts unilaterally. Both are indispensable, and the more that people cooperate, and the more they pursue the attainment of the standards of God's requirements, the greater the work of the Holy Spirit. Only people's real cooperation, added to the work of the Holy Spirit, can produce real experiences and the essential knowledge of God's words. Gradually, through experiencing in this way, a perfect person is ultimately produced. God does not do supernatural things; in people's notions, God is almighty, and everything is done by God—with the result that people wait passively, do not read the words of God or pray, and merely await the touch of the Holy Spirit. Those with a correct understanding, however, believe this: God's actions can only go as far as my cooperation, and the effect that God's work has in me depends on how I cooperate. When God speaks, I should do all I can to seek and strive toward God's words; this is what I should achieve.

Excerpted from "How to Know Reality" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

It can be seen from experience that one of the most important issues is quieting one's heart before God. This is an issue that concerns people's spiritual life, and their growth in their lives. Only if your heart is at peace before God will your pursuit of the truth and of changes in your

disposition bear fruit. Because you come before God bearing a burden, and because you always feel that you are lacking in so many ways, that there are many truths that you need to know, much reality that you need to experience, and that you should give every care to God's will—these things are always on your mind. It is as if they are pressing down on you with a force that leaves you unable to breathe, and thus you feel heavy of heart (though you are not in a negative state). Only people such as this are qualified to accept the enlightenment of God's words and to be moved by the Spirit of God. It is because of their burden, because they are heavy of heart, and, it can be said, because of the price they have paid and the torment they have suffered before God, that they receive His enlightenment and illumination. For God does not give anyone special treatment. He is always fair in His treatment of people, but He also does not give to people arbitrarily or unconditionally. This is one aspect of His righteous disposition. In real life, most people have yet to attain this realm. At the very least, their heart has yet to completely turn to God, and thus there has still not been any great change in their life disposition. This is because they only live in God's grace and have yet to gain the work of the Holy Spirit. The criteria that people must meet in order to be made use of by God are as follows: Their heart turns to God, they carry the burden of the words of God, they have a heart of yearning, and they have the resolve to seek the truth. Only people such as this can gain the work of the Holy Spirit and they frequently gain enlightenment and illumination.

Excerpted from "It Is Very Important to Establish a Normal Relationship With God" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The Holy Spirit can only work in you when you actually train, actually search, actually pray, and are willing to suffer for the sake of searching the truth. Those who do not seek the truth have nothing but letters and doctrines, and empty theory, and those who are without the truth naturally have many notions about God. People such as this long only for God to turn their fleshly body into a spiritual body so that they might ascend to the third heaven. How foolish these people are! All who say such things have no knowledge of God, or of reality; people such as this cannot possibly cooperate with God, and can only wait passively. If people are to understand the truth, and to clearly see the truth, and if, furthermore, they are to enter the truth and put it into practice, then they must actually train, actually search, and actually hunger and thirst. When you hunger and thirst, and when you actually cooperate with God, God's Spirit will

surely touch you and work within you, which will bring you more enlightenment, and give you more knowledge of reality, and be of greater help to your life.

Excerpted from “How to Know Reality” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

There is a rule to God’s perfection of people, which is that He enlightens you by using a desirable part of you so that you have a path to practice and can separate yourself from all negative states, helping your spirit attain release, and making you more able to love Him. In this way, you are able to throw off the corrupt disposition of Satan. You are artless and open, willing to know yourself and to put truth into practice. God will certainly bless you, so when you are weak and negative, He enlightens you doubly, helping you know yourself more, be more willing to repent for yourself, and be more able to practice the things that you should practice. Only in this way can your heart be peaceful and at ease. A person who ordinarily pays attention to knowing God, who pays attention to knowing himself, who pays attention to his own practice, will be able to frequently receive God’s work, as well as His guidance and enlightenment. Even though such a person may be in a negative state, he is able to turn things around immediately, whether due to the action of conscience or the enlightenment from God’s word.

Excerpted from “Only Those Who Focus on Practice Can Be Perfected” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Sometimes, when in abnormal conditions, you lose the presence of God, and become unable to feel God when you pray. It is normal to feel afraid at such times. You should immediately start searching. If you do not, God will be apart from you, and you will be without the presence of the Holy Spirit—and, moreover, the work of the Holy Spirit—for a day, two days, even a month or two months. In these situations, you become so incredibly numb and are once more taken captive by Satan, to the point where you are capable of committing all manner of act. You covet wealth, deceive your brothers and sisters, watch movies and videos, play mahjong, and even smoke and drink without discipline. Your heart has strayed far from God, you have secretly gone your own way, and you have arbitrarily passed judgment on God’s work. In some cases, people sink so low that they feel no shame or embarrassment in committing sins of a sexual nature. This kind of person has been forsaken by the Holy Spirit; in fact, the work of the Holy Spirit has long been absent in such a person. One can only see them sink ever deeper into corruption as the hands of evil stretch out ever further. In the end, they deny the existence of

this way, and are taken captive by Satan as they sin. If you discover that you only have the presence of the Holy Spirit, yet lack the work of the Holy Spirit, it is already a dangerous situation to be in. When you cannot even feel the presence of the Holy Spirit, then you are on the verge of death. If you do not repent, then you will have completely returned to Satan, and you shall be among those who are eliminated. So, when you discover that you are in a state where there is only the presence of the Holy Spirit (you do not sin, you hold yourself in check, and you do nothing in blatant resistance to God) but you lack the work of the Holy Spirit (you do not feel moved when you pray, you gain no obvious enlightenment or illumination when you eat and drink the words of God, you are indifferent about eating and drinking the words of God, there is never any growth in your life, and you have long been bereft of great illumination)—at such times, you must be more cautious. You must not indulge yourself, you must not give free rein to your own character any further. The presence of the Holy Spirit may disappear at any time. This is why such a situation is so dangerous. If you find yourself in this kind of state, try to turn things around as soon as you can. First, you should say a prayer of repentance and ask that God extend His mercy upon you once more. Pray more earnestly and, quiet your heart to eat and drink more of God's words. With this foundation, you must spend more time in prayer; redouble your efforts in singing, praying, eating and drinking God's words, and performing your duty. When you are at your weakest, your heart is most easily possessed by Satan. When that happens, your heart is taken from God and returned to Satan, whereupon you are without the presence of the Holy Spirit. At such times, it is doubly difficult to regain the work of the Holy Spirit. It is better to seek the work of the Holy Spirit while He is still with you, which will allow God to bestow more of His enlightenment upon you and not cause Him to abandon you. Praying, singing hymns, serving your function, and eating and drinking the words of God—all of this is done so that Satan has no opportunity to do its work, and so that the Holy Spirit may work within you. If you do not regain the work of the Holy Spirit in this way, if you simply wait, then regaining the work of the Holy Spirit will not be easy when you have lost the presence of the Holy Spirit, unless the Holy Spirit has particularly moved you, or especially illuminated and enlightened you. Even so, it does not just take a day or two for your state to recover; sometimes even six months may pass without any recovery. This is all because people are too easy on themselves, are incapable of experiencing things in a normal way and are thus abandoned by the Holy Spirit. Even if you do regain the work of the Holy Spirit, the present work of God still

might not be very clear to you, for you have fallen far behind in your life experience, as if you were left ten thousand miles behind. Is this not a terrible thing? I tell such people, however, that it is not too late to repent now, but that there is one condition: You must work harder, and not indulge in laziness. If other people pray five times in one day, you must pray ten times; if other people eat and drink the words of God for two hours a day, you must do so for four or six hours; and if other people listen to hymns for two hours, you must listen for half a day at the very least. Be often at peace before God and think of God's love, until you are moved, your heart returns to God, and you no longer dare stray away from God—only then will your practice bear fruit; only then will you be able to recover your previous, normal state.

Excerpted from "How to Enter Into a Normal State" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The work of the Holy Spirit has its principles, and it is conditional. In what kind of person does the Holy Spirit typically work? What must a person possess to obtain the work of the Holy Spirit? In one's faith, one must clearly understand that to obtain the work of the Holy Spirit, at the very least one must have a conscience and an honest heart, and one's conscience must have elements of honesty. Only once you have an honest heart—as well as the conscience and reason that one's humanity must possess—can the Holy Spirit work on you. People always say that God looks deeply into one's heart and observes everything. However, people never know why some never gain enlightenment from the Holy Spirit, why they can never obtain grace, why they never have joy, why they are always negative and depressed, and why they are incapable of being positive. Take a look at their states. It is certain that not one of these people has a functioning conscience or an honest heart. Those who have peace and joy, who are always active and improving in the performance of their duties, who always gain something, who always have understanding, and who always get something from their efforts after a period of time—is what they gain achieved by their imagination? Are those things learned from studying books? How are they gained? Can the Holy Spirit's work be gotten rid of? (No.) The work of the Holy Spirit is the main thing. When you possess an honest heart, and the conscience and reason that are the prerequisites of one's humanity, God will observe you. Have you figured out a pattern of how the Holy Spirit works? The Holy Spirit usually works on those whose hearts are honest, and He works when people get into trouble and are seeking the truth. God will not pay heed to those who have no shred of human reason or conscience. If someone is very honest but, for a

period of time, his heart is turned away from God, he has no desire to improve, he falls into a negative state and does not come out of it, when he does not pray or seek the truth to resolve his state, and he does not cooperate, then the Holy Spirit will not work in him during such occasional darkening of his state or his temporary degeneration. How, then, can someone without the consciousness of humanity be worked in by the Holy Spirit? That is even more impossible. What, then, should such people do? Is there a way for them to follow? They must genuinely repent and be honest people. How can one be an honest person? First, your heart must open up to God, and you must seek truth from God; once you understand the truth, you must then practice it. You must then submit to God's arrangements and allow God to take charge of you. Only in this way will you be praised by God. You must first set aside your own prestige and vanity, and forgo your own interests. Try to set them aside first of all, and once you have set them aside, put your entire body and soul into your duty and into the work of testifying for God, and then see how God guides you, see whether peace and joy arise within you, whether you have this confirmation. You must first genuinely repent, surrender yourself, open your heart to God, and set aside the things that you treasure. If you continue to hold on to them while making requests of God, will you be able to gain the work of the Holy Spirit? The work of the Holy Spirit is conditional, and God is a God who hates evil and who is holy. If people always hold on to these things, constantly closing themselves off to God and rejecting God's work and guidance, then God will stop working on them. It is not that God must work within every person, or that He will force you to do this or that. He does not coerce you. The work of evil spirits is to force humans to do this and that, and even to possess and control people. The Holy Spirit works especially gently; He moves you, and you do not feel it. You simply feel as though you have unconsciously come to understand or realize something. This is how the Holy Spirit moves people, and, if they submit, they will find themselves able to truly repent.

Excerpted from "Give Your True Heart to God, and You Can Obtain the Truth" in Records of Christ's Talks

4. What is the work of evil spirits? What are the manifestations of the work of evil spirits?

Relevant Words of God:

What is the work that comes from Satan? In the work that comes from Satan, the visions within people are vague; people are without normal humanity, the motivations behind their actions are wrong, and although they wish to love God there are always accusations within them, and these accusations and thoughts cause constant interference within them, constraining the growth of their life and stopping them from coming before God in the normal condition. This is to say, as soon as the work of Satan is within people, their hearts cannot be at peace before God. Such people do not know what to do with themselves—when they see people gathering together, they want to run away, and they are unable to close their eyes when others pray. The work of evil spirits wrecks the normal relationship between man and God, and upsets people’s previous visions or their former path of life entry; in their hearts they can never draw close to God, and things always happen that cause disruption to them and shackle them. Their hearts cannot find peace and they are left with no strength to love God and with their spirits sinking. Such are the manifestations of the work of Satan. The manifestations of the work of Satan are: being unable to stand your ground and stand witness, causing you to become someone who is at fault before God and who has no faithfulness toward God. When Satan interferes, you lose the love and loyalty toward God within you, you are stripped of a normal relationship with God, you do not pursue the truth or the improvement of yourself; you regress and become passive, you indulge yourself, you give free rein to the spread of sin and are not hateful of sin; furthermore, the interference of Satan makes you dissolute; it causes God’s touch to disappear within you and makes you complain about God and oppose Him, leading you to question God; there is even the risk that you will abandon God. All of this comes from Satan.

Excerpted from “The Work of the Holy Spirit and the Work of Satan” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

There are today some evil spirits that deceive man with supernatural things; that is nothing but imitation on their part, to deceive man through work that is not presently done by the Holy Spirit. Many people perform miracles and heal the sick and drive out demons; these are nothing but the work of the evil spirits, for the Holy Spirit no longer does such work in the present day, and all those who have imitated the work of the Holy Spirit from that time onward are evil spirits indeed. All the work carried out in Israel at that time was work of a supernatural nature, though the Holy Spirit does not now work in such a manner, and any such work now is the

imitation and disguise of Satan and its disturbance. But you cannot say that whatsoever is supernatural comes from evil spirits—this would depend on the age of God’s work.

Excerpted from “The Mystery of the Incarnation (1)” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

If, during the present day, there is to emerge a person who is able to display signs and wonders, cast out demons, heal the sick, and perform many miracles, and if this person claims that they are Jesus who has come, then this would be a counterfeit produced by evil spirits which imitate Jesus. Remember this! God does not repeat the same work. Jesus’ stage of work has already been completed, and God will never again undertake that stage of work. The work of God is irreconcilable with the notions of man; for example, the Old Testament foretold the coming of a Messiah, and the result of this prophecy was Jesus’ coming. This having already happened, it would be wrong for another Messiah to come again. Jesus has already come once, and it would be wrong if Jesus were to come again this time. There is one name for every age, and each name contains a characterization of that age. In the notions of man, God must always display signs and wonders, must always heal the sick and cast out demons, and must always be just like Jesus. Yet this time, God is not like that at all. If, during the last days, God still displayed signs and wonders, and still cast out demons and healed the sick—if He did exactly the same as Jesus—then God would be repeating the same work, and the work of Jesus would have no significance or value. Thus, God carries out one stage of work in every age. Once each stage of His work has been completed, it is soon imitated by evil spirits, and after Satan begins to follow on the heels of God, God changes to a different method. Once God has completed a stage of His work, it is imitated by evil spirits. You must be clear about this.

Excerpted from “Knowing God’s Work Today” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Some people say that the Holy Spirit is working in them at all times. This is impossible. If they were to say that the Holy Spirit is always with them, that would be realistic. If they were to say that their thinking and sense are normal at all times, that would also be realistic, and would show that the Holy Spirit is with them. If they say the Holy Spirit is always working within them, that they are enlightened by God and touched by the Holy Spirit at every moment, and gain new knowledge all the time, then this is by no means normal! It is entirely supernatural! Without a shadow of a doubt, such people are evil spirits! Even when the Spirit of God comes into the flesh,

there are times when He must eat and must rest—to say nothing of humans. Those who have been possessed by evil spirits seem to be without the weakness of the flesh. They are able to forsake and give up everything, they are free of the emotion, capable of enduring torment and do not feel the slightest fatigue, as if they have transcended the flesh. Is this not extremely supernatural? The work of evil spirits is supernatural—no human could achieve such things! Those who lack discernment are envious when they see such people: They say they have such vigor in their belief in God, have great faith, and never show the slightest sign of weakness! In fact, these are all manifestations of the work of an evil spirit. For, normal people inevitably have human weaknesses; this is the normal state of those who have the presence of the Holy Spirit.

Excerpted from “Practice (4)” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Are you able to feel your soul? Are you able to touch your soul? Are you able to sense what your soul is doing? You don't know, do you? If you are able to feel or touch such a thing, then it is another spirit inside of you doing something by force, having you do and say things. That is something outside of yourself, not inherent to you. Those with the work of the evil spirit will have a deep understanding of this.

Excerpted from “How to Understand the Relationship Between God's Flesh and Spirit” in *Records of Christ's Talks*

When people have some understanding of God, they can willingly suffer for Him and devote their lives to Him. However, Satan is still in control of the weaknesses within them, and can still cause them to suffer. Evil spirits can still work in people, interfering with them and causing them to be in a confused state of mind, to take leave of their senses, to feel ill at ease, and to be disturbed in every respect. There are things of the mind or soul in people that can still be controlled and manipulated by Satan. This is why you fall ill and become troubled, and it is possible for you to commit suicide, and at times you also feel that the world is desolate or that life has no meaning. In other words, these human sufferings are still under Satan's command; they comprise one of man's fatal weaknesses. Satan is still able to use those things that it has corrupted and trampled; they are weapons Satan can use against humanity. ... Evil spirits latch onto every opportunity to do their work; they can speak to you from within or whisper into your ear, or they can throw your thoughts and mind into disarray. They can even suppress the Holy

Spirit's touch so that you cannot feel it. After that, they begin to interfere with you by confusing your thinking and addling your brain, leaving you restless and unhinged. Such is the work that evil spirits do on people. If they cannot discern it, then they will find themselves in great danger.

Excerpted from "The Significance of God's Tasting of Worldly Suffering" in Records of Christ's Talks

Sermon and Fellowship Excerpts for Reference:

The most obvious characteristic of the work of evil spirits is that it is supernatural. The words evil spirits speak or the things they ask people to do are abnormal and illogical, and even betray the basic morals and ethics of normal humanity, and that the nature of their words and actions is such that they do nothing but deceive, disturb, and corrupt people. It makes them only capable of harming, tormenting, and devouring people, and means they are never beneficial or helpful for people. When evil spirits possess people, they feel anxious and uneasy. Some even become abnormal, while others fall into a daze, and still others find themselves incredibly anxious and appear unable to sit still. At any rate, when evil spirits possess people, those people change into something that is neither human nor demon, and lose their normal humanity and reason. This is sufficient proof that the essence of evil spirits is one of evil and ugliness, which is precisely the essence of Satan.

The main manifestations of those in whom evil spirits are working (those who are possessed by demons) are:

1. People in whom evil spirits are at work often tell others to do this and that, or tell someone something, or often speak false prophecies.
2. People in whom evil spirits are at work often speak in so-called "tongues" in prayer, in a way that no one understands, and even the speakers themselves do not understand. Some of the speakers can even "interpret these tongues" themselves.
3. People in whom evil spirits are at work are always receiving revelations with great frequency; the evil spirits send them in one direction one minute, and in another direction the next, causing these people to be in a state of constant anxiety.
4. People in whom evil spirits are at work always urgently want to do this or that, too impatient to wait and giving no consideration to whether or not conditions permit; they even run out in the middle of the night, exhibiting particularly abnormal behavior.

5. People in whom evil spirits are at work are wildly arrogant, they lack reason, and their speech all tends to be condescending and they lord it over others. They put others at a loss of what to do, and like demons, they force them to do things.

6. People in whom evil spirits are at work do not know how to fellowship about the truth, much less pay attention to God's work. They have no regard for Him and are always trying to be a law unto themselves, and are capable of committing all kinds of outrages to disturb and destroy the normal order of the church.

7. People in whom evil spirits are at work inexplicably pass themselves off as someone else, claiming to be someone's spirit or sent by someone and that people should listen to them.

8. People in whom evil spirits are at work usually have no normal sense. They cannot understand any truth at all; they absolutely do not possess any capacity for understanding, nor are they enlightened by the Holy Spirit, and their thoughts are chaotic. When understanding things, these people are exceptionally absurd.

9. People in whom evil spirits are at work pay particular focus to lecturing others while working. Everything they do and say is meant to attack, bind, and corrupt other people, and they even go as far as to break people's resolve and cause them to become negative to the point that they cannot lift themselves back up; only then will they lay off. Their actions are all about causing disturbances and disruptions, and committing all kinds of outrages. They are devils, pure and simple, who harm, toy with, and devour others, and as soon as they get their way, they feel happy. This is the primary goal of the work of evil spirits.

10. People in whom evil spirits are at work live utterly abnormal lives. There is an ominous glint to their eyes, and the words they utter are extremely gruesome, as if a demon had descended to the world. There is no order to this kind of person's daily life, they are as erratic as undomesticated beasts. They are extremely repulsive and odious to others. This is precisely how people bound by demons express themselves.

These are the ten main ways in which the work of evil spirits manifests. Any person who displays any one of these expressions is certainly one in whom evil spirits are at work. To be exact, all those who manifest any of the aforementioned expressions of the work of evil spirits, regardless of which one, are people in whom evil spirits are at work. A person in whom evil spirits are at work often hates and deliberately distances themselves from people in whom the Holy Spirit is at work and who can fellowship about the truth. Often, the better someone is, the

more they want to attack and condemn them. The more foolish someone is, the more they try to fawn upon and flatter them, and desire especially to come in contact with them. When evil spirits work, they always confuse black and white, portraying positive as negative and negative as positive. This is precisely how evil spirits act.

Excerpted from Work Arrangements

Most people can identify the work of evil spirits when it is supernatural, but struggle to do so when it is not. This requires people to equip themselves with the truth, and to use the truth to identify the myriad fallacies born of evil spirits; then it is easy to identify the true face of the work of evil spirits. In fact, all fallacies and heresies originate from evil spirits, and all of the demon kings of Satan are the incarnations of evil spirits. But are their words and actions supernatural? Not at all; outwardly, some people even appear highly rational—which is precisely what makes Satan so cunning. Thus, the most fundamental principle for identification is the use of the words of God and the truth to measure all theoretical arguments. All that does not accord with the truth is heresy and fallacy, and it all originates from evil spirits. All who dupe people and meddle with the work of God are evil spirits; all false Christs and antichrists are evil spirits; and all who do not testify to the true God, who do not exalt the true God, who do not worship the true God, who do not obey the true God, and instead testify that they are God or they want to be made into God—they are all evil spirits, no matter how great the signs and wonders they perform. God's chosen people should understand that performing signs and wonders is not a true power; only being able to express the truth and using words to perfect people and accomplish all is a true power. And so, all who fixate on signs and wonders and pursue the supernatural work of spirits are absurd, and not possessed of the truth. All who are unable to accept the truth, and invariably accept evil spirits that are able to perform signs and wonders and whose work is supernatural—these people are all evil spirits; all whose hearts brim with every manner of fallacy and heresy—they are all evil spirits; all who invariably embrace every manner of heresy and fallacy, yet are incapable of accepting the truth—they are all evil spirits; all who are forever incapable of the pure understanding of God's words, who forever pervert God's words and espouse fallacies—they are unquestionably all evil spirits; and all who are especially absurd and ridiculous are evil spirits. This is absolute. In fact, everyone has a past, they all have a spirit inside them that directs what they say and do—this is beyond question.

The spirit of Satan was in the ancient serpent, and is in the great red dragon, too; and evil spirits are within all of the demon kings that oppose God. As soon as they are held up against God's word the truth, their true colors are exposed. Some people's understanding is particularly absurd, as is their perspective on things. Can you claim their spirit is without issue? Some people are particularly partial to various heresies and fallacies, and do not accept the truth. Can you claim their spirits are without issue? Some people particularly fixate on and love pursuing supernatural things. They invariably claim that the supernatural work of evil spirits is the work of the Holy Spirit, and do not even turn back after they are tricked. Can you say their spirits are without issue? Some people have accepted the true way for several years, and have heard many sermons and fellowships, and are capable of recounting many letters and doctrines, yet they are incapable of truly understanding the essence of the truth, and there is not the slightest change in their life disposition. Can you say their spirits are without issue? In fact, the work of the Holy Spirit is absent from such people, and they lack any means of understanding the truth and entering into reality. Of this there is no doubt. So just how can the various work of evil spirits be identified? Of chief importance is identifying people's essence, for only when you can identify their essence can you tell which kind of spirit's work they are. If people are especially evil, insidious, and venomous, they unquestionably lack a human spirit; if they have a spirit, then it is an evil one. If people consistently accept and espouse all manner of fallacies, there is unquestionably some absurd—and evil—spirit inside them. The understanding of those who possess the work of the Holy Spirit is relatively pure, their humanity is relatively untainted and honest, and so the knowledge they fellowship is relatively pure, and of benefit to people. Only such people are God's chosen ones, and beloved of God's chosen ones, and those whom people are willing to engage with, and capable of being of one heart and mind with. If people are especially deceitful, insidious, and venomous, then they absolutely do not possess the work of the Holy Spirit, for God does not save those who are evil. Those predestined and chosen by God are people who love and pursue the truth. Even if they are service-doers, they are unquestionably of relatively good humanity; only people of relatively good humanity are faithful in the performance of their duty, and conscientious and reasonable in their interactions with others. In the churches, only when those who love the truth gather is there the work of the Holy Spirit, and the true life of the church. If people's words and fellowship are particularly absurd, if they lack pure understanding no matter how many sermons and fellowships they hear, and

show no signs of progress, and their humanity is especially ignoble, especially bad, and they have not changed at all, and they are abhorred and despised by others, then there is no question that they shall be eliminated by the Holy Spirit. There is no benefit to living and interacting with such people; they will only have a bad impact on you and disturb you. It can be said the humanity of all who do not love the truth is relatively deceitful, venomous, selfish, and ignoble; they believe in God only in order to be blessed, and have never known to be mindful of God's will and repay God's love and satisfy God; they lack any conscience or reason. Such people are not likely to gain the work of the Holy Spirit. It should be clear to God's chosen people that of all who are bereft of the work of the Holy Spirit, most suffer from the meddling of the work of evil spirits. People who have long been without the work of the Holy Spirit are highly dangerous, and should be guarded against. If people are forsaken by the Holy Spirit, all manner of evil spirits take the opportunity to enter them, at which time these people's conditions become ever more dire, to the extent that they fall into their old ways, and even become no different from the unbelievers. This is the devil Satan showing itself. Clearly, being able to identify different kinds of people is of the utmost importance. Only when you can identify people can you identify spirits. If you cannot identify people, then you will surely be unable to identify the various work of evil spirits.

Excerpted from Work Arrangements

5. What are the main differences between the work of the Holy Spirit and the work of evil spirits?

Relevant Words of God:

You must understand what comes from God and what comes from Satan. What comes from God gives you visions with ever greater clarity and brings you ever closer to God; you share earnest love with your brothers and sisters, you are capable of showing consideration for God's burden, and have a God-loving heart that never diminishes. There is a road ahead for you to walk. What comes from Satan causes visions to disappear with you, and causes you to lose all that you had before; you become estranged from God, you have no love for your brothers and sisters, and you have a hateful heart. You become desperate, you no longer wish to live the

church life, and your God-loving heart is no more. This is Satan's work, and is also the consequence to which the work of evil spirits leads.

Excerpted from "Chapter 22" of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh

The work of the Holy Spirit is positive progress, whereas the work of Satan is retreat, negativity, rebelliousness, resistance against God, loss of faith in God, unwillingness even to sing hymns, and being too weak to perform one's duty. Everything that stems from the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit is quite natural; it is not forced upon you. If you follow it, then you will have peace; if you do not, then you will afterward be rebuked. With the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, nothing you do will be interfered with or constrained; you will be set free, there will be a path to practice in your actions, and you will not be subject to any restraints, but be able to act upon the will of God. The work of Satan causes you interference in many things; it makes you unwilling to pray, too lazy to eat and drink the words of God, and indisposed to live the life of the church, and it estranges you from the spiritual life. The work of the Holy Spirit does not interfere with your daily life and does not interfere with your normal spiritual life.

Excerpted from "The Work of the Holy Spirit and the Work of Satan" in The Word Appears in the Flesh

The work of the Holy Spirit is a form of proactive guidance and positive enlightenment. It does not allow people to be passive. It brings them solace, gives them faith and resolve, and enables them to pursue being made perfect by God. When the Holy Spirit works, people are able to enter actively; they are not passive or forced, but act at their own initiative. When the Holy Spirit works, people are glad and willing, willing to obey and happy to humble themselves. Even though they are pained and fragile inside, they have the resolve to cooperate; they suffer gladly, they are able to obey, and they are untainted by human will, untainted by the thinking of man, and certainly they are untainted by human desires and motivations. When people experience the work of the Holy Spirit, they are especially holy inside. Those who are possessed of the work of the Holy Spirit live out the love of God and the love of their brothers and sisters; they delight in the things that delight God and loathe the things that God loathes. People who are touched by the work of the Holy Spirit have normal humanity, and they constantly pursue the truth and are possessed of humanity. When the Holy Spirit works within people, their condition becomes better and better, and their humanity becomes more and more normal, and though some of

their cooperation may be foolish, their motivations are right, their entry is positive, they do not try to cause disruption, and there is no malevolence within them. The work of the Holy Spirit is normal and real, the Holy Spirit works in man according to the rules of the normal life of man, and He carries out enlightenment and guidance within people according to the actual pursuit of normal people. When the Holy Spirit works in people, He guides and enlightens them according to the needs of normal people. He provides for them according to their needs, and He positively guides and enlightens them according to what they lack, and according to their deficiencies. The Holy Spirit's work is to enlighten and guide people in real life; only if they experience God's words in their actual lives are they able to see the work of the Holy Spirit. If, in their everyday lives, people are in a positive state and have a normal spiritual life, then they are possessed of the work of the Holy Spirit. In such a state, when they eat and drink the words of God, they have faith; when they pray, they are inspired; when they come up against something, they are not passive; and as things happen, they are able to see the lessons within those things that God requires them to learn. They are not passive or weak, and although they have real difficulties, they are willing to obey all the arrangements of God.

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What is the work that comes from Satan? In the work that comes from Satan, the visions within people are vague; people are without normal humanity, the motivations behind their actions are wrong, and although they wish to love God there are always accusations within them, and these accusations and thoughts cause constant interference within them, constraining the growth of their life and stopping them from coming before God in the normal condition. This is to say, as soon as the work of Satan is within people, their hearts cannot be at peace before God. Such people do not know what to do with themselves—when they see people gathering together, they want to run away, and they are unable to close their eyes when others pray. The work of evil spirits wrecks the normal relationship between man and God, and upsets people's previous visions or their former path of life entry; in their hearts they can never draw close to God, and things always happen that cause disruption to them and shackle them. Their hearts cannot find peace and they are left with no strength to love God and with their spirits sinking. Such are the manifestations of the work of Satan. The manifestations of the work of Satan are: being unable to stand your ground and stand witness, causing you to become someone who is at fault before God and who has no faithfulness toward God. When Satan interferes, you lose the love and

loyalty toward God within you, you are stripped of a normal relationship with God, you do not pursue the truth or the improvement of yourself; you regress and become passive, you indulge yourself, you give free rein to the spread of sin and are not hateful of sin; furthermore, the interference of Satan makes you dissolute; it causes God's touch to disappear within you and makes you complain about God and oppose Him, leading you to question God; there is even the risk that you will abandon God. All of this comes from Satan.

Excerpted from "The Work of the Holy Spirit and the Work of Satan" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Some people say that the Holy Spirit is working in them at all times. This is impossible. If they were to say that the Holy Spirit is always with them, that would be realistic. If they were to say that their thinking and sense are normal at all times, that would also be realistic, and would show that the Holy Spirit is with them. If they say the Holy Spirit is always working within them, that they are enlightened by God and touched by the Holy Spirit at every moment, and gain new knowledge all the time, then this is by no means normal! It is entirely supernatural! Without a shadow of a doubt, such people are evil spirits! Even when the Spirit of God comes into the flesh, there are times when He must eat and must rest—to say nothing of humans. Those who have been possessed by evil spirits seem to be without the weakness of the flesh. They are able to forsake and give up everything, they are free of the emotion, capable of enduring torment and do not feel the slightest fatigue, as if they have transcended the flesh. Is this not extremely supernatural? The work of evil spirits is supernatural—no human could achieve such things! Those who lack discernment are envious when they see such people: They say they have such vigor in their belief in God, have great faith, and never show the slightest sign of weakness! In fact, these are all manifestations of the work of an evil spirit. For, normal people inevitably have human weaknesses; this is the normal state of those who have the presence of the Holy Spirit.

Excerpted from "Practice (4)" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

God works in a gentle, delicate, loving and caring way, a way that is extraordinarily measured and proper. His way does not provoke in you intense emotional reactions such as: "God must let me do this" or "God must let me do that." God never gives you that kind of mental or emotional intensity that makes things unbearable. Is that not so? Even when you accept God's words of judgment and chastisement, how do you feel then? When you sense the

authority and power of God, how do you feel then? Do you feel that God is divine and inviolable? (Yes.) Do you feel distance between yourself and God at these times? Do you feel the fear of God? No—rather, you feel fearful reverence toward God. Is it not because of God’s work that people feel all of these things? Would they have these feelings if it were Satan who was at work? (No.) God uses His words, His truth and His life to continuously provide for man, to support man. When man is weak, when man is feeling dispirited, God certainly does not speak harshly, saying: “Do not feel dispirited. What is there to be dispirited about? Why are you weak? What reason is there to be weak? You are always so weak, and you are always so negative! What is the use of you being alive? Just die and have done with it!” Does God work in this way? (No.) Does God have the authority to act in this way? (Yes.) Yet God does not act in this way. The reason why God does not act in this way is because of His essence, the essence of the holiness of God. ...

... As regards Satan’s work on man, I have two phrases that can amply describe the malicious and evil nature of Satan, that can truly allow you to know the hatefulness of Satan: In Satan’s approach to man, it always wants to forcefully occupy and possess man, each and every one, to the extent that it can gain complete control of man and harm man grievously, so that it can achieve its objective and fulfill its wild ambition. What does “forcefully occupy” mean? Is it something that happens with your consent, or without your consent? Does it happen with your knowing, or without your knowing? The answer is that it happens completely without your knowing! It happens in situations where you are unaware, perhaps without it even saying or doing anything to you, with no premise, no context—there Satan is, circling around you, surrounding you. It looks for an opportunity to exploit and then it forcefully occupies you, possesses you, achieving its objective of gaining complete control of you and of inflicting harm upon you. This is a most typical intention and behavior of Satan as it struggles to wrest mankind away from God.

Excerpted from “God Himself, the Unique IV” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

6. What is demonic possession? What are the manifestations of demonic possession?

Relevant Words of God:

If, during the present day, there is to emerge a person who is able to display signs and wonders, cast out demons, heal the sick, and perform many miracles, and if this person claims that they are Jesus who has come, then this would be a counterfeit produced by evil spirits which imitate Jesus. Remember this! God does not repeat the same work. Jesus' stage of work has already been completed, and God will never again undertake that stage of work. The work of God is irreconcilable with the notions of man; for example, the Old Testament foretold the coming of a Messiah, and the result of this prophecy was Jesus' coming. This having already happened, it would be wrong for another Messiah to come again. Jesus has already come once, and it would be wrong if Jesus were to come again this time. There is one name for every age, and each name contains a characterization of that age. In the notions of man, God must always display signs and wonders, must always heal the sick and cast out demons, and must always be just like Jesus. Yet this time, God is not like that at all. If, during the last days, God still displayed signs and wonders, and still cast out demons and healed the sick—if He did exactly the same as Jesus—then God would be repeating the same work, and the work of Jesus would have no significance or value. Thus, God carries out one stage of work in every age. Once each stage of His work has been completed, it is soon imitated by evil spirits, and after Satan begins to follow on the heels of God, God changes to a different method. Once God has completed a stage of His work, it is imitated by evil spirits. You must be clear about this.

Excerpted from "Knowing God's Work Today" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

There are some who are possessed by evil spirits and cry out vociferously, "I am God!" Yet, in the end, they are revealed, for they are wrong in what they represent. They represent Satan, and the Holy Spirit pays them no heed. However highly you exalt yourself or however strongly you cry out, you are still a created being and one that belongs to Satan. I never cry out, "I am God, I am the beloved Son of God!" But the work I do is God's work. Need I shout? There is no need for exaltation. God does His own work Himself and does not need man to accord Him a status or give Him an honorific title: His work represents His identity and status. Prior to His baptism, was not Jesus God Himself? Was He not the incarnate flesh of God? Surely it cannot be said that it was only after receiving witness that He became the only Son of God? Long before He began His work, was there not already a man by the name of Jesus? You are unable to bring forth new paths or to represent the Spirit. You cannot express the work of the Spirit or the words

that He speaks. You are unable to do the work of God Himself, and that of the Spirit you are unable to do. The wisdom, wonder, and unfathomability of God, and the entirety of the disposition by which God chastises man—all of these are beyond your capacity to express. It would therefore be useless to try to claim to be God; you would have only the name and none of the substance. God Himself has come, but no one recognizes Him, yet He continues on in His work and does so in representation of the Spirit. Whether you call Him man or God, the Lord or Christ, or call Her sister, it does not matter. But the work He does is that of the Spirit and represents the work of God Himself. He does not care about the name by which man calls Him. Can that name determine His work? Regardless of what you call Him, as far as God is concerned, He is the incarnate flesh of the Spirit of God; He represents the Spirit and is approved by the Spirit. If you are unable to make way for a new age, or to bring the old to an end, or to usher in a new age, or to do new work, then you cannot be called God!

Excerpted from “The Mystery of the Incarnation (1)” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

There are some people who, when no issues arise, are pretty normal, who talk and converse pretty normally, who seem normal, and who do not do anything bad. But when God’s words are being read in gatherings, when the truth is being fellowshiped, they suddenly start behaving abnormally. Some cannot bear to listen, some become drowsy, and some get sick, saying they feel bad and do not wish to hear anymore. They are completely without awareness—what is actually going on here? They have been possessed by an evil spirit. Why, when they have been possessed by an evil spirit, do they keep saying the words “I don’t want to hear it”? Sometimes people cannot understand what is happening here, but it is crystal clear to an evil spirit. This is the spirit within antichrists. You ask them why they are so ill-disposed toward the truth, and they say they are not, and they steadfastly refuse to acknowledge this. But in their hearts, they know that they do not love the truth. When not reading God’s words, they seem normal when engaging with others. You would not know what’s inside them. When they try and read God’s words, out come the words “I don’t want to hear it”; their nature has been exposed, and this is what they are. Have God’s words provoked them, or revealed them, or hit them where it hurts? None of the above. What has happened is that when everyone is reading God’s words, they say they do not want to hear it. Are they not wicked? (Yes.) What does it mean to be wicked? It means being so ill-disposed toward something for no discernible reason and being so ill-

disposed toward positive things without even knowing why. They really want to say, “As soon as I hear the words of God, those words come out; as soon as I hear testimony to God, I feel hostile, and I don’t even know why. When I see someone who pursues the truth, or who loves the truth, I want to challenge them, I always want to scold them, to do something harmful to them behind their back, I want to kill them.” By saying this they are wicked. In fact, right from the off, antichrists have never had the spirit of a normal person and have never had normal humanity—this is what is really going on.

Excerpted from “For Leaders and Workers, Choosing a Path Is of Utmost Importance (5)” in Records of Christ’s Talks

Sermon and Fellowship Excerpts for Reference:

People possessed by demons are those who have been invaded and controlled by evil spirits. The main ways in which this is manifested in such people are having psychological disorders or being of unsound mind at times, even to the point of completely losing all normal sense of reason. Such people believe in God but are unable to accept the truth, and can only act as Satan’s servants by playing roles that create disruptions and disturbances. As a result, despite believing in God, they cannot be saved and must be expelled. People who are possessed by evil spirits primarily express themselves in the ten following ways:

1. Anyone who impersonates God or Christ is possessed by an evil spirit.
2. Anyone who impersonates the spirit of an angel is possessed by an evil spirit.
3. Anyone who claims to be another incarnation of God is possessed by an evil spirit.
4. Anyone who claims words expressed by God as their own, or asks others to treat their own words as the words of God, is possessed by an evil spirit.
5. Anyone who impersonates the man used by the Holy Spirit, and asks others to follow and obey them, is possessed by an evil spirit.
6. Anyone who often speaks in tongues, interprets tongues, can see any sort of supernatural vision, or who often hears voices in their head that command them to act, is possessed by an evil spirit.
7. Anyone who claims to be able to supernaturally hear spirits speak inside their head, who can frequently hear the voices of spirits or see ghosts, and who has visibly lost the faculties of reason, is possessed by an evil spirit.

8. Anyone who loses the mental faculties of normal humanity, who often speaks devilish words, speaks to themselves, or speaks in insane terms, is possessed by an evil spirit.

9. Anyone who seems to go insane at times, who occasionally falls into a trance, or who is occasionally manic and cannot communicate normally with others, is possessed by an evil spirit.

10. Anyone who usually expresses themselves normally, but who can be provoked into bouts of insanity every few months or every year or two and appears to be identical to those possessed by demons, and who is still normal at times, is possessed by an evil spirit. (If someone had episodes of insanity many years ago, but has never had such an episode since, this is one who is no longer possessed by an evil spirit.)

People who are possessed by demons and are completely occupied and controlled by Satan belong to Satan and are cursed.

Excerpted from Work Arrangements

7. Why does God not save those with the work of evil spirits in them or those possessed by demons?

Relevant Words of God:

I have long seen clearly the various deeds of evil spirits. And people used by evil spirits (those with wrong intentions, those who lust after flesh or wealth, those who exalt themselves, those who disrupt the church, etc.) have also each been seen through by Me. Do not assume that everything is finished once the evil spirits have been cast out. Let Me tell you! From now on, I shall dispose of these people one by one, never to use them! That is to say, any person corrupted by evil spirits shall not be used by Me, and will be kicked out! Do not think I do not have feelings! Know this! I am the holy God, and I will not reside in a filthy temple! I only use honest and wise people who are completely loyal to Me and can be considerate of My burden. This is because such people were predestined by Me, and absolutely no evil spirits are working on them at all. Let Me make one thing clear: From now on, all those without the work of the Holy Spirit have the work of evil spirits. Let Me reiterate: I do not want a single person whom evil spirits work on. They shall all be cast down into Hades along with their flesh!

Excerpted from "Chapter 76" of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh

Those who have been possessed for a time by evil spirits (meaning, since birth) will all be exposed now. I will kick you out! Do you still remember what I have said? I—the holy and unblemished God—do not reside in a foul and filthy temple. Those who were possessed by evil spirits know this for themselves, and I need not clarify. I have not predestined you! You are old Satan, yet you want to infiltrate My kingdom! Absolutely not!

Excerpted from “Chapter 81” of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh

People often mention hell and Hades. But what do these two words refer to, and what is the difference between them? Do they really refer to some cold, dark corner? Human minds are always interrupting My management, thinking that their own random ponderings are perfectly good! But these are all nothing but their own imaginings. Hades and hell both refer to a temple of filth that has previously been lived in by Satan or by evil spirits. That is to say, whosoever has been occupied before by Satan or by evil spirits—it is they who are Hades and it is they who are hell—there is no mistake! This is why I have stressed repeatedly in the past that I do not live in a temple of filth. Can I (God Himself) live in Hades, or in hell? Would that not be ridiculous nonsense? I have said this several times, but you still do not understand what I mean. Compared to hell, Hades is corrupted more severely by Satan. Those who are for Hades are the most serious cases, and I have simply not predestined these people; those who are for hell are those whom I have predestined, and then eliminated. Put simply, I have not chosen even one of these people.

Excerpted from “Chapter 90” of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh

XV. How to Identify False Leaders, Antichrists, and Nonbelievers

1. What is an antichrist? How can an antichrist be identified?

Relevant Words of God:

What is God’s definition of an antichrist? One who is hostile to God. This is an enemy of God! One who is hostile to God, hostile to the truth, who loathes the truth, loathes God, and

who loathes absolutely anything that is positive—this is no common person who is momentarily weak, foolish, and slightly mistaken in their thoughts and views, nor one with a slightly absurd understanding that does not accord with the truth. This is not the kind of person they are. This is an antichrist, an enemy of God. His role is that of someone who hates absolutely anything that is positive, hates all truth, and hates all of God’s disposition and essence. How does God treat one in this role? God will not save them! Such people despise and detest the truth, by their essence. What is exposed here is not the common corrupt disposition of the masses, things such as arrogance, a touch of hardness, or minor deceit; what is exposed here is evil, ferocity, and detestation of the truth—these are the most serious manifestations and dispositions among corrupt dispositions, and they are the things most typical of and essential to Satan. This is no minor revelation of the corrupt disposition that is in common, corrupted people, which can neither constitute a real threat to the truth nor coalesce into a substantial force—this is a force that is hostile to God. They can disrupt and control a church, and they can destroy and interrupt God’s management work. Is this something that common, corrupted people do? Absolutely not, and you should therefore not underestimate it. There are some people who also have an evil disposition, some of whom behave selfishly and despicably, some fiendishly, who do not allow others to push them around, and who think, “If people don’t offend me, I won’t offend them.” How are the antichrists different from this? Their main disposition is not arrogance, but full-blown evil. And how is this evil mainly manifested? It can be seen in their bizarre way of doing things, which common people with eyes and ears, with some culture and some social experience, find difficult to detect; this has risen past deceit to evil. They can play shadow games and tricks, and play them “better” than most people; most ordinary people cannot compete with them and cannot deal with them. This is an antichrist. Why is it said that ordinary people cannot deal with them? It is because their evil is so extreme that they possess an enormous power to deceive people. Why are we fellowshiping about the manifestations of antichrists? Because antichrists are all too able to deceive people. They deceive swaths of people at once, like a lethal plague, which, through its contagion, can harm and kill many in a single outbreak; it is highly contagious and wide reaching, and its infectiousness and mortality rates are greater than those of common diseases. Are these not severe consequences?

Excerpted from “For Leaders and Workers, Choosing a Path Is of Utmost Importance (4)” in Records of

Christ’s Talks

In the time when God had not yet become flesh, the measure of whether man opposed God was based on whether man worshiped and looked up to the invisible God in heaven. The way in which opposition to God was defined at that time was not all that practical, for man could not see God, nor did he know what the image of God was like, or how He worked and spoke. Man had no notions about God whatsoever, and he believed in God vaguely, because God had not yet appeared to man. Therefore, no matter how man believed in God in his imagination, God did not condemn man or make too many demands of him, because man was completely unable to see God. When God becomes flesh and comes to work among men, all behold Him and hear His words, and all see the deeds that God works from within His body of flesh. At that moment, all man's notions become foam. As for those who have seen God appearing in the flesh, they shall not be condemned if they willingly obey Him, whereas those who purposefully stand against Him shall be deemed an opponent of God. Such people are antichrists, enemies who willfully stand against God.

Excerpted from "All People Who Do Not Know God Are People Who Oppose God" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Anyone who does not understand the purpose of God's work is one who opposes Him, and one who has come to understand the purpose of God's work but still does not seek to satisfy God is even more to be deemed an opponent of God. There are those who read the Bible in grand churches and recite it all day long, yet not one among them understands the purpose of God's work. Not one among them is able to know God; still less can any one among them accord with God's will. They are all worthless, vile people, each standing on high to lecture God. They willfully oppose God even as they carry His banner. Claiming faith in God, still they eat the flesh and drink the blood of man. All such people are devils that devour the soul of man, head demons that deliberately get in the way of those trying to step onto the right path, and stumbling blocks impeding those who seek God. They may appear of "sound constitution," but how are their followers to know that they are none other than antichrists who lead people to stand against God? How are their followers to know that they are living devils dedicated to the devouring of human souls?

Excerpted from “All People Who Do Not Know God Are People Who Oppose God” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Look at the leaders of each denomination—they are all arrogant and self-righteous, and their interpretations of the Bible lack context and are guided by their own imaginings. They all rely on gifts and erudition to do their work. If they could not preach at all, would people follow them? They do, after all, possess some knowledge and can preach on some doctrine, or they know how to win others over and make use of some artifice. They use these to bring people before themselves and deceive them. Nominally, those people believe in God, but in reality, they follow their leaders. When they encounter someone preaching the true way, some of them say, “We have to consult our leader about our faith.” A human is the medium of their faith in God; is that not a problem? What have those leaders become, then? Have they not become Pharisees, false shepherds, antichrists, and stumbling blocks to people’s acceptance of the true way?

Excerpted from “Only to Pursue the Truth Is Truly to Believe in God” in *Records of Christ’s Talks*

There are some who are entirely too cavalier in their attitude toward work arrangements from the Above. “The Above makes the work arrangements,” they think, “and we’re down here, doing the work. Some of what’s said and some of the tasks can be implemented flexibly—they can be altered when they come down to us. The Above just talks, after all, and we’re the ones doing practical work. We understand the situation in the church, but the Above doesn’t, so the people and work of the church that are given to us are ours to do with as we see fit. We can do as we like, and no one has the right to interfere.” To such people, the principle of serving God is this: “If I think something’s right, I’ll take note of it; if I think something isn’t workable, I’ll ignore it. I can resist you if I like, or go against you, and I don’t have to implement or carry out anything I don’t want to. If something you say strikes me as unsuitable, I’ll edit it for you, and, once I’ve filtered it, I’ll pass it on down. Nothing I haven’t approved may go to print.” Everywhere else, they disseminate the arrangements from the Above in their original form, but this person sends their edited version of the work arrangements to the people in the area they lead. Such a person wishes always to set God off to the side, and desperately wants everyone to follow and believe in them. The way they see it, God is not their equal in certain areas—they should be God, too, and everyone should believe in them. That is the nature of what they do. If

you understood this, would you still cry when such a person is removed and replaced? Would you still feel sympathy for them? Would you still think, “What the Above does is uncalled for and unjust—how could the Above dismiss someone who’s suffered so much?” For whose sake have they suffered? They have suffered for the sake of their own status. Are they serving God? Are they performing their duty? Are they loyal and submissive to God? They are nothing but a lackey of Satan, and their work is the devil’s dominion; it destroys God’s management plan and disturbs His work. What sort of faith is that? They are nothing but a devil, an antichrist!

Excerpted from “What Is It to Offend God?” in Records of Christ’s Talks

What kind of person sets up his own kingdom? (An antichrist.) And why is such a person called “an antichrist”? First of all, “anti” means being antagonistic and hostile, and it involves being antagonistic and hostile toward Christ, toward God, and toward the truth. What does it mean to be “antagonistic and hostile?” (To stand in direct opposition.) (To have hatred.) Can people who hate God and who are in direct opposition to Him accept the truth? Can they love the truth? They certainly cannot. The very first way in which they express themselves is to not love the truth. Whenever someone speaks the truth, they do not express anything to that person’s face, but in their hearts they do not accept the truth, and deep down they resist it. While resisting, with regard to all positive things—all these truths such as submitting to God, loyally performing their duties, being honest people, seeking the truth in all things, and so on—do they have a little bit of subjective yearning or love? No, not in the slightest. Therefore, given this sort of nature essence that they have, they are already standing in direct opposition to God and the truth. So, inevitably, such people do not, deep down, love the truth or any positive thing. For example, people in positions of leadership have to be able to accept the various opinions of their brothers and sisters, they must be able to open themselves up to the brothers and sisters and accept the reproach of the brothers and sisters, and they must not take up status. What would an antichrist think of all of these correct ways of practicing? Perhaps he would say, “If I heard the brothers’ and sisters’ opinions, then would I still be a leader? Would I then still have status and prestige? Would I still be able to make people fear me? If I cannot make people fear me, and if I have no prestige, then what work can I do?” This is precisely the kind of disposition possessed by an antichrist; he does not accept the truth in even the tiniest way, and the more proper a method of practice is, the more he resists it. He does not admit that these correct

methods of practice are ways of practicing the truth. What is the truth, as he believes it to be? It is that one should always use an iron fist, evil deeds, cruel methods, and shadowy tricks when dealing with anyone; one should never use truth, love, and God's words. His way is an evil way. This is the nature essence of those who are of an antichrist's ilk, and it is also the way they do things and the impetus behind their actions, the source from which they spring. This is what their motivation and their intentions are like. The essence of their motivations and intentions, which they often reveal, is precisely the essence of an antichrist—an aversion and hatred toward the truth. This is their essence. What, then, does it mean to stand in opposition to the truth and to God? It means hating the truth and positive things. For example, as an object of creation, one should fulfill the duty of a created being; no matter what God might say, people should submit, for humans are objects of creation. But how does an antichrist think? "It's not untrue that I am an object of creation, but when it comes to submitting, that depends on the situation. First and foremost, there has to be some benefit in it for me; I mustn't be put at a disadvantage, and I must put my own interests first. If there are rewards and great blessings to be gained and You want me to submit, then that's fine, but without rewards and without a destination, then I can't submit." That is how an antichrist sees it. As another example, God would have people be honest, but what does an antichrist think of this? "Only idiots are honest; clever people aren't honest." Do these opinions constitute an attitude that is not accepting of the truth? What is the essence of this sort of attitude? Its essence is a hatred for the truth. This is precisely the essence of such antichrists, and their essence determines what kind of path they walk and, in turn, the path they walk determines what things they will do while fulfilling this sort of duty.

Excerpted from "For Leaders and Workers, Choosing a Path Is of Utmost Importance (1)" in Records of
Christ's Talks

What is the difference between when an antichrist exalts and testifies about themselves and when an ordinary person does? Ordinary people often brag and show off to make others look up to them; they, too, possess such dispositions and manifest such states. Wherein is the difference? If you can articulate this, then you are able to see what the essence of the antichrists is. If you do not figure this out, and assign all occasional manifestations of self-exaltation or showing off to the domain of antichrists, is this not a conceptual error? How, then, do you make the distinction? What is the essential difference between people who deliberately exalt and

testify about themselves, and those who do so unconsciously? (Their motivations are different). That is the difference. Ordinary people have corrupt dispositions. When they exalt themselves and brag, they are trying to show off, and it goes no further than that. Others could look up to them or look down on them—they do not care; their intentions are unclear, and their behavior is governed by one sort of disposition and it is an outpouring of that sort of disposition, nothing more. If they pursue the truth and accept being dealt with and pruned, judged and chastised, this sort of disposition can gradually be alleviated, and, slowly, they will come to have a sense of integrity and shame, and become more rational. Such behavior will become rarer and they will condemn it, reining themselves in and holding themselves back. This is when people unconsciously exalt and testify about themselves. The disposition inherent in exalting and testifying about oneself deliberately is the same as that of doing so unconsciously, but their natures are not the same. Deliberately exalting and testify about oneself is done with an agenda; one who does so is not speaking on the spur of the moment—every time they exalt and testify about themselves, they do so with a certain motivation and a secret aim, and their actions bear features of the ambitions and desires of Satan. Externally, the behavior looks the same: In both cases, people are exalting and testifying about themselves, but when they do so unconsciously, God defines this as the outpouring of a corrupt disposition; when they do so deliberately, how does God define this? God defines this as being deceptive, with an aim to make people think highly of them, venerate them, look up to them, and then follow them. The nature of this behavior of theirs is delusion. So, when their intention is to deceive people, to take possession of them, and to make them follow them, they employ certain methods and techniques in their words and actions. People who do not understand the truth and are of small stature, or who have a relatively shallow foundation, are easily taken in and led astray, and they cannot discern what is going on. Not only are they blind to this, they are also liable to look up to these people and think highly of them. As time goes on, they will also venerate and even follow them. One of the most commonly seen phenomena in everyday life is when some people seem to have a good understanding of a sermon they just heard, but cannot solve issues they encounter later. Even when they come before God to seek, they get nowhere, and they are ultimately forced to seek out a leader, who becomes the one they think of every time they encounter an issue. It is like having an opium smoking habit—they are addicted. So, antichrists who exalt and testify about themselves become a virtual drug for those benighted people of small stature who cannot

discern what is happening. As soon as these people have an issue, they go looking for the antichrist. Even after discussing an issue with the group and having clearly understood the truth principles, they will not dare to call it what it is, nor will they dare to attend to it. Instead, they wait for the “master” whom they admire to have the final say, to define the problem, to make a decision—and if their “master” says nothing, no one has the confidence to handle the affair in question. Have they not been poisoned? How much work—how much poison—does it take for the antichrists to poison these folks so badly? If they were often to dissect themselves and know themselves, if they were often to lay bare their weaknesses, mistakes, and sins to everyone, would everyone venerate them so? Absolutely not. It seems that they expend considerable effort to obtain this “achievement,” which is precisely the outcome they wish for. People do not know what to do when they are apart from them; when they encounter an issue, they lack any principle and are at a loss. Clearly, the antichrists fed them no small amount of poison while controlling them. They really went to work on them! If they had only said a few words, would these people have fallen under their control? Absolutely not.

Excerpted from “For Leaders and Workers, Choosing a Path Is of Utmost Importance (2)” in Records of Christ’s Talks

Some people have certain manifestations of an antichrist and certain outpourings of the disposition of an antichrist, but also accept and acknowledge the truth, and love the truth. They are possible objects of salvation. There are some people who, regardless of their appearance, are hostile and loathsome toward the truth by their nature essence. As soon as you speak of the truth or preach to them, they grow annoyed and oppositional: They start to doze off, they fall asleep, they are bored, and are not interested even when they do understand; or they may seem diligent on the outside, but measure the truth with a different attitude, or with some body of knowledge and theory. If this is the case, then regardless of how many of God’s words they have read or how many sermons they have listened to, there will ultimately never be the least change in their attitude, which is the pursuit of status and worldly things, enmity to God, and hostility to the truth. This is typical of the antichrist. Therefore, when you say that their actions are meant to win people to their side, and that they exalt and testify about themselves to vie for God’s status, to deceive people, and that their actions are those of Satan and antichrists, do they accept such condemnation? They do not. They think: “It is right and proper for me to act in this

way. This is how I do things. You can condemn and criticize me all you want—I will not give up on this pursuit, this desire, or this way of doing things.” It is settled: They are antichrists. Nothing you say can alter their perspective, nor can it alter their motivations and intentions, nor their ambitions and desires. Such is the nature essence of a typical antichrist. No matter how their circumstances change, or how the people, matters, and things around them change, or how the times change, and regardless of the signs and miracles performed by God, and how much grace God gives them—even if He punishes them—their intentions will never change. Their way of being a human and way of doing things will never change, nor will their attitude of hostility to the truth. When others point out that what they are doing is exalting and testifying about themselves and trying to deceive people, they change their manner of speaking to one with which others can find no fault. No one can discern what they are doing; they use even more crafty means to carry on their management and achieve their secret aims. This is what is manifested in an antichrist, and it is engendered by the essence of an antichrist. Even if God told them they would be punished, that their end had come, that they were cursed and damned, could this change their essence? Could it change their attitude toward the truth? Could it change their love of status, fortune, and prestige? It could not. Turning people who have been corrupted by Satan into people with normal humanity who worship God is the work of God; it can be achieved. But is it possible to turn demons, people who are dressed in human skin but whose essence is satanic, who worship Satan in Satan’s camp and are hostile to God, into normal people? That would be impossible. God does not do this kind of work; these people are not included among those God saves. How, then, does God define such people? They belong to Satan. They are not objects of God’s selection or salvation; God does not want such people. No matter how long they have been in the house of God, how much they have suffered or what they have accomplished, their intentions do not change. They will not put aside their ambitions or desires, much less will they relinquish their motivation and craving to vie for status and for people with God. Such people are living antichrists.

Excerpted from “For Leaders and Workers, Choosing a Path Is of Utmost Importance (2)” in Records of Christ’s Talks

All antichrists would rather die than repent. They vow to resist God to the death, and fight to the very end. Even though, deep down, they acknowledge that there is a God, that He created

man, and that He can save mankind, their nature makes them incapable of changing the path they have chosen, and incapable of changing the fact of their hostility to God. Thus, the essence of the behavior of antichrists is to constantly use various means and methods to achieve their goal of having status, of winning people over and making them follow and venerate them. It is possible that in the depths of their hearts they are not deliberately vying over humanity with God, but one thing is certain: Even when they do not vie with God for humans, they still wish to have status and power among them. Even if the day comes when they realize that they are vying with God for status, and they rein themselves in, they still employ other methods to gain status among people and be validated. In short, though everything antichrists do appears to comprise a faithful performance of their duties, and they seem to be true followers of God, their ambition to control people—and to gain status and power among them—will never change. No matter what God says or does, and no matter what He asks of people, they do not do what they should do or fulfill their duties in a way that befits His words and requirements, nor do they give up their pursuit of power and status as a result of understanding His utterances and the truth; throughout, their ambition consumes them, controls and directs their behavior and thoughts, and determines the path they walk. This is the epitome of an antichrist. What is emphasized here? Some people ask, “Are antichrists not those who vie with God to gain people, and who do not recognize Him?” They may recognize God, they may genuinely recognize and believe in His existence, and they may be willing to follow Him and pursue the truth, but one thing will never change: They will never relinquish their ambition for power and status, nor will they give up their pursuit of those things due to their environments or God’s attitude toward them. These are the characteristics of antichrists. However much a person has suffered, however much of the truth they have understood, however many truth realities they have entered, and however much knowledge of God they possess, beyond these external phenomena and manifestations, they will never rein in or relinquish their ambition for, and pursuit of, status and power, and this determines precisely their nature essence. There is not the slightest inaccuracy in God’s defining such people as antichrists; it has been determined by their very nature essence. Some people, perhaps, used to believe that an antichrist was anyone who tried to vie over humanity with God. However, sometimes antichrists do not necessarily have to vie with Him; they simply have to be those whose knowledge, understanding, and need for status and power is unlike that of normal people. Normal people can be vainglorious; they can try to

win credit with others and make a good impression on them, and they can try to vie for a good ranking. This is the ambition of normal people. When they are replaced as leaders, losing their positions, they get over it; with a change in their environment, some growth in their stature, some attainment of entry to the truth, or the gaining of a deeper understanding of the truth, their ambition gradually cools. A change occurs in the path they take and in the direction they travel, and their pursuit of status and power fades. Their desires, too, gradually lessen. Antichrists, however, are different: They could never give up their pursuit of status and power. At any given time, in any environment, and no matter what people they have around them and however old they might be, their ambition will never change. What indicates that their ambition will never change? Supposing they are church leaders: They would want to control everyone in the church. They might then go to another church, where they are not the leaders, yet, they still yearn for that status. Wherever such people go, they want to wield power. Are their hearts not swollen with ambition? What they manifest goes beyond the realm of normal humanity. Is there not something abnormal about this? What is abnormal about it? What they manifest is not what ought to be manifested by normal humanity. What do they manifest? What is it that causes this to manifest? It is caused by their nature. They are evil spirits. This is not the same as ordinary corruption; there is a difference. Antichrists will stop at nothing in their pursuit of status and power; they are utterly engrossed by it. This is their nature essence; it is their original form, and their true face. They do not merely compete with God for status, but they compete with people for status, too. Whether others are willing or in agreement or not, antichrists actively try to control them and be their leaders, without regard for their wishes. Wherever they go, antichrists want to be in charge and have the last word. Is this their nature? Do people want to listen to you? Did they choose you? Did they elect you? Do they agree with your having the last word? No one wants these people to have the last word, and no one listens to them, but they still try to have it. Is this a problem? They are utterly shameless and unapologetic. When such people are leaders, they are antichrists; when they are not leaders, they are also antichrists.

Excerpted from “For Leaders and Workers, Choosing a Path Is of Utmost Importance (3)” in Records of Christ’s Talks

Since you believe in God, you must put faith in all of the words of God and in all of His work. Which is to say, since you believe in God, you must obey Him. If you are unable to do this,

then it does not matter whether you believe in God or not. If you have believed in God for many years, and yet have never obeyed Him, and do not accept the entirety of His words, and instead ask that God submit to you and act according to your notions, then you are the most rebellious of all, you are a nonbeliever. How could such people be able to obey the work and words of God that do not conform to the notions of man? Most rebellious of all are those who intentionally defy and resist God. They are the enemies of God, the antichrists. Theirs is always an attitude of hostility toward the new work of God; they never have the slightest inclination to submit, nor have they ever gladly submitted or humbled themselves. They exalt themselves before others and never submit to anyone. Before God, they consider themselves the best at preaching the word, and the most skillful in working on others. Never do they discard the “treasures” in their possession, but treat them as family heirlooms for worship, for preaching about to others, and they use them to lecture those fools who idolize them. There are indeed a certain number of people like this in the church. It can be said that they are “indomitable heroes,” generation after generation sojourning in the house of God. They take preaching the word (doctrine) to be their highest duty. Year after year, generation after generation, they go about vigorously enforcing their “sacred and inviolable” duty. None dare touch them; not a single person dares openly reproach them. They become “kings” in the house of God, running rampant as they tyrannize others from age to age. This pack of demons seeks to join hands and demolish My work; how can I allow these living devils to exist before My eyes? Even those who are only half obedient cannot carry on until the end, much less these tyrants without the slightest obedience in their hearts! The work of God is not easily gained by man. Even using all the strength they have, people can only gain a mere portion of it, ultimately allowing them to be made perfect. What, then, of the children of the archangel, who seek to destroy the work of God? Do they not have even less hope of being gained by God?

Excerpted from “Those Who Obey God With a True Heart Shall Surely Be Gained by God” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

2. What is a false Christ? How can a false Christ be identified?

Relevant Words of God:

God become flesh is called Christ, and so the Christ that can give people the truth is called God. There is nothing excessive about this, for He possesses the essence of God, and possesses God's disposition, and wisdom in His work, that are unattainable by man. Those who call themselves Christ, yet cannot do the work of God, are frauds. Christ is not merely the manifestation of God on earth, but also the particular flesh assumed by God as He carries out and completes His work among man. This flesh cannot be supplanted by just any man, but is a flesh that can adequately bear God's work on earth, and express the disposition of God, and well represent God, and provide man with life. Sooner or later, those who impersonate Christ will all fall, for although they claim to be Christ, they possess none of the essence of Christ. And so I say that the authenticity of Christ cannot be defined by man, but is answered and decided by God Himself.

Excerpted from "Only Christ of the Last Days Can Give Man the Way of Eternal Life" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

He who is God incarnate shall possess the essence of God, and He who is God incarnate shall possess the expression of God. Since God becomes flesh, He shall bring forth the work He intends to do, and since God becomes flesh, He shall express what He is, and shall be able to bring the truth to man, bestow life upon him, and point the way for him. Flesh that does not have the essence of God is decidedly not the incarnate God; of this there is no doubt. If man intends to inquire into whether it is God's incarnate flesh, then he must corroborate this from the disposition He expresses and the words He speaks. Which is to say, to corroborate whether or not it is God's incarnate flesh, and whether or not it is the true way, one must discriminate on the basis of His essence. And so, in determining whether it is the flesh of God incarnate, the key lies in His essence (His work, His utterances, His disposition, and many other aspects), rather than external appearance.

Excerpted from Preface to *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Though Christ on earth is able to work on behalf of God Himself, He does not come with the intention of showing all men His image in the flesh. He does not come so that all men see Him; He comes to allow man to be led by His hand, and man thereby enters into the new age. The function of Christ's flesh is for the work of God Himself, that is, for the work of God in the

flesh, and not to enable man to fully understand the essence of His flesh. No matter how He works, nothing He does goes beyond that which is attainable by the flesh. No matter how He works, He does so in the flesh with a normal humanity, and does not fully reveal to man the true countenance of God. Additionally, His work in the flesh is never as supernatural or inestimable as man conceives. Even though Christ represents God Himself in the flesh and carries out in person the work that God Himself ought to do, He does not deny the existence of God in heaven, nor does He feverishly proclaim His own deeds. Rather, He remains hidden, humbly, within His flesh. Apart from Christ, those who falsely claim to be Christ do not possess His qualities. When juxtaposed against the arrogant and self-exalting disposition of those false Christs, it becomes apparent what manner of flesh is truly Christ. The falser they are, the more such false Christs flaunt themselves, and the more capable they are of working signs and wonders to deceive man. False Christs do not have the qualities of God; Christ is not tainted by any element belonging to false Christs. God becomes flesh only to complete the work of the flesh, not to merely allow men to see Him. Rather, He lets His work affirm His identity, and lets that which He reveals attest to His essence. His essence is not baseless; His identity was not seized by His hand; it is determined by His work and His essence.

Excerpted from “The Essence of Christ Is Obedience to the Will of the Heavenly Father” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

If, during the present day, there is to emerge a person who is able to display signs and wonders, cast out demons, heal the sick, and perform many miracles, and if this person claims that they are Jesus who has come, then this would be a counterfeit produced by evil spirits which imitate Jesus. Remember this! God does not repeat the same work. Jesus’ stage of work has already been completed, and God will never again undertake that stage of work. The work of God is irreconcilable with the notions of man; for example, the Old Testament foretold the coming of a Messiah, and the result of this prophecy was Jesus’ coming. This having already happened, it would be wrong for another Messiah to come again. Jesus has already come once, and it would be wrong if Jesus were to come again this time. There is one name for every age, and each name contains a characterization of that age. In the notions of man, God must always display signs and wonders, must always heal the sick and cast out demons, and must always be just like Jesus. Yet this time, God is not like that at all. If, during the last days, God still displayed

signs and wonders, and still cast out demons and healed the sick—if He did exactly the same as Jesus—then God would be repeating the same work, and the work of Jesus would have no significance or value. Thus, God carries out one stage of work in every age. Once each stage of His work has been completed, it is soon imitated by evil spirits, and after Satan begins to follow on the heels of God, God changes to a different method. Once God has completed a stage of His work, it is imitated by evil spirits. You must be clear about this.

Excerpted from “Knowing God’s Work Today” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

There are some who are possessed by evil spirits and cry out vociferously, “I am God!” Yet, in the end, they are revealed, for they are wrong in what they represent. They represent Satan, and the Holy Spirit pays them no heed. However highly you exalt yourself or however strongly you cry out, you are still a created being and one that belongs to Satan. I never cry out, “I am God, I am the beloved Son of God!” But the work I do is God’s work. Need I shout? There is no need for exaltation. God does His own work Himself and does not need man to accord Him a status or give Him an honorific title: His work represents His identity and status. Prior to His baptism, was not Jesus God Himself? Was He not the incarnate flesh of God? Surely it cannot be said that it was only after receiving witness that He became the only Son of God? Long before He began His work, was there not already a man by the name of Jesus? You are unable to bring forth new paths or to represent the Spirit. You cannot express the work of the Spirit or the words that He speaks. You are unable to do the work of God Himself, and that of the Spirit you are unable to do. The wisdom, wonder, and unfathomability of God, and the entirety of the disposition by which God chastises man—all of these are beyond your capacity to express. It would therefore be useless to try to claim to be God; you would have only the name and none of the substance. God Himself has come, but no one recognizes Him, yet He continues on in His work and does so in representation of the Spirit. Whether you call Him man or God, the Lord or Christ, or call Her sister, it does not matter. But the work He does is that of the Spirit and represents the work of God Himself. He does not care about the name by which man calls Him. Can that name determine His work? Regardless of what you call Him, as far as God is concerned, He is the incarnate flesh of the Spirit of God; He represents the Spirit and is approved by the Spirit. If you are unable to make way for a new age, or to bring the old to an end, or to usher in a new age, or to do new work, then you cannot be called God!

Excerpted from “The Mystery of the Incarnation (1)” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

3. What is a false leader or false shepherd? How can a false leader or false shepherd be identified?

Relevant Words of God:

The work of a qualified worker can bring people to the right way and grant them greater entry into the truth. His work can bring people before God. In addition, the work he does can vary from individual to individual and is not bound by rules, allowing people liberation and freedom, and the capacity gradually to grow in life and to have a more profound entry into the truth. The work of an unqualified worker falls far short. His work is foolish. He can only bring people into rules, and what he demands of people does not vary from individual to individual; he does not work according to people’s actual needs. In this type of work, there are too many rules and too many doctrines, and it cannot bring people into reality, nor into normal practice of growth in life. It can only enable people to adhere to a few worthless rules. Such guidance can only lead people astray. He leads you to become like him; he can bring you into what he has and is. For followers to discern whether leaders are qualified, the key is to look at the path on which they lead and the results of their work, and to see whether followers receive principles in accordance with the truth, and whether they receive ways of practice suitable for their transformation. You should distinguish between the different work of different types of people; you should not be a foolish follower. This bears on the matter of people’s entry. If you are unable to distinguish which person’s leadership has a path and which does not, you will easily be deceived. All of this has a direct bearing on your own life.

Excerpted from “God’s Work and Man’s Work” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

Work in the mind of man is too easy for man to achieve. Pastors and leaders in the religious world, for example, rely on their gifts and positions to do their work. People who follow them for a long time will be infected by their gifts and influenced by some of their being. They focus on people’s gifts, abilities and knowledge, and they pay attention to supernatural things and many profound, unrealistic doctrines (of course, these profound doctrines are unattainable).

They do not focus on changes in people's dispositions, but rather on training people to preach and work, improving people's knowledge and their abundant religious doctrines. They do not focus on how much people's disposition is changed nor on how much people understand of the truth. They do not concern themselves with people's essence, and much less do they try to know people's normal and abnormal states. They do not counter people's notions, nor do they reveal their notions, much less do they prune people for their deficiencies or corruptions. Most who follow them serve with their gifts, and all they release is religious notions and theological theories, which are out of touch with reality and completely unable to confer life onto people. In fact, the essence of their work is nurturing talent, nurturing a person with nothing into a talented seminary graduate who later goes on to work and lead.

Excerpted from "God's Work and Man's Work" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

As leaders and workers in the church, if you want to lead God's chosen people into truth reality and to serve as God's witnesses, most importantly, you must have a deeper understanding of God's aim in saving people and the purpose of His work. You must understand the will of God and His various requirements of people. You must be practical in your efforts; practice only as much as you understand and communicate only on that which you know. Do not boast, do not exaggerate, and do not make irresponsible remarks. If you exaggerate, people will detest you and you will feel reproached afterward; this is just too inappropriate. When you provide the truth to others, you don't necessarily have to deal with them and scold them in order for them to attain the truth. If you yourself don't have the truth and only deal with and scold others, they will fear you, but that doesn't mean they understand the truth. In some administrative work, it's fine for you to deal with and prune others and discipline them to a certain degree. But if you cannot provide the truth and know only how to be overbearing and to chide others, your corruption and ugliness will be revealed. With the passage of time, as people are unable to obtain the provision of life or practical things from you, they will come to detest you and feel disgusted by you. Those who lack discernment will learn negative things from you; they will learn to deal with and prune others, to get angry, and to lose their temper. Isn't that tantamount to leading others onto the path of Paul, onto a path toward perdition? Is that not an evildoing? Your work should focus on communicating the truth and providing life to others. If all you do is blindly deal with and lecture others, how will they ever understand the truth? As

time goes by, people will see you for who you really are, and they will abandon you. How can you expect to bring others before God in this way? How is this doing the work? You will lose everyone if you keep working in this way. What work do you hope to accomplish anyway? Some leaders are incapable of communicating the truth to resolve problems. Instead, they just blindly deal with others and flaunt their power so that others come to fear them and obey them—such people are of the false leaders and antichrists. Those whose disposition has not changed are incapable of performing church work, and are unable to serve God.

Excerpted from “Only Those With the Reality of the Truth Can Lead” in Records of Christ’s Talks

Many people behind My back covet the blessing of status, they gorge themselves on food, they love to sleep and give every care to the flesh, always afraid that there is no way out for the flesh. They do not perform their proper function in the church, but freeload off the church, or else they admonish their brothers and sisters with My words, lording themselves over others from positions of authority. These people keep saying they are doing God’s will and always say they are God’s intimates—is this not absurd? If you have the right intentions, but are unable to serve in accordance with God’s will, then you are being foolish; but if your intentions are not right, and you still say you serve God, then you are someone who opposes God, and you ought to be punished by God! I have no sympathy for such people! In the house of God, they freeload, always coveting the comforts of the flesh, and give no consideration to the interests of God. They always seek what is good for them, and they pay no heed to God’s will. They do not accept the scrutiny of God’s Spirit in anything they do. They are always maneuvering and deceiving their brothers and sisters, and being two-faced, like a fox in a vineyard, always stealing grapes and trampling over the vineyard. Could such people be God’s intimates? Are you fit to receive God’s blessings? You take no burden for your life and the church, are you fit to receive God’s commission? Who would dare trust someone like you? When you serve like this, could God dare to entrust you with a greater task? Would this not cause delays to the work?

Excerpted from “How to Serve in Harmony With God’s Will” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

If antichrists are allowed to run amok in a church, given free rein to cry whatever slogans and arguments they wish in order to control, threaten, deceive, or mislead the brothers and sisters, and the leaders do nothing, being without discernment and incapable of promptly

exposing these antichrists and getting them under control, leading to the brothers and sisters being manipulated and disturbed by the antichrists at will, then the leaders of this church are garbage. If the antichrists and wicked ones in a church are spurned and abhorred by the brothers and sisters, if they are shackled within the church, and everyone has discernment over them, such that their speech and empty slogans that mislead and deceive the brothers and sisters do not work in the church and they are held in check, locked down, then this church's leaders are up to standard; they are leaders possessed of truth reality. If a church is being disrupted by an antichrist, and, after being identified and rejected by the brothers and sisters, the antichrist takes revenge by oppressing and abusing the brothers and sisters, then the leaders of this church are garbage, and should be eliminated. As leaders of a church, if they are incapable of solving problems using the truth, if they cannot identify, control, and limit the antichrists' waywardness in the church, are unable to protect brothers and sisters and protect them so that they can perform their duties normally, and are unable to maintain the normal execution of the work of the house of God, then the leaders of this church are garbage, and should be eliminated. If the leaders of a church are afraid to approach or provoke an antichrist because the antichrist is ferocious and cruel, and thus allow that antichrist to run wild in the church, becoming a tyrant, doing whatever they want, and paralyzing and bringing to a standstill much of the work of the house of God, then the leaders of this church are garbage, and should be eliminated. If, because of fear of retribution, the leaders of a church never have the courage to expose an antichrist, and never try to limit that antichrist's evil acts, thereby causing disruption to the church life, and greatly hindering and damaging the brothers' and sisters' entry into life, then the leaders of this church are garbage, and should be eliminated.

Excerpted from "For Leaders and Workers, Choosing a Path Is of Utmost Importance (16)" in Records of Christ's Talks

Some people only arm themselves with certain truths for emergencies or to forsake themselves and help others, and not to solve their own troubles; we call them "selfless people." They regard others as puppets of the truth and themselves as its masters, teaching others to hold fast to the truth and not to be passive, while they themselves remain as spectators on the sidelines. What kind of people are these? They arm themselves with some words of truth but merely use them to lecture others, while doing nothing at all to keep from meeting their own

destruction. How pathetic! If their words can help others, then why can they not help themselves? We should label them as hypocrites who have no reality. They supply words of truth to others and ask others to put them into practice, while making no effort to practice them themselves. Are they not despicable? They themselves clearly cannot do it, yet they force others to put the words of truth into practice—what a cruel method this is! They are not using reality to help others; they are not using love to provide for others. They are simply deceiving and harming people. If this continues, with each person passing the words of truth onto the next, then will this not end up with everyone merely speaking the words of truth while being incapable themselves of putting it into practice? How can such people change? They do not recognize their own problems at all; how can there be a path forward for them?

Excerpted from “Those Who Love the Truth Have a Path Forward” in Records of Christ’s Talks

Some people work and preach and, despite superficially appearing to be fellowshiping on God’s utterances, they are only discussing the literal meaning of His words, and nothing essential is mentioned. Their sermons are like teachings from a language textbook—arranged item by item and aspect by aspect, and when they are done, everyone sings praises, saying, “This person possesses reality. He preached so well and in such detail.” After such people are done preaching, they tell others to compile their sermons and send them out to everybody. In doing this, they have gotten to where they are deceiving others and all that they preach are fallacies. On the surface, it looks as though they are preaching only God’s words and their sermons conform to the truth. However, with more careful discernment, you will see that they are nothing but letters and doctrines and false reasoning along with some human imaginings and notions, as well as some things that delimit God. Does this kind of preaching not amount to an interruption of God’s work? This is service that resists God.

Excerpted from “Only by Pursuing the Truth Can One Achieve a Change in Disposition” in Records of
Christ’s Talks

Your knowledge can only provide for people for a certain period of time. As time goes on, if you keep saying the same things, some people will discern that; they’ll say you’re too superficial, too lacking in depth. You’ll have no option but to try and deceive people by preaching on doctrines. If you always carry on like this, those below you will follow your

methods, steps, and model of faith and of experiencing and putting into practice those words and doctrines. Ultimately, as you keep on preaching and preaching, they'll all come to use you as an exemplar. In your leadership of others you speak of doctrines, so those below you will learn doctrines from you, and as things progress you will have taken the wrong path. Those below you will take whatever path you do; they will all learn from you and follow you, so you will feel: "I am powerful now; so many people listen to me, and the church is at my beck and call." This nature of betrayal within man unconsciously makes you turn God into a mere figurehead, and you yourself then form some sort of denomination. How do various denominations arise? They arise in this way. Look at the leaders of each denomination—they are all arrogant and self-righteous, and their interpretations of the Bible lack context and are guided by their own imaginings. They all rely on gifts and erudition to do their work. If they could not preach at all, would people follow them? They do, after all, possess some knowledge and can preach on some doctrine, or they know how to win others over and make use of some artifice. They use these to bring people before themselves and deceive them. Nominally, those people believe in God, but in reality, they follow their leaders. When they encounter someone preaching the true way, some of them say, "We have to consult our leader about our faith." A human is the medium of their faith in God; is that not a problem? What have those leaders become, then? Have they not become Pharisees, false shepherds, antichrists, and stumbling blocks to people's acceptance of the true way?

Excerpted from "Only to Pursue the Truth Is Truly to Believe in God" in Records of Christ's Talks

4. What is hypocrisy?

Relevant Words of God:

What is the definition of the appellation, "Pharisees"? They are people who are hypocritical, completely fake, and put on an act in everything they do, while pretending to be good, kind, and positive. Is this what they are actually like? Given that they are hypocrites, everything that is manifested and revealed in them is false; it is all pretense—it is not their true face. Their true face is hidden within their hearts; it is out of sight. If people do not pursue the truth, and if they do not understand the truth, then what do those theories they have gained become? Do they

not become the letters and doctrines to which people often refer? People use these so-called correct doctrines to camouflage and package themselves so nicely. Wherever they go, the things they talk about, the things they say, and their external behavior all appear right and good to others; they are all in line with human notions and tastes. In others' eyes, they are both devout and humble, capable of forbearance and tolerance, and can love others and love God. Actually, though, all of this is fake; it is all just pretense and a way in which they package themselves. On the outside, they appear loyal to God, but they are actually just performing for others to see. When no one is looking, they are not the slightest bit loyal, and everything they do is perfunctory. Superficially, they have given up their families and careers, appearing to work hard and expend themselves; in actual fact, however, they are secretly profiting from the church and stealing offerings. Everything they outwardly reveal—all their behavior—is fake. This is what is meant by a hypocritical Pharisee. Where do “Pharisees”—these people come from? Do they emerge among the unbelievers? All of them emerge among believers. Why do these believers transform thusly? Could God's words have made them that way? (No.) What is the reason? It is because of the path they have taken. They have taken God's words as a tool with which to arm themselves; they arm themselves with these words, treating them as capital with which to secure a living and get something for nothing. They merely preach doctrines, yet have never put those words into practice. What sort of people are those who continue to preach words and doctrines despite never having followed God's way? These are hypocritical Pharisees. That little bit of supposedly good behavior and good ways of expressing themselves, and what little they have given up and expended, are entirely forced; they are all just acts that they put on. They are entirely fake; all those actions are pretense. In these people's hearts, there is not the slightest reverence for God, nor do they even have any genuine faith in God. More than that, they are of the nonbelievers. If people do not pursue the truth, then they will walk this sort of path, and they will become Pharisees. Is that not frightful?

Excerpted from “Six Indicators of Life Growth” in Records of Christ's Talks

In Israel, “Pharisee” used to be a sort of title. Why is it now a label instead? This is because the Pharisees have become representatives of a type of person. What are the characteristics of this type of person? They chant slogans, they are skilled at pretending, at ornament, at hiding their true selves, and they affect great nobility, great holiness and uprightness, great fair-

handedness and honor. As a result, they do not practice the truth in the least. How do they act? They read scripture, they preach, they teach others to do good, not to do evil, not to resist God; they say pleasant-sounding things and behave well in front of others, yet, when others' backs are turned, they steal offerings. The Lord Jesus said they "strain out a gnat but swallow a camel." This means that all their behavior seems good on its surface—they chant slogans ostentatiously, they speak lofty theories, and their words sound pleasant, yet their deeds are a disordered mess, entirely resistant of God. Their behaviors and outward appearances are all pretense, all fraud; in their hearts, they have not the slightest love for the truth, nor for positive things. They detest truth, detest all that comes from God, and detest positive things. What do they love? Do they love fairness and righteousness? (No.) How can you tell they do not love these things? (The Lord Jesus came to do work and spread the gospel of the kingdom of heaven, yet they condemned Him.) Had they not condemned Him, would you be able to tell? Before the Lord Jesus came to do work, what might have told you that they did not love fairness and righteousness? You would not have been able to tell, would you? All their behavior is pretense, and they use this pretense of good behavior to defraud others of their trust. Is this not hypocrisy and deceit? Can such deceivers love the truth? What is the hidden purpose of this good behavior of theirs? One part of their purpose is to cheat others; the other part is to deceive others, to win them over and be worshiped by them, and, in the end, to receive rewards. How clever must their techniques be, to pull off such a large swindle? Do such people love fairness and righteousness, then? Of course not. They love status, they love fame and fortune, and they wish to receive rewards. Do they put God's words of guidance for people into practice? Not at all. They do not live out a bit of them; they just use ornament and disguise to trick people and win them over, to shore up their own status, to shore up their own reputation. Once these things are secure, they use them to procure capital and a source of income. Is this not contemptible? It can be seen in all these behaviors of theirs that it is their essence not to love the truth, for they never put the truth into practice. What is the sign that they do not put the truth into practice? This was the biggest sign: The Lord Jesus came to do work and everything He said was right, everything He said was the truth. How did they treat that? (They did not accept it.) Did they not accept the Lord Jesus' words because they believed them to be wrong, or did they not accept them despite knowing they were right? (They did not accept them despite knowing they were right.) And what could cause this? They do not love the truth, and they abhor positive things. All the Lord

Jesus said was correct, without any error, and though they could not find any fault in the Lord Jesus' words to use against Him, they said, "Isn't this the carpenter's son?" They set out to find faults in the Lord Jesus' words to use against Him, and, unable to find any, they condemned Him, and then they conspired: "Have Him crucified. It's either Him or us." In this way, they pit themselves against the Lord Jesus. Though they did not believe that Lord Jesus was the Lord, He was a good person who broke neither secular law nor the law of Moses; why would they condemn the Lord Jesus? Why did they treat the Lord Jesus so? It can be seen in how wicked and malicious these people are—they are evil in the extreme! The evil countenance the Pharisees expose could not be more different from their camouflage of kindness. There are many who cannot discern which is their true countenance and which is the falsehood, yet the Lord Jesus' appearance and work revealed them all. How well Pharisees disguise themselves, how kind they seem on the outside—had the facts not been revealed, no one would be able to see them for what they are.

Excerpted from "The Most Important Part of Believing in God Is Putting the Truth Into Practice" in
Records of Christ's Talks

If, in believing in God, people treat the truth as a set of regulations to be adhered to, then will their belief not be liable to turn into just a bunch of religious ceremonies? And what are the differences between such religious ceremonies and Christianity? These people may be deeper and more progressive in how they say things, but if their faith has merely come down to a set of regulations and a type of ceremony, then does that not mean that it has turned into Christianity? (Yes, it does.) There are differences between the old teachings and the new, but if teachings are nothing more than a kind of theory, and have merely become a form of ceremony or regulation for people—and, likewise, if people can neither gain the truth from it nor use it to enter the truth reality—then has their faith not become just the same as Christianity? In essence, is this not Christianity? (Yes, it is.) Then, in your behavior and when performing your duties, in which things do you have views and states that are the same as or similar to those of believers in Christianity? (In adhering to regulations, and in equipping ourselves with letters and doctrines.) (In focusing on the appearance of being spiritual and exhibiting good behavior, and on being devout and humble.) You seek to outwardly exhibit good behavior, doing your utmost to package yourselves in a kind of spiritual appearance, and you do some things that are relatively

approved of within human notions and imaginings, pretending to be virtuous. You stand in the high pulpit preaching letters and doctrines, teaching people to do good, be virtuous, and understand the truth; you preach spiritual doctrine, saying the right spiritual things; you put on airs of being spiritual and exude a superficial spirituality in everything you say and do, yet in practice and in performing your duty, you never seek the truth. As soon as you encounter a problem, you act entirely according to human will, tossing God aside. You have never acted according to the truth principle, nor do you have any idea what the truth even is, what God's intentions are, or what the standards that He requires of man are; you have never taken these matters seriously or even concerned yourselves with them. Do such external actions and internal states of people—that is, does this type of faith—comprise a fear for God and the shunning of evil? If there is no connection between people's faith and the pursuit of the truth, then do they or do they not believe in God? Regardless of how many years people who have no connection with pursuing the truth might believe in Him, can they or can they not truly fear God and shun evil? (They cannot.) What, then, is the outward behavior of such people? What kind of path can they walk? (The path of the Pharisees.) With what do they spend their days equipping themselves? Is it not with letters and doctrines? Do they not spend their days arming themselves, dressing themselves up with letters and doctrines to make themselves more like the Pharisees, more spiritual, and more like people who supposedly serve God? Just what is the nature of all these deeds? Is it worshiping God? Is it genuine faith in Him? (No, it isn't.) So, what are they doing? They are deceiving God; they are just going through the steps of a process, and engaging in religious ceremonies. They are waving the flag of faith and performing religious rites, attempting to deceive God in order to achieve their aim of being blessed. These people do not worship God at all.

Excerpted from "Only by Constantly Living Before God Can One Walk the Path to Salvation" in Records of
Christ's Talks

In the word "impersonate," the operative part is persona. So what persona do antichrists invest themselves with? Who are they pretending to be? Their impersonation, of course, is for the sake of status and reputation. It cannot be divorced from those things, or else they would not possibly put on such a pretense—there is no way they could do something so foolish. Given that such behavior is considered reproachful, loathsome and repulsive, why do they still do it?

They undoubtedly have their own aims and motivations—there are intentions and motivations involved. If antichrists are to gain status in people’s minds, they must make these people think highly of them. And what makes people do that? In addition to impersonating some behaviors and expressions that, in people’s notions, are believed good, one other aspect is that antichrists also impersonate certain behaviors and images that people believe great and grand, in order to make others think highly of them. What people often encounter in the churches are some who pretend to be spiritual, so that others think they have believed in God for many years, and are very spiritual. And do people not believe those who are spiritual to be wonderful and grand? (Yes.) No matter what type of person or what kind of person the antichrists impersonate, it is bound to be the kind that people see as good, and grand, and noble, or else they would not impersonate them. Would people look highly upon them if they impersonated Satan? If they impersonated a bully, a gangster, a thug, or a whore, would people think highly of them then? (No.) If they said they were a Pharisee or a Judas, would people not reject them? (Yes.) Such individuals are clearly regarded as negative, as bad. Antichrists would never do that. So who do they impersonate? They impersonate those who, in people’s minds, are seen as grand, good, and wonderful. First are people in the churches who have believed in God for many years, who are possessed of spiritual experience and testimony, who have received the grace and blessings of God, experienced signs and wonders, beheld great visions, and who have had some unique experiences; there are also those who blow a lot of hot air when around others, who can go on for two or three hours, or even longer; there are those whose ways, means, and principles of doing things align with the rules of the church; and then there are those who appear to have great faith in God. These people are known as spiritual people, and they are relatively spiritual. So how do the antichrists impersonate spiritual people? They simply do these exact same things, so that people see them as spiritual. And when they do these things, do they happen spontaneously, from the heart? No. The antichrists are just imitating, following rules. And when they do these things, some of it seems to others like right behavior. For example, they are quick to pray when they encounter an issue, but they go through all the motions when they do so. In fact, they are not truly seeking and praying; they are just trying to make people say they love God, and have great reverence for God, and that they turn to prayer when they encounter some issue. What is more, no matter how seriously sick they become, they do not go to seek medical treatment when they should or take medicine when they should. People say, “If you don’t take

medicine your illness could get worse. There's a time for prayer, and there's a time for medicine. You just need to follow your faith and not abandon your duty." They reply, "It's alright—I have God, I'm not afraid." On the outside, they pretend to be calm and unafraid, and full of faith, but inside, they are terrified to death; in private, they take pill after pill, and secretly run to the doctor the second they feel any discomfort. If people discover them taking medicine, and ask them what it is, they say, "I'm just taking some health supplements. They give me energy, so I don't hold things up when performing my duty." They also say, "Illness is a trial from God. When we live amidst sickness, we get sick; when we live amidst God's words, the sickness goes. We must not live amidst sickness—if we live amidst God's words, this sickness will disappear." That is what they often teach people on the surface, using the words of God to help others. But when something happens to them, they privately try to solve it by their own means. Outwardly, they still say: Rely on God in all things, and everything is in the hands of God. But that is not actually what they do in private. They have no true faith. When they encounter an issue, in front of other people they pray and say that they submit to the sovereignty and arrangements of God, that this issue has come from God, and people should not complain. But in their hearts, meanwhile, they are thinking: "I'm so devoted and I work so hard performing my duty, how could this illness befall me? And how come no one else has gotten it?" They dare not voice any complaints, but doubts about God arise in their heart; it seems to them that not everything God does is right. On the outside, though, they give the appearance that nothing is wrong, that despite getting sick, the illness still does not seem to hold them back, they can still perform their duty, they are still faithful, and can still expend themselves for God. When they are said to be an impersonator, their behavior is then shown to be contaminated. Such a person's faith and obedience are fake, as is their loyalty. There is no true obedience here, nor true faith, much less do they truly rely on God and entrust matters into His hands. They do not care what is arranged by God, or what God's will is; they do not examine their own corruption, they do not examine what the problem is with them, nor do they solve problems when problems arise, but outwardly pretend that nothing is holding them back, that they are able to submit, and have faith, and can stand firm. In their hearts, however, they are thinking, "Did this illness befall me because God hates me? And now that He hates me, am I a service-doer? Is God using me to render service? Do I still have an end? Is God using this to expose me, to stop me from performing this duty?" That is what they think in their hearts, while outwardly assuming the pretense of someone

spiritual, saying “God’s kind intentions are behind this,” and not complaining, whenever something happens to them. They do not complain openly, but their hearts roil, and their minds are rocked like a stormy sea; the complaints, and the doubts and questions about God come on all at once. On the outside, they keep reading the words of God and are prompt in performing their duty, but in their hearts, they have already abandoned their duty. Is this not what putting on a pretense means?

Excerpted from “For Leaders and Workers, Choosing a Path Is of Utmost Importance (18)” in Records of Christ’s Talks

These antichrists want to play the role of spiritual people, they want to be the preeminent ones among the brothers and sisters, to be people who possess the truth, and understand the truth, and can help those who are weak and immature. And what is their aim in playing this role? First, they believe themselves to have already transcended the flesh, to have superseded worldly concerns, to have shed the weaknesses of normal humanity, and overcome the fleshly needs of normal humanity; they believe themselves those who can undertake important tasks in the house of God, who can be considerate to God’s will, whose minds are full of the words of God. They style themselves as people who have already attained the requirements of God and pleased God, and who can be considerate to God’s will, and can gain the beautiful destination promised by God’s own mouth. And so they are often smug, and they think themselves different from others. Using the words and phrases they can remember and are capable of understanding in their minds, they admonish, condemn, and form conclusions about others; so, too, do they often use the practices and sayings born of the imagination of their own notions to form conclusions about others and coach them, to make others follow along with these practices and sayings, thus achieving the status they desire among the brothers and sisters. They think that as long as they can say the right words and phrases, and the right doctrines, can shout a few slogans, can assume a little responsibility in the house of God, can undertake some important task, are willing to take the lead, and are able to maintain the normal order in a group of people, then that means they are spiritual, and that their position is secure. And so, whilst pretending to be spiritual, and boasting of their spirituality, they also pretend to be all-powerful and capable of anything, a perfect person, and think they can do everything, and are good at everything. Perhaps someone will have a problem with their computer and they ask them to fix

it, and they will say it is easy to fix; inside, though, their heart will be pounding like a drum — they do not know how to fix it, and after a few attempts at repair all the files end up being lost. The person asks them whether they really can fix it, and they say, “I can, I’ve done it before, but now I’ve somehow forgotten. Let me think. I’ve got too much on now, though, I don’t have time. Best find someone else to fix it.” They are pretty good at pretending, right? They pretend they can do anything. Are you familiar with the kind of people who are always pretending? They have a name; do you know what it is? Did the archangel always think it could do anything? (Yes.) Do such people not have the disposition of the archangel? They never say, “That’s beyond me” or “I can’t” or “I’m not right for that” or “I’ve never seen this before” or “I don’t know, find someone else to take a look.” They never say such things. No matter what it is, if you ask them about a matter, even if they cannot do it or have never encountered such a thing, they will come up with a reason or reply to make you think that they are good at everything, can do anything, are capable of everything, that nothing is a problem for them. What kind of person are they trying to be? They are trying to be all-powerful—they are pretending to be the angel of light. Is this what they are? Because such people always try to pretend they are good at everything, if you ask them to work with someone else, to learn from them, to discuss things with them, to fellowship with them, or to communicate any problem with them, they are incapable of these things. They will say, “I don’t need to be paired up with anyone, I have no need of a helper. I don’t require someone else to assist me in doing anything, I’m okay on my own, I can do it all, I can do everything, nothing is beyond me, there is nothing I am incapable of, there is nothing I cannot do. Who am I? I’m nothing like you: You are only capable of doing one thing, and you are no expert at it. I learned one thing, but I can do anything—mastering one thing, I can then understand everything else by analogy. I can write articles and speak foreign languages; I may not be able to speak any now, but if I were to learn, I could master five foreign languages without any problem.” When other people ask them if they could act in a movie, if they can sing and dance, they say they can do it all. They are pretty good at boasting, right? They pretend to be all-powerful, able to do anything—truly, theirs is the nature of the archangel! When people ask them if they have ever been weak during the years they have believed in God, they say, “Weak? God speaks His words so clearly, I could never be weak. To be weak is to let God down. We should put all our effort into repaying God’s love.” When people ask them, “Do you miss home after being away all these years? And do you ever cry when you think about home?” they reply,

“What is there to cry about? God is in my heart. As soon as I think of God, I stop missing home. The unbelievers at home are demons, they’re Satans—I pray for their damnation.” When people ask them if they have ever gone astray during their years of belief in God, they say, “Go astray? How could I go astray when God speaks His words so clearly? You’d have to be absurd and unable to understand spiritual matters to go astray. How could people with caliber like mine go astray? How could I take the wrong path? Never.” They are good at everything, better than other people at everything. And what do they think of those who are weak and negative? They say that those who are weak and negative waste their energy. Is that the case? In some cases, it is normal to be weak and negative; in some cases, there is a reason to feel this way. How could them wasting their energy explain the problem? This is the act the antichrists put on: They pretend to be spiritual, to be capable of anything, to have no faults, no shortcomings, no weaknesses, and more than this, they pretend to not be rebellious and to have never transgressed.

Excerpted from “For Leaders and Workers, Choosing a Path Is of Utmost Importance (18)” in Records of Christ’s Talks

No matter what the setting is, or where they are performing their duty, the antichrists give the appearance of not being weak, of having the utmost love for God, of being full of faith in God, of never having been negative, hiding from others the real attitude and the real view they hold in the depths of their heart on the truth and on God. In fact, in the depths of their heart, do they really believe themselves all-powerful? Do they really believe themselves to have no weakness? No. So, knowing that they are possessed of weakness, rebelliousness, and corrupt dispositions, why do they speak and behave in such a way in front of others? Their aim is obvious: It is simply to protect their status among and before others. They believe that if, in front of others, someone is openly negative, openly says things that are weak, reveals rebelliousness, and talks of knowing themselves, then this is something that harms their status and reputation, it is a loss. They would therefore rather die than say that they are weak and negative, and that they are not perfect, but are just an ordinary person. They think that if they admit that they have a corrupt disposition, that they are an ordinary person, a small and insignificant being, then they will have no status in people’s minds, that they will not gain such status, and that they will lose their status in people’s minds. And so, no matter what, they cannot let go of this status, but instead do their utmost to secure it. Every time they encounter a

problem, they step forward—but upon seeing that they could be exposed, that people could see through them, they quickly hide. If there is any room to maneuver, if they still have the chance of parading themselves, of pretending that they are an expert, that they know about this matter, and understand it, and can solve this problem, then they rush forward to grab the opportunity to earn others' appreciation, to let them know they are skilled in this area. If, in a situation, someone asks them what their understanding of an issue is, and what their view is, they are reticent to speak, and they let everyone else speak first. There is a reason for their reticence: It is not that they have no view, but that they are afraid that speaking up directly will cause them to lose face, or that they will say something ignorant or trivial that no one will agree with. This is one reason. Another is that they have no view, and dare not speak arbitrarily. Because of these two reasons, or many more other reasons, they shy away from speaking up and expressing their own point of view, they fear exposing their true face, they are afraid of revealing their real stature and true point of view, and impacting the image people have of them in their minds. And so, when people fellowship their points of view, thoughts, and understanding, they seize on statements by one person or certain people, statements that are more intelligent and tenable, and they use them as their own, they distill them and fellowship them to everyone, and by doing this gain their high position in people's minds. When the time comes to really express a point of view, they never open up about their true state to people, or let people know what they really think, what their caliber is like, what their humanity is like, what their powers of understanding are like, and whether they have true knowledge of the truth. And so, at the same time as bragging and pretending to be spiritual, and a perfect person, they do their utmost to cover up their true face and real stature. They never reveal their weaknesses to the brothers and sisters, nor do they ever recognize their own deficiencies and weak points; instead, they do their utmost to cover them up. People ask them, "You've believed in God for so many years, have you ever had any doubts about God?" They reply, "No." They are asked, "Did you cry when members of your family died?" They reply, "No, I didn't shed a single tear." They are asked, "You believed in God for all these years, you've given so much up and expended so much of yourself, have you ever had any regrets?" They reply, "No." They are asked, "When there was no one to care for you when you were ill, did it upset you, did you miss home?" And they reply, "Never." They portray themselves as so staunch, strong-willed, able to make sacrifices, capable of expending themselves—someone who is simply unassailable, without any faults. And how do they react if

you tell them what their faults are, opening up and fellowshiping to them as a normal brother or sister? They do their utmost to vindicate and justify themselves, to save the situation, to undermine what you said, to make you take it back and ultimately acknowledge that they do not have this problem, and that they are still the perfect, spiritual person that people think they are. Is it not all a pretense? Anyone who thinks they are perfect and all-powerful is just pretending. Why do I say they are just pretending? Why am I tarring them all with the same brush? Is anyone perfect? Is anyone all-powerful? What does “all-powerful” mean? Does it mean almighty? No one in this universe world is all-powerful; only God is, and only God is almighty. So what are people if they claim themselves to be all-powerful, and almighty? They are the archangel, they are demons, and they are the antichrists among men. Antichrists pretend that they are all-powerful, that they are perfect. Do antichrists know themselves? (No.) They do not know themselves, so can they give fellowship about knowing themselves? (Some hypocrites do.) Correct; these people pretend to fellowship about knowing themselves. So what is the difference between them fellowshiping about knowing themselves, and truly knowing oneself? (Hypocrites fellowship about knowing themselves in order to make others think highly of them, to show their good side. Those who truly know themselves fellowship on and dissect their corrupt dispositions, gaining true knowledge of themselves and coming to manifest certain regrets by means of God’s words.) There is a difference. When antichrists talk of knowing themselves, they explain and vindicate themselves using things about them that everyone knows and sees, so that people think they are right, and think highly of them, and think that they know themselves even when there is not much wrong with them, and can still come before God to admit their mistakes and repent. What is their aim? To deceive people. They are not really dissecting their corrupt dispositions so that people can learn from them at all. What is the effect when they use knowing themselves to make people think more highly of them? They deceive people. How is this knowing oneself? It is tricking people, using the saying and practice of knowing oneself to deceive people and make others think more highly of them.

Excerpted from “For Leaders and Workers, Choosing a Path Is of Utmost Importance (18)” in Records of Christ’s Talks

Some people only arm themselves with certain truths for emergencies or to forsake themselves and help others, and not to solve their own troubles; we call them “selfless people.”

They regard others as puppets of the truth and themselves as its masters, teaching others to hold fast to the truth and not to be passive, while they themselves remain as spectators on the sidelines. What kind of people are these? They arm themselves with some words of truth but merely use them to lecture others, while doing nothing at all to keep from meeting their own destruction. How pathetic! If their words can help others, then why can they not help themselves? We should label them as hypocrites who have no reality. They supply words of truth to others and ask others to put them into practice, while making no effort to practice them themselves. Are they not despicable? They themselves clearly cannot do it, yet they force others to put the words of truth into practice—what a cruel method this is! They are not using reality to help others; they are not using love to provide for others. They are simply deceiving and harming people. If this continues, with each person passing the words of truth onto the next, then will this not end up with everyone merely speaking the words of truth while being incapable themselves of putting it into practice? How can such people change? They do not recognize their own problems at all; how can there be a path forward for them?

Excerpted from “Those Who Love the Truth Have a Path Forward” in Records of Christ’s Talks

How many religious practices do you observe? How many times have you rebelled against the word of God and gone your own way? How many times have you put God’s word into practice because you are truly considerate of His burdens and seek to satisfy His will? You should understand the word of God and put it into practice accordingly. Be principled in all your actions and deeds, though this does not mean abiding by rules or doing something grudgingly just for show; rather, it means practicing the truth and living by the word of God. Only practice such as this satisfies God. Any course of action that pleases God is not a rule, but the practice of truth. Some people have a penchant for drawing attention to themselves. In the presence of their brothers and sisters, they might say they are indebted to God, but behind their backs, they do not practice the truth and act entirely differently. Are these not religious Pharisees? A person who truly loves God and possesses the truth is one who is loyal to God but does not outwardly show off as such. Such a person is willing to practice the truth when situations arise, and does not speak or act in a way that goes against their conscience. This sort of person demonstrates wisdom when matters arise, and is principled in his or her deeds regardless of the circumstances. This kind of person can provide true service. There are some

who often pay lip service to their indebtedness to God; they spend their days with brows locked in worry, putting on an affected air and pretending to be pitiable. How despicable! If you were to ask them, "Can you tell me about how you are indebted to God?" then they would be rendered speechless. If you are loyal to God, then do not talk outwardly about it; instead, demonstrate your love for God by way of actual practice, and pray to Him with a true heart. Those who just deal with God verbally and perfunctorily are all hypocrites! Some speak of indebtedness to God each time they pray, and begin to weep each time they pray, even without being moved by the Holy Spirit. People such as this are possessed by religious rituals and notions; they live by such rituals and notions, always believing that those actions please God and that He favors superficial godliness or sorrowful tears. What good can come of such absurd people? In order to demonstrate humility, some feign graciousness when speaking in the presence of others. Some are deliberately servile when in the presence of other people, acting like lambs without an ounce of strength. Is this a manner befitting people of the kingdom? People of the kingdom should be lively and free, innocent and open, honest and lovable, and be living in a state of freedom. They should have integrity and dignity and be able to stand witness wherever they go; such people are beloved by both God and man. Those who are novices in the faith have too many outward practices; they must first undergo a period of being dealt with and broken. People who have faith in God deep down are not outwardly distinguishable from others, but their actions and deeds are commendable. Only such people can be deemed to be living out the word of God. If you preach the gospel every day to various people in an effort to bring them to salvation, yet in the end are still living by rules and doctrines, then you cannot bring glory to God. Such people are religious figures, as well as hypocrites.

Whenever those religious people congregate, they might ask, "Sister, how have you been these days?" She might reply, "I feel I owe a debt to God, and that I am unable to satisfy His will." Another might say, "I, too, feel indebted to God and that I am unable to satisfy Him." These few sentences and words alone express the vile things deep within them; such words are most loathsome, and exceedingly repugnant. The nature of such people is in opposition to God. Those who focus on reality communicate whatever is on their mind, and open up their hearts in fellowship. They do not engage in a single false exercise, displaying neither such civilities nor empty pleasantries. They are always straightforward, and observe no secular rules. Some people have a penchant for outward displays, even to the point of utterly lacking sense. When someone

sings, they begin to dance, not even realizing that the rice in their pots has already burned. Such people are not godly or honorable, and they are far too frivolous. All of these things are manifestations of a lack of reality. When some people fellowship about matters of spiritual life, though they speak not of owing anything to God, they do retain a true love for Him deep down. Your feeling of indebtedness to God has nothing to do with other people; you are indebted to God, not humanity. What use is it for you to constantly speak of this to others? You must place importance on entering into reality, not on any outward zeal or display.

What do the superficial good deeds of humans represent? They represent the flesh, and even the best of outward practices do not represent life; they can only show your own individual temperament. The outward practices of humanity cannot fulfill the desire of God. You constantly speak of your indebtedness to God, yet you cannot supply the life of others or inspire them to love God. Do you believe that those actions of yours will satisfy God? You feel that your actions are in line with God's will, and that they are of the spirit, but in truth, they are all absurd! You believe that what pleases you and what you are willing to do are precisely those things in which God delights. Can your likes represent God? Can a person's character represent God? What pleases you is precisely that which God abhors, and your habits are those which God loathes and rejects. If you feel indebted, then go and pray before God; there is no need to speak of it to others. If you do not pray before God, and instead constantly draw attention to yourself in the presence of others, can this satisfy God's will? If your actions always exist in appearance alone, then this means that you are vain in the extreme. What manner of humans are those who only carry out superficial good deeds and are devoid of reality? Such people are just hypocritical Pharisees and religious figures! If you do not shed your outward practices and are unable to make changes, then the elements of hypocrisy in you will grow even more. The greater your elements of hypocrisy, the more resistance there is toward God. In the end, such people will surely be eliminated!

from "In Faith, One Must Focus on Reality—Engaging in Religious Ritual Is Not Faith" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

5. What is a nonbeliever?

Relevant Words of God:

Since you believe in God, you must put faith in all of the words of God and in all of His work. Which is to say, since you believe in God, you must obey Him. If you are unable to do this, then it does not matter whether you believe in God or not. If you have believed in God for many years, and yet have never obeyed Him, and do not accept the entirety of His words, and instead ask that God submit to you and act according to your notions, then you are the most rebellious of all, you are a nonbeliever. How could such people be able to obey the work and words of God that do not conform to the notions of man?

Excerpted from “Those Who Obey God With a True Heart Shall Surely Be Gained by God” in The Word
Appears in the Flesh

In their belief in God, if people do not have a heart of reverence for God, if they do not have a heart of obedience toward God, then not only will they be unable to do any work for Him, but on the contrary will become those who disturb His work and who defy Him. Believing in God but not obeying or revering Him, and instead resisting Him, is the greatest disgrace for a believer. If believers are just as casual and unrestrained in their speech and conduct as unbelievers are, then they are even more evil than unbelievers; they are archetypal demons.

Excerpted from “A Warning to Those Who Do Not Practice the Truth” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

There are some people whose faith has never been acknowledged within God’s heart. In other words, God does not recognize that they are His followers, because He does not praise their beliefs. For these people, regardless of how many years they have followed God, their ideas and views have never changed; they are like the unbelievers, adhering to the unbelievers’ principles and ways of doing things and to the unbelievers’ laws of survival and faith. They have never accepted the word of God as their life, never believed that God’s word is truth, never intended on accepting God’s salvation, and never recognized God as their God. They see believing in God as some kind of amateur hobby, treating Him as mere spiritual sustenance; as such, they do not think it is worth it to try and understand God’s disposition or essence. It can be said that all that corresponds to the true God has nothing to do with these people; they are not interested, nor can they be bothered to pay heed. This is because deep in their hearts, there is an intense voice that is always telling them, “God is invisible and untouchable, and does not

exist.” They believe that trying to understand this sort of God would not be worth their efforts, and that in doing so they would be fooling themselves. They believe that by merely acknowledging God with words without taking any real stand or investing themselves in any real actions, they are being pretty clever. How does God look upon such people? He views them as unbelievers. Some people ask, “Can unbelievers read God’s words? Can they fulfill their duties? Can they say the words, ‘I’ll live for God’?” What humans often see are the displays people exhibit on the surface; they do not see people’s essences. However, God does not look at these superficial displays; He only sees their inner essences. Thus, this is the kind of attitude and definition God has toward these people.

Excerpted from “How to Know God’s Disposition and the Results His Work Shall Achieve” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

People nowadays are still unable to let go of things of the flesh; they cannot give up the enjoyment of the flesh, the world, money, or their corrupt dispositions. Most people go about their pursuits in a perfunctory manner. Actually, these people do not harbor God in their hearts at all; even worse, they do not fear God. They do not have God in their hearts, and so they cannot perceive all that God does, and much less are they capable of believing the words He utters. Such people are too much of the flesh; they are too deeply corrupted and lack any truth whatsoever. What is more, they do not believe that God can become flesh. Anyone who does not believe in God incarnate—that is, anyone who does not believe in the visible God or in His work and words, and instead worships the invisible God in heaven—is a person who does not have God in their heart. Such people are rebellious and resistant to God. They lack humanity and reason, to say nothing of truth. Moreover, for these people, the visible and tangible God all the more cannot be believed, yet they consider the invisible and intangible God to be most credible and most gladdening. What they seek is not the actual truth, nor is it the true essence of life; much less is it God’s will. Rather, they seek excitement. Whichever things can most enable them to fulfill their own desires are, without a doubt, what they believe in and what they pursue. They only believe in God in order to satisfy their own desires, not to seek the truth. Are such people not evildoers?

Excerpted from “God and Man Will Enter Into Rest Together” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Some people do not rejoice in the truth, much less judgment. Instead, they rejoice in power and riches; such people are called power seekers. They search only for those denominations in the world with influence, and they search only for pastors and teachers that come from seminaries. Though they have accepted the way of truth, they are only half-believing; they are incapable of giving all of their hearts and minds, their mouths speak of expending themselves for God, but their eyes are focused on the great pastors and teachers, and they do not spare Christ a second glance. Their hearts are fixated upon fame, fortune, and glory. They think it out of the question that such a meager person could be capable of conquering so many, that one so unremarkable could perfect man. They think it out of the question that these nobodies among the dust and dunghills are the people chosen by God. They believe that if such people were the objects of God's salvation, then heaven and earth would be turned upside down, and all people would laugh themselves silly. They believe that if God chose such nobodies to be perfected, then those great men would become God Himself. Their perspectives are tainted with unbelief; more than not believing, they are simply preposterous beasts. For they value only status, prestige, and power, and they esteem only large groups and denominations. They have not the slightest regard for those led by Christ; they are simply traitors who have turned their backs on Christ, on truth, and on life.

What you admire is not the humility of Christ, but those false shepherds of prominent standing. You do not adore the loveliness or wisdom of Christ, but those libertines who wallow in the filth of the world. You laugh at the pain of Christ who has no place to lay His head, but you admire those corpses that hunt for offerings and live in debauchery. You are not willing to suffer alongside Christ, but you gladly throw yourself into the arms of those reckless antichrists, though they only supply you with flesh, words, and control. Even now, your heart still turns toward them, toward their reputation, toward their status, toward their influence. And yet you continue to hold an attitude whereby you find the work of Christ hard to swallow and you are unwilling to accept it. This is why I say that you lack the faith to acknowledge Christ. The reason you have followed Him to this day is only because you had no other option. A series of lofty images are forever towering in your heart; you cannot forget their every word and deed, nor their influential words and hands. They are, in your heart, forever supreme and forever heroes. But this is not so for the Christ of today. He is forever insignificant in your heart, and forever

undeserving of reverence. For He is far too ordinary, has far too little influence, and is far from lofty.

In any case, I say that all those who do not value the truth are nonbelievers and traitors to the truth. Such men shall never receive the approval of Christ.

Excerpted from "Are You a True Believer in God?" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Above all, there is one fact you should understand in your faith in God: Belief in God does not merely mean believing in God's name, much less is it having faith in the vague God of your imagination. Instead, you must believe that God is real, you should believe in God's essence, in His disposition, and in what He has and is; you must believe in the fact that God rules the destiny of mankind, and that He rules your destiny. So what counts as faith? Is there not a side to it whereby people should actually cooperate in it and put it into practice? For example, some people are disturbed by a situation that befalls them, and it causes them some minor spiritual turmoil, and they think to themselves, "So-and-so is to blame for what's happened to me. If it wasn't for his nitpicking, it wouldn't have been so embarrassing." They cast about for excuses, and ultimately lay the blame on someone else, which puts them at ease, and they then think the problem has been solved, that the difficulty is over. What do you think of this method of solving problems? Can one gain the truth by practicing in this way? Does it show an attitude of obedience toward God? With what perspective, and by what means, do such people believe in God? Have they applied the words "God rules the destiny of mankind, all things and all events are in His hands" to their everyday lives? When they analyze the problem using the mind of man, when they address the matter using human means, are they believing in God's sovereignty, are they submitting to God's sovereignty over and arrangement of people, matters, and things? (No.) Firstly, they do not submit; and secondly, they make an even graver mistake: They are unable to accept from God the situation and people, matters, and things He arranges for them; they do not look beyond the surface. They look only at how the situation appears from the outside, before then analyzing it using their human mind and trying to resolve it with human methods. Is this not a big mistake? (It is.) How is it so? They do not believe that everything is ruled by God. They think to themselves, "Everything is ruled by God? Can God rule over so many things? That is the blind application of doctrine. What happened to me is different, it's an exception!" This is an exception, that is an exception. In their eyes, everything is an exception;

not a single thing is ruled by God, it is all born of man. Is this faith in God? Does this reflect the essence of faith in God? They do not believe that God can rule over everything or that God can arrange all things, all events, and all situations. They cannot accept these things from God. They feel that all these situations just occur randomly, that they are caused by human actions and are not arranged by God. So what is the essence of their belief? They are nonbelievers! The view of nonbelievers is to never accept a single thing from God, but instead to employ human perspectives, mindsets, and methods to think hard about and rack their brains to cope with whatever they encounter. This is what a nonbeliever does. When you run into this kind of person in the future, you should develop some discernment regarding them. Nonbelievers are good at engaging their brains and coming up with ideas when issues arise; they constantly study the matter at hand, try to resolve it using human methods, and they love to talk reason and go by the philosophies of Satan or the law. They do not believe that God's words are the truth, much less that God rules over all things, or that everything is done by God. They have never accepted from God any kind of situation He has arranged or anything that has happened around them. They generally insist that they believe that mankind's fate is in God's hands and that they are willing to submit to His rule and His arrangements. However, that is not what they believe when they encounter an issue, that is not how they understand things, and they never obey in such a way. This is what a nonbeliever is.

Excerpted from "Corrupt Dispositions Can Only Be Resolved by Seeking the Truth and Relying on God" in
Records of Christ's Talks

The simplest way to describe belief in God is trusting there is a God, and, on this foundation, following Him, obeying Him, accepting His dominion, orchestrations, and arrangements, listening to His words, living in accordance with His words, doing everything according to His words, being a true created being, and fearing Him and shunning evil; only this is true belief in God. This is what it means to follow God. You say you follow God, but, in your heart, you do not accept God's words, and you do not accept His dominion, orchestrations, and arrangements. If you always have notions of what God does, and you always misunderstand what He does, and complain about it; if you are always dissatisfied, and you always measure and approach what He does using your own notions and imaginings; if you always have your own understandings—

this will cause trouble. You are not experiencing God's work, and you have no way to follow Him truly. Such is not belief in God.

What, exactly, is belief in God? Is belief in religion equivalent to belief in God? When people believe in religion, they follow Satan. Only when they believe in God do they follow God, and only those who follow Christ truly believe in God. Is someone who will never accept God's words as their life a person who believes in God? It is of no use, no matter how many years they have believed in God. Someone who always engages in religious ritual in their faith but does not practice the truth is not a believer in God, and God does not acknowledge them. On what basis does God acknowledge you? His acknowledgment of you is based on whether you act in all matters according to His requirements. His acknowledgment is meted in accordance with His words, not based on how many changes there are in your outward behavior, or how much time you spend running about for Him, but on the path you walk, and whether you pursue the truth. There are many who say they believe in God and speak words of praise for God—but, in their hearts, they do not love the words spoken by God, nor are they interested in the truth. In their hearts they believe always that only if they live by the philosophies of Satan and various doctrines of the outside world will they be normal, and able to protect themselves, that only living like this will give value to their lives in this world. Is this someone who believes in God and follows Him? All the sayings of renowned, great figures sound especially philosophical and are particularly capable of deceiving people. If you treat them as the truth and abide by them as maxims, but, when it comes to God's words, to the most ordinary words of God, which ask that you be an honest person, that you stick scrupulously to your own, allotted station and perform the duty of a created being, and that you remain steadfast—you are incapable of practicing them, and you do not treat them as the truth, then you are no follower of God. You may say you have practiced His words, but what if God may press you for the truth and ask: "What have you practiced? Who spoke those words that you practice? What is the basis of the principles to which you adhere?" If that basis is not the words of God, then it is the words of Satan; what you live out is the words of Satan, yet you still say you practice the truth and satisfy God, is this not blasphemy against Him? God says people should be honest, yet there are those who do not ponder what being honest includes, how they should practice honesty, or which of the things they live out and reveal are not honest, and which of them are. They do not contemplate the essence of the truth in God's words, but find a book of the unbelievers, and, upon reading it,

they say, “These are good words—even better than God’s. ‘Guileless people ever prevail’—isn’t that the same as what God said? This is the truth, as well!” So, they abide by these words. What do they live out when they abide by these words? Are they able to live out the reality of the truth? Are there many such people? They gain a little knowledge, read a few books, and gain a bit of insight, and they hear some famous adage or popular saying and treat these as the truth. They act according to these words, and apply them to their duties and their lives of belief in God, and even think this satisfies Him. Is this not sleight of hand? Is this not trickery? It is blasphemy! There is much of this in people. They abide by pleasant-sounding, correct-seeming folk doctrines as if they were the truth. They put God’s words to one side and pay them no heed, and, no matter how many times they read them, they do not take them to heart or treat them as the truth. Is one who does so someone who believes in God? Do they follow God? Such a person believes in religion; they follow Satan! In their hearts, they think there is philosophy in the words spoken by Satan, that these words have profound meaning, that they are scripture, wise sayings, and, no matter what else they may forsake, they could never put these words aside. To do so would be, to them, like losing their life, or having their heart scooped out. What kind of person is this? This is a person who follows Satan.

Excerpted from “Belief in Religion Will Never Lead to Salvation” in Records of Christ’s Talks

People who truly believe in God have a sense of conscience, they trust that the words of God are the truth, that all God does is right, and of benefit to man. If they do something wrong and violate the truth, they feel a sense of reproach, indebtedness and anguish deep within their hearts. And as for those who do not truly believe in God, let us put aside the question of whether they have a sense of conscience, and first talk about their attitude toward the existence of God and His words. To begin with, what is their view on the existence of God? “You say God exists—but where is He? I do not see Him. I do not know if there is a God or not. Those who believe in Him say there is, those who don’t say there isn’t.” Such is their view. But, on further reflection, they think, “All these people believe in Him and bear testimony to Him, so maybe there is a God. I hope so; if there is, I’ll have pulled a fast one and been blessed. I’ll have made the right bet.” They are just along for the ride, rolling the dice, taking their chances. They do not think it will cost them anything. Their attitude and view toward whether God exists is like this: “Does God exist or not? I can’t tell. Where is He exactly? I don’t really know. So many people bear

testimony, but is it true or false? I can't tell this either." In their minds, there are questions marks about all of this; they cannot be sure, and so they are skeptical. And with such skepticism and uncertainty, what is their attitude toward God's words when He speaks, and expresses the truth? Do they take God's words as the truth? On occasion, they might listen out of curiosity, to ponder them a while, and, having done so, they think, "Are these words the truth? They supposedly contain power and authority—why don't I hear that or have any sense of it? Apparently, they can change people—so why haven't they changed me? I still love to eat and sleep. I'm just as short-tempered as ever, and I haven't become more capable of anything. I'm still afraid when the great red dragon inflicts its persecution. I haven't become superhuman! God's words are supposedly the reality of all positive things. What is a positive thing? It is asking that people be good and honest. People who are honest are fools. People are asked to fear God and shun evil. That means when you do evil, you have to rein yourself in, you must place strictures on yourself, and not do bad things—how many people can do that? Man's nature is to do bad things, to be selfish. Every man for himself, and the devil take the hindmost. No one in this world thinks of anyone but themselves. Your fate is in your hands; it is up to you to strive for happiness. If everyone practices God's words, fearing God and shunning evil, would the people of the world not become ascetic monks and nuns? What would be the fun in living, then?" Is this not their attitude toward the truth in the depths of their hearts? "If people do not strive and fight for themselves, if they do not live for wealth and recognition, then what meaning would life have?" Such is the view of such people—of nonbelievers. This is the nonbelievers' attitude toward the truth. In their hearts, they do not know what the truth is; God's words do not equal the truth, and the truth does not equal life. What do they consider the truth to be, deep within their hearts? Something that can make them supernatural, that can give them powers, and make them gifted, something that is of physical benefit to them, that can make their lives happier, that can be of the greatest possible benefit to them—that is the truth. They think: These words of God are too ordinary; they are mere trivialities, beneath mentioning. Asking that people be honest, that they fear God and shun evil, that they free themselves of their corrupt dispositions—that is too hard. No one can do this! People do not live in a vacuum; they have myriad desires and emotions. No one can live out these words. The nonbelievers do not believe that God's words are the truth; they do not believe that God's words are the life, much less do they believe that God's words can change the fate of mankind, or that God's words can

change people's corrupt dispositions and allow them to cast off their corrupt dispositions. That is their attitude toward God's words. And so, in the depths of their hearts, they have never accepted that the words of God are the truth, nor do they ever accept them as the truth. All in all, they do not accept the words of God as their life, as the direction and purpose of their existence and their conduct. Can those who do not accept that God's words are the truth believe in the existence of God? Do they truly believe in the existence of God? (No.) Can those who do not believe in the existence of God believe that there is also truth in this world? Can those who do not believe in the existence of the truth believe that mankind can be saved? (No.) If they do not believe any of that, can they believe in the fact of God's incarnation? Can they believe in God's management plan? (No.) They are nonbelievers, through and through.

Excerpted from "Performing Duty Well Requires a Conscience, at the Very Least" in Records of Christ's
Talks

If, in their belief in God, people do not frequently live before Him, then they will not be able to have any reverence for Him, and so will they be incapable of shunning evil. These things are connected. If deep down you often live before God, you will be held in check, and will fear Him in many things. You will not go too far or do anything that is dissolute, nor will you do anything which is loathed by God or speak words that are not sensible. If you accept God's scrutiny, and accept His discipline, you will avoid doing many evil things. As such, will you not have shunned evil? If, in your belief in God, you often exist in a state of bewilderment, not knowing whether He is in your heart and not knowing what you wish to do deep down; if you are incapable of being at peace before God, and do not pray or seek the truth whenever something happens to you; if you often act according to your own will, live according to your satanic disposition, and reveal your arrogant disposition; and if you do not accept God's scrutiny or discipline, and do not submit, then deep down people like this will always live before Satan and be controlled by Satan and by their corrupt disposition. Such people are therefore without the slightest reverence for God. They are simply incapable of shunning evil, and even if they do not do evil things, everything they think is still evil, and is both unconnected to the truth and runs against it. Do such people, then, fundamentally have no connection to God? Though they are ruled by Him, they have never reported before Him; they have never treated God as God, they have never treated Him as the Creator who rules over them, they have never

acknowledged that He is their God and their Lord, and they have never considered worshipping Him in earnest. Such people do not understand what it means to fear God, and they think it is their right to commit evil. They say, “I’ll do what I want. I’ll take care of my own business, it’s not up to anyone else.” Meanwhile, they treat faith in God as a kind of mantra, a form of ceremony. Does this not make them nonbelievers? They are nonbelievers! And what does God name these people in His heart? All day long, everything they think is evil. They are the degenerates of the house of God, and He does not acknowledge such people as members of His house.

Excerpted from “Only by Constantly Living Before God Can One Walk the Path to Salvation” in Records of
Christ’s Talks

6. What is an evil person? How can various evil people be identified?

Relevant Words of God:

Those among brothers and sisters who are always giving vent to their negativity are lackeys of Satan, and they disturb the church. Such people must one day be expelled and eliminated. In their belief in God, if people do not have a heart of reverence for God, if they do not have a heart of obedience toward God, then not only will they be unable to do any work for Him, but on the contrary will become those who disturb His work and who defy Him. Believing in God but not obeying or revering Him, and instead resisting Him, is the greatest disgrace for a believer. If believers are just as casual and unrestrained in their speech and conduct as unbelievers are, then they are even more evil than unbelievers; they are archetypal demons. Those who give vent to their poisonous, malicious talk within the church, who spread rumors, foment disharmony, and form cliques among the brothers and sisters—they should have been expelled from the church. Yet because now is a different era of God’s work, these people are restricted, for they face certain elimination. All who have been corrupted by Satan have corrupt dispositions. Some have nothing more than corrupt dispositions, while others are different: Not only do they have corrupt satanic dispositions, but their nature is also extremely malicious. Not only do their words and actions reveal their corrupt, satanic dispositions; these people are, moreover, the genuine devil Satan. Their behavior interrupts and disturbs God’s work, it impairs the brothers’

and sisters' entry into life, and it damages the normal life of the church. Sooner or later, these wolves in sheep's clothing must be cleared out; an unsparing attitude, an attitude of rejection, should be adopted toward these lackeys of Satan. Only this is standing on the side of God, and those who fail to do so are wallowing in the mire with Satan.

Excerpted from "A Warning to Those Who Do Not Practice the Truth" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Every church has people who cause trouble for the church or meddle in the work of God. They are all Satans who have infiltrated the house of God in disguise. Such people are good at acting: They come before Me with great reverence, bowing and scraping, living like mangy dogs, and devoting their "all" to achieve their own objectives—but in front of the brothers and sisters, they show their ugly side. When they see people who practice the truth, they strike out at them and shove them aside; when they see people more formidable than themselves, they flatter and fawn upon them. They run wild in the church. It can be said that such "local bullies," such "lapdogs," exist in the majority of churches. They act devilishly together, sending each other winks and secret signals, and none of them practices the truth. Whoever has the most venom is the "head demon," and whoever has the highest prestige leads them, bearing their flag aloft. These people rampage through the church, spreading their negativity, venting death, doing as they please, saying what they please, and no one dares to stop them. They brim with the disposition of Satan. No sooner do they cause a disturbance than an air of death enters the church. Those within the church who practice the truth are cast out, unable to give their all, while those who disturb the church and spread death run rampage within—and, what's more, most people follow them. Such churches are ruled by Satan, plain and simple; the devil is their king. If the congregants do not rise up and reject the head demons, then they, too, will sooner or later come to ruin. From now on, measures must be taken against such churches. If those who are capable of practicing a little of the truth do not seek to, then that church will be expunged. If a church contains no one who is willing to practice the truth and no one who can stand witness for God, then that church should be completely isolated, and its connections with other churches must be severed. This is called "burying death"; this is what it means to cast out Satan. If a church contains several local bullies, and they are followed by "little flies" that entirely lack discernment, and if the congregants, even after having seen the truth, are still incapable of rejecting the binds and manipulation of these bullies, then all those fools will be

eliminated in the end. These little flies might not have done anything terrible, but they are even more deceitful, even more slick and evasive, and everyone like this will be eliminated. Not a single one shall remain! Those who belong to Satan will be returned to Satan, while those who belong to God will surely go in search of the truth; this is decided by their natures. Let all those who follow Satan perish! No pity will be shown to such people. Let those who search for the truth be provided for, and may they take pleasure in God's word to their hearts' content. God is righteous; He would not show favoritism to anyone. If you are a devil, then you are incapable of practicing the truth; if you are someone who searches for the truth, then it is certain that you will not be taken captive by Satan. This is beyond all doubt.

Excerpted from "A Warning to Those Who Do Not Practice the Truth" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

People who do not strive for progress always wish for others to be as negative and indolent as themselves. Those who do not practice the truth are jealous of those who do, and always try to deceive those who are muddle-headed and lack discernment. The things these people give vent to can cause you to degenerate, slip downward, develop an abnormal state, and be filled with darkness. They cause you to become distant from God, and to cherish the flesh and indulge yourself. People who do not love the truth and who are always perfunctory toward God have no self-awareness, and the disposition of such people seduces others into committing sins and defying God. They do not practice the truth, nor do they allow others to practice it. They cherish sin and have no loathing of themselves. They do not know themselves, and they stop others from knowing themselves; they also stop others from desiring the truth. Those they deceive cannot see the light. They fall into darkness, do not know themselves, are unclear about the truth, and become more and more distant from God. They do not practice the truth and they stop others from practicing the truth, bringing all those fools before them. Rather than say that they believe in God, it would be better to say that they believe in their ancestors, or that what they believe in are the idols in their hearts. It would be best for those people who claim to follow God to open their eyes and take a good look to see exactly who they believe in: Is it really God that you believe in, or Satan? If you know that what you believe in is not God, but your own idols, then it would be best if you did not claim to be a believer. If you really do not know who you believe in, then, again, it would be best if you did not claim to be a believer. To say so would be blasphemy! No one is forcing you to believe in God. Do not say you believe in Me; I have had

enough of such talk, and do not wish to hear it again, because what you believe in are the idols in your hearts and the local bullies among you. Those who shake their heads when they hear the truth, who grin when they hear talk of death, are all the spawn of Satan, and they are the ones who will be eliminated. Many in the church have no discernment. When something deceptive occurs, they unexpectedly stand on the side of Satan; they even take offense at being called Satan's lackeys. Though people might say they have no discernment, they always stand on the side without truth, they never stand on the side of the truth at the critical time, they never stand up and argue for the truth. Do they truly lack discernment? Why do they unexpectedly take the side of Satan? Why do they never say one word that is fair and reasonable in support of the truth? Has this situation genuinely arisen as a result of their momentary confusion? The less discernment people have, the less able they are to stand on the side of truth. What does this show? Does it not show that people without discernment love evil? Does it not show that they are the loyal spawn of Satan? Why is it that they are always able to stand on the side of Satan and speak its language? Their every word and deed, the expressions on their faces, are all sufficient to prove that they are not any kind of lovers of the truth; rather, they are people who detest the truth. That they can stand on the side of Satan is enough to prove that Satan really loves these petty devils who spend their lives fighting for Satan's sake. Are all these facts not abundantly clear? If you truly are a person who loves the truth, then why have you no regard for those who practice the truth, and why do you immediately follow those who do not practice the truth at the slightest look from them? What kind of problem is this? I do not care whether you have discernment or not. I do not care how great a price you have paid. I do not care how great your forces are, and I do not care whether you are a local bully or a flag-bearing leader. If your forces are great, then that is only with the help of Satan's strength. If your prestige is high, then that is merely because there are too many around you who do not practice the truth. If you have not been expelled, then that is because now is not the time for the work of expelling; rather, it is time for the work of elimination. There is no rush to expel you now. I am simply waiting for the day when I will punish you after you have been eliminated. Whoever does not practice the truth will be eliminated!

Excerpted from "A Warning to Those Who Do Not Practice the Truth" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

In their belief in God, if people do not have a heart of reverence for God, if they do not have a heart of obedience toward God, then not only will they be unable to do any work for Him, but on the contrary will become those who disturb His work and who defy Him. Believing in God but not obeying or revering Him, and instead resisting Him, is the greatest disgrace for a believer. If believers are just as casual and unrestrained in their speech and conduct as unbelievers are, then they are even more evil than unbelievers; they are archetypal demons.

Excerpted from “A Warning to Those Who Do Not Practice the Truth” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

It may be that in all your years of faith in God, you have never cursed anyone or committed a bad deed, yet in your association with Christ, you cannot speak the truth, act honestly, or obey the word of Christ; in that case, I say that you are the most sinister and malicious person in the world. You may be exceptionally amiable and devoted toward your relatives, friends, wife (or husband), sons and daughters, and parents, and never take advantage of others, but if you are incapable of compatibility with Christ, if you are unable to interact in harmony with Him, then even if you expend your all in relief to your neighbors or take meticulous care of your father, mother, and members of your household, I would say that you are still wicked, and moreover one full of cunning tricks.

Excerpted from “Those Who Are Incompatible With Christ Are Surely Opponents of God” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

What does it mean to be good-hearted? Only those who love the truth and positive things are good-hearted. Do the wicked love positive things? The wicked like evil, vicious, malicious things; they love all these things that are related to negative things. At the mention of positive things—when they are told that something is of benefit to people, that it comes from God—they do not like what they hear and become uninterested. That being so, there is no way they can be saved. No matter how well-articulated the truth, how true this way, their interest cannot be roused—but at the mention of eating, drinking, having fun, of whoring, gambling, stealing, robbing, they perk up. This is a vicious and evil disposition, there is no goodness in their hearts, and so they are incapable of loving positive things. How do they regard positive things, in their hearts? With contempt. They despise them and will make fun of them. At the mention of being honest, they think to themselves, “Honest people do nothing but suffer. I’m not going to be

honest. You're foolish for being honest, look at how arduous it is for you to perform your duty. You've never thought to give yourself a way out, you've never considered your health. Who will look after you when you're burnt out? I cannot let myself get burnt out." Some say, "We have to leave ourselves a way out; we can't keep blindly toiling on by the sweat of our brows. We have to prepare a way out, then we can just make some token effort." Talk of their own mindset makes them happy, but any mention of absolute obedience, of faithfully expending oneself and performing one's duty, disgusts them, they feel aversion to it, and it falls on deaf ears. Are such people not vicious? There is nothing but viciousness in their hearts. At the mention of the truth, and of practicing the truth, if their own interests are infringed upon they become averse, they do not want to hear it: "All day long you go on about the truth, the principles of practice, and being honest. Can being honest put food on the table? Can I make money by being honest? I can make a profit by lying." What logic is this? This is "highwayman's logic." Is this disposition not vicious? Are such people's hearts kind? (No.) Such people cannot gain the truth. Thus there is an objective to the little that they dedicate, expend and forsake. They have thought it all through: They will dedicate one part, and get back ten parts in return. Only this seems worthwhile to them. What kind of disposition is this? It is wickedness and viciousness.

Excerpted from "Only When You Know Yourself Can You Pursue the Truth" in Records of Christ's Talks

How do antichrists and the wicked get along? They generally laugh and joke around; they flatter and curry favor with each other. The wicked flock to wherever the antichrists are; they are always together, like flies following stench. No serious work is done when they are in each other's company; they just gossip about who bad-mouthed whom or who lambasted the leaders, or if they see people who displease them, they will contemplate how to squeeze them out. All they talk about is how to give others a hard time. They also discuss how to take a stand against the Above, how to know in advance if someone plans to report an issue with them, and what to do about it once they do know. Such are the matters that this pack of wicked ones talk about. Never, when together, do they fellowship about which brothers and sisters might be weak or negative, lack conviction in performing their duties, or have been deceived because of something, nor do they discuss how best to help and support those brothers and sisters, or which areas the church could do better in. When together, antichrists do not discuss ways and methods to resolve these problems; they do not talk about such matters. They only gossip about

who is unhappy with them, who is a threat to their status, who is going to report an issue with them, and who is in contact with the Above. After discussing something, antichrists then go and put it into play across the churches, and their meddling turns the churches upside down. Everyone is then thrown into a panic, and the brothers and sisters ultimately begin to be suspicious and jealous of each other, tearing each other apart and exposing one another—thereby achieving the antichrists’ goals. This is how the antichrists lead the churches. If the wicked do as they say, the antichrists protect them. If the wicked do not do as they say, then the wicked are the first to be dealt with. If those wicked ones follow the antichrists, and can be recruited and drawn in, then the antichrists will turn those wicked ones into accomplices and informers to carry out evil acts for them. They will plant those wicked ones among the other brothers and sisters to find out who has been bad-mouthing them behind their backs, who has complaints about them, who has some insights into God’s words and wants to exercise discernment about them and about certain things that might expose them for what they really are, who beneath them plans to report them, and who often wants to be in contact with the Above. They specifically keep an eye on these things, and then, when they are all together, they discuss countermeasures, deliberating on whom they can expel each day, and then making it seem official by putting it to a vote. These are the things that antichrists do; this is how they lead the churches. In locations with antichrists and the wicked, the churches reek with foul vapors. This is called the devil being in charge. Can anything good come from the devil being in charge? It can only bring calamity upon God’s chosen ones.

Excerpted from “For Leaders and Workers, Choosing a Path Is of Utmost Importance (3)” in Records of Christ’s Talks

7. What is it to follow God? What is it to follow man?

Relevant Words of God:

Of principal importance in following God is that everything should be according to the words of God today: Whether you are pursuing entry into life or the fulfillment of God’s will, everything should be centered around the words of God today. If what you commune and pursue are not centered around the words of God today, then you are a stranger to the words of

God, and totally bereft of the work of the Holy Spirit. What God wants are people who follow His footsteps. No matter how wonderful and pure what you understood before is, God does not want it, and if you are unable to put aside such things, then they will be a tremendous obstacle to your entry in the future. All those who are able to follow the present light of the Holy Spirit are blessed. The people of ages past also followed the footsteps of God, yet they could not follow until today; this is the blessing of the people of the last days. Those who can follow the present work of the Holy Spirit, and who are able to follow the footsteps of God, such that they follow God wherever He leads them—these are people who are blessed by God. Those who do not follow the present work of the Holy Spirit have not entered into the work of God's words, and no matter how much they work, or how great their suffering, or how much they run about, none of it means anything to God, and He will not commend them. Today, all those who follow the present words of God are in the stream of the Holy Spirit; those who are strangers to the words of God today are outside of the stream of the Holy Spirit, and such people are not commended by God.

Excerpted from "Know God's Newest Work and Follow His Footsteps" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Do you know what following God means? Without visions, what path would you walk? In the work of today, if you have no visions, you will not at all be able to be made complete. In whom do you believe? Why do you believe in Him? Why do you follow Him? Do you see your faith as a sort of a game? Are you handling your life as a kind of a plaything? The God of today is the greatest vision. How much of Him do you know? How much of Him have you seen? Having seen the God of today, is the foundation of your belief in God solid? Do you think that you will attain salvation as long as you follow along in this muddled way? Do you think you can catch fish in muddy water? Is it that simple? How many notions regarding the words God utters today have you set aside? Do you have a vision of the God of today? Wherein does your understanding of the God of today lie? You always believe that you can obtain Him^[a] just by following Him, or just by seeing Him, and that no one will be able to get rid of you. Do not assume that following God is such an easy matter. The key is that you must know Him, you must know His work, and you must have the will to endure hardship for His sake, to sacrifice your life for Him, and to be perfected by Him. This is the vision that you should have. It will not do if your thoughts are always bent on enjoying grace. Do not suppose that God is here just for

people's enjoyment, or just to bestow grace upon them. You would be wrong! If one cannot risk their life to follow Him, and if one cannot abandon every worldly possession to follow, then they will certainly not be able to keep following Him to the end! You must have visions as your foundation. If misfortune befalls you one day, what ought you to do? Would you still be able to follow Him? Do not say lightly whether you would be able to follow to the end. You had better first open wide your eyes to see just what time it is now. Though you may currently be like pillars of the temple, a time will come when all such pillars will be gnawed by worms, causing the temple to collapse, for at present, there are so many visions that you lack. You only pay attention to your own little worlds, and you do not know what the most reliable and appropriate way of seeking is. You do not heed the vision of the work of today, nor do you hold these things in your hearts. Have you considered that one day your God will put you in a most unfamiliar place? Can you imagine what would become of you one day when I might snatch everything from you? Would your energy on that day be as it is now? Would your faith reappear? In following God, you must know this greatest vision that is "God": This is the most important issue.

Excerpted from "You Must Understand the Work—Do Not Follow in Confusion!" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

When they have no problems, when everything is going smoothly for them, most people feel that God is mighty, and righteous, and lovely. When God tests them, deals with them, chastens them, and disciplines them, when He asks them to put aside their own interests, to turn their backs on the flesh and practice the truth, when God does work on them, and orchestrates and reigns over their fates and their lives, they become rebellious, and create estrangement between themselves and God; they create conflict and a gulf between them and God. At such times, in their hearts, God is not lovely in the least; He is not at all mighty, for what He does does not fulfill their wishes. God makes them sad; He makes them upset; He brings them pain and suffering; He makes them feel unsettled. They therefore do not submit to God at all, instead rebelling against Him and shunning Him. Are they practicing the truth by doing this? Are they following the way of God? Do they follow God? No. So, regardless of how numerous your notions and imaginings about God's work are, and regardless of how you previously acted according to your own will and rebelled against God, if you truly pursue the truth, and accept the judgment and chastisement of God's words, and accept being pruned and

dealt with by God's words; if, in everything He orchestrates, you are able to follow the way of God, obey God's words, seek His will, practice in accordance with His words and His will, are able to seek to submit, and can put all your own will, desires, considerations, motivations, and antagonism to God aside—only then are you following God! You say you follow God, but all you do, you do according to your own will. In everything you do, you have your own aims, your own plans; you do not leave it up to God. Is God still your God, then? If God is not your God, then, when you say you follow God, are these not empty words? Are such words not an attempt to fool people? You say you follow God, but all your actions and behaviors, your outlook on life, your values, and the attitude and principles with which you approach and handle matters all come from Satan—you handle all this entirely in accordance with the principles and logic of Satan. So, do you follow God?

... The simplest way to describe belief in God is trusting there is a God, and, on this foundation, following Him, obeying Him, accepting His dominion, orchestrations, and arrangements, listening to His words, living in accordance with His words, doing everything according to His words, being a true created being, and fearing Him and shunning evil; only this is true belief in God. This is what it means to follow God. You say you follow God, but, in your heart, you do not accept God's words, and you do not accept His dominion, orchestrations, and arrangements. If you always have notions of what God does, and you always misunderstand what He does, and complain about it; if you are always dissatisfied, and you always measure and approach what He does using your own notions and imaginings; if you always have your own understandings—this will cause trouble. You are not experiencing God's work, and you have no way to follow Him truly. Such is not belief in God.

Excerpted from "Belief in Religion Will Never Lead to Salvation" in Records of Christ's Talks

Peter followed Jesus for a number of years and saw much in Him that was not in other people. After following Him for a year, Peter was chosen by Jesus from among the twelve disciples. (Of course, Jesus did not speak this aloud, and others were not aware of it at all.) In life, Peter measured himself by everything Jesus did. Most notably, the messages that Jesus preached were etched in his heart. He was utterly dedicated and loyal to Jesus, and he never spoke any grievances against Him. As a result, he became Jesus' faithful companion everywhere He went. Peter observed Jesus' teachings, His gentle words, what He took for His food, His

clothing, His shelter, and how He traveled. He emulated Jesus in every regard. He was never self-righteous, but cast off all that was outdated, following Jesus' example in both word and deed. It was then that Peter felt that the heavens and earth and all things were in the hands of the Almighty and that, for this reason, he was without personal choice. Peter also assimilated all that Jesus was and used it as an example. Jesus' life shows that He was not self-righteous in what He did; instead of bragging about Himself, He moved people with love. Various things showed what Jesus was, and for this reason, Peter emulated everything about Him.

Excerpted from "On the Life of Peter" of Interpretations of the Mysteries of God's Words to the Entire Universe in The Word Appears in the Flesh

1. Man should not magnify himself, nor exalt himself. He should worship and exalt God.

.....

8. People who believe in God should obey God and worship Him. Do not exalt or look up to any person; do not put God first, the people you look up to second, and yourself third. No person should hold a place in your heart, and you should not consider people—particularly those you venerate—to be on a par with God or to be His equal. This is intolerable to God.

Excerpted from "The Ten Administrative Decrees That Must Be Obeyed by God's Chosen People in the Age of Kingdom" in The Word Appears in the Flesh

Some people do not rejoice in the truth, much less judgment. Instead, they rejoice in power and riches; such people are called power seekers. They search only for those denominations in the world with influence, and they search only for pastors and teachers that come from seminaries. Though they have accepted the way of truth, they are only half-believing; they are incapable of giving all of their hearts and minds, their mouths speak of expending themselves for God, but their eyes are focused on the great pastors and teachers, and they do not spare Christ a second glance. Their hearts are fixated upon fame, fortune, and glory. They think it out of the question that such a meager person could be capable of conquering so many, that one so unremarkable could perfect man. They think it out of the question that these nobodies among the dust and dunghills are the people chosen by God. They believe that if such people were the objects of God's salvation, then heaven and earth would be turned upside down, and all people would laugh themselves silly. They believe that if God chose such nobodies to be perfected, then

those great men would become God Himself. Their perspectives are tainted with unbelief; more than not believing, they are simply preposterous beasts. For they value only status, prestige, and power, and they esteem only large groups and denominations. They have not the slightest regard for those led by Christ; they are simply traitors who have turned their backs on Christ, on truth, and on life.

What you admire is not the humility of Christ, but those false shepherds of prominent standing. You do not adore the loveliness or wisdom of Christ, but those libertines who wallow in the filth of the world. You laugh at the pain of Christ who has no place to lay His head, but you admire those corpses that hunt for offerings and live in debauchery. You are not willing to suffer alongside Christ, but you gladly throw yourself into the arms of those reckless antichrists, though they only supply you with flesh, words, and control. Even now, your heart still turns toward them, toward their reputation, toward their status, toward their influence. And yet you continue to hold an attitude whereby you find the work of Christ hard to swallow and you are unwilling to accept it. This is why I say that you lack the faith to acknowledge Christ. The reason you have followed Him to this day is only because you had no other option. A series of lofty images are forever towering in your heart; you cannot forget their every word and deed, nor their influential words and hands. They are, in your heart, forever supreme and forever heroes. But this is not so for the Christ of today. He is forever insignificant in your heart, and forever undeserving of reverence. For He is far too ordinary, has far too little influence, and is far from lofty.

In any case, I say that all those who do not value the truth are nonbelievers and traitors to the truth. Such men shall never receive the approval of Christ. Have you now identified how much unbelief is within you, and how much betrayal of Christ you have? I exhort you thus: Since you have chosen the way of truth, then you should devote yourself wholeheartedly; do not be ambivalent or half-hearted. You should understand that God does not belong to the world nor any one person, but to all those who truly believe in Him, all those who worship Him, and all those who are devoted and faithful to Him.

Excerpted from "Are You a True Believer in God?" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

There are some people who are often deceived by those who outwardly seem spiritual, noble, lofty, and great. As for people who can speak eloquently of letters and doctrines, and

whose speech and actions seem worthy of admiration, those who are deceived by them have never looked at the essence of their actions, the principles behind their deeds, or what their goals are. Moreover, they have never looked at whether these people truly submit to God, nor have they ever determined whether or not these people genuinely fear God and shun evil. They have never discerned the essence of the humanity of these people. Rather, beginning with the first step of getting acquainted with them, they have, little by little, come to admire and venerate these people, and in the end, these people become their idols. Furthermore, in some people's minds, the idols whom they worship—and who they believe can abandon their families and jobs, and who seem superficially able to pay the price—are the ones who are truly satisfying God and who can really attain good outcomes and good destinations. In their minds, these idols are the ones whom God praises. What causes them to believe such a thing? What is the essence of this issue? What are the consequences it can lead to? Let us first discuss the matter of its essence.

Essentially, these issues regarding people's viewpoints, their methods of practice, which principles of practice they choose to adopt, and what they each tend to focus on have nothing to do with God's demands of humankind. Whether people focus on shallow matters or profound issues, or on letters and doctrines or reality, they do not adhere to that which they should adhere to most, nor do they know that which they most should know. The reason for this is that people do not like the truth at all; as such, they are not willing to put time and effort into seeking out and putting into practice the principles of practice found in God's utterances. Instead, they prefer to use shortcuts, summing up what they understand and know to be good practice and good behavior; this summary then becomes their own goal to pursue, which they take as truth to be practiced. The direct consequence of this is that people use human good behavior as a substitute for putting the truth into practice, which also satisfies their desire to curry favor with God. This gives them capital with which to contend with the truth, which they also use to reason and compete with God. At the same time, people also unscrupulously put God aside, placing the idols they admire in His stead. There is only one root cause which makes people have such ignorant actions and viewpoints, or one-sided opinions and practices—and today I will tell you about it: The reason is that, although people may follow God, pray to Him every day, and read His utterances every day, they do not actually understand His will. Herein lies the root of the problem. If someone understood God's heart and knew what He likes, what He loathes, what He wants, what He rejects, what kind of person He loves, what kind of person He dislikes, what

kind of standard He uses when making demands of people, and what kind of approach He takes for perfecting them, then could that person still have their own personal opinions? Could people like this simply go and worship someone else? Could an ordinary human become their idol? People who understand God's will possess a slightly more rational viewpoint than that. They are not going to arbitrarily idolize a corrupted person, nor will they, while walking the path of putting the truth into practice, believe that blindly adhering to a few simple rules or principles is tantamount to putting the truth into practice.

Excerpted from "How to Know God's Disposition and the Results His Work Shall Achieve" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Look at the leaders of each denomination—they are all arrogant and self-righteous, and their interpretations of the Bible lack context and are guided by their own imaginings. They all rely on gifts and erudition to do their work. If they could not preach at all, would people follow them? They do, after all, possess some knowledge and can preach on some doctrine, or they know how to win others over and make use of some artifice. They use these to bring people before themselves and deceive them. Nominally, those people believe in God, but in reality, they follow their leaders. When they encounter someone preaching the true way, some of them say, "We have to consult our leader about our faith." A human is the medium of their faith in God; is that not a problem? What have those leaders become, then? Have they not become Pharisees, false shepherds, antichrists, and stumbling blocks to people's acceptance of the true way? Such people are of the same ilk as Paul. ...

Previously, believers in God might have followed a person, or they might not have satisfied God's will; in this final stage, they will have to come before God. If your foundation is your experience of this stage of work, yet you continue to follow a person, then you are unforgivable, and will end up as Paul did.

Excerpted from "Only to Pursue the Truth Is Truly to Believe in God" in *Records of Christ's Talks*

No matter how many people believe in God, as soon as their beliefs are defined by Him as being those of a religion or group, He has already determined that they cannot be saved. Why do I say this? In a gang or crowd of people who are without the work and guidance of God, and who do not worship Him at all, whom do they worship? Whom do they follow? In form and

name, they follow a person, but whom do they essentially follow? Deep down, they acknowledge God, but in fact, they are subject to human manipulation, arrangements, and control. They follow Satan, the devil; they follow the forces that are hostile to God and that are His enemies. Would God save a pack of people such as this? (No.) Why not? Are they capable of repentance? (No.) They are incapable of repentance. They wave the flag of faith, carrying out human enterprises and conducting their own management, and they run counter to God's management plan for mankind's salvation. Their final outcome is one of being detested and rejected by God; He could not possibly save these people, they could not possibly repent, they have already been captured by Satan—they are entirely in Satan's hands. In your faith, does how many years you have believed in God matter to whether or not you are praised by Him? Do the rituals and regulations you abide by matter? Does God look at people's methods of practice? Does He look at how many people there are? He has selected one portion of mankind; how does He measure whether they can and should be saved? He bases this decision on the paths these people walk. In the Age of Grace, although the truths that God told people were less numerous than today, and not as specific, He could still perfect people at the time, and salvation was still possible. Thus, as for the people of this age who have heard many truths and have come to understand God's will, if they are incapable of following His way and unable to walk the path of salvation, then what will their final outcome be? Their final outcome will be the same as that of believers in Christianity and Judaism; there will be no difference. This is God's righteous disposition! Regardless of how many sermons you have heard or how many truths you have understood, if, ultimately, you still follow humans and Satan, and in the end, if you are still incapable of following God's way and unable to fear Him and shun evil, then such people will be detested and rejected by God. To all appearances, such people who are detested and rejected by God can talk much about letters and doctrines, and may have come to understand many truths, yet they are incapable of worshiping God; they cannot fear God and shun evil, and are incapable of total submission to Him. In God's eyes, He defines them as part of a religion, as just a group of humans—a gang of humans—and as a lodging place for Satan. They are collectively referred to as Satan's gang, and these people are utterly despised by God.

Excerpted from "Only by Constantly Living Before God Can One Walk the Path to Salvation" in Records of Christ's Talks

It would be best for those people who claim to follow God to open their eyes and take a good look to see exactly who they believe in: Is it really God that you believe in, or Satan? If you know that what you believe in is not God, but your own idols, then it would be best if you did not claim to be a believer. If you really do not know who you believe in, then, again, it would be best if you did not claim to be a believer. To say so would be blasphemy! No one is forcing you to believe in God. Do not say you believe in Me; I have had enough of such talk, and do not wish to hear it again, because what you believe in are the idols in your hearts and the local bullies among you. Those who shake their heads when they hear the truth, who grin when they hear talk of death, are all the spawn of Satan, and they are the ones who will be eliminated. Many in the church have no discernment. When something deceptive occurs, they unexpectedly stand on the side of Satan; they even take offense at being called Satan's lackeys. Though people might say they have no discernment, they always stand on the side without truth, they never stand on the side of the truth at the critical time, they never stand up and argue for the truth. Do they truly lack discernment? Why do they unexpectedly take the side of Satan? Why do they never say one word that is fair and reasonable in support of the truth? Has this situation genuinely arisen as a result of their momentary confusion? The less discernment people have, the less able they are to stand on the side of truth. What does this show? Does it not show that people without discernment love evil? Does it not show that they are the loyal spawn of Satan? Why is it that they are always able to stand on the side of Satan and speak its language? Their every word and deed, the expressions on their faces, are all sufficient to prove that they are not any kind of lovers of the truth; rather, they are people who detest the truth. That they can stand on the side of Satan is enough to prove that Satan really loves these petty devils who spend their lives fighting for Satan's sake. Are all these facts not abundantly clear? If you truly are a person who loves the truth, then why have you no regard for those who practice the truth, and why do you immediately follow those who do not practice the truth at the slightest look from them? What kind of problem is this? I do not care whether you have discernment or not. I do not care how great a price you have paid. I do not care how great your forces are, and I do not care whether you are a local bully or a flag-bearing leader. If your forces are great, then that is only with the help of Satan's strength. If your prestige is high, then that is merely because there are too many around you who do not practice the truth. If you have not been expelled, then that is because now is not the time for the work of expelling; rather, it is time for the work of elimination. There

is no rush to expel you now. I am simply waiting for the day when I will punish you after you have been eliminated. Whoever does not practice the truth will be eliminated!

Excerpted from "A Warning to Those Who Do Not Practice the Truth" in The Word Appears in the Flesh

Footnotes:

a. The original text does not contain the word "Him."

8. What is the difference between understanding the truth and understanding doctrine?

Relevant Words of God:

Coming to a genuine understanding of the actual meaning of God's words is no simple matter. Do not think this way: "I can interpret the literal meaning of God's words, and everyone says my interpretation is good, and gives me a thumbs-up, so this means I understand God's words." That is not the same as understanding God's words. If you have gained some light from within God's utterances, and you have gotten a sense of the true meaning of His words; and if you can express the intention behind His words and what effect they will ultimately achieve, then once you have a clear understanding of all of these things, you can be considered to have some level of understanding of God's words. Thus, understanding God's words is not all that simple. Just because you can give a flowery explanation of the literal meaning of God's words does not mean you understand them. No matter how much you can explain their literal meaning, your explanation is still based on human imagination and way of thinking. It is useless! How can you understand God's words? The key is to seek the truth from within them; only in that way can you truly understand what He says. Whenever God speaks, He certainly does not speak in mere generalities. Each sentence He utters contains details that are certain to be revealed further in God's words, and they may be expressed differently. Man cannot fathom the ways in which God expresses the truth. God's utterances are very profound and cannot be fathomed with human way of thinking. People can discover the entire meaning of every aspect of the truth as long as they make an effort; if you do this, then as you experience them, what details remain will be filled in completely as the Holy Spirit enlightens you, thus giving you an understanding of these concrete states. One part is understanding God's words and seeking their specific

content through reading them. Another part is understanding the implications of God's words through experiencing them and obtaining enlightenment from the Holy Spirit. It is primarily by these two means that a true understanding of God's words is achieved. If you interpret His words literally, or through the lens of your own thinking or imagination, then your understanding of God's words is not real no matter how eloquently you can interpret them. You might even take their meaning out of context and misinterpret them, and doing so is even more troublesome. Thus, the truth is primarily obtained by receiving enlightenment from the Holy Spirit through gaining knowledge of God's words. Understanding the literal meaning of His words, or being able to explain them, does not count as having gained the truth. If you only needed to interpret the literal meaning of His words, then what would be the point of the Holy Spirit's enlightenment? In that case, you would only need to have a certain level of education, and the uneducated would all be in quite a predicament. God's work is not something that can be comprehended by the human brain. A true understanding of God's words relies mainly on having enlightenment from the Holy Spirit; such is the process of gaining the truth.

Excerpted from "How to Know Man's Nature" in Records of Christ's Talks

The truth that man needs to possess is found in the word of God, and it is a truth that is the most beneficial and helpful to mankind. It is the tonic and sustenance that your body needs, something that helps man restore his normal humanity. It is a truth that man should be equipped with. The more you practice God's word, the more quickly your life will blossom, and the clearer the truth will become. As you grow in stature, you will see things of the spiritual world more clearly, and the more strength you will have to triumph over Satan. Much of the truth that you do not understand will be made clear when you practice the word of God. Most people are satisfied to merely understand the text of God's word and focus on equipping themselves with doctrines rather than on deepening their experience in practice, but is that not the way of the Pharisees? So how can the phrase, "The word of God is life" be real for them? A person's life cannot grow simply by reading God's word, but only when the word of God is put into practice. If it is your belief that to understand God's word is all that is needed to have life and stature, then your understanding is warped. Truly understanding God's word occurs when you practice the truth, and you must understand that "only by practicing the truth can it ever be understood." Today, after reading the word of God, you can merely say that you know God's

word, but you cannot say that you understand it. Some say that the only way to practice the truth is to understand it first, but this is only partially correct, and is certainly not entirely accurate. Before you have knowledge of a truth, you have not experienced that truth. Feeling that you understand something you hear in a sermon is not truly understanding—this is just taking possession of the literal words of the truth, and it is not the same as understanding the true meaning therein. Just having a superficial knowledge of the truth does not mean that you actually understand it or have knowledge about it; the true meaning of the truth comes from having experienced it. Therefore, only when you experience the truth can you understand it, and only then can you grasp the hidden parts of it. Deepening your experience is the only way to grasp the connotations, and to understand the essence of the truth.

Excerpted from “Once You Understand the Truth, You Should Put It Into Practice” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

If you have read a lot of God’s word but only understand the meaning of the text and lack direct knowledge of God’s word through your practical experiences, then you will not know God’s word. As far as you are concerned, God’s word is not life, but just lifeless letters. And if you only live in observance of lifeless letters, then you cannot grasp the essence of God’s word, nor will you understand His will. Only when you experience His word in your actual experiences will the spiritual meaning of God’s word open itself to you, and it is only through experience that you can grasp the spiritual meaning of many truths and unlock the mysteries of God’s word. If you do not put it into practice, then no matter how clear His word, all that you have grasped are empty letters and doctrines, which have become religious regulations to you. Is this not what the Pharisees did? If you practice and experience God’s word, it becomes practical to you; if you do not seek to practice it, then God’s word to you is little more than the legend of the third heaven. In fact, the process of believing in God is the process of you experiencing His word as well as being gained by Him, or to put it more clearly, to believe in God is to have the knowledge and understanding of His word and to experience and live out His word; such is the reality behind your belief in God. If you believe in God and hope for eternal life without seeking to practice the word of God as something you have within you, then you are foolish. This would be like going to a feast and only looking at the food and learning the delicious things by heart without actually tasting any of it. Would such a person not be a fool?

Excerpted from “Once You Understand the Truth, You Should Put It Into Practice” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

After having had your own experience, you can then talk about the knowledge you should have of what you experienced. In addition, you can also distinguish between those whose knowledge is real and practical and those whose knowledge is based on doctrine and worthless. So, whether the knowledge you profess accords with the truth largely depends on whether you have practical experience of it. Where there is truth in your experience, your knowledge will be practical and valuable. Through your experience, you can also gain discernment and insight, deepen your knowledge, and increase your wisdom and common sense about how you should conduct yourself. The knowledge expressed by people who do not possess the truth is doctrine, no matter how lofty it may be. This type of person may well be very intelligent when it comes to matters of the flesh but cannot make distinctions when it comes to spiritual matters. This is because such people have no experience at all of spiritual affairs. These are people who are not enlightened in spiritual affairs and do not understand spiritual matters. Whatever sort of knowledge you express, as long as it is your being, then it is your personal experience, your real knowledge. What people who speak only of doctrine—those being people who possess neither the truth nor reality—discuss can also be called their being, because they have arrived at their doctrine only through deep contemplation and it is the result of their deep rumination. Yet it is only doctrine, nothing more than imagination!

Excerpted from “God’s Work and Man’s Work” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

If a person does not pursue the truth, he will never understand it. You can say the letters and doctrines ten thousand times, but they will still just be letters and doctrines. Some people just say, “Christ is the truth, the way, and the life.” Even if you repeat these words ten thousand times, it will still be useless; you have no understanding of its meaning. Why is it said that Christ is the truth, the way, and the life? Can you articulate the knowledge you have gained about this from experience? Have you entered the reality of the truth, the way, and the life? God has uttered His words so that you can experience them and gain knowledge; merely voicing letters and doctrines is useless. You can only know yourself once you have understood and entered God’s words. If you do not understand God’s words, then you cannot know yourself. You can

only discern when you have the truth; without the truth, you cannot discern. You can only fully understand a matter when you have the truth; without the truth, you cannot understand a matter. You can only know yourself when you have the truth; without the truth, you cannot know yourself. Your disposition can only change when you have the truth; without the truth, your disposition cannot change. Only after you have the truth can you serve in accordance with God's will; without the truth, you cannot serve in accordance with God's will. Only after you have the truth can you worship God; without the truth, your worship will be nothing more than a performance of religious rites. All of these things hinge on gaining the truth from God's words.

Excerpted from "How to Know Man's Nature" in Records of Christ's Talks

You have deviated in your summing up the truth; after you do all this summing up, it has yielded only rules. Your "summing up the truth" is not done so that people gain life or attain changes in their dispositions from the truth. Instead, it causes people to master some knowledge and doctrines from within the truth. They appear to have understood the purpose behind God's work, when actually they have only mastered some words and doctrines. They do not understand the intended meaning of the truth; it is no different from studying theology or reading the Bible. You compile these books or those materials, and so people become in possession of this aspect of doctrine and that aspect of knowledge. They are first rate speakers of doctrines—but what happens when they are done speaking? They are incapable of experiencing, they have no understanding of God's work, nor do they have any understanding of themselves. Ultimately, all they will have gained are formulas and rules, and they can talk about those few things but nothing else. If God did something new, would you be able to match up all the doctrines that you know with that? Those things of yours are just rules and you are just having people study theology, not allowing them to experience the word of God or the truth. Therefore, those books that you compile can bring others only into theology and knowledge, into new formulas, and into rules and conventions. They cannot bring people before God or allow them to understand the truth or God's will. You are thinking that by raising those questions one after another, which you then answer and for which you write down outlines and summaries, brothers and sisters will find it easy to understand, and you think that apart from being easy to remember, these issues are clear at a glance, and that this is a great way of doing things. But what people are understanding is not the real intended meaning of the truth and

does not match up with reality—it is just words and doctrines. So it would be better if you did not do these things at all. Doing this is leading people to understand and master knowledge. You bring others into the doctrines, into religion, and have them follow and believe in God within religious doctrines. Isn't that being just like Paul? You think that mastering knowledge of the truth is particularly important, and so is learning by heart many passages of God's words. But how people understand the word of God is not important at all. You think it is extremely important for people to be able to memorize many of God's words, to be able to speak much doctrine and to discover many formulas within God's words. Therefore, you always want to systematize these things so that everyone is singing from the same hymn sheet, saying the same things, and talking about the same doctrines, so they have the same knowledge and keep the same rules—this is your objective. Your doing this appears to be for the sake of people gaining understanding, when on the contrary you have no idea that this is bringing people into the midst of rules that are outside of God's word the truth. To allow people to have a real understanding of the truth, you must link it up with reality and with the work, and solve practical problems according to God's word the truth. Only in this way can people understand the truth and enter into reality, and only achieving such a result is really bringing people before God. If all you talk about are spiritual theories, doctrines, and rules, if you only put effort into the literal words, all you can achieve is getting people to say the same things and follow rules, but you will not be able to guide people to understand the truth. You will be particularly unable to have people better understand themselves, and achieve repentance and transformation. If being able to talk about spiritual theories could substitute for people's entering the truth reality, then you would not be needed to lead the churches.

Excerpted from "Without the Truth, One Is Liable to Offend God" in Records of Christ's Talks

People who do not understand or love the truth often take the truth as an interpretation, as theory—and what becomes of them? When they encounter an issue, after having believed in God for years, they cannot see it for what it really is, nor are they able to submit, or seek the truth; when people fellowship with them, they answer with their "famous words of wisdom": "Save it—I understand everything. I was preaching before you could even walk!" These are their famous words. If they understand everything, why can they not handle it when they encounter an issue? If you understand it, why are you unable to put it into practice? Why does the issue

trip you up, why do you get stuck on it? Do you understand or not? If you understand, why can you not obey? If you understand, why can you not accept it? What is the first thing people should do after understanding the truth? They should obey, and nothing else. Some people say, “I understand everything. No one should fellowship with me—I don’t need anyone’s help.” They can forgo the help of others, but it is a pity that, when they are weak, the doctrine they understand is totally useless, and they even stop performing their duty. Some do not even want to believe in God anymore. They spent all those years preaching theological theory, but they give up their faith and retreat at the drop of a hat. Is there stature in this? (No.) And no stature means no life. If you had life, why would you be unable to handle it when you encountered that minor issue? Are you not good at talking? So have a go at convincing yourself; if you cannot even convince yourself, so just what do you understand? Is it the truth? The truth can solve people’s real problems and can also solve people’s corrupt dispositions. Why can the “truths” you understand not even solve your own difficulties? So just what is it you understand? It is doctrine.

Excerpted from “For Leaders and Workers, Choosing a Path Is of Utmost Importance (7)” in Records of Christ’s Talks

9. How are positive and negative things discerned from each other?

Relevant Words of God:

What are positive things? All that directly comes from God is positive; the disposition of man, however, has been processed by Satan, and cannot represent God. Only the love, the will to suffer, the righteousness, submission, and humbleness and hiddenness of the incarnate God directly represent God. This is because when He came, He came without a sinful nature and came directly from God, without having been processed by Satan. Jesus is only in the likeness of sinful flesh and does not represent sin; therefore, His actions, deeds, and words, up to the time prior to His accomplishment of the work through crucifixion (including the moment of His crucifixion), are all directly representative of God.

Excerpted from “Corrupt Man Is Incapable of Representing God” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

God Himself possesses no elements of disobedience; His essence is good. He is the expression of all beauty and goodness, as well as all love. Even in the flesh, God does not do anything that disobeys God the Father. Even at the expense of sacrificing His life, He would be wholeheartedly willing to do so, and He would make no other choice. God possesses no elements of self-righteousness or self-importance, or those of conceit and arrogance; He possesses no elements of crookedness. Everything that disobeys God comes from Satan; Satan is the source of all ugliness and wickedness. The reason that man has qualities similar to those of Satan is because man has been corrupted and processed by Satan. Christ has not been corrupted by Satan, hence He possesses only the characteristics of God, and none of the characteristics of Satan.

Excerpted from “The Essence of Christ Is Obedience to the Will of the Heavenly Father” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The disposition of God is one that belongs to the Ruler of all things and living beings, to the Lord of all creation. His disposition represents honor, power, nobility, greatness, and most of all, supremacy. His disposition is the symbol of authority, the symbol of all that is righteous, the symbol of all that is beautiful and good. More than that, it is a symbol of Him who cannot be^[a] overcome or invaded by the darkness and any enemy force, as well as a symbol of Him who cannot be offended (nor will He tolerate being offended)^[b] by any created being. His disposition is the symbol of the highest power. No person or persons can or may disturb His work or His disposition. But the personality of man is no more than a mere symbol of the slight superiority of man over beast. Man in and of himself has no authority, no autonomy, and no ability to transcend the self, but is in his essence one who cowers at the mercy of all manner of people, events, and things. The joy of God is due to the existence and emergence of righteousness and light, because of the destruction of darkness and evil. He takes delight in bringing the light and a good life to mankind; His joy is a righteous joy, a symbol of the existence of all that is positive and, even more, a symbol of auspiciousness. The anger of God is due to the harm that the existence and interference of injustice brings upon His mankind, because of the existence of evil and darkness, because of the existence of things that drive out the truth, and even more, because of the existence of things that oppose what is good and beautiful. His anger is a symbol that all things negative no longer exist and, even more than that, it is a symbol of His holiness.

His sorrow is due to mankind, for whom He has hopes but who has fallen into darkness, because the work He does on man does not come up to His expectations, and because the mankind He loves cannot all live in the light. He feels sorrow for the innocent mankind, for the honest but ignorant man, and for the man who is good but lacking in his own views. His sorrow is a symbol of His goodness and of His mercy, a symbol of beauty and of kindness. His happiness, of course, comes from defeating His enemies and gaining the good faith of man. More than this, it arises from the expulsion and destruction of all enemy forces, and because mankind receives a good and peaceful life. The happiness of God is unlike the joy of man; rather, it is the feeling of garnering good fruits, a feeling even greater than joy. His happiness is a symbol of mankind breaking free of suffering from this time forth, and a symbol of mankind entering a world of light. The emotions of mankind, on the other hand, all arise for the sake of his own interests, not for righteousness, light, or what is beautiful, and least of all for the grace bestowed by Heaven. The emotions of mankind are selfish and belong to the world of darkness. They do not exist for the sake of the will, much less for the plan of God, and so man and God can never be spoken of in the same breath. God is forever supreme and ever honorable, while man is forever base, forever worthless. This is because God is forever making sacrifices and devoting Himself to mankind; man, however, forever takes and strives only for himself. God is forever taking pains for mankind's survival, yet man never contributes anything for the sake of the light or for righteousness. Even if man makes an effort for a time, it is so weak that it cannot withstand a single blow, for the effort of man is always for his own sake and not for others. Man is always selfish, while God is forever selfless. God is the source of all that is just, good, and beautiful, while man is he who succeeds to and makes manifest all ugliness and evil. God will never alter His essence of righteousness and beauty, yet man is perfectly capable, at any time and in any situation, of betraying righteousness and straying far from God.

Excerpted from "It Is Very Important to Understand God's Disposition" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Whether the words spoken by God be plain or profound in outward appearance, they are all truths indispensable to man as he enters into life; they are the fount of living waters that enables man to survive in both spirit and flesh. They provide what man needs to stay alive; the principles and creed for conducting his daily life; the path, goal, and direction through which he must pass in order to receive salvation; every truth that he should possess as a created being

before God; and every truth about how man obeys and worships God. They are the guarantee that ensures man's survival, they are man's daily bread, and they are also the sturdy support that enables man to be strong and stand up. They are rich in the truth reality of normal humanity as it is lived out by created mankind, rich in the truth by which mankind breaks free from corruption and eludes Satan's snares, rich in the tireless teaching, exhortation, encouragement, and solace that the Creator gives to created humanity. They are the beacon that guides and enlightens men to understand all that is positive, the guarantee which ensures that men will live out and come into possession of all that is righteous and good, the criterion by which all people, events, and objects are measured, and also the navigation marker that leads men toward salvation and the path of light.

Excerpted from "Knowing God Is the Path to Fearing God and Shunning Evil" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Satan builds its reputation through deceiving people, and often establishes itself as a vanguard and role model of righteousness. Under false pretenses of safeguarding righteousness, it harms people, devours their souls, and uses all sorts of means to benumb, deceive and incite man. Its goal is to make man approve of and go along with its evil conduct, to make man join it in opposing God's authority and sovereignty. However, when one sees through its schemes and plots and sees through to its vile features, and when one does not wish to continue to be trampled upon and fooled by it or to continue slaving away for it, or to be punished and destroyed alongside it, then Satan changes its previously saintly features and tears off its false mask to reveal its true face, which is evil, vicious, ugly and savage. It would love nothing more than to exterminate all those who refuse to follow it and who oppose its evil forces. At this point Satan can no longer assume a trustworthy, gentlemanly appearance; instead, its true ugly and devilish features are revealed under sheep's clothing. Once Satan's schemes are brought to light and its true features exposed, it will fly into a rage and expose its barbarity. After this, its desire to harm and devour people will only be intensified. This is because it is enraged when man awakens to the truth, and it develops a powerful vindictiveness toward man for their aspiration to yearn for freedom and light and to break free of its prison. Its rage is intended to defend and uphold its evil, and it is also a true revelation of its savage nature.

In every matter, Satan's behavior exposes its evil nature. Out of all the evil acts that Satan has carried out upon man—from its early efforts to delude man into following it, to its exploitation of man, in which it drags man into its evil deeds, to its vindictiveness toward man after its true features have been exposed and man has recognized and forsaken it—not one of these acts fails to expose Satan's evil essence, nor to prove the fact that Satan has no relation to positive things and that Satan is the source of all evil things. Every single one of its actions safeguards its evil, maintains the continuation of its evil acts, goes against just and positive things, and ruins the laws and order of humanity's normal existence. These acts of Satan are hostile to God, and they will be destroyed by God's wrath. Although Satan has its own rage, its rage is just a means of venting its evil nature. The reason why Satan is exasperated and furious is this: Its unspeakable schemes have been exposed; its plots are not easily gotten away with; its wild ambition and desire to replace God and act as God have been struck down and blocked; and its goal of controlling all of humanity has now come to nothing and can never be achieved. What has stopped Satan's plots from coming to fruition and cut short the spread and rampancy of Satan's evil is God's repeated summoning of His wrath, time after time. For this reason, Satan both hates and fears God's wrath. Each time God's wrath descends, it not only unmasks Satan's true vile appearance, but also exposes Satan's evil desires to the light, and in the process, the reasons for Satan's rage against humanity are laid bare. The eruption of Satan's rage is a true revelation of its evil nature and an exposure of its schemes. Of course, each time that Satan is enraged heralds the destruction of evil things and the protection and continuation of positive things; it heralds the truth that God's wrath cannot be offended!

Excerpted from "God Himself, the Unique II" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Those who are of the devil all live for themselves. Their life view and maxims mainly come from Satan's sayings, such as, "Everyone for himself and the devil take the hindmost." The words spoken by those devil kings, great ones, and philosophers of the earth have become man's very life. In particular, most of the words of Confucius, who is touted by Chinese people to be a "sage," have become man's life. There are also the famous proverbs of Buddhism and Taoism, and the oft-quoted classic sayings of various famous figures; these are all outlines of Satan's philosophies and Satan's nature. They are also the best illustrations and explanations of Satan's nature. These poisons that have been infused into the heart of man all come from Satan; not

the least bit of them comes from God. Such devilish words are also in direct opposition to God's word. It is absolutely clear that the realities of all positive things come from God, and all those negative things that poison man come from Satan. Therefore, you can discern a person's nature and to whom he belongs from his life view and values. Satan corrupts people through the education and influence of national governments and of the famous and great. Their devilish words have become man's life and nature. "Everyone for himself and the devil take the hindmost" is a well-known satanic saying that has been instilled into everyone, and that has become man's life. There are other words of philosophies for living that are also like this. Satan uses each nation's fine traditional culture to educate people, causing mankind to fall into and be engulfed by a boundless abyss of destruction, and in the end people are destroyed by God because they serve Satan and resist God. Imagine asking someone who has been active in society for decades the following question: "Given that you have lived in the world for so long and achieved so much, what are the main famous sayings that you live by?" He might say, "The most important one is, 'Officials do not strike gift-givers, and those who do not flatter accomplish nothing.'" Are these words not representative of that person's nature? Unscrupulously using any means to obtain position has become his nature, and being an official is what gives him life. There are still many satanic poisons in people's lives, in their conduct and behavior; they possess almost no truth at all. For example, their philosophies for living, their ways of doing things, and their maxims are all filled with the poisons of the great red dragon, and they all come from Satan. Thus, all things that flow through people's bones and blood are all things of Satan. All of those officials, those who hold power, and those who are accomplished have their own paths and secrets to success. Are such secrets not perfectly representative of their nature? They have done such big things in the world, and no one can see through the schemes and intrigues that lay behind them. This shows just how insidious and venomous their nature is. Mankind has been profoundly corrupted by Satan. Satan's venom flows through the blood of every person, and it can be seen that man's nature is corrupt, evil, and reactionary, filled by and immersed in the philosophies of Satan—it is, in its entirety, a nature that betrays God. This is why people resist God and stand in opposition to God.

Excerpted from "How to Know Man's Nature" in Records of Christ's Talks

Knowledge of ancient culture has surreptitiously stolen man from the presence of God and turned him over to the king of devils and its progeny. The Four Books and Five Classics^[c] have taken man's thinking and notions into another age of rebellion, causing him to give even greater adulation than before to those who compiled the Book/Classic of Documents, and as a result to further exacerbate his notions about God. Unbeknownst to man, the king of devils heartlessly cast God out from his heart and then occupied it itself with triumphant glee. Since that time, man became possessed of an ugly and wicked soul and of the countenance of the king of devils. A hatred of God filled his chest, and the spiteful malice of the king of devils spread within man day after day until he was utterly consumed. Man no longer had the least bit of freedom and had no way of breaking free from the toils of the king of devils. He had no choice but to be taken captive on the spot, to surrender and fall down in submission in its presence. Long ago, when man's heart and soul was still in its infancy, the king of devils planted in it the seed of the tumor of atheism, teaching him such fallacies as "study science and technology; realize the Four Modernizations; and there is no such thing as God in the world." Not only that, it shouts out at every opportunity: "Let us rely on our industrious labor to build a beautiful homeland," asking each and every person to be prepared from childhood to render faithful service to their country. Man, unwitting, was brought into its presence, where it unhesitatingly arrogated all the credit (meaning the credit belonging to God for holding all of mankind in His hands) unto itself. Never did it have any sense of shame. Moreover, it shamelessly seized God's people and dragged them back into its house, where it leaped like a mouse onto the table and had man worship it as God. What a desperado! It cries out scandalous, shocking things, such as: "There is no such thing as God in the world. The wind comes from transformations according to natural laws; rain comes when water vapor, meeting with cold temperatures, condenses into drops that fall to earth; an earthquake is the shaking of the surface of the earth due to geological changes; drought is due to dryness in the air caused by nucleonic disruption on the sun's surface. These are natural phenomena. Where, in all this, is there an act of God?" There are even those who shout out statements like the following, statements that should not be given voice: "Man evolved from apes in the ancient past, and the world today comes from a succession of primitive societies starting from approximately an eon ago. Whether a country flourishes or declines rests entirely in the hands of its people." In the background, it makes man hang it on the wall or place it on the table to pay homage and make offerings to it. At the same time that it cries out, "There is no

God,” it sets itself up as God, with summary roughness pushing God out of the bounds of the earth, while standing in God’s place and taking up the role of the king of devils. How utterly lost to reason! It makes one hate it to the very bone. It seems that God and it are sworn enemies, and the two cannot coexist. It schemes to chase God away while it roams free, outside the reach of law.^[1] Such a king of devils it is! How can its existence be tolerated? It will not rest until it has made a mess of God’s work and left it all in a complete shambles,^[2] as if it wants to oppose God to the bitter end, until either the fish dies or the net breaks, deliberately setting itself against God and pressing in ever closer. Its hideous face having long since been completely unmasked, it is now bruised and battered^[3] and in a sorry condition, yet still it will not relent in its hatred of God, as if only by devouring God in one mouthful will it be able to relieve the hatred pent up in its heart. How can we tolerate it, this enemy of God! Only its eradication and complete extermination will bring our life’s wish to fruition. How can it be allowed to continue running rampant? It has corrupted man to such a degree that man does not know the heavensun, and has become deadened and devoid of feeling. Man has lost normal human reason. Why not offer up our whole being to destroy it and burn it up to eliminate all worries for the future and allow the work of God to sooner reach unprecedented splendor? This gang of scoundrels has come into the world of men and reduced it to turmoil. They have brought all of humanity to the edge of a precipice, secretly planning to push them over to be dashed to pieces so that they may then devour their corpses. They vainly hope to break up God’s plan and enter into a match with Him, staking everything on a single throw of the dice.^[4] That is by no means easy! The cross has been prepared, after all, for the king of devils, who is guilty of the most heinous crimes. God does not belong to the cross. He has already tossed it aside for the devil. God has long before now emerged victorious and no longer feels sorrow over the sins of mankind, but will bring salvation to all mankind.

From top to bottom and from beginning to end, Satan has been disrupting the work of God and acting in opposition to Him. All this talk of “ancient cultural heritage,” valuable “knowledge of ancient culture,” “teachings of Taoism and Confucianism,” and “Confucian classics and feudal rites” has taken man into hell. Advanced modern-day science and technology, as well as highly developed industry, agriculture, and business are nowhere to be seen. Rather, all it does is emphasize the feudal rites propagated by the “apes” of ancient times in order to deliberately disrupt, oppose, and dismantle the work of God. Not only has it continued to afflict man until

this day, but it even wants to swallow^[5] man whole. The transmission of the moral and ethical teachings of feudalism and the passing down of the knowledge of ancient culture have long infected humanity, turning them into devils big and small. Few are those who would gladly receive God, few who would jubilantly welcome His coming. The face of all humanity is filled with murderous intent, and in every place, a killing breath pervades the air. They seek to cast God out from this land; with knives and swords in hand, they arrange themselves in battle formation to “annihilate” God.

Excerpted from “Work and Entry (7)” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Since mankind’s contrivance of the social sciences, the mind of man has become occupied by science and knowledge. Science and knowledge then have become tools for the ruling of mankind, and there is no longer sufficient room for man to worship God, and no more favorable conditions for the worship of God. The position of God has sunk ever lower in the heart of man. Without God in his heart, man’s inner world is dark, hopeless and empty. Subsequently many social scientists, historians, and politicians have come to the fore to express theories of social science, the theory of human evolution, and other theories that contradict the truth that God created man, to fill the hearts and minds of mankind. And in this way, those who believe that God created everything have become ever fewer, and those who believe in the theory of evolution have become ever greater in number. More and more people treat the records of the work of God and His words during the age of the Old Testament as myths and legends. In their hearts, people become indifferent to the dignity and greatness of God, to the tenet that God exists and holds dominion over all things. The survival of mankind and the fate of countries and nations are no longer important to them, and man lives in a hollow world concerned only with eating, drinking, and the pursuit of pleasure. ... Few people take it upon themselves to seek out where God does His work today, or to look for how He presides over and arranges the destination of man. And in this way, unbeknownst to man, human civilization becomes less and less able to hew to man’s wishes, and there are even many people who feel that, living in such a world, they are less happy than those who have already passed away. Even people of countries that used to be highly civilized air such grievances. For without the guidance of God, no matter how much rulers and sociologists wrack their brains to preserve human civilization, it is to no avail. No one can fill the emptiness in man’s heart, for no one can be the life of man, and no

social theory can free man from the emptiness with which he is afflicted. Science, knowledge, freedom, democracy, leisure, comfort: these bring man only a temporary consolation. Even with these things, man will inevitably sin and bemoan the injustices of society. These things cannot restrain man's craving and desire to explore. This is because man was made by God and the senseless sacrifices and explorations of man can only lead to more distress and can only cause man to exist in a constant state of fear, not knowing how to face the future of mankind or how to face the path that lies ahead. Man will even come to fear science and knowledge, and fear even more the feeling of emptiness. In this world, regardless of whether you live in a free country or one without human rights, you are utterly incapable of escaping the fate of mankind. Whether you are the ruler or the ruled, you are utterly incapable of escaping the desire to explore the fate, mysteries, and destination of mankind, much less are you capable of escaping the bewildering sense of emptiness. Such phenomena, which are common to all of mankind, are called social phenomena by sociologists, yet no great man can come forth to solve such problems. Man, after all, is man, and the position and life of God cannot be replaced by any man. Mankind does not just require a fair society in which everyone is well-fed and is equal and free; what mankind needs is the salvation of God and His provision of life to them. Only when man receives God's provision of life and His salvation can the needs, the yearning to explore, and the spiritual emptiness of man be resolved. If the people of a country or a nation are unable to receive the salvation and care of God, then such a country or nation will tread the road to ruin, toward darkness, and shall be annihilated by God.

Excerpted from "God Presides Over the Fate of All Mankind" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Satan corrupts man through social trends. "Social trends" include many things. Some people say: "Does it mean the latest fashions, cosmetics, hairstyles, and gourmet foods?" Are these things considered social trends? They make up one part of social trends, but we will not be talking about them here. We only wish to talk about the ideas that social trends bring about in people, the way they cause people to conduct themselves in the world, and the life goals and outlook that they bring about in people. These are very important; they can control and influence man's state of mind. These trends arise one after another, and they all carry an evil influence that continually debases mankind, causing people to lose conscience, humanity and reason, weakening their morals and their quality of character ever more, to the extent that we

can even say that the majority of people now have no integrity, no humanity, and neither do they have any conscience, much less any reason. So what are these trends? They are trends that you cannot see with the naked eye. When a new trend sweeps through the world, perhaps only a small number of people are on the cutting edge, acting as the trendsetters. They start off doing some new thing, then accepting some kind of idea or some kind of perspective. The majority of people, however, will be continually infected, assimilated, and attracted by this kind of trend in a state of unawareness, until they all unknowingly and involuntarily accept it and become submerged in it and controlled by it. One after another, such trends cause people, who are not of sound body and mind, do not know what the truth is, and cannot differentiate between positive and negative things, to happily accept them as well as the life views and values that come from Satan. They accept what Satan tells them about how to approach life and the way to live that Satan “bestows” on them, and they have neither the strength nor the ability, much less the awareness, to resist.

Excerpted from “God Himself, the Unique VI” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

In His expression of the truth, God expresses His disposition and essence; His expression of the truth is not based on mankind’s summaries of the various positive things and statements that mankind recognizes. God’s words are God’s words; God’s words are truth. They are the foundation and the law by which mankind should exist, and those so-called tenets that originate with humanity are condemned by God. They do not meet with His approval, and less still are they the origin or basis of His utterances. God expresses His disposition and His essence through His words. All the words brought forth by God’s expression are truth, for He has the essence of God, and He is the reality of all positive things. The fact that God’s words are truth never alters, no matter how this corrupt mankind positions them or defines them, nor how it views them or understands them. No matter how many words of God have been spoken, and no matter how much this corrupt, sinful mankind condemns them, even unto not disseminating them, and even to the point of their meeting with the contempt of corrupt mankind—even in these circumstances, there remains a fact that cannot be changed: The so-called culture and traditions that mankind values, even given the reasons listed above, cannot become positive things, and cannot become the truth. This is unalterable.

Mankind's traditional culture and way of existence will not become truth because of the changes or passage of time, and neither will the words of God become the words of man due to mankind's condemnation or forgetfulness. This essence will never change; truth is always truth. What fact exists herein? All those sayings that are summarized by mankind originate in Satan — they are human imaginings and notions, even arising from human hot-bloodedness, and have nothing at all to do with positive things. The words of God, on the other hand, are expressions of God's essence and status. For what reason does He express these words? Why do I say they are truth? The reason is that God rules over all the laws, principles, roots, essences, actualities, and mysteries of all things, and they are grasped in His hand, and God alone knows all the principles, actualities, facts, and mysteries of all things; He knows their origins and what their roots really are. Therefore, only the definitions of all things mentioned in the words of God are most accurate, and the requirements for mankind within God's words are the only standard for mankind—the only criteria by which mankind should exist. Nevertheless, the laws by which mankind exists are derived, in one regard, from a violation of the fact of God's rule over all things, and in another regard from a violation of the fact of God's sovereignty over the laws of all things. They come from man's imaginings and notions, and come also from Satan. What sort of role does Satan play? First, Satan impersonates the truth; second, it destroys, disturbs, and tramples all the principles and laws of God's creation of all things. Thus, things that come from Satan match its essence precisely, and are full of Satan's wicked intentions, temptations, and disguises, as well as Satan's never-ending ambition. These will never become truth, regardless of whether corrupt mankind can discern them, regardless of the degree to which corrupt mankind accepts them, and regardless of the longevity of the era during which corrupt mankind admires them, worships them, and preaches them, and regardless, too, of how many people admire, worship, and preach them. They will never become truth, and will always remain negative things, for their essence, origin, and root is Satan, the Satan that is the enemy of God and in enmity with truth. When there is no truth against which to contrast them, they may pretend that they are good and that they are positive, but when the truth is used to dissect and expose them, they are not without vulnerabilities. They cannot stand fast, and they are things quickly condemned, exposed, and cast aside. The truth God expresses is exactly in line with the needs of mankind's normal humanity, which God created, while what Satan gives man is in precise violation of those needs. It makes a normal person abnormal, immoderate, narrow-

minded, arrogant, foolish, evil, hard, vicious, and, above all, insufferably arrogant. At a certain point, that person becomes mentally deranged, no longer even knowing who they are. They refuse to be normal people but must act as non-normal human beings; they refuse to be ordinary people but insist instead on becoming superior human beings—and thus is people’s humanity warped, and thus are their instincts warped. Truth makes people more able to live instinctually in accordance with the principles and laws of normal humanity and all the principles that God has dictated, whereas these so-called sayings and laws of Satan are precisely what cause people to violate their instincts and try to escape the laws that God has decreed and dictated, and even abandon the path of normal humanity, doing immoderate things that people with normal humanity should not do and of which they should not think.

Excerpted from “On What the Truth Is” in Records of Christ’s Talks

Footnotes:

1. “Roams free, outside the reach of law” indicates that the devil goes berserk and runs amok.
2. “A complete shambles” refers to how the devil’s violent behavior is unbearable to see.
3. “Bruised and battered” refers to the ugly face of the king of devils.
4. “Staking everything on a single throw of the dice” means placing all one’s money on a single bet in hopes of winning in the end. This is a metaphor for the devil’s sinister and nefarious schemes. The expression is used mockingly.
5. “Swallow” refers to the vicious behavior of the king of devils, which ravishes people in their entirety.
 - a. The original text reads “it is a symbol of being unable to be.”
 - b. The original text reads “as well as a symbol of being unable to be offended (and not tolerating being offended).”
 - c. The Four Books and Five Classics are the authoritative books of Confucianism in China.

10. What things are included in heresy and fallacy? How can various heresies and fallacies be identified?

Relevant Words of God:

Since mankind's contrivance of the social sciences, the mind of man has become occupied by science and knowledge. Science and knowledge then have become tools for the ruling of mankind, and there is no longer sufficient room for man to worship God, and no more favorable conditions for the worship of God. The position of God has sunk ever lower in the heart of man. Without God in his heart, man's inner world is dark, hopeless and empty. Subsequently many social scientists, historians, and politicians have come to the fore to express theories of social science, the theory of human evolution, and other theories that contradict the truth that God created man, to fill the hearts and minds of mankind. And in this way, those who believe that God created everything have become ever fewer, and those who believe in the theory of evolution have become ever greater in number. More and more people treat the records of the work of God and His words during the age of the Old Testament as myths and legends. In their hearts, people become indifferent to the dignity and greatness of God, to the tenet that God exists and holds dominion over all things. The survival of mankind and the fate of countries and nations are no longer important to them, and man lives in a hollow world concerned only with eating, drinking, and the pursuit of pleasure. ... Few people take it upon themselves to seek out where God does His work today, or to look for how He presides over and arranges the destination of man. And in this way, unbeknownst to man, human civilization becomes less and less able to hew to man's wishes, and there are even many people who feel that, living in such a world, they are less happy than those who have already passed away. Even people of countries that used to be highly civilized air such grievances. For without the guidance of God, no matter how much rulers and sociologists wrack their brains to preserve human civilization, it is to no avail. No one can fill the emptiness in man's heart, for no one can be the life of man, and no social theory can free man from the emptiness with which he is afflicted. Science, knowledge, freedom, democracy, leisure, comfort: these bring man only a temporary consolation. Even with these things, man will inevitably sin and bemoan the injustices of society. These things cannot restrain man's craving and desire to explore. This is because man was made by God and the senseless sacrifices and explorations of man can only lead to more distress and can only cause man to exist in a constant state of fear, not knowing how to face the future of mankind or how to face the path that lies ahead. Man will even come to fear science and knowledge, and fear even more the feeling of emptiness. In this world, regardless of whether you live in a free country or one without human rights, you are utterly incapable of escaping the fate of mankind.

Whether you are the ruler or the ruled, you are utterly incapable of escaping the desire to explore the fate, mysteries, and destination of mankind, much less are you capable of escaping the bewildering sense of emptiness. Such phenomena, which are common to all of mankind, are called social phenomena by sociologists, yet no great man can come forth to solve such problems. Man, after all, is man, and the position and life of God cannot be replaced by any man. Mankind does not just require a fair society in which everyone is well-fed and is equal and free; what mankind needs is the salvation of God and His provision of life to them. Only when man receives God's provision of life and His salvation can the needs, the yearning to explore, and the spiritual emptiness of man be resolved. If the people of a country or a nation are unable to receive the salvation and care of God, then such a country or nation will tread the road to ruin, toward darkness, and shall be annihilated by God.

Excerpted from "God Presides Over the Fate of All Mankind" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Knowledge of ancient culture has surreptitiously stolen man from the presence of God and turned him over to the king of devils and its progeny. The Four Books and Five Classics^[a] have taken man's thinking and notions into another age of rebellion, causing him to give even greater adulation than before to those who compiled the Book/Classic of Documents, and as a result to further exacerbate his notions about God. Unbeknownst to man, the king of devils heartlessly cast God out from his heart and then occupied it itself with triumphant glee. Since that time, man became possessed of an ugly and wicked soul and of the countenance of the king of devils. A hatred of God filled his chest, and the spiteful malice of the king of devils spread within man day after day until he was utterly consumed. Man no longer had the least bit of freedom and had no way of breaking free from the toils of the king of devils. He had no choice but to be taken captive on the spot, to surrender and fall down in submission in its presence. Long ago, when man's heart and soul was still in its infancy, the king of devils planted in it the seed of the tumor of atheism, teaching him such fallacies as "study science and technology; realize the Four Modernizations; and there is no such thing as God in the world." Not only that, it shouts out at every opportunity: "Let us rely on our industrious labor to build a beautiful homeland," asking each and every person to be prepared from childhood to render faithful service to their country. Man, unwitting, was brought into its presence, where it unhesitatingly arrogated all the credit (meaning the credit belonging to God for holding all of mankind in His hands) unto itself. Never

did it have any sense of shame. Moreover, it shamelessly seized God's people and dragged them back into its house, where it leaped like a mouse onto the table and had man worship it as God. What a desperado! It cries out scandalous, shocking things, such as: "There is no such thing as God in the world. The wind comes from transformations according to natural laws; rain comes when water vapor, meeting with cold temperatures, condenses into drops that fall to earth; an earthquake is the shaking of the surface of the earth due to geological changes; drought is due to dryness in the air caused by nucleonic disruption on the sun's surface. These are natural phenomena. Where, in all this, is there an act of God?" There are even those who shout out statements like the following, statements that should not be given voice: "Man evolved from apes in the ancient past, and the world today comes from a succession of primitive societies starting from approximately an eon ago. Whether a country flourishes or declines rests entirely in the hands of its people." In the background, it makes man hang it on the wall or place it on the table to pay homage and make offerings to it. At the same time that it cries out, "There is no God," it sets itself up as God, with summary roughness pushing God out of the bounds of the earth, while standing in God's place and taking up the role of the king of devils. How utterly lost to reason! ...

From top to bottom and from beginning to end, Satan has been disrupting the work of God and acting in opposition to Him. All this talk of "ancient cultural heritage," valuable "knowledge of ancient culture," "teachings of Taoism and Confucianism," and "Confucian classics and feudal rites" has taken man into hell. Advanced modern-day science and technology, as well as highly developed industry, agriculture, and business are nowhere to be seen. Rather, all it does is emphasize the feudal rites propagated by the "apes" of ancient times in order to deliberately disrupt, oppose, and dismantle the work of God. Not only has it continued to afflict man until this day, but it even wants to swallow^[1] man whole. The transmission of the moral and ethical teachings of feudalism and the passing down of the knowledge of ancient culture have long infected humanity, turning them into devils big and small. Few are those who would gladly receive God, few who would jubilantly welcome His coming. The face of all humanity is filled with murderous intent, and in every place, a killing breath pervades the air. They seek to cast God out from this land; with knives and swords in hand, they arrange themselves in battle formation to "annihilate" God.

Excerpted from "Work and Entry (7)" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Is knowledge something that everyone considers to be a positive thing? At the very least, people think that the connotation of the word “knowledge” is positive rather than negative. So why are we mentioning here that Satan uses knowledge to corrupt man? Is the theory of evolution not an aspect of knowledge? Are Newton’s scientific laws not a part of knowledge? The gravitational pull of the earth is also a part of knowledge, is it not? (Yes.) So why is knowledge listed among the things that Satan uses to corrupt mankind? What is your view on this? Does knowledge have even a shred of truth in it? (No.) Then what is the essence of knowledge? On what basis is all the knowledge that man acquires learned? Is it based on the theory of evolution? Is not the knowledge that man has gained through exploration and summation based on atheism? Does any of this knowledge have a connection to God? Is it connected with worshiping God? Is it connected to truth? (No.) So how does Satan use knowledge to corrupt man? I just said that none of this knowledge is connected with worshiping God or with truth. Some people think about it like this: “Knowledge might not have anything to do with truth, but still, it doesn’t corrupt people.” What is your view on this? Were you taught by knowledge that a person’s happiness must be created with their own two hands? Did knowledge teach you that man’s fate was in his own hands? (Yes.) What kind of talk is this? (It is devilish talk.) Absolutely right! It is devilish talk! Knowledge is a complicated subject to discuss. You may state simply that a field of knowledge is nothing more than knowledge. That is a field of knowledge that is learned on the basis of not worshiping God and on not understanding that God created all things. When people study this type of knowledge, they do not see God having sovereignty over all things; they do not see God being in charge of or managing all things. Instead, all they do is endlessly research and explore that area of knowledge, and seek out answers based on knowledge. However, is it not true that if people do not believe in God and instead only pursue research, they will never find the true answers? All that knowledge can give you is a livelihood, a job, income so that you do not go hungry; but it will never make you worship God, and it will never keep you far from evil. The more you study knowledge, the more you will desire to rebel against God, to subject God to your studies, to tempt God, and to resist God. So, what do we now see that knowledge is teaching people? It is all the philosophy of Satan. Do the philosophies and rules of survival spread by Satan among corrupt men have any relation to truth? They have nothing to do with truth and, in fact, are the

opposite of the truth. People often say, “Life is motion” and “Man is iron, rice is steel, man feels famished if he skips a meal”; what are these sayings? They are fallacies, and hearing them causes a feeling of disgust. In man’s so-called knowledge, Satan has imbued quite a bit of its philosophy for living and its thinking. And as Satan does this, it allows man to adopt its thinking, philosophy, and points of view so that man may deny the existence of God, deny God’s dominion over all things and over man’s fate. So as man’s studies progress and he gains more knowledge, he feels the existence of God become vague, and might even no longer feel that God exists. As Satan has added viewpoints, notions, and thoughts into the mind of man, is not man corrupted during this process? (Yes.) What does man now base his life upon? Is he really living on the basis of this knowledge? No; man is basing his life on the thoughts, views and philosophies of Satan that are hidden within this knowledge. This is where the essential part of Satan’s corruption of man occurs; this is both Satan’s goal and its method for corrupting man.

Excerpted from “God Himself, the Unique V” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Those who are of the devil all live for themselves. Their life view and maxims mainly come from Satan’s sayings, such as, “Everyone for himself and the devil take the hindmost.” The words spoken by those devil kings, great ones, and philosophers of the earth have become man’s very life. In particular, most of the words of Confucius, who is touted by Chinese people to be a “sage,” have become man’s life. There are also the famous proverbs of Buddhism and Taoism, and the oft-quoted classic sayings of various famous figures; these are all outlines of Satan’s philosophies and Satan’s nature. They are also the best illustrations and explanations of Satan’s nature. These poisons that have been infused into the heart of man all come from Satan; not the least bit of them comes from God. Such devilish words are also in direct opposition to God’s word. It is absolutely clear that the realities of all positive things come from God, and all those negative things that poison man come from Satan. Therefore, you can discern a person’s nature and to whom he belongs from his life view and values. Satan corrupts people through the education and influence of national governments and of the famous and great. Their devilish words have become man’s life and nature. “Everyone for himself and the devil take the hindmost” is a well-known satanic saying that has been instilled into everyone, and that has become man’s life. There are other words of philosophies for living that are also like this. Satan uses each nation’s fine traditional culture to educate people, causing mankind to fall into and

be engulfed by a boundless abyss of destruction, and in the end people are destroyed by God because they serve Satan and resist God. Imagine asking someone who has been active in society for decades the following question: “Given that you have lived in the world for so long and achieved so much, what are the main famous sayings that you live by?” He might say, “The most important one is, ‘Officials do not strike gift-givers, and those who do not flatter accomplish nothing.’” Are these words not representative of that person’s nature? Unscrupulously using any means to obtain position has become his nature, and being an official is what gives him life. There are still many satanic poisons in people’s lives, in their conduct and behavior; they possess almost no truth at all. For example, their philosophies for living, their ways of doing things, and their maxims are all filled with the poisons of the great red dragon, and they all come from Satan. Thus, all things that flow through people’s bones and blood are all things of Satan. All of those officials, those who hold power, and those who are accomplished have their own paths and secrets to success. Are such secrets not perfectly representative of their nature? They have done such big things in the world, and no one can see through the schemes and intrigues that lay behind them. This shows just how insidious and venomous their nature is. Mankind has been profoundly corrupted by Satan. Satan’s venom flows through the blood of every person, and it can be seen that man’s nature is corrupt, evil, and reactionary, filled by and immersed in the philosophies of Satan—it is, in its entirety, a nature that betrays God. This is why people resist God and stand in opposition to God.

Excerpted from “How to Know Man’s Nature” in Records of Christ’s Talks

“Money makes the world go round” is a philosophy of Satan, and it prevails among the whole of mankind, in every human society. You could say that it is a trend because it has been instilled in the heart of every single person. From the very beginning, people did not accept this saying, but then they gave it tacit acceptance when they came into contact with real life, and began to feel that these words were in fact true. Is this not a process of Satan corrupting man? Perhaps people do not understand this saying to the same degree, but everyone has different degrees of interpretation and acknowledgment of this saying based on things that have happened around them and on their own personal experiences. Is that not the case? Regardless of how much experience someone has with this saying, what is the negative effect that it can have on someone’s heart? Something is revealed through the human disposition of the people

in this world, including each and every one of you. How is this thing that is revealed to be interpreted? It is the worship of money. Is it hard to remove this from someone's heart? It is very hard! It seems that Satan's corruption of man is deep indeed! So after Satan uses this trend to corrupt people, how is it manifested in them? Do you feel that you could not survive in this world without any money, that even one day without money would be impossible? People's status is based on how much money they have, as is the respect they command. The backs of the poor are bent in shame, while the rich enjoy their high status. They stand tall and proud, speaking loudly and living arrogantly. What does this saying and trend bring to people? Is it not true that many people make any sacrifice in the pursuit of money? Do many people not lose their dignity and integrity in the pursuit of more money? Moreover, do many people not lose the opportunity to perform their duty and follow God for the sake of money? Is this not a loss for people? (Yes.) Is Satan not sinister to use this method and this saying to corrupt man to such a degree? Is this not a malicious trick? As you progress from objecting to this popular saying to finally accepting it as truth, your heart falls completely into Satan's grasp, and therefore you inadvertently come to live by the saying. To what degree has this saying affected you? You might know the true way, and you might know the truth, but you are powerless to pursue it. You may clearly know that God's words are the truth, but you are unwilling to pay the price or to suffer in order to gain the truth. Instead, you would rather sacrifice your own future and destiny to resist God to the very end. No matter what God says, no matter what God does, no matter whether you understand how deep and how great God's love for you is, you would stubbornly insist on having your own way and pay the price for this saying. That is to say, this saying already controls your behavior and your thoughts, and you would rather have your fate controlled by it than give it all up. Does not the fact that people act in this way, that they are controlled by this saying and manipulated by it, illustrate that Satan's corrupting of man is effective? Is this not the philosophy and corrupt disposition of Satan taking root in your heart? If you do this, has Satan not achieved its goal? (Yes.) Do you see how Satan has corrupted man in this way? Can you feel it? (No.) You have neither seen it nor felt it. Do you see Satan's evil here? Satan corrupts man at all times and in all places. Satan makes it impossible for man to defend against this corruption and makes man helpless against it. Satan makes you accept its thoughts, its viewpoints and the evil things that come from it in situations where you are unknowing and when you have no recognition of what is happening to you. People accept these things and take

no exception to them. They cherish and hold on to these things like a treasure, they let these things manipulate them and toy with them; this is how Satan's corruption of man grows ever deeper.

Excerpted from "God Himself, the Unique V" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

With regard to the words of God, when people fellowship together, and after they have pray-read the original text of God's words, they may incorporate their personal experiences, and their enlightenments and illuminations as they talk of their own knowledge—you must not, however, interpret God's words howsoever you wish, as if they were born of your own hand. God's words do not need you to explain them, nor could you explain them clearly or understandably. It is enough that you have some minor enlightenment, illumination or experience, but to try to explain the truth, to try to use your explanation to allow people to understand God's will? That would be impossible. It is the wrong thing to do. Some people read in God's words that God loves those who are honest. God told man, "But let your communication be, Yes, yes; No, no: for whatever is more than these comes of evil" (Mat 5:37). Today, God's words also call for people to be honest. So what is the right attitude to take toward God's words and what He requires? Search in God's words: God said, "But let your communication be, Yes, yes; No, no." How exactly do those who are honest in the eyes of God behave? How do they speak, how do they act, how do they approach their duty, and how do they work well with others? People should search God's words for these principles and paths of practice, that they may become the honest people He requires. This is the right attitude, the attitude that ought to be possessed by those who seek the truth. So how do those who do not seek the truth, who do not love the truth, and who have no fear of God and His words behave? They look at God's words, and straight away they say, "God requires that people be honest. That's what the Lord Jesus said. The God of today is once more saying for people to be honest. I know this already. Are honest people not guileless people? It is not as people say, that guileless people ever prevail, that the good have peaceful lives, and that it is a sin to exploit those who are guileless? Look, God is redressing the injustices suffered by the guileless." Are these words the truth? Are these truth principles that they have identified? (No.) So what are these words? Could they be called heresies and fallacies? (They could.) Those who do not understand spiritual things or love the truth always connect God's words with what, among mankind, is believed to

be pleasing to the ear and right. Is this not downgrading God's words? Is this not making the truth into a kind of slogan for mankind, an argument for how to act? They ignore what God says about being honest—how those who are honest behave, how to be honest, what the precepts are—and nonsensically claim that God asks that people be guileless, and that people who are guileless, good-for-nothings, and fools are all honest. Is this not a misinterpretation of God's words? They misinterpret God's words, yet think themselves very clever, and that God's words are nothing more than this: "The truth isn't so profound, is it not just being guileless? And is it not simple to be a guileless person? Don't steal, don't swear, don't fight. 'Execution does nothing but make heads roll; be lenient wherever it is possible.' Be tolerant of others in all things, be good, and the good will have peaceful lives." They say a lot, but none of it is in line with the truth, it is nothing but heresies and fallacies. It seems to bear some relation to the words of God, it appears to have some connection to them, but when one goes deeper and looks more closely, it is nothing but deception, it does nothing except discompose people's thoughts.

For example, God says that there is love in His essence, that He loves man. God's love of man is shown to people through what He says, the way He treats man, His painstaking efforts to save man, and the myriad aspects of what He does in man, and at the same time as showing God's salvation of man, God's will and the means by which He saves man is also made evident, that people may know God's love. What do people who do not understand spiritual things think? "God is a God that loves man, God wants every person to be saved and does not want anyone to suffer perdition. God has said that the returned prodigal son is worth more than gold." Did God say this? Are these God's original words? (No.) What else do they say? "There is greater merit in saving one life than in building a seven-tier pagoda" and "My Buddha is compassionate." They are just throwing phrases around. Clearly, they are only pretending to be spiritual, and to understand God's words, and to love the truth; they are obviously outsiders, philistines, people who do not understand spiritual things. I have met many such people. They're like idiots, bold in speech but bereft of brains, the thoughts and arisings of their minds nothing but heresies, fallacies, and fakeries. These people, who are possessed of the utmost powers of deception, often employ these heresies and fallacies and some seemingly sound theological arguments to dupe others, forcing them to obey and practice what they say. They are antichrists. To all appearances, they seem highly spiritual, often quoting passages of God's words, and once they have finished interpreting them, then come the heresies and fallacies. Such people are everywhere. Under the

banner of quoting and fellowshiping on God's words, they help and lead people—but in fact, what they are instilling in people is not what God's words ask of man, nor the truth principles contained in God's words, but heresies and fallacies which they come up with through processing, interpreting, and imagining based on God's words, and which cause people to stray from the words of God and obey them instead, creating discomposure and deception in these people. For example, there are those who say, "In doing the work of His six-thousand-year management plan, God has experienced the rejection and opposition of all mankind; God is God, and His heart has no bounds. As people say, 'A prime minister's heart is big enough to sail a boat in,' and 'It is never too late for a gentleman to take his revenge.' How magnanimous God is!" To all appearances, they seem to be testifying to people of God and what God has and is—but what message are they actually transmitting? Is it the truth? Is it truly the essence of God? (No.) Who are they testifying to? They are testifying to the prime minister. They are likening God to a prime minister, to a gentleman—and is this not blasphemy? Can such words be found in God's words? (No.) So where did they come from? From Satan. Not only does this band of antichrists not testify to God, they also twist the facts and blaspheme against God, often duping those who have no foundation, who lack true faith in God, and are incapable of understanding the truth; these people are of small stature, they have no foundation, they have no capacity to understand the truth, and so they are duped by these heresies and fallacies. These antichrists treat the heresies and fallacies as spiritual sayings. One thing they say about God's love is, "God wants every person to be saved and does not want anyone to suffer perdition." One thing they say about what God asks of man is, "The good have peaceful lives." About God not remembering people's transgressions and His giving them a chance to repent, they say, "Execution does nothing but make heads roll; be lenient wherever it is possible." Can such words be found in the words of God? (No.) Why am I so angry when I hear these words? Why am I so bothered by them? Why do I get so worked up? For how many years have you been reading God's words? Have you grown foolish, or are you losing your wits? Where in God's words are such things mentioned? When did God ask that people be guileless? When did God ask that people abide by the saying "Execution does nothing but make heads roll; be lenient wherever it is possible"? Is this what God does? Where, in these heresies and fallacies they espouse, is there any connection to what God requires of mankind, His will, and the truth principles? They are wholly unrelated.

Excerpted from “For Leaders and Workers, Choosing a Path Is of Utmost Importance (25)” in Records of
Christ’s Talks

What is the difference in substance between the words of God and man, and between the truth and doctrine? God’s words cause people to grow in sense and conscience, to act with principle, and what they live out to become increasingly possessed of the reality of positive things. The words of man, on the other hand, may seem to sit perfectly with people’s tastes and perspectives, but because they are not the truth, they brim with pitfalls, temptation, and heresies and fallacies, and so if people act according to these words, what they live out will stray ever further from God, and from the standards of God. Even more serious, the way people live will become ever more evil and akin to Satan. When people live and act entirely by the heresies and fallacies of man, when they have wholly embraced these arguments, they live as Satan. And does living as Satan not imply that they are Satan? (Yes.) So you have “successfully” become a living Satan. Some people say, “I don’t believe it. I just want to be someone without guile who is liked by others. I want to be someone that most people regard as good, and then I’ll see whether God takes delight in me or not.” If you do not believe what God says, go and look, and — see if God’s words are the truth, or if man’s notions are the truth. This is the difference in essence between the words of God and the words of man. It is the essential distinction between the truth and heresies and fallacies. No matter how the heresies and fallacies of man seem to fit with people’s tastes, they can never become their life; meanwhile, no matter how unadorned the words of God seem, how vernacular, how at odds with people’s notions, their essence is the truth, and if what people do and live out is in accordance with God’s word principles, eventually, one day, they will become a genuine qualified creature of God, and will be capable of fearing God and shunning evil. For those who do not achieve this, meanwhile, what they live out and their ultimate path can only lead them to be detested and rejected by God: This is a fact.

Excerpted from “For Leaders and Workers, Choosing a Path Is of Utmost Importance (25)” in Records of
Christ’s Talks

How does mankind regard the logics and ideologies of Satan, and those spiritual crutches that dominate people’s lives? Some people say they are spiritual nourishment, chicken soup for the soul, but actually they corrupt people; once people “eat” them, it is over for them. What

happens if people continue to accept such things without expelling the old things? If they do not shed their former corrupt dispositions, and then embrace the newer corruptions of Satan, they are finished—they are doomed never to be saved. You should, while continually identifying and rejecting them, keep shedding them; you should not live by these things, and you should accept the words of God. Has anyone ever said, “I no longer accepted those things, and then God’s words automatically entered me”? That would be impossible. You must take it upon yourself to seek and accept the truth. During the process of your understanding of the truth, you will naturally identify heresies and fallacies, and you will gradually come to let them go. Thus, God’s words will gradually become the principles by which you act; whenever you do anything, you will know how to act in accordance with God’s will, and shall naturally practice it—and in this regard a change will occur in your disposition.

Excerpted from “The Truth Is the Criterion for Man’s Conduct, Actions, and Worship of God” in Records of
Christ’s Talks

Footnotes:

1. “Swallow” refers to the vicious behavior of the king of devils, which ravishes people in their entirety.
 - a. The Four Books and Five Classics are the authoritative books of Confucianism in China.

11. What is it to have gained life? What is it to have no life?

Relevant Words of God:

When people understand the truth, and live with it as their life, what life does this refer to? It refers to their ability to base how they live on God’s words; it means they have real knowledge of God’s words and a genuine understanding of the truth. When people possess this new life within them, the way they live is established upon a foundation of God’s word the truth, and they are living within the realm of the truth. People’s life is all about coming to know and experience the truth, and with this as its foundation, not surpassing that scope; this is the life that is being referred to when speaking of gaining the truth life. For you to live with the truth as your life, it is not the case that the life of truth is inside you, nor is it the case that if you possess the truth as your life, you become the truth, and your internal life becomes the life of truth; less still can it be said that you are the truth life. Ultimately, your life is still the life of a human. It is

just that a human can live by God's words, possess knowledge of the truth, and understand it to an in-depth degree; this understanding cannot be taken away from you. You experience and understand these things fully, feeling that they are so good and precious, and you come to accept them as the basis for your life; moreover, you live in reliance on these things, and no one can change that: This, then, is your life. That is, your life only contains these things—understanding, experience, and insights of the truth—and no matter what you do, you will base the way you live on them, and you will not go beyond this scope or past these borders; this is precisely the sort of life you will have. The ultimate objective of God's work is for people to have this kind of life.

Excerpted from "Do You Know What the Truth Really Is?" in Records of Christ's Talks

Holding up God's words and being able to explain them unabashedly does not mean you are in possession of reality; things are not as simple as you imagine. Whether you are in possession of reality is not based on what you say; rather, it is based on what you live out. Only when God's words become your life and your natural expression can you be said to have reality, and only then can you be counted as having gained true understanding and actual stature. You must be able to withstand examination over long periods of time, and you must be able to live out the likeness that is required by God. This must not be mere posturing; it must flow from you naturally. Only then will you truly possess reality, and only then will you have gained life. Let Me use the example of the trial of the service-doers with which everyone is familiar: Anyone can offer the loftiest theories regarding service-doers, and everyone has a decent understanding of the subject; they speak on it and each speech surpasses the last, as if it were a competition. However, if man has not undergone a major trial, then it is very difficult to say that he has good testimony to bear. In short, man's living out is still very lacking, entirely contrary to his understanding. Therefore, it has yet to become man's actual stature, and it is not yet man's life. Because man's understanding has not been brought into reality, his stature is still like a castle built on sand, teetering and on the verge of collapse. Man possesses far too little of reality; it is almost impossible to find any reality in man. There is too little reality naturally flowing from man, and all the reality they live out has been forced. This is the reason I say man possesses no reality. Although people claim their love of God never changes, this is merely what they say before they have faced any trials. When they are suddenly faced with trials one day, the things that they speak of will once again fall out of step with reality, and this will again prove that man

possesses no reality. It can be said that whenever you encounter things that do not fit with your notions and that require you to put yourself aside, those things are your trials. Before God's will is revealed, everyone goes through a rigorous test and an immense trial. Can you fathom this? When God wants to try people, He always allows them to make their choices before the actual truth has been revealed. This means that when God is subjecting man to trials, He will never tell you the truth; this is the manner in which people are exposed. This is one way that God carries out His work, to see whether you know the God of today, as well as whether you possess any reality.

Excerpted from "Only Putting the Truth Into Practice Is Possessing Reality" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Man experiences God's work, comes to know himself, purges away his corrupt disposition, and seeks growth in life, all for the sake of knowing God. If you only seek to know yourself and to deal with your own corrupt disposition, but have no knowledge of what work God does upon man, of how great His salvation is, or of how you experience God's work and witness His deeds, then this experience of yours is fatuous. If you think that one's life has attained maturity just because one is able to put the truth into practice and to endure, this means that you have still not grasped the true meaning of life or God's purpose in perfecting man. One day, when you are in the religious churches, among members of the Repentance Church or of the Life Church, you will come across many devout people, whose prayers contain "visions" and who, in their pursuit of life, feel touched and are guided by words. Furthermore, they are able in many matters to endure and to forsake themselves, and not to be led by the flesh. At that time, you will not be able to tell the difference: You will believe that everything they do is right, is the natural expression of life, and that it is a great pity that the name that they believe in is wrong. Are not such views foolish? Why is it said that many people have no life? Because they do not know God, and thus it is said that they have no God in their hearts, and have no life. If your belief in God has reached a point where you are capable of thoroughly knowing the deeds of God, the reality of God, and every stage of God's work, then you are possessed of the truth.

Excerpted from "Only Those Who Know God Can Bear Testimony to God" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

If people have a genuine understanding of God's disposition, and can give heartfelt praise to His holiness and righteousness, then it means they truly know Him and possess the truth; only then do they live in the light. Only once a person's view of the world and of life changes does one undergo a fundamental transformation. When one has a life goal and comports oneself according to the truth, when one submits absolutely to God and lives by His words, when one feels peaceful and illuminated to the depths of one's soul, when one's heart is free of darkness, and when one can live entirely free and unrestrained in God's presence, only then does one lead a genuine human life, and only then has one become a person who possesses the truth. In addition, all the truths in your possession have come from God's words and from God Himself. The Ruler of the entire universe and all things—God Most High—approves of you as a real person living a true human life. What could be more meaningful than God's approval? This is what it means to be in possession of the truth.

Excerpted from "How to Know Man's Nature" in Records of Christ's Talks

What manifestations do people who lack the truth life exhibit? Without the truth, they will naturally be subject to the constraints and bonds of their satanic nature; they will naturally reveal a disposition that is arrogant and conceited, selfish and contemptible, reckless and willful, and liable to decide and act alone. Such people will lie and cheat, be deceitful and treacherous, and be prone to feeling suspicious of others, and to attacking and judging others; they will always assess others through the lens of their prejudices and motives. Such people will always rely on their own preferences in both word and deed, and when encountering setbacks or failures, they will become negative. At times they will be supremely arrogant, and at times they will fall into such negativity that they practically burrow a hole into the ground. These people go to extremes, and are never normal. When they are not baring their fangs, they are putting on puppy dog eyes. This is the sort of state you are currently in: You are willing to suffer and pay a price; your resolution and determination are complete—but you do not yet possess truth reality. How do people who possess truth reality to serve as their lives express themselves? I will tell you a few major indications. When people possess truth reality, on the one hand, they have understood some of the truth; on the other, they have begun to exhibit some changes in disposition. Changes in disposition have a characteristic, which is being able to submit to what is right and in line with the truth. No matter who gives you suggestions—whether they are young

or old, whether you get along well, and whether the relationship between you is good or bad — as long as they say something that is correct and in line with the truth, and also is beneficial to the work of God’s house, then you can listen, adopt it, and accept it, and not be impacted by any other factors. This is the first aspect of that characteristic. First of all, you can accept the truth, as well as things that are correct and in line with the truth. Another aspect is being able to seek the truth whenever you encounter a problem. You must not only be able to accept the truth; you must also be able to seek it. For example, if you encounter a new problem that no one can fathom, then you can seek the truth and see what you should do or practice to bring the matter in line with the truth principles and meet God’s requirements. Yet another aspect is gaining the ability to be considerate of God’s will. How should you be considerate of His will? This depends on what duty you are performing and what requirements He has of it. You must grasp this principle: Carry out your duty according to God’s requirements, and fulfill it to His satisfaction. You must also understand God’s will and what the desired result of your duty is, and you must be able to act with responsibility and faithfulness. All of these are ways to be considerate of God’s will. If you do not know how to be considerate of God’s will in the thing that you are currently doing, then you must do some seeking in order to accomplish that and to satisfy Him. If you can put these three principles into practice, measure how well you are actually living by them, and find a path of practice, then you will be handling matters in a principled manner. Regardless of what you might encounter, and no matter what problems you might have to deal with, you must always search for the right principles to practice by, what details these each include, and how they should be practiced so that you will not be violating the principles. Once you have a clear understanding of these things, you will naturally be able to practice the truth.

Excerpted from “Only by Putting the Truth Into Practice Can One Cast off the Shackles of a Corrupt Disposition” in Records of Christ’s Talks

When the truth becomes your life, then if someone blasphemes against God, has no reverence for God, is slipshod in their duty, causes interruptions or disturbs the work of God’s house, and when you see this happen, you are then able to discern it and expose it when necessary, and approach it in accordance with the truth principle. If the truth has not become your life, and you still live within your satanic disposition, then when you encounter wicked people and devils who cause interruptions and disturbances to the work of God’s house, you

will turn a blind eye and a deaf ear; you will brush them aside, without reproach from your conscience. You will even think that someone causing disturbances to the work of God's house has nothing to do with you. No matter how great the loss to God's work and the interests of His house, you will feel no reproach from your conscience, which means that you will be someone who lives by their satanic disposition. Satan controls you and causes you to live as something neither quite human nor quite demon. You eat what is God's, drink what is God's, and enjoy all that comes from Him, yet, when the work of God's house suffers any loss, you think it has nothing to do with you, and, when you see it happen, you even "bend your elbow outward,"^[a] and do not take God's side, nor do you uphold God's work or the interests of God's house. This means Satan has power over you, does it not? Do such people live as human beings? Clearly, they are demons, not humans! However, when the truth holds sway in your heart and has become your life, then, when you see something passive, negative, or evil arising, the reaction in your heart is entirely different. First, you feel reproach and a sense of uneasiness, followed immediately by this feeling: "I can't just remain idle and turn a blind eye. I must stand up and speak, I must stand up and take responsibility." You can then stand up and put a stop to these evil deeds, exposing them, striving to safeguard the interests of God's house and prevent God's work from being disturbed. Not only will you have this courage and resolve, and will you be capable of understanding the matter completely, but you will also fulfill the responsibility you should bear for God's work and for the interests of His house, and your duty will thereby be fulfilled. How will it be fulfilled? It will be fulfilled through the truth exerting its effect on you and becoming your life. In this way, once your duty has been fulfilled, you will not ask whether God can grant you a reward, whether He saw your actions, or whether He accepts them. Instead, you will simply believe it is the responsibility you ought to have taken on. Would you not thus be living out conscience, reason, humanity, integrity, and dignity? Your deeds and behavior would be the "fearing God and shunning evil" of which He speaks. You would be performing the essence of these words and living out their reality. When the truth becomes a person's life, they are then able to live out this reality. But if you have not yet entered into this reality, then, when you evince deceit, deception, or disguise, or when you see wicked people in action or evil forces disturbing and interrupting God's work, you do not feel a thing, and perceive nothing. Even when these things happen under your very nose, you are still able to laugh, and can still eat and sleep with an easy conscience, and you feel not the slightest bit of self-reproach. Out of

these two lives you can live out, which do you choose? Which life has a true human likeness, with which you live out the reality of positive things, and which life is an evil, devilish one? The answer is self-evident. When the truth has not become people's reality or lives, then what they live out is quite pitiful and sad, and they are not in charge of their own lives. Because the truth has not become the life inside them, what they do is not under their own control, and though they may feel a bit sad about this, the feeling passes very quickly and they feel no remorse whatsoever. That is how great the difference is between these two sorts of life.

Excerpted from "Only Those Who Practice the Truth Are God-Fearing" in Records of Christ's Talks

If one can satisfy God while fulfilling one's duty, is principled in one's words and actions, and can enter truth reality in every aspect of the truth, then one is a person who is perfected by God. It can be said that the work and the words of God have been completely effective for such people, that God's words have become their life, they have obtained the truth, and they are able to live in accordance with God's words. After this, the nature of their flesh—that is, the very foundation of their original existence—will shake apart and collapse. After people possess God's words as their life, they will become new people. If the words of God become their life, if the vision of God's work, His requirements of humanity, His revelations to humans, and the standards for a true life that God requires them to meet become their life, if they live according to these words and truths, then they are perfected by the words of God. Such people are reborn, and have become new people through God's words. This is the path by which Peter pursued the truth; it was the path of being perfected, perfected by God's words, and gaining life from the words of God. The truth expressed by God became his life, and only then did he become a person who obtained the truth.

Excerpted from "How to Walk the Path of Peter" in Records of Christ's Talks

People often speak of letting God be their life, but their experience has not yet come to that point. You are merely saying that God is your life, that He guides you every day, that you eat and drink His words each day, and that you pray to Him each day, so He has become your life. The knowledge of those who say this is quite superficial. In many people there is no foundation; God's words have been planted within them, but they have yet to sprout, much less have they borne any fruit. Today, to what extent have you experienced? Only now, after God has forced

you to come this far, do you feel that you cannot leave God. One day, when your experience has reached a certain point, if God were to make you leave, you would not be able to. You will always feel that you cannot be without God inside you; you can be without a husband, wife, or children, without a family, without a mother or father, without the enjoyments of the flesh, but you cannot be without God. Being without God would be like losing your life; you would not be able to live without God. When you have experienced to this point, you will have hit the mark in your faith in God, and in this way, God will have become your life, He will have become the foundation of your existence. You will never again be able to leave God. When you have experienced to this extent, you will have truly enjoyed God's love, and when you have a close enough relationship with God, He will be your life, your love, and at that time you will pray to God and say: "O God! I cannot leave You. You are my life. I can go without everything else—but without You, I cannot go on living." This is people's true stature; it is the real life. Some people have been forced to come as far as they have today: They have to go on whether they want to or not, and they always feel as if they are stuck between a rock and a hard place. You must experience such that God is your life, such that if God were taken away from your heart, it would be like losing your life; God must be your life, and you must be incapable of leaving Him. In this way, you will have actually experienced God, and at this time, when you love God, you will truly love God, and it will be a singular, pure love. One day, when your experiences are such that your life has reached a certain point, when you pray to God, and eat and drink the words of God, you will be unable to leave God inside, nor will you be able to forget Him even if you wanted to. God will have become your life; you can forget the world, you can forget your wife, husband, or children, but you will have trouble forgetting God—to do so would be impossible, this is your true life and your true love for God. When people's love of God has reached a certain point, their love for nothing else is equal to their love of God; their love for God comes first. In this way you are able to give up everything else, and are willing to accept all dealing and pruning from God. When you have achieved a love of God that surpasses all else, you will live in reality and in God's love.

Excerpted from "Those Who Love God Will Forever Live Within His Light" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Footnotes:

a. “Bend one’s elbow outward” is a Chinese idiom, which means a person is helping others at the expense of people close to that person, for example parents, children, relatives or siblings.

12. How are wheat and tares discerned from each other?

Bible Verses for Reference:

“In the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather you together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn” (Mat 13:30).

“The harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who has ears to hear, let him hear” (Mat 13:39–43).

Relevant Words of God:

Now do you truly know why you believe in Me? Do you truly know the purpose and significance of My work? Do you truly know your duty? Do you truly know My testimony? If you merely believe in Me, yet there is no sign of My glory or testimony in you, then I have long ago eliminated you. As for those who know it all, they are even more thorns in My eye, and in My house, they are nothing more than obstacles in My way, they are tares to be completely winnowed out in My work, they have no use, they are worthless, and I have long abhorred them. Often does My wrath befall all who are bereft of testimony, and never does My rod stray from them. I have long since turned them over to the hands of the evil one; they are bereft of My blessings. When the day comes, their chastisement will be more grievous even than that of foolish women. Today, I do only the work that is My duty to do; I will bind all the wheat into bundles, together along with those tares. This is My work today. Those tares shall all be winnowed out in the time of My winnowing, then the grains of wheat shall be gathered into the storehouse, and those tares that have been winnowed out shall be placed in the fire to be burned to dust. My work now is merely to bind all men into bundles; that is, to utterly conquer them.

Then shall I begin winnowing to reveal the end of all men. And so you ought to know how you should satisfy Me now, and how you ought to set upon the right track in your faith in Me.

Excerpted from “What Do You Know of Faith?” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Man will be fully made complete in the Age of Kingdom. After the work of conquest, man will be subjected to refinement and tribulation. Those who can overcome and stand testimony during this tribulation are the ones who will ultimately be made complete; they are the overcomers. During this tribulation, man is required to accept this refinement, and this refinement is the last instance of God’s work. It is the last time that man will be refined prior to the conclusion of all the work of God’s management, and all those who follow God must accept this final test, and they must accept this last refinement. Those who are beset by tribulation are without the work of the Holy Spirit and the guidance of God, but those who have been truly conquered and who truly seek after God will ultimately stand fast; they are the ones who are possessed of humanity, and who truly love God. No matter what God does, these victorious ones will not be bereft of the visions and will still put the truth into practice without failing in their testimony. They are the ones who will finally emerge from the great tribulation. Even though those who fish in troubled waters can still freeload today, no one is able to escape the final tribulation, and no one can escape the final test. For those who overcome, such tribulation is a tremendous refinement; but for those who fish in troubled waters, it is the work of complete elimination. No matter how they are tried, the allegiance of those who have God in their heart remains unchanged; but for those who do not have God in their heart, once the work of God is not advantageous to their flesh, they change their view of God, and even depart from God. Such are those who will not stand fast in the end, who only seek God’s blessings and have no desire to expend themselves for God and dedicate themselves to Him. Such base people will all be expelled when God’s work comes to an end, and they are unworthy of any sympathy. Those without humanity are incapable of truly loving God. When the environment is safe and secure, or there are profits to be made, they are totally obedient toward God, but once that which they desire is compromised or finally refuted, they immediately revolt. Even in the space of just one night, they may go from a smiling, “kind-hearted” person to an ugly-looking and ferocious killer, suddenly treating their benefactor of yesterday as their mortal enemy, without rhyme or reason. If these demons are not cast out, these demons that would kill without blinking an eye, will they

not become a hidden danger? The work of saving man is not achieved following the completion of the work of conquest. Although the work of conquest has come to an end, the work of purifying man has not; such work will only be finished once man has been wholly purified, once those who truly submit to God have been made complete, and once those disguisers who are without God in their heart have been purged. Those who do not satisfy God in the final stage of His work will be completely eliminated, and those who are eliminated are of the devil. As they are incapable of satisfying God, they are rebellious against God, and even though these people follow God today, this does not prove that they are those who will finally remain. In the words that “those who follow God to the end will receive salvation,” the meaning of “follow” is to stand firm in the midst of tribulation. Today, many believe that following God is easy, but when God’s work is about to end, you will know the true meaning of “follow.” Just because you are still able to follow God today after being conquered, this does not prove that you are one of those who will be made perfect. Those who are unable to endure the trials, who are incapable of being victorious amid tribulation will, ultimately, be incapable of standing fast, and so will be unable to follow God to the very end. Those who truly follow God are able to withstand the test of their work, whereas those who do not truly follow God are incapable of withstanding any of God’s trials. Sooner or later they will be expelled, while the overcomers will remain in the kingdom. Whether or not man truly seeks God is determined by the test of his work, that is, by God’s trials, and has nothing to do with the decision by man himself. God does not reject any person on a whim; all that He does can utterly convince man. He does not do anything that is invisible to man, or any work that cannot convince man. Whether man’s belief is true or not is proved by the facts and cannot be decided by man. That “wheat cannot be made into tares, and tares cannot be made into wheat” is without doubt. All those who truly love God will ultimately remain in the kingdom, and God will not mistreat anyone who truly loves Him.

Excerpted from “God’s Work and Man’s Practice” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

As I have said, Satan has sent those who do service for Me for the purpose of interrupting My management. These service-doers are tares, yet the word “wheat” does not refer to the firstborn sons, but to all the sons and people who are not the firstborn sons. “Wheat will always be wheat, tares will always be tares”; this means the nature of those who are of Satan can never change. So, in short, they remain Satan. “Wheat” refers to the sons and the people, because I

instilled My quality into these people before the creation of the world. I have already said that man's nature does not change, and that is why wheat will always be wheat.

Excerpted from "Chapter 113" of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh

Since you are called My people, you should be able to glorify My name; that is, stand testimony in the midst of trial. If anyone attempts to wheedle Me and conceal the truth from Me, or engage in disreputable dealings behind My back, such people will, without exception, be chased out and removed from My house to wait for Me to deal with them. Those who have been unfaithful and unfilial to Me in the past, and who rise up again today to judge Me openly—they, too, will be chased out of My house. Those who are My people must constantly show consideration for My burdens as well as seek to know My words. Only people like this will I enlighten, and they will surely live under My guidance and enlightenment, never meeting with chastisement. Those who, failing to show consideration for My burdens, concentrate on planning for their own futures—that is, those who do not aim with their actions to satisfy My heart, but rather who look for handouts—these beggar-like creatures I absolutely refuse to use, because from the time they were born, they have known nothing of what it means to show consideration for My burdens. They are people who lack normal sense; such people are suffering from "malnutrition" of the brain, and need to go home for some "nourishment." I have no use for such people. Among My people, everyone will be required to regard knowing Me as an obligatory duty to be seen through to the end, like eating, dressing, and sleeping, something that one never forgets about for a moment, so that in the end, knowing Me will become as familiar as eating—something you do effortlessly, with a practiced hand. As for the words I speak, every single one must be taken with the utmost faith and fully assimilated; there can be no perfunctory half-measures. Anyone who does not pay attention to My words will be regarded as directly resisting Me; anyone who does not eat of My words, or does not seek to know them, will be regarded as not paying attention to Me, and will directly be swept out the door of My house. This is because, as I have said in the past, what I want is not a great number of people, but excellence. Out of a hundred people, if only one is able to know Me through My words, then I will willingly throw away all the others to focus on enlightening and illuminating this single one. From this you can see that it is not necessarily true that greater numbers alone can manifest Me and live Me out. What I want is wheat (even though the kernels may not be full) and not

tares (even when the kernels are full enough to be admired). As for those who give no regard to seeking, but who instead behave in a slack manner, they should leave of their own accord; I do not wish to see them anymore, lest they continue to bring disgrace to My name.

Excerpted from “Chapter 5” of God’s Words to the Entire Universe in The Word Appears in the Flesh

XVI. Only the Wise Virgins Can Meet the Lord Returned and Be Brought Before God

1. What are the wise virgins? What are the foolish virgins?

Bible Verses for Reference:

“Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened to ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them: But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom comes; go you out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said to the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out. But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go you rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Truly I say to you, I know you not” (Mat 25:1–12).

Relevant Words of God:

In the past, some people predicted “five wise virgins and five foolish virgins.” Although this prediction is not accurate, neither is it entirely wrong—thus, I may offer you some explanation. “Five wise virgins and five foolish virgins” together represent neither a number of people nor a type of person. “Five wise virgins” refers to a number of people, and “five foolish virgins” represents one type of person, but neither refers to the firstborn sons. Rather, they represent creation. This is why they have been asked to prepare oil in the last days. (Creation does not

possess My quality; if they want to be wise ones, they need to prepare oil, and thus they need to be equipped with My words.) “Five wise virgins” represent My sons and My people among the humans I created. They are called “virgins” because they are gained by Me, despite being born on earth; one might call them holy, so they are called “virgins.” The aforementioned “five” represents the number of My sons and My people that I have predestined. “Five foolish virgins” refers to the service-doers, for they do service for Me without attaching the slightest importance to life, pursuing only external things (because they do not have My quality, no matter what they do, it is an external thing), and they are unable to be My capable helpers, so they are called “foolish virgins.” The aforementioned “five” represents Satan, and the fact they are called “virgins” means they have been conquered by Me and are able to do service for Me—but such people are not holy, so they are called service-doers.

Excerpted from “Chapter 116” of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh

Since we are searching for the footprints of God, it behooves us to search for God’s will, for the words of God, for His utterances—because wherever there are new words spoken by God, the voice of God is there, and wherever there are the footsteps of God, God’s deeds are there. Wherever there is the expression of God, there God appears, and wherever God appears, there the truth, the way, and the life exist. In seeking God’s footprints, you have ignored the words “God is the truth, the way, and the life.” And so, many people, even when they receive the truth, do not believe that they have found God’s footprints, and still less do they acknowledge the appearance of God. What a grave mistake! The appearance of God cannot be reconciled with man’s notions, still less can God appear at the behest of man. God makes His own choices and His own plans when He does His work; moreover, He has His own objectives and His own methods. Whatever work He does, He has no need to discuss it with man or seek his advice, much less to notify each and every person of His work. This is the disposition of God, which should, moreover, be recognized by everyone. If you desire to witness the appearance of God, to follow God’s footsteps, then you must first walk away from your own notions. You must not demand that God do this or that, much less should you place Him within your own confines and limit Him to your own notions. Instead, you should ask how you are to seek God’s footprints, how you are to accept God’s appearance, and how you are to submit to the new work of God:

This is what man should do. Since man is not the truth, and is not possessed of the truth, he should seek, accept, and obey.

Excerpted from “The Appearance of God Has Ushered in a New Age” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Since man believes in God, he must closely follow the footsteps of God, step-by-step; he should “follow the Lamb wherever He goes.” Only these are the people who seek the true way, only they are the ones who know the work of the Holy Spirit. People who slavishly follow letters and doctrines are those who have been eliminated by the work of the Holy Spirit. In each period of time, God will begin new work, and in each period, there will be a new beginning among man. If man only abides by the truths that “Jehovah is God” and “Jesus is Christ,” which are truths that only apply to their respective ages, then man will never keep up with the work of the Holy Spirit, and will forever be incapable of gaining the work of the Holy Spirit. Regardless of how God works, man follows without the slightest doubt, and he follows closely. In this way, how could man be eliminated by the Holy Spirit? Regardless of what God does, as long as man is certain that it is the work of the Holy Spirit, and cooperates in the work of the Holy Spirit without any misgivings, and tries to meet the requirements of God, then how could he be punished? The work of God has never ceased, His footsteps have never halted, and prior to the completion of His management work, He has always been busy, and never stops. But man is different: Having gained but a modicum of the Holy Spirit’s work, he treats it as if it will never change; having gained a little knowledge, he does not go forth to follow the footsteps of God’s newer work; having seen but a little of God’s work, he immediately prescribes God as a particular wooden figure, and believes that God will always remain in this form that he sees before him, that it was like this in the past and will always be thus in the future; having gained but a superficial knowledge, man is so proud that he forgets himself and begins to wantonly proclaim a disposition and a being of God that simply do not exist; and having become certain about one stage of the Holy Spirit’s work, no matter what kind of person it is that proclaims the new work of God, man does not accept it. These are people who cannot accept the new work of the Holy Spirit; they are too conservative, and incapable of accepting new things. Such people are those who believe in God but also reject God. Man believes that the Israelites were wrong to “only believe in Jehovah and not believe in Jesus,” yet the majority of people act out a role in which they “only believe in Jehovah and reject Jesus” and “long for the return of the Messiah,

but oppose the Messiah who is called Jesus.” No wonder, then, that people still live under the domain of Satan after accepting one stage of the work of the Holy Spirit, and still do not receive God’s blessings. Is this not the result of man’s rebelliousness? Christians across the world who have not kept up with the new work of today all cling to the hope that they will get lucky, assuming that God will fulfill each of their wishes. Yet they cannot say for sure why God will take them up to the third heaven, nor are they certain about how Jesus will come to receive them riding upon a white cloud, much less can they say with absolute certainty whether Jesus will truly arrive upon a white cloud on the day that they imagine. They are all anxious, and at a loss; they themselves do not even know whether God will take up each of them, the varied small handfuls of people, who hail from every denomination. The work that God does now, the present age, God’s will—they have no grasp of any of these things, and they can do nothing but count down the days on their fingers. Only those who follow the footsteps of the Lamb to the very end can gain the final blessing, whereas those “clever people,” who are unable to follow to the very end yet believe they have gained all, are incapable of witnessing the appearance of God. They each believe they are the smartest person on earth, and they cut short the continued development of God’s work for no reason at all, and seem to believe with absolute certainty that God will take them up to heaven, they who “have the utmost loyalty to God, follow God, and abide by the words of God.” Even though they have the “utmost loyalty” toward the words spoken by God, their words and actions are still so disgusting because they oppose the work of the Holy Spirit, and commit deceit and evil. Those who do not follow to the very end, who do not keep up with the work of the Holy Spirit, and who only cleave to the old work have not only failed to achieve loyalty to God, but on the contrary, have become those who oppose God, have become those who are rejected by the new age, and who will be punished. Are there any more pitiable than them?

Excerpted from “God’s Work and Man’s Practice” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The aim of God’s appearance, free from the constraints of any form or nation, is to enable Him to complete His work as He has planned it. This is just as when God became flesh in Judea: His aim was to complete the work of the crucifixion in redeeming the entire human race. Yet the Jews believed that it was impossible for God to do this, and they thought it impossible that God could become flesh and assume the form of the Lord Jesus. Their “impossible” became the

basis on which they condemned and opposed God, and ultimately led to the destruction of Israel. Today, many people have committed a similar error. They proclaim with all their might the imminent appearance of God, yet at the same time condemn His appearance; their “impossible” once more confines the appearance of God within the limits of their imagination. And so I have seen many people break into wild and raucous laughter after coming upon the words of God. But is this laughter any different from the condemnation and blasphemy of the Jews? You are not reverent in the presence of the truth, still less do you possess an attitude of yearning. All you do is study indiscriminately and wait with blithe unconcern. What can you gain from studying and waiting like this? Do you think you will receive personal guidance from God? If you cannot discern God’s utterances, in what way are you qualified to witness the appearance of God? Wherever God appears, there the truth is expressed, and there the voice of God will be. Only those who can accept the truth will be able to hear the voice of God, and only such people are qualified to witness the appearance of God.

Excerpted from “The Appearance of God Has Ushered in a New Age” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Sermon and Fellowship Excerpts for Reference:

The wise virgins’ welcoming of the Lord shows that their wisdom lay chiefly in recognizing the voice of the Lord, which was a wisdom not possessed by the foolish virgins. Is recognizing the voice of the Lord a simple matter? If people are swollen with notions and imaginings, they will be fettered and constrained when they hear the voice of the Lord, and will be likely to doubt the voice of the Lord. When wise virgins hear the voice of the Lord, they are able to put aside their notions and imaginings; they have no doubt that this is the Lord speaking, and thus they welcome the Lord. And so, those who can recognize the voice of the Lord understand spiritual things: The source of this voice is clear to them, and they can see that it is the Spirit of God talking. That is enough, and their notions and imaginings are no longer a great problem. Foolish virgins, meanwhile, regard their notions and imaginings as a basis for their decisions, and they regard them as the truth. Even though they hear the voice of the Lord, they deny it, they reject it, and so they miss the opportunity to welcome the Lord. This is where the foolish virgins fail. So what does the wise virgins’ preparing the oil refer to? It primarily refers to attentively listening to the voice of the Lord, not being constrained by notions and imaginings, and welcoming and accepting the Lord without any doubts upon ascertaining that this is the voice

of the Lord—this is most important. In welcoming the Lord, many people are constrained by religious notions. It is as if they have already established and ascertained a model for the return of the Lord, and they give no consideration to anything that is at odds with their own notions and imaginings. How foolish such people are! There are many who have investigated the true way, who have read the words of Almighty God and acknowledge that they are the truth, but who do not accept that this person is the incarnation. They act exactly how the Pharisees did toward the Lord Jesus—they are the most foolish people of all. Those who, after reading the words of Almighty God, acknowledge that these words are the truth, who are certain that this is the appearance and work of God, and who accept that Almighty God is the Savior, are the wisest of all. What makes them wise? Firstly, they are able to discern all of God's words to be the truth and the voice of God. Secondly, having determined that the words of God are the truth and the voice of God, they are able to identify what Satan says as rumors and devilish words which condemn and oppose God, and deny, in totality, all of the words that come from Satan, and trust that only God is the truth. These are the wisest things about the wise virgins. After they have welcomed the Lord, none of the lies and fabrications of Satan can deceive them; they trust only in God, and willingly put aside everything to follow God, thus entirely fulfilling the words of the Lord Jesus: The wise virgins have welcomed the Lord, that is, they have been raised before the throne of God.

Excerpted from The Fellowship from the Above

2. What is the wise virgins' reward? Why will the foolish virgins fall into disaster?

Relevant Words of God:

What God wants are people who follow His footsteps. No matter how wonderful and pure what you understood before is, God does not want it, and if you are unable to put aside such things, then they will be a tremendous obstacle to your entry in the future. All those who are able to follow the present light of the Holy Spirit are blessed. The people of ages past also followed the footsteps of God, yet they could not follow until today; this is the blessing of the people of the last days. Those who can follow the present work of the Holy Spirit, and who are able to follow the footsteps of God, such that they follow God wherever He leads them—these are people who are blessed by God. Those who do not follow the present work of the Holy Spirit

have not entered into the work of God's words, and no matter how much they work, or how great their suffering, or how much they run about, none of it means anything to God, and He will not commend them. Today, all those who follow the present words of God are in the stream of the Holy Spirit; those who are strangers to the words of God today are outside of the stream of the Holy Spirit, and such people are not commended by God. Service that is divorced from the present utterances of the Holy Spirit is service that is of the flesh, and of notions, and it is impossible for it to be in accordance with God's will. If people live among religious notions, then they are unable to do anything that is fit for God's will, and even though they serve God, they serve in the midst of their imaginings and notions, and are totally incapable of serving in accordance with the will of God. Those who are unable to follow the work of the Holy Spirit do not understand the will of God, and those who do not understand the will of God cannot serve God. God wants service that is after His own heart; He does not want service that is of notions and the flesh. If people are incapable of following the steps of the Holy Spirit's work, then they live amid notions. The service of such people interrupts and disturbs, and such service runs contrary to God. Thus those who are unable to follow the footsteps of God are incapable of serving God; those who are unable to follow the footsteps of God most certainly oppose God, and are incapable of being compatible with God. "Following the work of the Holy Spirit" means understanding the will of God today, being able to act in accordance with the present requirements of God, being able to obey and follow the God of today, and entering in accordance with the newest utterances of God. Only this is someone who follows the work of the Holy Spirit and is in the stream of the Holy Spirit. Such people are not only capable of receiving God's praise and seeing God, but can also know God's disposition from the latest work of God, and can know man's notions and disobedience, and man's nature and essence, from His latest work; furthermore, they are able to gradually achieve changes in their disposition during their service. Only people such as this are those who are able to gain God, and who have genuinely found the true way. Those who are eliminated by the work of the Holy Spirit are people who are incapable of following the latest work of God, and who rebel against the latest work of God. That such people openly oppose God is because God has done new work, and because the image of God is not the same as that in their notions—as a result of this, they openly oppose God and pass judgment upon God, which results in God loathing and rejecting them. Possessing the knowledge of the latest work of God is no easy matter, but if people have a mind to obey the

work of God and seek the work of God, then they will have the chance to see God, and will have the chance to gain the newest guidance of the Holy Spirit. Those who intentionally oppose the work of God cannot receive the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit or the guidance of God. Thus, whether or not people can receive the latest work of God depends on the grace of God, it depends on their pursuit, and it depends on their intentions.

All who are able to obey the present utterances of the Holy Spirit are blessed. It does not matter how they used to be, or how the Holy Spirit used to work within them—those who have gained the latest work of God are the most blessed, and those who are unable to follow the latest work today are eliminated. God wants those who are able to accept the new light, and He wants those who accept and know His latest work. Why is it said that you must be a chaste virgin? A chaste virgin is able to seek the work of the Holy Spirit and understand the new things, and moreover, able to put aside old notions, and obey the work of God today. This group of people, who accept the newest work of today, were predestined by God before the ages, and are the most blessed of people. You hear the voice of God directly, and behold the appearance of God, and so, throughout heaven and earth, and throughout the ages, none have been more blessed than you, this group of people.

Excerpted from “Know God’s Newest Work and Follow His Footsteps” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

When you have experienced each step of the work of God incarnate in the Age of Kingdom, you will feel that desires you have had for many years have finally been realized. You will feel that only now have you truly seen God face to face; only now have you gazed upon His countenance, heard His personal utterances, appreciated the wisdom of His work, and truly sensed how real and almighty He is. You will feel that you have gained many things that people in times past had never seen nor possessed. At this time, you will clearly know what it is to believe in God, and what it is to conform to God’s will. Of course, if you cling to views of the past, and reject or deny the fact of the second incarnation of God, then you will remain empty-handed, acquiring nothing, and ultimately you will be pronounced guilty of opposing God. Those who are able to obey the truth and submit to the work of God shall be claimed under the name of the second incarnate God—the Almighty. They will be able to accept God’s personal guidance, gaining more and higher truths, as well as real life. They shall behold the vision never seen before by people of the past: “And I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And being

turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks; And in the middle of the seven candlesticks one like to the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the breasts with a golden girdle. His head and His hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and His eyes were as a flame of fire; And His feet like to fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and His voice as the sound of many waters. And He had in His right hand seven stars: and out of His mouth went a sharp two edged sword: and His countenance was as the sun shines in its strength” (Revelation 1:12–16). This vision is the expression of God’s entire disposition, and the expression of His entire disposition is also the expression of the work of God in His present incarnation. In the torrents of chastisements and judgments, the Son of man expresses His inherent disposition by means of utterances, allowing all those who accept His chastisement and judgment to see the true face of the Son of man, which is a faithful depiction of the face of the Son of man seen by John. (Of course, all of this will be invisible to those who do not accept the work of God in the Age of Kingdom.) The true face of God cannot be fully articulated using human language, and so God uses the means by which He expresses His inherent disposition to show His true face to man. Which is to say that all those who have appreciated the inherent disposition of the Son of man have seen the true face of the Son of man, for God is too great and cannot be fully articulated using human language. Once man has experienced each step of God’s work in the Age of Kingdom, then he shall know the true meaning of John’s words when he spoke of the Son of man among the lampstands: “His head and His hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and His eyes were as a flame of fire; And His feet like to fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and His voice as the sound of many waters. And He had in His right hand seven stars: and out of His mouth went a sharp two edged sword: and His countenance was as the sun shines in its strength.” At that time, you shall know beyond all doubt that this ordinary flesh that has said so much is undeniably the second incarnate God. Moreover, you shall truly sense how blessed you are, and feel yourself to be the most fortunate. Are you not willing to accept this blessing?

Excerpted from Preface to The Word Appears in the Flesh

You do not know what God is, you do not know what Christ is, you do not know how to revere Jehovah, you do not know how to enter into the work of the Holy Spirit, and you do not know how to distinguish between the work of God Himself and the deceptions of man. You

know only to condemn any word of truth expressed by God that does not conform to your own thoughts. Where is your humility? Where is your obedience? Where is your loyalty? Where is your desire to seek the truth? Where is your reverence for God? I tell you, those who believe in God because of the signs are surely the category that shall be destroyed. Those who are incapable of receiving the words of Jesus who has returned to flesh are surely the progeny of hell, the descendants of the archangel, the category that shall be subjected to everlasting destruction. Many people may not care what I say, but I still want to tell every so-called saint who follows Jesus that, when you see Jesus descend from the heaven upon a white cloud with your own eyes, this will be the public appearance of the Sun of righteousness. Perhaps that will be a time of great excitement for you, yet you should know that the time when you witness Jesus descend from the heaven is also the time when you go down to hell to be punished. That will be the time of the end of God's management plan and it will be when God rewards the good and punishes the wicked. For the judgment of God will have ended before man sees signs, when there is only the expression of truth. Those who accept the truth and do not seek signs, and thus have been purified, shall have returned before the throne of God and entered the Creator's embrace. Only those who persist in the belief that "The Jesus who does not ride upon a white cloud is a false Christ" shall be subjected to everlasting punishment, for they only believe in the Jesus who exhibits signs, but do not acknowledge the Jesus who proclaims severe judgment and releases the true way of life. And so it can only be that Jesus deals with them when He openly returns upon a white cloud. They are too stubborn, too confident in themselves, too arrogant. How could such degenerates be rewarded by Jesus?

Excerpted from "By the Time You Behold the Spiritual Body of Jesus, God Will Have Made Heaven and Earth Anew" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Those who wish to gain life without relying on the truth spoken by Christ are the most ridiculous people on earth, and those who do not accept the way of life brought by Christ are lost in fantasy. And so I say that those who do not accept Christ of the last days shall forever be despised by God. Christ is man's gateway to the kingdom during the last days, and there are none who can go around Him. None may be perfected by God except through Christ. You believe in God, and so you must accept His words and obey His way. You cannot only think of gaining blessings while being incapable of receiving the truth and incapable of accepting the provision

of life. Christ comes during the last days so that all those who truly believe in Him may be provided with life. His work is for the sake of concluding the old age and entering the new one, and His work is the path that must be taken by all those who would enter the new age. If you are incapable of acknowledging Him, and instead condemn, blaspheme, or even persecute Him, then you are bound to burn for eternity and shall never enter the kingdom of God. For this Christ is Himself the expression of the Holy Spirit, the expression of God, the One whom God has entrusted to do His work on earth. And so I say that if you cannot accept all that is done by Christ of the last days, then you blaspheme the Holy Spirit. The retribution to be had by those who blaspheme the Holy Spirit is self-evident to all. I also tell you that if you resist Christ of the last days, if you spurn Christ of the last days, there will be no one else to bear the consequences on your behalf. Furthermore, from this day onward you will not have another chance to gain the approval of God; even if you try to redeem yourself, you will never again behold the face of God. For what you resist is not a man, what you spurn is not some puny being, but Christ. Do you know what the consequences of this will be? You will not have made a small mistake, but committed a heinous crime. And so I advise everyone not to bare your fangs before the truth, or make careless criticisms, for only the truth can bring you life, and nothing except the truth can allow you to be reborn and behold the face of God again.

Excerpted from “Only Christ of the Last Days Can Give Man the Way of Eternal Life” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

3. What is an overcomer? How is one made into an overcomer before the disaster?

Bible Verses for Reference:

“And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things said He that is holy, He that is true, He that has the key of David, He that opens, and no man shuts; and shuts, and no man opens; I know your works: behold, I have set before you an open door, and no man can shut it: for you have a little strength, and have kept My word, and have not denied My name. Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you. Because you have kept the word of My patience, I also will keep you from the hour

of temptation, which shall come on all the world, to try them that dwell on the earth. Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which you have, that no man take your crown. Him that overcomes will I make a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write on him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, which is new Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God: and I will write on him My new name” (Rev 3:7–12).

“These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb” (Rev 7:14).

“And I looked, and, see, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with Him an hundred forty and four thousand, having His Father’s name written in their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps: And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth. These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These were redeemed from among men, being the first fruits to God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God” (Rev 14:1–5).

Relevant Words of God:

Belief in God requires obedience to Him and experience of His work. God has done so much work—it could be said that for people it is all perfection, refinement, and even more, chastisement. There has not been a single step of God’s work that has been in line with human notions; what people have enjoyed is God’s stern words. When God comes, people should enjoy His majesty and His wrath. However, no matter how stern His words may be, He comes to save and perfect mankind. As creatures, people should fulfill the duties that they ought to, and stand witness for God in the midst of refinement. In every trial they should uphold the witness that they should bear, and do so resoundingly for the sake of God. A person who does this is an overcomer. No matter how God refines you, you remain full of confidence and never lose confidence in Him. You do what man should do. This is what God requires of man, and man’s heart should be able to fully return to Him and turn toward Him in every passing moment. This is an overcomer. Those whom God refers to as “overcomers” are those who are still able to stand

witness and maintain their confidence and devotion to God when under the influence of Satan and while being laid siege to by Satan, that is, when they find themselves amidst the forces of darkness. If you are still able to keep a pure heart before God and maintain your genuine love for God no matter what, then you are standing witness in front of God, and this is what God refers to as being an “overcomer.”

Excerpted from “You Should Maintain Your Devotion to God” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Man will be fully made complete in the Age of Kingdom. After the work of conquest, man will be subjected to refinement and tribulation. Those who can overcome and stand testimony during this tribulation are the ones who will ultimately be made complete; they are the overcomers. During this tribulation, man is required to accept this refinement, and this refinement is the last instance of God’s work. It is the last time that man will be refined prior to the conclusion of all the work of God’s management, and all those who follow God must accept this final test, and they must accept this last refinement. Those who are beset by tribulation are without the work of the Holy Spirit and the guidance of God, but those who have been truly conquered and who truly seek after God will ultimately stand fast; they are the ones who are possessed of humanity, and who truly love God. No matter what God does, these victorious ones will not be bereft of the visions and will still put the truth into practice without failing in their testimony. They are the ones who will finally emerge from the great tribulation.

Excerpted from “God’s Work and Man’s Practice” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

I have previously said that a group of overcomers are gained from the East, overcomers who come from amid the great tribulation. What is meant by these words? They mean that these people who have been gained only truly obeyed after undergoing judgment and chastisement, and dealing and pruning, and all kinds of refinement. The belief of these people is not vague and abstract, but real. They have not seen any signs and wonders, or any miracles; they do not speak of abstruse letters and doctrines, or profound insights; instead they have reality, and the words of God, and a true knowledge of the reality of God.

Excerpted from “All Is Achieved by the Word of God” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

As believers in God, each of you should appreciate how you have truly gained the utmost exaltation and salvation by receiving the work of God in the last days and the work of His plan that He does in you today. God has made this group of people the sole focus of His work throughout all the universe. He has sacrificed all His heart's blood for you; He has reclaimed and given to you all the work of the Spirit throughout the universe. That is why I say you are the fortunate ones. Moreover, He has shifted His glory from Israel, His chosen people, onto you, and He shall make the purpose of His plan fully manifest through this group. Therefore, you are the ones who will receive the inheritance of God, and even more than this, you are the heirs to God's glory. Perhaps you all remember these words: "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, works for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." You have all heard these words before, yet none of you understood their true meaning. Today, you are profoundly aware of their true significance. These words shall be fulfilled by God during the last days, and they shall be fulfilled in those who have been brutally persecuted by the great red dragon in the land where it lies coiled. The great red dragon persecutes God and is the enemy of God, and so, in this land, those who believe in God are thus subjected to humiliation and oppression, and these words are fulfilled in you, this group of people, as a result. Because it is embarked upon in a land that opposes God, all of God's work faces tremendous obstacles, and accomplishing many of His words takes time; thus, people are refined as a result of God's words, which is also part of suffering. It is tremendously difficult for God to carry out His work in the land of the great red dragon—but it is through this difficulty that God does one stage of His work, making manifest His wisdom and His wondrous deeds, and using this opportunity to make this group of people complete. It is through people's suffering, through their caliber, and through all the satanic dispositions of the people of this filthy land that God does His work of purification and conquest, so that, from this, He may gain glory, and so that He may gain those who will bear witness to His deeds. Such is the entire significance of all the sacrifices that God has made for this group of people.

Excerpted from "Is the Work of God As Simple As Man Imagines?" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The kingdom is expanding in humanity's midst, it is forming in humanity's midst, and it is standing up in humanity's midst; there is no force that can destroy My kingdom. Of My people who are in the kingdom of today, which of you is not a human being among human beings?

Which of you lies outside the human condition? When My new starting point is announced to the multitude, how will humanity react? You have seen with your own eyes the state of humankind; surely you do not still harbor hopes of enduring forever in this world? I am now walking abroad amongst My people and I live in their midst. Today, those who bear genuine love for Me—such people are blessed. Blessed are those who submit to Me, they will surely stay in My kingdom. Blessed are those who know Me, they will surely wield power in My kingdom. Blessed are those who seek after Me, they will surely escape from Satan’s bonds and enjoy My blessings. Blessed are those who are able to forsake themselves, they will surely enter into My possession and inherit My kingdom’s bounty. Those who run around for Me I will remember, those who make expenditures for Me I will joyfully embrace, and to those who make offerings to Me I will grant enjoyments. Those who find enjoyment in My words I will bless; they will surely be the pillars that hold up the ridgepole in My kingdom, they will surely have matchless abundance in My house, and no one can compare with them. Have you ever accepted the blessings that you were given? Have you ever sought the promises that were made for you? You will surely, under the guidance of My light, break through the stranglehold of the forces of darkness. You will surely not, in the midst of darkness, lose the light guiding you. You will surely be the master of all creation. You will surely be an overcomer before Satan. You will surely, at the downfall of the kingdom of the great red dragon, stand up amid the myriad throngs to bear witness to My victory. You will surely stand firm and unwavering in the land of Sinim. Through the sufferings you endure, you will inherit My blessings, and will surely radiate My glory throughout the entire universe.

Excerpted from “Chapter 19” of God’s Words to the Entire Universe in The Word Appears in the Flesh

XVII. Truths of the Preparation of Good Deeds

1. What are good deeds? How are good deeds made manifest?

Relevant Words of God:

If you possess the truth, you can follow God. If you have living out, you can be a manifestation of God’s word. If you have life, you can enjoy God’s blessing. Those who possess

the truth can enjoy God's blessing. God ensures redress for those who love Him wholeheartedly and who endure hardships and sufferings, but not for those who only love themselves and who have fallen prey to Satan's deceptions. How can there be goodness in those who do not love the truth? How can there be righteousness in those who only love the flesh? Are not righteousness and goodness both spoken of only in reference to the truth? Are they not reserved for those who wholeheartedly love God?

Excerpted from "Only the Perfected Can Live a Meaningful Life" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

In the church, stand firm in your testimony to Me, uphold the truth; right is right and wrong is wrong. Do not confuse black and white. You shall be at war with Satan and must completely vanquish it so that it never rises again. You must give everything you have to protect My testimony. This shall be the goal of your actions—do not forget this. But now, you are lacking in faith and the ability to differentiate things and you are always unable to understand My words and My intentions. Nonetheless, do not be anxious; everything proceeds according to My steps and anxiety only begets trouble. Spend more time before Me and do not attach importance to food and clothing, which are for the physical body. Seek My intentions often, and I will clearly show you what they are. Gradually you will find My intentions in everything, so that for every human being, I will have a way in without obstruction. This will satisfy My heart, and you shall receive blessings with Me forever and ever!

Excerpted from "Chapter 41" of *Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh*

You should each do your own duty to the best of your ability, with open and honest hearts, and be willing to pay whatever price is necessary. As you have said, when the day comes, God will not be remiss toward anyone who has suffered or paid a price for Him. This kind of conviction is worth holding on to, and it is right that you should never forget it. Only in this way can I put My mind at ease about you. Otherwise, you will forever be people about whom I cannot put My mind at ease, and you will forever be the objects of My distaste. If all of you can follow your conscience and give your all for Me, sparing no effort for My work, and devoting the energy of a lifetime to My gospel work, then will My heart not often leap for joy on your account? This way, I will be able to put My mind entirely at ease regarding you, won't I?

Excerpted from "On Destination" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

If you can devote your heart, body, and all of your genuine love to God, place them before Him, be completely obedient toward Him, and be absolutely considerate of His will—not for the flesh, not for family, and not for your own personal desires, but for the interests of God’s household, taking God’s word as the principle and foundation in everything—then by doing so, your intentions and your perspectives will all be in the right place, and you will then be a person before God who receives His praise.

Excerpted from “Those Who Truly Love God Are Those Who Can Submit Absolutely to His Practicality” in
The Word Appears in the Flesh

As church leaders, you should learn how to discover and cultivate talent, and not be jealous of talented people. In this way, your duty will be performed satisfactorily, and you will have fulfilled your responsibility; you will also have done your utmost to be loyal. Some people are always afraid that others will steal their limelight and surpass them, obtaining recognition while they themselves are neglected. This leads them to attack and exclude others. Is this not a case of being jealous of people more capable than themselves? Is such behavior not selfish and contemptible? What kind of disposition is this? It is malicious! Thinking only of oneself, satisfying only one’s own desires, showing no consideration for the duties of others, and thinking only about one’s own interests and not the interests of God’s house—people like this have a bad disposition, and God has no love for them. If you are truly capable of being considerate of God’s will, then you will be able to treat other people fairly. If you give someone your recommendation, and that person is cultivated into someone of talent, thereby bringing one more talented person into God’s house, will you not then have done your work well? Will you not then have been loyal in performing your duty? This is a good deed before God, and it is the sort of conscience and reason people should possess. Those who are capable of putting the truth into practice can accept God’s scrutiny when doing things. When you accept God’s scrutiny, your heart is set straight. If you only ever do things for others to see, and do not accept God’s scrutiny, then is God still in your heart? People like this have no reverence for God. Do not always do things for your own sake and do not constantly consider your own interests; give no thought to your own status, prestige, or reputation. Also do not consider the interests of man. You must first give thought to the interests of God’s house, and make them your first priority.

You should be considerate of God's will and begin by contemplating whether or not you have been impure in the fulfillment of your duty, whether you have done your utmost to be loyal, done your best to fulfill your responsibilities, and given your all, as well as whether or not you have wholeheartedly given thought to your duty and the work of God's house. You must give consideration to these things. Think about them frequently, and it will be easier for you to perform your duty well. If you are of poor caliber, your experience is shallow, or you are not proficient in your professional work, then there may be some mistakes or deficiencies in your work, and the results may not be very good—but you will have put forth your best effort. When you are not thinking of your own selfish desires or considering your own interests in the things you do, and are instead giving constant consideration to the work of God's house, bearing its interests in mind, and performing your duty well, then you will be accumulating good deeds before God. People who perform these good deeds are the ones who possess truth reality; as such, they have borne testimony.

Excerpted from "Give Your True Heart to God, and You Can Obtain the Truth" in Records of Christ's Talks

Most people who believe in God are glad to expend and devote themselves for Him. However, only those who are capable of genuine devotion and sacrifice possess the true reality. Most people happily pursue the truth, but relatively few are able to put it into practice or pay a price to gain it. When the crucial moment comes, and you are asked to sacrifice and forsake, you cannot bear to; this is unacceptable, and shows that you are not sincere toward God. If the more crucial a moment it is, the more able people are to submit and let go of their self-interests, vanity, and pride, and perform their duties properly, only then will they be remembered by God. Those are all good deeds! Regardless of what people do, which is more important—their vanity and pride, or God's glory? (God's glory.) Which are more important—your responsibilities, or your own interests? Fulfilling your responsibilities is what is most important, and you are duty-bound to them. This is not some slogan; if that is deep down what you think, and you try to practice that way, then will you not have entered a little of reality? At the very least, it means you possess that aspect of reality. When faced with certain things, your own ephemeral subjective desires and your vanity and pride will stop standing in your way, and you will give first priority to your own duty, to the will of God, to bearing testimony for Him, and to your own responsibilities. This is such a great way of bearing testimony, and it brings shame upon Satan!

What does Satan think, after seeing all this? If you actually do this, using real actions to truly bear testimony to God and turn your back on Satan, and you are doing more than just chanting slogans, then there is no better way to shame Satan and testify to God. How wonderful it is to use various methods to bear witness for God and to make Satan see your determination to forsake and reject Satan!

Excerpted from “Gaining God and the Truth Is the Happiest of Things” in Records of Christ’s Talks

Whether you are fulfilling your duty or learning professional knowledge, you must adhere to principles in everything you do. You must treat everything you do in accordance with the truth, and practice in accordance with the truth. You must use the truth to resolve problems, to resolve the corrupt dispositions that have been revealed in you, and to resolve your erroneous ways and thoughts. You must continuously surmount these. For one thing, you must examine yourself. Once you have done so, if you discover a corrupt disposition, you must resolve it, subdue it, and forsake it. Once you have resolved these problems, when you no longer do things based on your corrupt dispositions, and when you can let go of your motives and interests and practice according to the truth principle, only then will you be doing what one who truly follows God is supposed to do. Does God find this particular behavior, way of acting, and conduct acceptable? He finds this acceptable; this is a good deed! Why is your acting that way considered to be a good deed? You do it to benefit others, for the sake of the work of God’s house, or for the interests of God’s house, and at the same time you are practicing the truth, and so God approves of it, and it is a good deed. If this is what you have lived out, it means you are bearing testimony for God.

Excerpted from “Only by Seeking the Truth in Everything Can One Enter Truth Reality” in Records of
Christ’s Talks

Sometimes, after finishing a job, you feel a little uneasy in your heart. On closer inspection, you find that there is indeed a problem. It must be amended, after which you will feel at ease. Your unease proves there is a problem on which you need to spend extra time and to which you must pay closer attention. This is a serious, responsible attitude toward performing one’s duty. When one can be serious, responsible, dedicated, and hard-working, the work will be done properly. Sometimes, you do not have such a heart, and you cannot find or discover a mistake

that is clear as day. Were one to have such a heart, then, with the prompting and guidance of the Holy Spirit, they would be able to identify the issue. But if the Holy Spirit guided you and gave you such awareness, allowing you to sense that something is wrong, yet you did not have such a heart, you would still be incapable of identifying the problem. So, what does this show? It shows that it is very important that people cooperate; their hearts are very important, and where they direct their thoughts and intentions is very important. God scrutinizes and can see what people hold in their hearts as they perform their duty, and how much energy they exert. It is crucial that people put all their heart and strength into what they do. Cooperation, too, is a crucial component. Only if people strive to have no regrets about the duties they have completed and the things they have done, and not to be in debt to God, will they be acting with all their heart and strength. If, today, you do not give all your heart and strength, then, when something goes wrong later, and there are consequences, will it not be too late for regrets? You will be forever indebted; it will be a stain on you! A stain in the performance of one's duty is a transgression. You must therefore strive to do properly the share of things you must and ought to do, with all your heart and strength. Those things must not be done carelessly or perfunctorily; you must not have any regrets. In this way, the duties you perform at this time shall be remembered by God. Those things remembered by God are good deeds. What, then, are the things that are not remembered? They are transgressions. People might not accept that they are evil deeds if they were described thus presently, but, if a day comes when there are serious consequences to these things, and they become a negative influence, then you will sense that these things are not mere behavioral transgressions, but evil deeds. When you realize this, you will be regretful, and think to yourself: I should have chosen an ounce of prevention! With a little more thought and effort, I wouldn't have this problem. Nothing will wipe this eternal stain from your heart, and it would cause trouble if it should leave you in permanent debt. So, today, every time you perform your duty, or accept a commission, you must strive to do it with all your strength and all your heart. You must do it such that you are free of guilt and regret, so that it is remembered by God, and is a good deed. Do not act carelessly and perfunctorily, with one eye open and the other closed; you will regret it, and unable to make amends. It will constitute transgression, and ultimately, in your heart, there will always be guilt, indebtedness, and accusation. Which of these two paths is best? Which path is the right way? Performing your duty with all your heart and strength, and preparing and accumulating good deeds, without any

regrets. Do not let your transgressions accumulate, regret them, and fall into debt. What happens when a person has committed too many transgressions? They are accruing God's anger at them in His presence! If you transgress ever more, and God's wrath toward you grows ever greater, then, ultimately, you shall be punished.

Excerpted from "How to Solve the Problem of Being Careless and Perfunctory When Performing Your Duty" in Records of Christ's Talks

2. What are evil deeds? How are they made manifest?

Relevant Words of God:

What is the standard by which a person's deeds are judged to be good or evil? It depends on whether or not you, in your thoughts, expressions, and actions, possess the testimony of putting the truth into practice and of living out truth reality. If you do not have this reality or do not live this out, then you are without a doubt an evildoer. How does God see evildoers? Your thoughts and external acts do not bear testimony for God, nor do they put Satan to shame or defeat Satan; instead, they shame God, and are riddled with marks that cause God to be ashamed. You are not testifying for God, not expending yourself for God, nor are you fulfilling your responsibility and obligations toward God; instead, you are acting for your own sake. What is the implication of "for your own sake"? For Satan. Therefore, in the end, God will say, "Depart from Me, you that work iniquity." In God's eyes, you have not done good deeds, but rather your behavior has turned evil. You will not be rewarded and God will not remember you. Is this not completely in vain?

Excerpted from "Give Your True Heart to God, and You Can Obtain the Truth" in Records of Christ's Talks

You are currently witnessing so many acts of God, yet still you resist, are rebellious, and do not submit; you harbor many things within you, and do whatever you wish. You follow your own lusts and preferences; this is all rebelliousness and resistance. Any belief in God for the sake of the flesh and one's lusts, as well as for the sake of one's own likes, the world, and Satan, is filthy; it is resistant and rebellious in nature. Nowadays, there are all different kinds of faith: Some seek shelter from disaster, and others seek to obtain blessings; some wish to understand

mysteries, while still others seek money. These are all forms of resistance and they are all blasphemy! To say that one resists or rebels—does that not refer to such behaviors? Many people these days grumble, complain, or make judgments. Those are all things done by the wicked; they are examples of human resistance and rebelliousness. Such people are possessed and occupied by Satan.

Excerpted from “You Should Know How the Whole of Humanity Has Developed to the Present Day” in The
Word Appears in the Flesh

Those among brothers and sisters who are always giving vent to their negativity are lackeys of Satan, and they disturb the church. Such people must one day be expelled and eliminated. In their belief in God, if people do not have a heart of reverence for God, if they do not have a heart of obedience toward God, then not only will they be unable to do any work for Him, but on the contrary will become those who disturb His work and who defy Him. Believing in God but not obeying or revering Him, and instead resisting Him, is the greatest disgrace for a believer. If believers are just as casual and unrestrained in their speech and conduct as unbelievers are, then they are even more evil than unbelievers; they are archetypal demons. Those who give vent to their poisonous, malicious talk within the church, who spread rumors, foment disharmony, and form cliques among the brothers and sisters—they should have been expelled from the church. Yet because now is a different era of God’s work, these people are restricted, for they face certain elimination. All who have been corrupted by Satan have corrupt dispositions. Some have nothing more than corrupt dispositions, while others are different: Not only do they have corrupt satanic dispositions, but their nature is also extremely malicious. Not only do their words and actions reveal their corrupt, satanic dispositions; these people are, moreover, the genuine devil Satan. Their behavior interrupts and disturbs God’s work, it impairs the brothers’ and sisters’ entry into life, and it damages the normal life of the church. Sooner or later, these wolves in sheep’s clothing must be cleared out; an unsparing attitude, an attitude of rejection, should be adopted toward these lackeys of Satan. Only this is standing on the side of God, and those who fail to do so are wallowing in the mire with Satan.

Excerpted from “A Warning to Those Who Do Not Practice the Truth” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

Every church has people who cause trouble for the church or meddle in the work of God. They are all Satans who have infiltrated the house of God in disguise. Such people are good at acting: They come before Me with great reverence, bowing and scraping, living like mangy dogs, and devoting their “all” to achieve their own objectives—but in front of the brothers and sisters, they show their ugly side. When they see people who practice the truth, they strike out at them and shove them aside; when they see people more formidable than themselves, they flatter and fawn upon them. They run wild in the church. It can be said that such “local bullies,” such “lapdogs,” exist in the majority of churches. They act devilishly together, sending each other winks and secret signals, and none of them practices the truth. Whoever has the most venom is the “head demon,” and whoever has the highest prestige leads them, bearing their flag aloft. These people rampage through the church, spreading their negativity, venting death, doing as they please, saying what they please, and no one dares to stop them. They brim with the disposition of Satan. No sooner do they cause a disturbance than an air of death enters the church. Those within the church who practice the truth are cast out, unable to give their all, while those who disturb the church and spread death run rampage within—and, what’s more, most people follow them. Such churches are ruled by Satan, plain and simple; the devil is their king. If the congregants do not rise up and reject the head demons, then they, too, will sooner or later come to ruin. From now on, measures must be taken against such churches. If those who are capable of practicing a little of the truth do not seek to, then that church will be expunged. If a church contains no one who is willing to practice the truth and no one who can stand witness for God, then that church should be completely isolated, and its connections with other churches must be severed. This is called “burying death”; this is what it means to cast out Satan. If a church contains several local bullies, and they are followed by “little flies” that entirely lack discernment, and if the congregants, even after having seen the truth, are still incapable of rejecting the binds and manipulation of these bullies, then all those fools will be eliminated in the end. These little flies might not have done anything terrible, but they are even more deceitful, even more slick and evasive, and everyone like this will be eliminated. Not a single one shall remain!

Excerpted from “A Warning to Those Who Do Not Practice the Truth” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

People who do not strive for progress always wish for others to be as negative and indolent as themselves. Those who do not practice the truth are jealous of those who do, and always try to deceive those who are muddle-headed and lack discernment. The things these people give vent to can cause you to degenerate, slip downward, develop an abnormal state, and be filled with darkness. They cause you to become distant from God, and to cherish the flesh and indulge yourself. People who do not love the truth and who are always perfunctory toward God have no self-awareness, and the disposition of such people seduces others into committing sins and defying God. They do not practice the truth, nor do they allow others to practice it. They cherish sin and have no loathing of themselves. They do not know themselves, and they stop others from knowing themselves; they also stop others from desiring the truth. Those they deceive cannot see the light. They fall into darkness, do not know themselves, are unclear about the truth, and become more and more distant from God. They do not practice the truth and they stop others from practicing the truth, bringing all those fools before them. Rather than say that they believe in God, it would be better to say that they believe in their ancestors, or that what they believe in are the idols in their hearts. It would be best for those people who claim to follow God to open their eyes and take a good look to see exactly who they believe in: Is it really God that you believe in, or Satan? If you know that what you believe in is not God, but your own idols, then it would be best if you did not claim to be a believer. If you really do not know who you believe in, then, again, it would be best if you did not claim to be a believer. To say so would be blasphemy! No one is forcing you to believe in God. Do not say you believe in Me; I have had enough of such talk, and do not wish to hear it again, because what you believe in are the idols in your hearts and the local bullies among you. Those who shake their heads when they hear the truth, who grin when they hear talk of death, are all the spawn of Satan, and they are the ones who will be eliminated. Many in the church have no discernment. When something deceptive occurs, they unexpectedly stand on the side of Satan; they even take offense at being called Satan's lackeys. Though people might say they have no discernment, they always stand on the side without truth, they never stand on the side of the truth at the critical time, they never stand up and argue for the truth. Do they truly lack discernment? Why do they unexpectedly take the side of Satan? Why do they never say one word that is fair and reasonable in support of the truth? Has this situation genuinely arisen as a result of their momentary confusion? The less discernment people have, the less able they are to stand on the side of truth. What does this

show? Does it not show that people without discernment love evil? Does it not show that they are the loyal spawn of Satan? Why is it that they are always able to stand on the side of Satan and speak its language? Their every word and deed, the expressions on their faces, are all sufficient to prove that they are not any kind of lovers of the truth; rather, they are people who detest the truth. That they can stand on the side of Satan is enough to prove that Satan really loves these petty devils who spend their lives fighting for Satan's sake. Are all these facts not abundantly clear? If you truly are a person who loves the truth, then why have you no regard for those who practice the truth, and why do you immediately follow those who do not practice the truth at the slightest look from them? What kind of problem is this? I do not care whether you have discernment or not. I do not care how great a price you have paid. I do not care how great your forces are, and I do not care whether you are a local bully or a flag-bearing leader. If your forces are great, then that is only with the help of Satan's strength. If your prestige is high, then that is merely because there are too many around you who do not practice the truth. If you have not been expelled, then that is because now is not the time for the work of expelling; rather, it is time for the work of elimination. There is no rush to expel you now. I am simply waiting for the day when I will punish you after you have been eliminated. Whoever does not practice the truth will be eliminated!

Excerpted from "A Warning to Those Who Do Not Practice the Truth" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

I have expressed so many words, and have also expressed My will and disposition, yet even so, people are still incapable of knowing Me and believing in Me. Or, it could be said, people are still incapable of obeying Me. Those who live within the Bible, those who live within the law, those who live on the cross, those who live according to doctrine, those who live amid the work I do today—who among them is compatible with Me? You only think of receiving blessings and rewards, but have never spared a thought as to how to actually be compatible with Me, or to how to prevent yourselves from being against Me. I am so disappointed in you, for I have given you so much, yet I have gained so little from you. Your deception, your arrogance, your greed, your extravagant desires, your betrayal, your disobedience—which of these could escape My notice? You are slipshod with Me, you fool Me, you insult Me, you wheedle Me, you exact Me and extort Me for sacrifices—how could such maleficence elude My punishment? All this evildoing is proof of your enmity against Me and is proof of your incompatibility with Me. Each

of you believes yourself to be so compatible with Me, but if that were the case, then to whom would such irrefutable evidence apply? You believe yourselves to possess the utmost sincerity and loyalty toward Me. You think that you are so kindhearted, so compassionate, and have devoted so much to Me. You think that you have done more than enough for Me. But have you ever held this up against your actions? I say you are plenty arrogant, plenty greedy, plenty perfunctory; the tricks with which you fool Me are plenty clever, and you have plenty of contemptible intentions and contemptible methods. Your loyalty is too meager, your earnestness too paltry, and your conscience even more lacking. There is too much maliciousness in your hearts, and no one is spared from your malice, not even Me. You shut Me out for the sake of your children, or your husband, or your own self-preservation. Instead of caring about Me, you care about your family, your children, your status, your future, and your own gratification. When have you ever thought of Me as you spoke or acted? On frigid days, your thoughts turn to your children, your husband, your wife, or your parents. On blistering days, I hold no place in your thoughts, either. When you perform your duty, you are thinking of your own interests, of your own personal safety, of the members of your family. What have you ever done that was for Me? When have you ever thought of Me? When have you ever devoted yourself, at any cost, to Me and My work? Where is the evidence of your compatibility with Me? Where is the reality of your loyalty to Me? Where is the reality of your obedience to Me? When have your intentions not been for the sake of gaining My blessings? You fool and deceive Me, you play with the truth, you conceal the existence of the truth, and betray the essence of the truth. What awaits you in the future by going against Me in this way? You merely seek compatibility with a vague God, and merely seek a vague belief, yet you are not compatible with Christ. Will not your maleficence beget the same retribution as that deserved by the wicked? At that time, you will realize that no one who is incompatible with Christ can escape the day of wrath, and you will discover what kind of retribution shall be wrought upon those who are against Christ.

Excerpted from "You Should Seek the Way of Compatibility With Christ" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

If I were to place some money in front of you right now and give you the freedom to choose—and if I did not condemn you for your choice—then most of you would choose the money and forsake the truth. The better among you would give up the money and choose the truth reluctantly, while those in-between would seize the money in one hand and the truth in

the other. Would your true colors thus not become self-evident? When choosing between the truth and anything to which you are loyal, you would all make this choice, and your attitude would remain the same. Is that not so? Are there not many among you who have seesawed between right and wrong? In contests between positive and negative, black and white, you are surely aware of the choices that you have made between family and God, children and God, peace and disruption, riches and poverty, status and ordinariness, being supported and being cast aside, and so on. Between a peaceful family and a broken one, you chose the former, and you did so without any hesitation; between riches and duty, you again chose the former, even lacking the will to return to shore;^[a] between luxury and poverty, you chose the former; when choosing between your sons, daughters, wives and husbands, and Me, you chose the former; and between notion and truth, you once again chose the former. Faced with all manner of your evil deeds, I have simply lost faith in you. It simply astounds Me that your hearts are so resistant to being softened. Many years of dedication and effort have apparently brought Me nothing more than your abandonment and despair, but My hopes for you grow with each passing day, for My day has been completely laid bare before everyone. Yet you persist in seeking dark and evil things, and refuse to loosen your grip on them. What, then, will be your outcome? Have you ever given careful consideration to this? If you were asked to choose again, what then would be your position? Would it still be the former? Would you still bring Me disappointment and wretched sorrow? Would your hearts still possess the sole modicum of warmth? Would you still be unaware of what to do to comfort My heart?

Excerpted from "To Whom Are You Loyal?" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

It may be that in all your years of faith in God, you have never cursed anyone or committed a bad deed, yet in your association with Christ, you cannot speak the truth, act honestly, or obey the word of Christ; in that case, I say that you are the most sinister and malicious person in the world. You may be exceptionally amiable and devoted toward your relatives, friends, wife (or husband), sons and daughters, and parents, and never take advantage of others, but if you are incapable of compatibility with Christ, if you are unable to interact in harmony with Him, then even if you expend your all in relief to your neighbors or take meticulous care of your father, mother, and members of your household, I would say that you are still wicked, and moreover one full of cunning tricks. Do not think yourself compatible with Christ simply because you get

along with others or do a few good deeds. Do you think that your charitable intent can finagle the blessings of Heaven? Do you think that doing a few good deeds is a substitute for your obedience?

Excerpted from “Those Who Are Incompatible With Christ Are Surely Opponents of God” in The Word
Appears in the Flesh

My concern continues to be the way in which each of you acts and expresses himself, on the basis of which I shall determine your end. However, I must make this clear: Toward those who showed Me not the slightest loyalty during times of tribulation, I shall be merciful no more, for My mercy only extends so far. I have no liking, furthermore, for anyone who has once betrayed Me, much less do I like to associate with those who sell out the interests of their friends. This is My disposition, regardless of who the person may be. I must tell you this: Anyone who breaks My heart shall not receive clemency from Me a second time, and anyone who has been faithful to Me shall forever remain in My heart.

Excerpted from “Prepare Sufficient Good Deeds for Your Destination” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

Every one of you has risen to the pinnacle of the multitudes; you have ascended to be the ancestors of the masses. You are extremely arbitrary, and you run amok among all of the maggots, seeking a place of ease and attempting to devour the maggots that are smaller than you. You are malicious and sinister in your hearts, surpassing even the ghosts that have sunk to the bottom of the sea. You reside in the bottom of the dung, disturbing the maggots from top to bottom until they have no peace, fighting each other for a while and then calming down. You do not know your place, yet still you battle with each other in the dung. What can you gain from such struggle? If you truly had reverence for Me in your hearts, how could you fight with each other behind My back? No matter how high your status, are you not still a stinking little worm in the dung? Will you be able to sprout wings and become a dove in the sky? You stinking little worms steal offerings from the altar of Me, Jehovah; in doing so, can you rescue your ruined, failed reputation and become the chosen people of Israel? You are shameless wretches! Those sacrifices on the altar were offered up to Me by people, as an expression of benevolent feelings from those who revere Me. They are for My control and for My use, so how can you possibly rob Me of the little turtledoves people have given Me? Do you not fear becoming a Judas? Are you

not afraid that your land might become a field of blood? You shameless thing! Do you think that the turtledoves offered up by people are to nourish the belly of you maggot? What I have given you is what I am content and willing to give you; what I have not given you is at My disposal. You may not simply steal My offerings. The One who works is Me, Jehovah—the Lord of creation—and people offer sacrifices because of Me. Do you think this is recompense for all the running about you do? You really are shameless! Who do you run about for? Is it not for yourself? Why do you steal My sacrifices? Why do you steal money from My money bag? Are you not the son of Judas Iscariot? The sacrifices to Me, Jehovah, are to be enjoyed by priests. Are you a priest? You dare to smugly eat My sacrifices, and even lay them out on the table; you are worth nothing! You worthless wretch! My fire, the fire of Jehovah, will incinerate you!

Excerpted from “When Falling Leaves Return to Their Roots, You Will Regret All the Evil You Have Done”
in The Word Appears in the Flesh

Those who think only of their flesh and who enjoy comfort; those who seem to believe but who do not really believe; those who engage in evil medicine and sorcery; those who are promiscuous, tattered and ragged; those who steal sacrifices to Jehovah and His possessions; those who love bribes; those who dream idly of ascending to heaven; those who are arrogant and conceited, who strive only for personal fame and fortune; those who spread impertinent words; those who blaspheme God Himself; those who do nothing but make judgments against and slander God Himself; those who form cliques and seek independence; those who exalt themselves above God; those frivolous young, middle-aged and older men and women who are ensnared in licentiousness; those men and women who enjoy personal fame and fortune and pursue personal status among others; those unrepentant people who are trapped in sin—are they not, all of them, beyond salvation? Licentiousness, sinfulness, evil medicine, sorcery, profanity, and impertinent words all run riot among you; and truth and the words of life are trampled in your midst, and the holy language is defiled among you. You Gentiles, bloated with filth and disobedience! What will your final outcome be? How can those who love the flesh, who commit sorcery of the flesh, and who are ensnared in licentious sin have the audacity to continue living! Do you not know that people such as you are maggots beyond salvation? What entitles you to demand this and that? To date, there has not been the slightest change in those who do not love the truth and only love the flesh—how can such people be saved? Those who

do not love the way of life, who do not exalt God and bear testimony to Him, who scheme for the sake of their own status, who extol themselves—are they not still the same, even today? What is the value in saving them? Whether you can be saved does not depend on how great your seniority or how many years you have been working, and much less does it depend on how many credentials you have built up. Rather, it depends on whether your pursuit has borne fruit. You ought to know that those who are saved are the “trees” that bear fruit, not the trees with lush foliage and abundant flowers that yet yield no fruit. Even if you have spent many years wandering the streets, what does that matter? Where is your testimony? Your reverence for God is far less than your love for yourself and your lustful desires—is this kind of person not a degenerate? How could they be a specimen and model for salvation? Your nature is incorrigible, you are too rebellious, you are beyond salvation! Are such people not those that will be eliminated?

Excerpted from “Practice (7)” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Think back on the past: When has My gaze been angry, and My voice stern, toward you? When have I split hairs with you? When have I reprimanded you unreasonably? When have I reprimanded you to your face? Is it not for the sake of My work that I call on My Father to keep you from every temptation? Why do you treat Me like this? Have I ever used My authority to strike down your flesh? Why do you repay Me thus? After blowing hot and cold toward Me, you are neither hot nor cold, and then you try to wheedle Me and hide things from Me, and your mouths are full of the spit of the unrighteous. Do you think your tongues can cheat My Spirit? Do you think that your tongues can escape My wrath? Do you think your tongues may pass judgment on the deeds of Me, Jehovah, however they wish? Am I the God whom man passes judgment on? Could I allow a little maggot to blaspheme Me thus? How could I place such sons of disobedience among My eternal blessings? Your words and actions have long since exposed and condemned you. When I stretched out the heavens and created all things, I did not allow any creature to participate as they pleased, much less did I allow any thing to disrupt My work and My management however it wished. I tolerated no man or object; how could I spare those who are cruel and inhumane toward Me? How could I forgive those who rebel against My words? How could I spare those who disobey Me? Is the destiny of man not in the hands of Me, the Almighty? How could I consider your unrighteousness and disobedience holy? How could your

sins defile My holiness? I am not defiled by the impurity of the unrighteous, nor do I enjoy the offerings of the unrighteous. If you were loyal toward Me, Jehovah, could you take for yourself the sacrifices at My altar? Could you use your venomous tongue to blaspheme My holy name? Could you rebel against My words in this way? Could you treat My glory and holy name as a tool with which to serve Satan, the evil one? My life is provided for the enjoyment of the holy ones. How could I allow you to play with My life however you wish, and use it as a tool for conflict among yourselves? How could you be so heartless, and so lacking in the way of the good, in how you are toward Me? Do you not know I have already written your evil doings in these words of life? How could you escape the day of wrath when I chastise Egypt? How could I allow you to oppose and defy Me in this way, time and time again? I tell you plainly, when the day comes, your chastisement will be more unbearable than that of Egypt! How can you escape My day of wrath?

Excerpted from “No One Who Is of the Flesh Can Escape the Day of Wrath” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Footnotes:

a. Return to shore: a Chinese idiom, meaning “turn from one’s evil ways.”

3. Why does God require man to prepare sufficient good deeds?

Relevant Words of God:

Now is the time when I determine the ending for each person, not the stage in which I began to work man. I write down in My record book, one by one, the words and actions of each person, the path by which they have followed Me, their inherent characteristics, and how they have ultimately comported themselves. In this way, no matter what kind of person they are, no one shall escape My hand, and all shall be with their own kind as I assign. I decide the destination of each person not on the basis of age, seniority, amount of suffering, and least of all, the degree to which they invite pity, but according to whether they possess the truth. There is no other choice but this. You must realize that all those who do not follow the will of God shall also be punished. This is an immutable fact. Therefore, all those who are punished are so

punished for the righteousness of God and as retribution for their numerous evil acts. I have not made a single change to My plan since its inception. It is simply that, as far as man is concerned, those to whom I direct My words seem to be diminishing in number, as are those of whom I truly approve. However, I maintain that My plan has never changed; rather, it is the faith and love of man that are ever changing, ever waning, to the extent that it is possible for each person to go from fawning over Me to being cold toward Me and even casting Me out. My attitude toward you will be neither hot nor cold, until I feel disgust and abhorrence, and finally mete out punishment. However, on the day of your punishment, I will still see you, but you shall no longer be able to see Me. As life among you already has become tedious and dull to Me, so, needless to say, I have chosen different surroundings in which to live, the better to avoid the hurt of your malicious words and steer clear of your unbearably sordid behavior, that you may no longer fool Me or treat Me in a perfunctory manner. Before I leave you, I must still exhort you to refrain from doing that which is not in accordance with the truth. Rather, you should do that which is pleasing to all, that which brings benefit to all, and that which benefits your own destination, otherwise the one who suffers in the midst of disaster will be none other than yourself.

Excerpted from "Prepare Sufficient Good Deeds for Your Destination" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

My mercy is expressed toward those who love Me and deny themselves. The punishment visited upon the wicked, meanwhile, is precisely proof of My righteous disposition and, even more, testimony to My wrath. When disaster comes, all who oppose Me will weep as they fall victim to famine and plague. Those who have committed all manner of wickedness, but who have followed Me for many years, will not escape paying for their sins; they too, will be plunged into disaster, the like of which has seldom been seen throughout millions of years, and they will live in a constant state of panic and fear. And those of My followers who have shown loyalty to Me will rejoice and applaud My might. They will experience ineffable contentment and live amid joy such as I have never before bestowed upon mankind. For I treasure the good deeds of man and abhor their evil deeds. Since I first began to lead mankind, I have been eagerly hoping to gain a group of people who are of the same mind with Me. Those who are not of the same mind with Me, meanwhile, I never forget; I always loathe them in My heart, awaiting the chance

to bring retribution upon them, which I shall relish to see. Now My day has finally come, and I need no longer wait!

My final work is not only for the sake of punishing man, but also for the sake of arranging the destination of man. Moreover, it is so that all people may acknowledge My deeds and actions. I want each and every person to see that all I have done is right, and that all I have done is an expression of My disposition. It is not man's doing, much less nature, that brought forth mankind, but I, who nourish every living being in creation. Without My existence, mankind will only perish and suffer the scourge of calamity. No human being will ever again see the beautiful sun and moon, or the verdant world; mankind shall encounter only the frigid night and the inexorable valley of the shadow of death. I am mankind's only salvation. I am mankind's only hope and, even more, I am He on whom the existence of all mankind rests. Without Me, mankind will immediately come to a standstill. Without Me, mankind will suffer catastrophe and be trampled underfoot by all manner of ghosts, though no one takes heed of Me. I have done work that can be done by no other, and hope only that man can repay Me with some good deeds. Though but a few have been able to repay Me, I will still conclude My journey in the human world and begin the next step of My unfolding work, because all My rushing to and fro in man's midst these many years has been fruitful, and I am very pleased. What I care about is not the number of people, but rather their good deeds. In any case, I hope that you prepare a sufficiency of good deeds for your own destination. Then will I be satisfied; otherwise, none of you can escape the disaster that will befall you. The disaster originates with Me and is of course orchestrated by Me. If you cannot appear as good in My eyes, then you will not escape suffering the disaster. In the midst of tribulation, your actions and deeds were not considered entirely appropriate, for your faith and love were hollow, and you only showed yourselves to be either timid or tough. Regarding this, I will only make a judgment of good or bad. My concern continues to be the way in which each of you acts and expresses himself, on the basis of which I shall determine your end. However, I must make this clear: Toward those who showed Me not the slightest loyalty during times of tribulation, I shall be merciful no more, for My mercy only extends so far. I have no liking, furthermore, for anyone who has once betrayed Me, much less do I like to associate with those who sell out the interests of their friends. This is My disposition, regardless of who the person may be. I must tell you this: Anyone who breaks My heart shall

not receive clemency from Me a second time, and anyone who has been faithful to Me shall forever remain in My heart.

Excerpted from “Prepare Sufficient Good Deeds for Your Destination” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

Do not always do things for your own sake and do not constantly consider your own interests; give no thought to your own status, prestige, or reputation. Also do not consider the interests of man. You must first give thought to the interests of God’s house, and make them your first priority. You should be considerate of God’s will and begin by contemplating whether or not you have been impure in the fulfillment of your duty, whether you have done your utmost to be loyal, done your best to fulfill your responsibilities, and given your all, as well as whether or not you have wholeheartedly given thought to your duty and the work of God’s house. You must give consideration to these things. Think about them frequently, and it will be easier for you to perform your duty well. If you are of poor caliber, your experience is shallow, or you are not proficient in your professional work, then there may be some mistakes or deficiencies in your work, and the results may not be very good—but you will have put forth your best effort. When you are not thinking of your own selfish desires or considering your own interests in the things you do, and are instead giving constant consideration to the work of God’s house, bearing its interests in mind, and performing your duty well, then you will be accumulating good deeds before God. People who perform these good deeds are the ones who possess truth reality; as such, they have borne testimony. If you are always living by the flesh, constantly satisfying your own selfish desires, then such people do not possess truth reality; this is the mark of bringing dishonor to God. You say, “I haven’t done anything; how have I brought God shame?” In your thoughts and ideas, in the intentions, goals and motives behind your actions, and in the consequences of what you’ve done—in every way you are satisfying Satan, being its laughingstock, and letting it get something on you. You do not remotely possess the testimony that you should as a Christian. You dishonor God’s name in all things and you do not possess genuine testimony. Will God remember the things you have done? In the end, what conclusion will God draw about your acts and the duty you performed? Doesn’t something have to come of that, some sort of statement? In the Bible, the Lord Jesus says, “Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name? and in Your name have cast out devils? and in Your name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess to them, I never knew you:

depart from Me, you that work iniquity.” Why did the Lord Jesus say this? Why have those who heal the sick and cast out devils in the Lord’s name, who travel to preach in the Lord’s name, become evildoers? Who are these evildoers? Are they those who do not believe in God? They all believe in God and follow God. They also give things up for God, expend themselves for God, and perform their duty. However, in performing their duty they lack devotion and testimony, so it has become doing evil. This is why the Lord Jesus says, “Depart from Me, you that work iniquity.”

Excerpted from “Give Your True Heart to God, and You Can Obtain the Truth” in Records of Christ’s Talks

I only hope that, in the last stage of My work, you will be able to give your most outstanding performance, and that you will devote yourselves wholeheartedly, no longer half-hearted. Of course, I also hope that you can all have a good destination. Nevertheless, I still have My requirement, which is for you to make the best decision in offering up to Me your sole and final devotion. If someone does not have that sole devotion, then he is surely a treasured possession of Satan, and I will no longer keep him to use but send him home to be looked after by his parents. My work is a great help to you; what I hope to get from you is a heart that is honest and that aspires upward, but so far My hands remain empty. Think about it: If one day I am still so aggrieved, beyond the scope of words to tell, what will My attitude toward you be then? Will I be as amiable to you then as I am now? Will My heart be as serene then as it is now? Do you understand the feelings of a person who, having painstakingly tilled the field, has not harvested a single grain? Do you understand how greatly a person’s heart is injured when he has been dealt a great blow? Can you taste the bitterness of a person, once so full of hope, who has had to part on bad terms? Have you seen the wrath issuing forth from a person who has been provoked? Can you know the eagerness for revenge of a person who has been treated with enmity and deceit? If you understand the mentality of these people, then I think it should not be difficult for you to imagine the attitude God will have at the time of His retribution! Finally, I hope you all put in serious effort for the sake of your own destination, though you had better not employ deceitful means in your efforts, or else I will continue to be disappointed with you in My heart. And what does such disappointment lead to? Are you not fooling yourselves? Those who take thought for their destination yet ruin it are the people least able to be saved. Even if he were to become exasperated and enraged, who would take pity on such a person? In sum, I

still wish for you to have a destination that is both suitable and good, and, even more, I hope that none of you will fall into disaster.

Excerpted from “On Destination” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

XVIII. Truths of the Arrival of Great Disasters

1. Why will God mete out all manner of disaster?

Bible Verses for Reference:

“And also I have withheld the rain from you, when there were yet three months to the harvest: and I caused it to rain on one city, and caused it not to rain on another city: one piece was rained on, and the piece whereupon it rained not withered. So two or three cities wandered to one city, to drink water; but they were not satisfied: yet have you not returned to Me, said Jehovah. I have smitten you with blasting and mildew: when your gardens and your vineyards and your fig trees and your olive trees increased, the palmerworm devoured them: yet have you not returned to Me, said Jehovah. I have sent among you the pestilence after the manner of Egypt: your young men have I slain with the sword, and have taken away your horses; and I have made the stink of your camps to come up to your nostrils: yet have you not returned to Me, said Jehovah. I have overthrown some of you, as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and you were as a firebrand plucked out of the burning: yet have you not returned to Me, said Jehovah. Therefore thus will I do to you, O Israel: and because I will do this to you, prepare to meet your God, O Israel” (Amo 4:7–12).

“Behold, the days come, said the Lord Jehovah, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of Jehovah” (Amo 8:11).

Relevant Words of God:

Everything God does is planned with precision. When He sees a thing or a situation occurring, in His eyes there is a standard to measure it with, and this standard determines whether He launches a plan to deal with it or what approach to take in dealing with this thing or situation. He is not indifferent or lacking in feelings toward everything. It is actually the

complete opposite. There is a verse here stating what God said to Noah: “The end of all flesh is come before Me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth.” When God said this, did He mean He was destroying only humans? No! God said He was going to destroy all living things of flesh. Why did God want destruction? There is another revelation of God’s disposition here; in God’s eyes, there is a limit to His patience toward man’s corruption, toward the filthiness, violence, and disobedience of all flesh. What is His limit? It is as God said: “God looked on the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way on the earth.” What does the phrase “for all flesh had corrupted his way on the earth” mean? It means any living things, including those who followed God, those who called on the name of God, those who once made burnt offerings to God, those who verbally acknowledged God and even praised God—once their behavior was full of corruption and reached God’s eyes, He would have to destroy them. That was God’s limit. So to what extent did God remain patient with man and the corruption of all flesh? To the extent that all people, whether followers of God or unbelievers, were not walking the right path. To the extent that man was not just morally corrupt and full of evil, but where there was no one who believed in God’s existence, let alone anyone who believed that the world is ruled by God and that God can bring people light and the right path. To the extent that man despised God’s existence and did not permit God to exist. Once man’s corruption reached this point, God could stand it no longer. What would replace it? The coming of God’s wrath and God’s punishment.

Excerpted from “God’s Work, God’s Disposition, and God Himself I” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

There is a limit to God’s patience toward man’s corruption, filthiness, and violence. When He reaches that limit, He will no longer be patient and will instead begin His new management and new plan, start to do what He has to do, reveal His deeds and the other side of His disposition. This action of His is not to demonstrate that He must never be offended by man or that He is full of authority and wrath, and it is not to show that He can destroy humanity. It is that His disposition and His holy essence can no longer allow or have the patience for this kind of humanity to live before Him, to live under His dominion. That is to say, when all of mankind is against Him, when there is no one He can save on the whole earth, He will no longer have patience for such a humanity and will, without any misgiving, carry out His plan—to destroy

this kind of humanity. Such an act by God is determined by His disposition. This is a necessary consequence, and a consequence that every created being under God's dominion must bear.

Excerpted from "God's Work, God's Disposition, and God Himself I" in The Word Appears in the Flesh

When the people have all been made complete and all the nations of the earth become Christ's kingdom, then it will be the time when the seven thunders peal. The current day is a stride toward that stage; the charge has been unleashed toward that day. This is God's plan, and in the near future it will be realized. However, God has already accomplished everything that He has uttered. Thus, it is clear that the nations of earth are but castles in the sand, trembling as high tide nears: The last day is imminent, and the great red dragon will topple beneath God's word. To ensure that His plan is carried out successfully, the angels of heaven have descended upon earth, doing their utmost to satisfy God. The incarnate God Himself has deployed to the field of battle to wage war against the enemy. Wherever the incarnation appears is a place from which the enemy is exterminated. China will be the first to be annihilated; it will be laid to waste by the hand of God. God will give absolutely no quarter there. Proof of the great red dragon's progressive collapse can be seen in the continued maturation of the people; this is obvious and visible to anyone. The maturation of the people is a sign of the enemy's demise. This is a bit of an explanation of what is meant by "compete."

Excerpted from "Chapter 10" of Interpretations of the Mysteries of God's Words to the Entire Universe in
The Word Appears in the Flesh

All will be accomplished by My words; no man may partake, and no man can do the work that I will carry out. I will wipe clean the air of all lands and eradicate all trace of the demons on earth. I have already begun, and I will commence the first step of My work of chastisement in the dwelling place of the great red dragon. Thus it can be seen that My chastisement has befallen the entire universe, and that the great red dragon and all kinds of unclean spirits will be powerless to escape My chastisement, for I look upon all lands. When My work on earth is completed, that is, when the era of judgment comes to an end, I will formally chastise the great red dragon. My people will surely see My righteous chastisement of the great red dragon, will surely pour forth praise because of My righteousness, and will surely forever extol My holy

name because of My righteousness. Hence you will formally perform your duty, and will formally praise Me throughout the lands, forever and ever!

Excerpted from “Chapter 28” of God’s Words to the Entire Universe in The Word Appears in the Flesh

Today, not only am I descending upon the nation of the great red dragon, I am also turning to face the entire universe, causing the entire empyrean to quake. Is there a single place anywhere that is not subject to My judgment? Is there a single place that does not exist under calamities that I rain down upon it? Everywhere I go, I have scattered all sorts of “seeds of disaster.” This is one of the ways in which I work, and is without doubt an act of salvation for humanity, and what I extend to them is still a kind of love. I wish to allow even more people to get to know Me and be able to see Me, and in this way, come to revere a God whom they could not see for so many years but who, right now, is real. For what reason did I create the world? Why, after humans had become corrupt, did I not completely annihilate them? For what reason does the whole of the human race live amidst disasters? What was My purpose in donning the flesh? When I am performing My work, humanity learns the taste not only of the bitter, but also of the sweet.

Excerpted from “Chapter 10” of God’s Words to the Entire Universe in The Word Appears in the Flesh

In this stage of the work, because God wishes to reveal all of His deeds throughout the world so that all humans who have betrayed Him will come again to submit before His throne, God’s judgment will still contain His mercy and lovingkindness. God uses current events throughout the world as opportunities to cause humans to feel panic, spurring them to seek God so that they may flow back to be before Him. Thus, God says, “This is one of the ways in which I work, and is without doubt an act of salvation for humanity, and what I extend to them is still a kind of love.”

Excerpted from “Chapter 10” of Interpretations of the Mysteries of God’s Words to the Entire Universe in
The Word Appears in the Flesh

In the phases of God’s work, salvation still takes the form of various disasters, and none who is doomed can escape them. Only in the end will it be possible to achieve a situation on earth that is “as serene as the third heaven: Here, living things, great and small, coexist in

harmony, never once engaging in ‘conflicts of mouth and tongue.’” One aspect of God’s work is to conquer all mankind and gain the chosen people through His words; another is to conquer all sons of rebellion by way of various disasters. This is one part of the large-scale work of God. Only in this way can the kingdom on earth that God wants be fully achieved, and this is the part of His work that is pure gold.

Excerpted from “Chapter 17” of Interpretations of the Mysteries of God’s Words to the Entire Universe in
The Word Appears in the Flesh

My mercy is expressed toward those who love Me and deny themselves. The punishment visited upon the wicked, meanwhile, is precisely proof of My righteous disposition and, even more, testimony to My wrath. When disaster comes, all who oppose Me will weep as they fall victim to famine and plague. Those who have committed all manner of wickedness, but who have followed Me for many years, will not escape paying for their sins; they too, will be plunged into disaster, the like of which has seldom been seen throughout millions of years, and they will live in a constant state of panic and fear. And those of My followers who have shown loyalty to Me will rejoice and applaud My might. They will experience ineffable contentment and live amid joy such as I have never before bestowed upon mankind. For I treasure the good deeds of man and abhor their evil deeds. Since I first began to lead mankind, I have been eagerly hoping to gain a group of people who are of the same mind with Me. Those who are not of the same mind with Me, meanwhile, I never forget; I always loathe them in My heart, awaiting the chance to bring retribution upon them, which I shall relish to see. Now My day has finally come, and I need no longer wait!

Excerpted from “Prepare Sufficient Good Deeds for Your Destination” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

2. Why will God cast into disaster those who do not accept Almighty God?

Relevant Words of God:

Now is the time when I determine the ending for each person, not the stage in which I began to work man. I write down in My record book, one by one, the words and actions of each person, the path by which they have followed Me, their inherent characteristics, and how they

have ultimately comported themselves. In this way, no matter what kind of person they are, no one shall escape My hand, and all shall be with their own kind as I assign. I decide the destination of each person not on the basis of age, seniority, amount of suffering, and least of all, the degree to which they invite pity, but according to whether they possess the truth. There is no other choice but this. You must realize that all those who do not follow the will of God shall also be punished. This is an immutable fact. Therefore, all those who are punished are so punished for the righteousness of God and as retribution for their numerous evil acts.

Excerpted from “Prepare Sufficient Good Deeds for Your Destination” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

My mercy is expressed toward those who love Me and deny themselves. The punishment visited upon the wicked, meanwhile, is precisely proof of My righteous disposition and, even more, testimony to My wrath. When disaster comes, all who oppose Me will weep as they fall victim to famine and plague. Those who have committed all manner of wickedness, but who have followed Me for many years, will not escape paying for their sins; they too, will be plunged into disaster, the like of which has seldom been seen throughout millions of years, and they will live in a constant state of panic and fear. And those of My followers who have shown loyalty to Me will rejoice and applaud My might. They will experience ineffable contentment and live amid joy such as I have never before bestowed upon mankind. For I treasure the good deeds of man and abhor their evil deeds. Since I first began to lead mankind, I have been eagerly hoping to gain a group of people who are of the same mind with Me. Those who are not of the same mind with Me, meanwhile, I never forget; I always loathe them in My heart, awaiting the chance to bring retribution upon them, which I shall relish to see. Now My day has finally come, and I need no longer wait!

Excerpted from “Prepare Sufficient Good Deeds for Your Destination” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

Those who wish to gain life without relying on the truth spoken by Christ are the most ridiculous people on earth, and those who do not accept the way of life brought by Christ are lost in fantasy. And so I say that those who do not accept Christ of the last days shall forever be despised by God. Christ is man’s gateway to the kingdom during the last days, and there are none who can go around Him. None may be perfected by God except through Christ. You believe in God, and so you must accept His words and obey His way. You cannot only think of gaining

blessings while being incapable of receiving the truth and incapable of accepting the provision of life. Christ comes during the last days so that all those who truly believe in Him may be provided with life. His work is for the sake of concluding the old age and entering the new one, and His work is the path that must be taken by all those who would enter the new age. If you are incapable of acknowledging Him, and instead condemn, blaspheme, or even persecute Him, then you are bound to burn for eternity and shall never enter the kingdom of God. For this Christ is Himself the expression of the Holy Spirit, the expression of God, the One whom God has entrusted to do His work on earth. And so I say that if you cannot accept all that is done by Christ of the last days, then you blaspheme the Holy Spirit. The retribution to be had by those who blaspheme the Holy Spirit is self-evident to all. I also tell you that if you resist Christ of the last days, if you spurn Christ of the last days, there will be no one else to bear the consequences on your behalf. Furthermore, from this day onward you will not have another chance to gain the approval of God; even if you try to redeem yourself, you will never again behold the face of God. For what you resist is not a man, what you spurn is not some puny being, but Christ. Do you know what the consequences of this will be? You will not have made a small mistake, but committed a heinous crime. And so I advise everyone not to bare your fangs before the truth, or make careless criticisms, for only the truth can bring you life, and nothing except the truth can allow you to be reborn and behold the face of God again.

Excerpted from "Only Christ of the Last Days Can Give Man the Way of Eternal Life" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

My final work is not only for the sake of punishing man, but also for the sake of arranging the destination of man. Moreover, it is so that all people may acknowledge My deeds and actions. I want each and every person to see that all I have done is right, and that all I have done is an expression of My disposition. It is not man's doing, much less nature, that brought forth mankind, but I, who nourish every living being in creation. Without My existence, mankind will only perish and suffer the scourge of calamity. No human being will ever again see the beautiful sun and moon, or the verdant world; mankind shall encounter only the frigid night and the inexorable valley of the shadow of death. I am mankind's only salvation. I am mankind's only hope and, even more, I am He on whom the existence of all mankind rests. Without Me, mankind will immediately come to a standstill. Without Me, mankind will suffer catastrophe

and be trampled underfoot by all manner of ghosts, though no one takes heed of Me. I have done work that can be done by no other, and hope only that man can repay Me with some good deeds. Though but a few have been able to repay Me, I will still conclude My journey in the human world and begin the next step of My unfolding work, because all My rushing to and fro in man's midst these many years has been fruitful, and I am very pleased. What I care about is not the number of people, but rather their good deeds. In any case, I hope that you prepare a sufficiency of good deeds for your own destination. Then will I be satisfied; otherwise, none of you can escape the disaster that will befall you. The disaster originates with Me and is of course orchestrated by Me. If you cannot appear as good in My eyes, then you will not escape suffering the disaster.

Excerpted from "Prepare Sufficient Good Deeds for Your Destination" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

There is a limit to God's patience toward man's corruption, filthiness, and violence. When He reaches that limit, He will no longer be patient and will instead begin His new management and new plan, start to do what He has to do, reveal His deeds and the other side of His disposition. This action of His is not to demonstrate that He must never be offended by man or that He is full of authority and wrath, and it is not to show that He can destroy humanity. It is that His disposition and His holy essence can no longer allow or have the patience for this kind of humanity to live before Him, to live under His dominion. That is to say, when all of mankind is against Him, when there is no one He can save on the whole earth, He will no longer have patience for such a humanity and will, without any misgiving, carry out His plan—to destroy this kind of humanity. Such an act by God is determined by His disposition. This is a necessary consequence, and a consequence that every created being under God's dominion must bear.

Excerpted from "God's Work, God's Disposition, and God Himself I" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

In the vast expanse of the world, countless changes have occurred, oceans silting into fields, fields flooding into oceans, over and over. Except for He who rules over all things in the universe, no one is able to lead and guide this human race. There is no mighty one to labor or make preparations for this human race, still less is there anyone who can lead this human race toward the destination of light and liberate it from earthly injustices. God laments the future of mankind, He grieves at the fall of mankind, and is pained that mankind is marching, step by

step, toward decay and the path of no return. A mankind that has broken the heart of God and renounced Him to seek the evil one: Has anyone ever given thought to the direction in which such a mankind might be headed? It is precisely for this reason why no one senses the wrath of God, why no one seeks a way to please God or tries to draw closer to God, and what is more, why no one seeks to comprehend God's grief and pain. Even after hearing the voice of God, man continues on his own path, persists in straying from God, evading God's grace and care, and shunning His truth, preferring to sell himself to Satan, the enemy of God. And who has given any thought—should man persist in his obduracy—to how God will act toward this humanity that has dismissed Him without a backward glance? No one knows that the reason for God's repeated reminders and exhortations is because He has prepared in His hands a calamity like never before, one that will be unbearable to the flesh and soul of man. This calamity is not merely a punishment of the flesh, but also of the soul. You need to know this: When God's plan falls through, and when His reminders and exhortations beget no response, what kind of rage will He unleash? It will be like nothing that has ever been experienced or heard by any created being. And so I say, this calamity is without precedent, and will never be repeated. For God's plan is to create mankind only this once, and to save mankind only this once. This is the first time, and it is also the last. Therefore, no one can comprehend the painstaking intentions and fervent anticipation with which God saves mankind this time.

Excerpted from "God Is the Source of Man's Life" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

God does not partake in the politics of man, yet the fate of a country or nation is controlled by God. God controls this world and the entire universe. The fate of man and the plan of God are intimately connected, and no man, country or nation is exempt from the sovereignty of God. If man wishes to know his fate, then he must come before God. God shall cause those who follow and worship Him to prosper and shall bring decline and extinction upon those who resist and reject Him.

Recall the scene in the Bible when God wrought destruction upon Sodom and think also of how Lot's wife became a pillar of salt. Think back to how the people of Nineveh repented their sins in sackcloth and ashes and recall what followed after the Jews nailed Jesus to the cross 2,000 years ago. The Jews were expelled from Israel and fled to countries around the world. Many were killed, and the entire Jewish nation was subjected to unprecedented destruction.

They had nailed God to the cross—committed a heinous sin—and provoked the disposition of God. They were made to pay for what they did and were made to bear all the consequences of their actions. They condemned God, rejected God, and so they had but one fate: to be punished by God. This was the bitter consequence and disaster that their rulers brought upon their country and nation.

Today, God has returned to the world to do His work. His first stop is the grand assemblage of dictatorial rulers: China, the staunch bastion of atheism. God has gained a group of people by His wisdom and power. During this period, He has been hunted by China's ruling party by every means and subjected to great suffering, with no place to rest His head, unable to find shelter. Despite this, God still continues the work He intends to do: He utters His voice and spreads the gospel. None can fathom the almightiness of God. In China, a country that regards God as an enemy, God has never ceased His work. Instead, more people have accepted His work and word, for God saves each and every member of mankind to the greatest extent possible. We trust that no country or power can stand in the way of what God wishes to achieve. Those who obstruct God's work, resist the word of God and disturb and impair the plan of God shall ultimately be punished by God. He who defies the work of God shall be sent to hell; any country that defies the work of God shall be destroyed; any nation that rises up to oppose the work of God shall be wiped from this earth and shall cease to exist. I urge the people of all nations, of all countries, and even of all industries to listen to the voice of God, to behold the work of God and to pay attention to the fate of mankind, to make God the most holy, the most honorable, the highest, and the only object of worship among mankind, and to allow the whole of mankind to live under the blessing of God, just as the descendants of Abraham lived under the promise of Jehovah, and just as Adam and Eve, whom God created first, lived in the Garden of Eden.

The work of God surges onward like a mighty wave. No one can detain Him, and no one can halt His march. Only those who listen carefully to His words, and who seek and thirst for Him, can follow His footsteps and receive His promise. Those who do not shall be subjected to overwhelming disaster and well-deserved punishment.

Excerpted from "God Presides Over the Fate of All Mankind" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

3. How can one be protected in disasters and survive them?

Relevant Words of God:

God created this world, He created this mankind and, moreover, He was the architect of ancient Greek culture and human civilization. Only God consoles this mankind, and only God cares for this mankind night and day. Human development and progress are inseparable from the sovereignty of God, and the history and future of mankind are inextricable from the designs of God. If you are a true Christian, then you will surely believe that the rise and fall of any country or nation occurs according to the designs of God. God alone knows the fate of a country or nation, and God alone controls the course of this mankind. If mankind wishes to have a good fate, if a country wishes to have a good fate, then man must bow down to God in worship, repent and confess before God, or else the fate and destination of man will be an unavoidable catastrophe.

Look back to the time when Noah built the ark: Mankind was deeply corrupt, people had strayed from the blessing of God, were no longer cared for by God, and had lost the promises of God. They lived in darkness, without the light of God. Then they became licentious by nature and abandoned themselves to hideous depravity. Such people could no longer receive the promise of God; they were unfit to witness the face of God or to hear the voice of God, for they had abandoned God, had cast aside all that He had bestowed upon them, and had forgotten the teachings of God. Their heart strayed farther and farther from God and, as it did, they became depraved beyond all reason and humanity and became increasingly evil. Then they walked ever closer to death and fell under the wrath and punishment of God. Only Noah worshiped God and shunned evil, and so he was able to hear the voice of God and hear His instructions. He built the ark according to the instructions of God's word, and there assembled all manner of living creatures. And in this way, once everything had been prepared, God unleashed His destruction upon the world. Only Noah and the seven other members of his family survived the destruction, for Noah worshiped Jehovah and shunned evil.

Now look upon the present age: Such righteous men as Noah, who could worship God and shun evil, have ceased to exist. Yet God is still gracious toward this mankind and still absolves them during this final era. God seeks those who long for Him to appear. He seeks those who are able to hear His words, those who have not forgotten His commission and offer up their hearts and bodies to Him. He seeks those who are as obedient as babes before Him and do not resist

Him. If you devote yourself to God, unimpeded by any power or force, then God shall look upon you with favor and shall bestow His blessings upon you.

Excerpted from “God Presides Over the Fate of All Mankind” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

God’s Mercy and Tolerance Are Not Rare—Man’s True Repentance Is

Regardless of how angry God had been with the Ninevites, as soon as they declared a fast and donned sackcloth and ashes, His heart began to soften and He began to change His mind. When He proclaimed to them that He would destroy their city—the moment prior to their confession and repentance for their sins—God was still angry with them. Once they had carried out a series of repentant acts, God’s anger for the people of Nineveh gradually transformed into mercy and tolerance for them. There is nothing contradictory about the coinciding revelation of these two aspects of God’s disposition in the same event. So, how should one understand and know this lack of contradiction? God expressed and revealed each of these two polar-opposite essences in turn as the people of Nineveh repented, allowing people to see the realness and the unoffendableness of God’s essence. God used His attitude to tell people the following: It is not that God does not tolerate people, or that He does not want to show mercy to them; rather, it is that they rarely truly repent to God, and it is rare that people truly turn away from their evil ways and abandon the violence in their hands. In other words, when God is angry with man, He hopes that man will be able to truly repent, and indeed He hopes to see man’s true repentance, in which case He will then liberally continue to bestow His mercy and tolerance upon man. This is to say that man’s evil conduct incurs God’s wrath, whereas God’s mercy and tolerance are bestowed upon those who listen to God and truly repent before Him, upon those who can turn away from their evil ways and abandon the violence in their hands. God’s attitude was very clearly revealed in His treatment of the Ninevites: God’s mercy and tolerance are not at all difficult to obtain, and what He requires is one’s true repentance. As long as people turn away from their evil ways and abandon the violence in their hands, God will change His heart and His attitude toward them.

Excerpted from “God Himself, the Unique II” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

My mercy is expressed toward those who love Me and deny themselves. The punishment visited upon the wicked, meanwhile, is precisely proof of My righteous disposition and, even more, testimony to My wrath. When disaster comes, all who oppose Me will weep as they fall victim to famine and plague. Those who have committed all manner of wickedness, but who have followed Me for many years, will not escape paying for their sins; they too, will be plunged into disaster, the like of which has seldom been seen throughout millions of years, and they will live in a constant state of panic and fear. And those of My followers who have shown loyalty to Me will rejoice and applaud My might. They will experience ineffable contentment and live amid joy such as I have never before bestowed upon mankind. For I treasure the good deeds of man and abhor their evil deeds. Since I first began to lead mankind, I have been eagerly hoping to gain a group of people who are of the same mind with Me. Those who are not of the same mind with Me, meanwhile, I never forget; I always loathe them in My heart, awaiting the chance to bring retribution upon them, which I shall relish to see. Now My day has finally come, and I need no longer wait!

My final work is not only for the sake of punishing man, but also for the sake of arranging the destination of man. Moreover, it is so that all people may acknowledge My deeds and actions. I want each and every person to see that all I have done is right, and that all I have done is an expression of My disposition. It is not man's doing, much less nature, that brought forth mankind, but I, who nourish every living being in creation. Without My existence, mankind will only perish and suffer the scourge of calamity. No human being will ever again see the beautiful sun and moon, or the verdant world; mankind shall encounter only the frigid night and the inexorable valley of the shadow of death. I am mankind's only salvation. I am mankind's only hope and, even more, I am He on whom the existence of all mankind rests. Without Me, mankind will immediately come to a standstill. Without Me, mankind will suffer catastrophe and be trampled underfoot by all manner of ghosts, though no one takes heed of Me. I have done work that can be done by no other, and hope only that man can repay Me with some good deeds. Though but a few have been able to repay Me, I will still conclude My journey in the human world and begin the next step of My unfolding work, because all My rushing to and fro in man's midst these many years has been fruitful, and I am very pleased. What I care about is not the number of people, but rather their good deeds. In any case, I hope that you prepare a sufficiency of good deeds for your own destination. Then will I be satisfied; otherwise, none of

you can escape the disaster that will befall you. The disaster originates with Me and is of course orchestrated by Me. If you cannot appear as good in My eyes, then you will not escape suffering the disaster.

Excerpted from “Prepare Sufficient Good Deeds for Your Destination” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

All manner of disasters will befall, one after another; all nations and places will experience calamities: Plague, famine, flood, drought, and earthquakes are everywhere. These disasters are not just happening in one or two places, nor will they be over within a day or two; rather, instead they will expand across a greater and greater area, and become more and more severe. During this time, all manner of insect plagues will arise one after another, and the phenomenon of cannibalism will occur everywhere. This is My judgment upon all nations and peoples. My sons! You must not suffer the pain or hardship of disasters. It is My wish that you will soon come of age and, as quickly as possible, take up the burden that lies on My shoulders. Why do you not understand My will? The work ahead will grow more and more strenuous. Are you so hard-hearted as to leave Me with My hands full, having to work so arduously on My own? I will put it more plainly: Those whose lives mature will enter refuge, and not suffer pain or hardship; those whose lives do not mature must suffer pain and harm. My words are clear enough, are they not?

Excerpted from “Chapter 65” of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh

In the future, great trials may befall you—but today, if you love God with a true heart, and if, regardless of how great the trials ahead, irrespective of what happens to you, you are able to stand firm in your testimony and are able to satisfy God, then your heart will be comforted, and you will be unafraid no matter how great the trials you encounter in the future. You cannot see what will happen in the future; you can only satisfy God in today’s circumstances. You are incapable of doing any great work and should focus on satisfying God by experiencing His words in real life, and bear strong and resounding testimony that brings shame upon Satan. Although your flesh will remain unsatisfied and will have suffered, you will have satisfied God and brought shame upon Satan. If you always practice in this way, God will open up a path before you. When, one day, a great trial comes, others will fall down, but you will still be able to stand firm: Because of the price you have paid, God will protect you so you can stand firm and not fall

down. If, ordinarily, you are able to put the truth into practice and satisfy God with a heart that truly loves Him, then God will surely protect you during future trials. Though you are foolish and of little stature and poor caliber, God will not discriminate against you. It depends on whether your intentions are right. Today, you are able to satisfy God, in which you are attentive to the smallest detail, you satisfy God in all things, you have a heart that truly loves God, you give your true heart to God, and although there are some things that you cannot understand, you can come before God to rectify your intentions and seek God's will, and you do everything needed to satisfy God. Perhaps your brothers and sisters will abandon you, but your heart will be satisfying God, and you will not covet the pleasures of the flesh. If you always practice in this way, you will be protected when great trials come upon you.

What internal state in people are trials aimed at? They are targeted at the rebellious disposition in people that is incapable of satisfying God. There is much that is impure within people, and much that is hypocritical, and so God subjects people to trials in order to purify them. But if, today, you are able to satisfy God, then the trials of the future will be a perfection for you. If, today, you are unable to satisfy God, then trials of the future will tempt you, and you will unwittingly fall down, and at that time you will not be able to help yourself, for you cannot keep up with God's work and are not possessed of real stature. And so, if you wish to be able to stand firm in the future, to satisfy God better, and to follow Him to the very end, today you must build a strong foundation. You must satisfy God by putting the truth into practice in all things and be mindful of His will. If you always practice in this way, there will be a foundation within you, and God will inspire in you a heart that loves Him, and He will give you faith. One day, when a trial truly befalls you, you may well suffer some pain and feel aggrieved to a certain point, and suffer crushing grief, as if you had died—but your love of God will not change, and will become even deeper. Such are the blessings of God. If you are able to accept all that God says and does today with a heart of obedience, then you will surely be blessed by God, and so you will be someone who is blessed by God and receives His promise. If, today, you do not practice, when trials befall you one day, you will be without faith or a loving heart, and at that time the trial will become temptation; you will be plunged amid Satan's temptation and will have no means of escape. Today, you may be able to stand firm when a small trial befalls you, but you will not necessarily be able to stand firm when a major trial befalls you one day. Some people are conceited and think that they are near perfect already. If you do not go deeper at such times,

and remain complacent, then you will be in danger. Today, God does not do the work of greater trials and everything appears fine, but when God tries you, you will discover that you are too lacking, for your stature is too small and you are incapable of enduring great trials. If you remain as you are and are in a state of inertia, then, when the trials come, you will fall. You should often look at how small your stature is; only in this way will you make progress. If it is only during trials that you see that your stature is so small, that your willpower is so weak, that too little within you is real, and that you are inadequate for God's will—if you only realize these things then, it will be too late.

Excerpted from "Only Loving God Is Truly Believing in God" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Those who are able to stand firm during God's work of judgment and chastisement during the last days—that is, during the final work of purification—will be the ones who will enter into the final rest alongside God; as such, all those who enter into rest will have broken free of Satan's influence and been obtained by God after having undergone His final work of purification. These humans, who will have been finally obtained by God, will enter into the final rest. The essential purpose of God's work of chastisement and judgment is to purify humanity and to prepare them for their ultimate rest; without such cleansing, none of humanity could be classified into different categories according to kind, or enter into rest. This work is humanity's only path to enter into rest. Only God's work of purification will cleanse humans of their unrighteousness, and only His work of chastisement and judgment will bring to light those disobedient elements of humanity, thereby separating those who can be saved from those who cannot, and those who will remain from those who will not. When this work ends, those people who are allowed to remain will all be cleansed and enter a higher state of humanity in which they will enjoy a more wonderful second human life upon the earth; in other words, they will commence their human day of rest, and coexist with God. After those who are not allowed to remain have been chastised and judged, their true colors will be entirely exposed, after which they will all be destroyed and, like Satan, will no longer be permitted to survive upon the earth. The humanity of the future will no longer include any of this type of people; such people are not fit to enter the land of the ultimate rest, nor are they fit to join in the day of rest that God and humanity will share, for they are the targets of punishment and are wicked, unrighteous people. They were redeemed once, and they have also been judged and chastised; they also once

rendered service to God. However, when the final day comes, they will still be eliminated and destroyed due to their wickedness and as a result of their disobedience and inability to be redeemed; they will never again come into being in the world of the future, and will no longer live among the human race of the future. ... The entire purpose behind God's ultimate work of punishing evil and rewarding good is to thoroughly purify all humans so that He may bring a purely holy humanity into eternal rest. This stage of His work is the most crucial; it is the final stage of the whole of His work of management. If God did not destroy the wicked, but instead allowed them to remain, then every human would still be unable to enter into rest, and God would not be able to bring all of humanity into a better realm. Such work would not be complete. When His work is finished, the whole of humanity will be entirely holy; only in this way will God be able to live in rest peacefully.

Excerpted from "God and Man Will Enter Into Rest Together" in The Word Appears in the Flesh

XIX. Truths of God Determining the Outcome of Each Sort of Person

1. On what basis does God determine a person's outcome?

Relevant Words of God:

Now is the time when I determine the ending for each person, not the stage in which I began to work man. I write down in My record book, one by one, the words and actions of each person, the path by which they have followed Me, their inherent characteristics, and how they have ultimately comported themselves. In this way, no matter what kind of person they are, no one shall escape My hand, and all shall be with their own kind as I assign. I decide the destination of each person not on the basis of age, seniority, amount of suffering, and least of all, the degree to which they invite pity, but according to whether they possess the truth. There is no other choice but this. You must realize that all those who do not follow the will of God shall also be punished. This is an immutable fact. Therefore, all those who are punished are so punished for the righteousness of God and as retribution for their numerous evil acts.

Excerpted from "Prepare Sufficient Good Deeds for Your Destination" in The Word Appears in the Flesh

Before humanity enters into rest, whether each sort of person is punished or rewarded will be determined according to whether they have sought the truth, whether they know God, and whether they can submit to the visible God. Those who have rendered service to the visible God, yet neither know Him nor submit to Him, lack truth. Such people are evildoers, and evildoers will undoubtedly be objects of punishment; furthermore, they shall be punished according to their wicked conduct. God is for humans to believe in, and He is also worthy of their obedience. Those who only have faith in the vague and invisible God are people who do not believe in God and are unable to submit to God. If these people still cannot manage to believe in the visible God by the time His work of conquest is finished, and continue to be disobedient and resist the God who is visible in the flesh, then these “vagueists” will, without a doubt, become objects of destruction. It is just like some among you—anyone who verbally recognizes God incarnate, yet cannot practice the truth of submission to God incarnate, will ultimately become objects of elimination and destruction. Moreover, anyone who verbally recognizes the visible God, eating and drinking of the truth expressed by Him while also seeking after the vague and invisible God, will be even more likely to be destroyed in the future. None of these people will be able to remain until the time of rest that will come after God’s work has finished, nor can a single individual similar to such people remain in that time of rest. Demonic people are those who do not practice the truth; their essence is one of resistance and disobedience to God, and they do not have the slightest intention of submitting to Him. Such people will all be destroyed. Whether you have truth and whether you resist God depend on your essence, not on your appearance or how you might occasionally speak or conduct yourself. Whether or not an individual will be destroyed is determined by one’s essence; it is decided according to the essence revealed by one’s behavior and one’s pursuit of the truth. Among people who are the same as each other in that they are doing work, and who do similar amounts of work, those whose human essences are good and who possess truth are the people who will be allowed to remain, while those whose human essences are evil and who disobey the visible God are those who will be objects of destruction. All of God’s work or words related to humanity’s destination will deal with people appropriately according to each individual’s essence; not the slightest error will occur, and not a single mistake will be made. It is only when people do work that human emotion or meaning enters the mix. The work God does is most appropriate; He absolutely does not bring false claims against any creature. There are currently many people who are unable to perceive humanity’s

future destination and who do not believe the words I utter. All those who do not believe, as well as the ones who do not practice truth, are demons!

Excerpted from “God and Man Will Enter Into Rest Together” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The standard by which humans judge other humans is based on their behavior; those whose conduct is good are righteous, while those whose conduct is abominable are wicked. The standard by which God judges humans is based on whether their essence submits to Him or not; one who submits to God is a righteous person, while one who does not is an enemy and a wicked person, regardless of whether this person’s behavior is good or bad and regardless of whether their speech is correct or incorrect. Some people wish to use good deeds to obtain a good destination in the future, and some people wish to use fine words to acquire a good destination. Everyone mistakenly believes that God determines people’s outcomes after watching their behavior or after listening to their speech; many people therefore wish to take advantage of this to deceive God into granting them a momentary favor. In the future, the people who will survive in a state of rest will all have endured the day of tribulation and will also have borne witness for God; they will all be people who have fulfilled their duties and who have deliberately submitted to God. Those who merely wish to use the opportunity to do service with the intention of avoiding practicing the truth will not be allowed to remain. God has appropriate standards for the arrangement of the outcome of every individual; He does not simply make these decisions according to one’s words and conduct, nor does He make them based on how one acts during a single period of time. He will absolutely not be lenient with regard to one’s wicked conduct due to their past service for Him, nor will He spare one from death because of any one-time expense for God. No one can evade retribution for their wickedness, and no one can cover up their evil behavior and thereby evade the torments of destruction. If people can truly fulfill their own duty, it means that they are eternally faithful to God and not seeking rewards, regardless of whether they receive blessings or suffer misfortune. If people are faithful to God when they see blessings, but lose their faithfulness when they cannot see any blessings, and if, in the end, they are still unable to bear witness for God or fulfill the duties incumbent upon them, then they will still be objects of destruction despite their having once previously rendered faithful service to God. In short, wicked people cannot survive through eternity, nor can they enter into rest; only the righteous are the masters of rest.

Excerpted from “God and Man Will Enter Into Rest Together” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

There is a saying you should take note of. I believe this saying is very important, because for Me, it comes to mind countless times every single day. Why is that? It is because every time I am faced with someone, every time I hear someone’s story, and every time I hear of a person’s experience or testimony of believing in God, I always use this saying to determine in My heart whether or not this individual is the type of person God wants and the type of person God likes. So, then: what is this saying? I now have you all on the edges of your seats. When I reveal the saying, perhaps you will feel disappointed, because there are some who have been paying it lip service for many years. I, however, have never once paid it any lip service at all. This saying resides in My heart. So, what is this saying? It is this: “Walk in the way of God: Fear God and shun evil.” Is this not an exceedingly simple phrase? Nevertheless, despite its simplicity, people who genuinely have a deep understanding of these words will feel that they carry great weight, that this saying is very valuable for one’s practice, that it is a line from the language of life containing truth reality, that it represents a lifelong objective for those seeking to satisfy God, and that it is a lifelong way which anyone considerate of God’s intentions should follow. So, what do you think: Is this saying not the truth? Does it or does it not have such significance? Also, perhaps some of you are thinking about this saying, and trying to figure it out, and perhaps there are some of you who even feel doubtful about it: Is this saying very important? Is it very important? Is it necessary to emphasize it so much? There may also be some of you who do not much like this saying, because you think that taking God’s way and distilling it into this one saying is too much of an oversimplification. To take all that God said and boil it down to one saying—would that not be making God out to be a bit too insignificant? Is that how it is? It could be that most of you do not fully understand the profound significance of these words. Though you have all made a note of it, you have no intention of storing this saying in your hearts; you have simply written it down in your notebooks to revisit and ponder in your spare time. Some of you will not even bother to memorize this saying, let alone attempt to put it to good use. Why, though, do I wish to mention this saying? Regardless of your perspective and no matter what you think, I had to mention this saying, for it is extremely relevant to how God determines people’s outcomes. No matter what your current understanding of this saying is or how you treat it, I will still tell you this: If people can put the words of this saying into practice and

experience them, and achieve the standard of fearing God and shunning evil, then they are assured to be survivors and are certain to have good outcomes. If, however, you cannot meet the standard laid out by this saying, then it can be said that your outcome is an unknown. Thus, I speak to you about this saying for your own mental preparation, and so that you will know what kind of standard God uses to measure you.

Excerpted from “How to Know God’s Disposition and the Results His Work Shall Achieve” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

God uses trials to determine their outcomes. There are two standards to God’s use of trials to determine people’s outcomes: The first is the number of trials that people undergo, and the second is the results these trials have on people. It is these two indicators that establish a person’s outcome. Now, let’s elaborate on these two standards.

To begin, when a person is faced with a trial from God (note: It is possible that in your eyes, this trial might be a minor one, not worth mentioning), He will make you distinctly aware that this is His hand upon you, and that it is He who arranged this circumstance for you. While you are still immature of stature, God will arrange trials in order to test you, and these trials will correspond to your stature, what you are able to comprehend, and what you can withstand. What part of you will be tested? Your attitude toward God. Is this attitude very important? Of course it is important! It is of special importance! This attitude in humans is the result God desires, so, as far as He is concerned, it is the most important thing of all. Otherwise, God would not spend His efforts on people by engaging in such work. By way of these trials, God wants to see your attitude toward Him; He wants to see whether or not you are on the right path. He also wants to see whether or not you fear God and shun evil. Therefore, whether you understand much or little of the truth at any particular time, you will still be faced with God’s trials, and following any increase in the amount of truth you understand, He will continue to arrange relevant trials for you. When you are once again faced with a trial, God will want to see whether your viewpoint, your ideas, and your attitude toward Him have experienced any growth in the intervening period of time. Some people wonder, “Why does God always want to see people’s attitudes? Hasn’t He already seen how they put the truth into practice? Why would He still want to see their attitudes?” This is mindless drivel! Given that God works in this manner, His will must lie therein. God constantly observes people from the side, watching their every word and

action, their every deed and movement; He even observes their every thought and idea. God makes a note of everything that happens to people—their good deeds, their faults, their transgressions, even their rebellions and betrayals—as evidence with which to determine their outcomes. Step by step, as God’s work is elevated, you will hear more truths and come to accept more positive things and information, and you will gain more of the reality of the truth. Throughout this process, God’s requirements of you will also increase, and as they do, He will arrange more serious trials for you. His goal is to examine whether your attitude toward Him has progressed in the meantime. Of course, when this happens, the viewpoint God demands of you will conform to your understanding of truth reality.

As your stature gradually builds up, so will the standard that God demands of you. While you are still immature, He will set a very low standard for you to meet; when your stature is a little greater, He will raise your standard a bit higher. But what will God do after you have gained an understanding of all of the truth? He will have you face even bigger trials. Amid these trials, what God wishes to obtain from you, what He wants to see from you, is a more profound knowledge of Him, an actual reverence of Him. At this time, His requirements of you will be higher and “harsher” than they were when your stature was more immature (note: People might view them as harsh, but God actually views them as reasonable). When God is trying people, what kind of reality does He wish to create? He is constantly asking that people give Him their hearts. Some people will say, “How can I give that? I have fulfilled my duty; I abandoned my home and livelihood, and I have expended myself. Are these not all instances of my giving my heart over to God? How else could I give my heart to God? Could it be that these weren’t actually ways of giving my heart to Him? What is God’s specific requirement?” The requirement is very simple. In fact, there are some people who have already given their hearts to God to varying degrees during various stages of their trials, but the vast majority of people never give their hearts over to God. When God tries you, He sees if your heart is with Him, with the flesh, or with Satan. When God tries you, He sees whether you are standing in opposition to Him or are in a position that is compatible with Him, and He also sees whether your heart is on His side. When you are immature and facing trials, you have little confidence, and you cannot know exactly what it is you need to do to fulfill God’s intentions, for your understanding of the truth is limited. However, if you can still pray to God genuinely and sincerely, and if you can be willing to give your heart over to Him, make Him your sovereign, and be willing to offer unto Him all

those things that you believe to be most precious, then you will have already given God your heart. As you listen to more sermons and understand more of the truth, your stature will also gradually grow. At this time, the standard of God's demands will not be the same as it was when you were immature; He will demand a higher standard of you. As people gradually give their hearts over to God, their hearts grow slowly nearer to Him; as people can genuinely grow nearer to God, then their hearts will revere Him ever more. What God wants is just such a heart.

Excerpted from "How to Know God's Disposition and the Results His Work Shall Achieve" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Whether one receives blessings or suffers misfortune is determined according to one's essence, not according to any common essence one might share with others. That sort of saying or rule simply has no place in the kingdom. If a person is ultimately able to survive, it is because they have met God's requirements, and if they are ultimately unable to remain until the time of rest, it is because they have been disobedient toward God and have not satisfied God's requirements. Everyone has a suitable destination. These destinations are determined according to each individual's essence, and have absolutely nothing to do with other people. A child's wicked behavior cannot be transferred to their parents, nor can a child's righteousness be shared with their parents. A parent's wicked behavior cannot be transferred to their children, nor can a parent's righteousness be shared with their children. Everyone bears their respective sins, and everyone enjoys their respective fortune. No one can be a substitute for another person; this is righteousness. From man's perspective, if parents obtain good fortune, then their children should be able to, too, and if children commit evil, then their parents must atone for those sins. This is a human perspective and a human way of doing things; it is not God's perspective. Everyone's outcome is determined according to the essence that comes from their conduct, and it is always determined appropriately. No one can bear the sins of another; even more so, no one can receive punishment in another's stead. This is absolute. A parent's doting care for their children does not indicate that they can perform righteous deeds in their children's stead, nor does the dutiful affection of a child to their parents mean that they can perform righteous deeds in their parents' stead. This is what is truly meant by the words, "Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left." People cannot take their evildoing

children into rest on the basis of their deep love for them, nor can anyone take their wife (or husband) into rest on the basis of their own righteous conduct. This is an administrative rule; there can be no exceptions for anyone. In the end, doers of righteousness are doers of righteousness, and evildoers are evildoers. The righteous will eventually be allowed to survive, while the evildoers will be destroyed. The holy are holy; they are not filthy. The filthy are filthy, and not one part of them is holy. The people who will be destroyed are all the wicked ones, and the ones who will survive are all the righteous—even if the children of the wicked ones perform righteous deeds, and even if the parents of the righteous ones commit evil deeds. There is no relationship between a believing husband and an unbelieving wife, and there is no relationship between believing children and unbelieving parents; these two types of people are completely incompatible. Prior to entering into rest, one has physical relatives, but once one has entered into rest, one will no longer have any physical relatives to speak of. Those who do their duty are enemies of those who do not; those who love God and those who hate Him are in opposition to one another. Those who will enter into rest and those who will have been destroyed are two incompatible types of creatures. Creatures that fulfill their duties will be able to survive, while those that do not fulfill their duties will be objects of destruction; what is more, this shall last through eternity.

Excerpted from “God and Man Will Enter Into Rest Together” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Do you understand now what is judgment and what is truth? If you do, then I exhort you to submit obediently to being judged, otherwise you shall never have the opportunity to be commended by God or to be brought by Him into His kingdom. Those who only accept judgment but can never be purified, that is, those who flee amidst the work of judgment, shall forever be detested and rejected by God. Their sins are more numerous, and more grievous, than those of the Pharisees, for they have betrayed God and are rebels against God. Such people who are not worthy even to do service shall receive more severe punishment, a punishment that is, moreover, everlasting. God shall not spare any traitor who once evinced loyalty with words but then betrayed Him. People such as these shall receive retribution through punishment of the spirit, soul, and body. Is this not precisely a revelation of the righteous disposition of God? Is this not God’s purpose in judging man, and revealing him? God consigns all who perform all kinds of wicked deeds during the time of judgment to a place infested with evil spirits, and lets

these evil spirits destroy their fleshly bodies as they wish, and those people's bodies emit the stench of corpses. Such is their fitting retribution. God writes down in their record books each and every one of the sins of those disloyal false believers, false apostles, and false workers; then, when the time is right, He casts them amidst the unclean spirits, letting these unclean spirits defile their entire bodies at will, so that they may never be reincarnated and never again see the light. Those hypocrites who do service for a time but are incapable of remaining loyal to the end are numbered by God among the wicked, so that they walk in the counsel of the wicked and become part of their disorderly rabble; in the end, God shall annihilate them. God casts aside and takes no notice of those who have never been loyal to Christ or have never contributed anything of their strength, and at the changing of the age He shall annihilate them all. They shall no longer exist on earth, much less gain passage into the kingdom of God. Those who have never been sincere to God, but are forced by circumstance into dealing with Him perfunctorily, are numbered among those who do service for His people. Only a small number of such people will survive, while the majority shall perish along with those who are not qualified even to do service. Ultimately, God shall bring into His kingdom all those who are of the same mind as God, the people and the sons of God, and those predestined by God to be priests. They will be the distillation of God's work. As for those who cannot be classed in any of the categories set by God, they shall be numbered among the unbelievers—and you can surely imagine what their outcome shall be. I have already said to you all that I should say; the road that you select is your choice alone. What you should understand is this: The work of God never waits for any that cannot keep pace with Him, and the righteous disposition of God shows no mercy to any man.

Excerpted from "Christ Does the Work of Judgment With the Truth" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

2. Whom does God save? Whom does He eliminate?

Relevant Words of God:

Nowadays, those who seek and those who do not are two entirely different types of people, whose destinations are also very different. Those who pursue knowledge of the truth and practice the truth are the ones to whom God will bring salvation. Those who do not know the true way are demons and enemies; they are the descendants of the archangel and will be objects

of destruction. Even those who are pious believers of a vague God—are they not also demons? People who possess good consciences but do not accept the true way are demons; their essence is one of resistance to God. Those who do not accept the true way are those who resist God, and even if such people endure many hardships, they will still be destroyed. All those who are unwilling to relinquish the world, who cannot bear to part with their parents, and who cannot bear to rid themselves of their own enjoyments of the flesh are disobedient to God, and all will be objects of destruction. Anyone who does not believe in God incarnate is demonic and, moreover, will be destroyed. Those who have faith but do not practice the truth, those who do not believe in God incarnate, and those who do not at all believe in God's existence will also be objects of destruction. All those who will be allowed to remain are people who have undergone the suffering of refinement and stood firm; these are people who have truly endured trials. Anyone who does not recognize God is an enemy; that is, anyone who does not recognize God incarnate—whether or not they are inside or outside this stream—is an antichrist! Who is Satan, who are demons, and who are God's enemies if not resisters who do not believe in God? Are they not those people who are disobedient to God? Are they not those who claim to have faith, yet who lack truth? Are they not those who merely seek to obtain blessings while being unable to bear witness for God? You still mingle with those demons today and bear conscience and love toward them, but in this case are you not extending good intentions toward Satan? Are you not associating with demons? If people these days are still unable to distinguish between good and evil, and continue to blindly be loving and merciful without any intention of seeking God's will or being able in any way to harbor God's intentions as their own, then their endings will be all the more wretched. Anyone who does not believe in the God in the flesh is an enemy of God. If you can bear conscience and love toward an enemy, do you not lack a sense of righteousness? If you are compatible with those which I detest and with which I disagree, and still bear love or personal feelings toward them, then are you not disobedient? Are you not intentionally resisting God? Does such a person possess truth? If people bear conscience toward enemies, love for demons, and mercy for Satan, then are they not intentionally disrupting God's work? Those people who believe only in Jesus and do not believe in God incarnate during the last days, as well as those who verbally claim to believe in God incarnate but do evil, are all antichrists, without even mentioning those who do not even believe in God. All these people will be objects of destruction. The standard by which humans judge other humans is based on their behavior;

those whose conduct is good are righteous, while those whose conduct is abominable are wicked. The standard by which God judges humans is based on whether their essence submits to Him or not; one who submits to God is a righteous person, while one who does not is an enemy and a wicked person, regardless of whether this person's behavior is good or bad and regardless of whether their speech is correct or incorrect. Some people wish to use good deeds to obtain a good destination in the future, and some people wish to use fine words to acquire a good destination. Everyone mistakenly believes that God determines people's outcomes after watching their behavior or after listening to their speech; many people therefore wish to take advantage of this to deceive God into granting them a momentary favor. In the future, the people who will survive in a state of rest will all have endured the day of tribulation and will also have borne witness for God; they will all be people who have fulfilled their duties and who have deliberately submitted to God. Those who merely wish to use the opportunity to do service with the intention of avoiding practicing the truth will not be allowed to remain. God has appropriate standards for the arrangement of the outcome of every individual; He does not simply make these decisions according to one's words and conduct, nor does He make them based on how one acts during a single period of time. He will absolutely not be lenient with regard to one's wicked conduct due to their past service for Him, nor will He spare one from death because of any one-time expense for God. No one can evade retribution for their wickedness, and no one can cover up their evil behavior and thereby evade the torments of destruction. If people can truly fulfill their own duty, it means that they are eternally faithful to God and not seeking rewards, regardless of whether they receive blessings or suffer misfortune. If people are faithful to God when they see blessings, but lose their faithfulness when they cannot see any blessings, and if, in the end, they are still unable to bear witness for God or fulfill the duties incumbent upon them, then they will still be objects of destruction despite their having once previously rendered faithful service to God. In short, wicked people cannot survive through eternity, nor can they enter into rest; only the righteous are the masters of rest.

Excerpted from "God and Man Will Enter Into Rest Together" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

The living are saved by God; they have been judged and chastised by God, they are willing to devote themselves and are happy to lay down their lives for God, and they would gladly dedicate their whole lives to God. Only when the living bear testimony to God can Satan be

shamed; only the living can spread the gospel work of God, only the living are after God's heart, and only the living are real people. Originally the man made by God was alive, but because of Satan's corruption man lives amid death and lives under the influence of Satan, and so, in this way, people have become the spiritless dead, they have become enemies who oppose God, they have become the tools of Satan, and they have become the captives of Satan. All the living people created by God have become dead people, and so God has lost His testimony, and He has lost mankind which He created and which is the only thing that has His breath. If God is to take back His testimony and take back those who were made by His own hand but who have been taken captive by Satan, then He must resurrect them so that they become living beings, and He must reclaim them so that they live in His light. The dead are those who have no spirit, those who are numb in the extreme and who oppose God. They are foremost those who do not know God. These people have not the slightest intention of obeying God; they only rebel against Him and oppose Him and have not the slightest loyalty. The living are those whose spirits have been reborn, who know to obey God, and who are loyal to God. They are possessed of the truth, and of testimony, and these people alone are pleasing to God in His house. God saves those who can come to life, who can see God's salvation, who can be loyal to God and who are willing to seek God. He saves those who believe in God's incarnation and in His appearance. Some people can come to life, and some people cannot; this depends on whether their nature can be saved or not. Many people have heard a lot of God's words yet do not understand God's will, and are still incapable of putting them into practice. Such people are incapable of living out any truth and also deliberately interfere with God's work. They are incapable of doing any work for God, they cannot devote anything to Him, and they also secretly spend the church's money and eat in the house of God for free. These people are dead and they will not be saved. God saves all those who are amid His work, but there is a portion of people who cannot receive His salvation; only a small number can receive His salvation. This is because most people have been corrupted too deeply and have become the dead, and they are beyond salvation; they have been totally exploited by Satan, and they are too malicious in their nature. That minority of people is also unable to obey God fully. They are not those who have been absolutely faithful to God since the beginning, or who have had the utmost love for God since the beginning; rather, they have become obedient to God because of His work of conquest, they see God because of His supreme love, there are changes in their disposition because of God's righteous disposition, and they

come to know God because of His work, His work which is both real and normal. Without this work of God, no matter how good these people are, they would still be of Satan, they would still be of death, and they would still be dead. The fact that these people can today receive God's salvation is purely because they are willing to cooperate with God.

Excerpted from "Are You Someone Who Has Come to Life?" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

God's salvation of mankind is a salvation of those who love the truth, a salvation of the part of them with will and resolve, and the part of them that is their yearning for truth and righteousness in their heart. A person's resolve is the part of them in their heart that yearns for righteousness, goodness, and truth, and is possessed of conscience. God saves this part of people, and through it, He changes their corrupt disposition, so that they may understand and gain the truth, so that their corruption may be cleansed, and their life disposition may be transformed. If you do not have these things within you, you cannot be saved. If, within you, there is no love for the truth or aspiration for righteousness and light; if, whenever you encounter evil, you have neither the will to cast off evil things nor the resolve to suffer hardship; if, moreover, your conscience is numb; if your faculty for receiving truth is also benumbed, and you are unattuned to the truth and to events that arise; and if you are undiscerning in all matters, and unable to handle or resolve things on your own, then there is no way to be saved. Such a person has nothing to recommend them, nothing worth working on. Their conscience is numb, their mind is muddled, and they do not love the truth, nor yearn for righteousness deep in their heart, and, no matter how clearly or transparently God speaks of the truth, they do not respond, as if they were already dead. Aren't things over for them? A person with a breath left in them may be saved by artificial respiration, but, if they have already died and their soul has left, artificial respiration will do nothing. If, whenever you encounter a problem, you shrink from it and try to avoid it, this means you have not borne witness; as such, you can never be saved, and you are completely done for.

Excerpted from "Confused People Cannot Be Saved" in *Records of Christ's Talks*

The people God saves are those who have been corrupted by Satan and thus came to have corrupt dispositions. They are not perfect people without the slightest blemish, nor are they people who live in a vacuum. For some, as soon as their corruption is revealed, they think, "Yet

again, I've resisted God; I've believed in Him for so many years, but I still haven't changed. God surely doesn't want me anymore!" What sort of attitude is this? They have given up on themselves and think that God does not want them anymore. Is this not a case of misunderstanding God? When you are so negative, it is easiest for Satan to find chinks in your armor, and once it has succeeded, the consequences are unimaginable. Therefore, no matter how much difficulty you are in or how negative you are feeling, you must never give up! While people's lives are developing and while they are being saved, they sometimes take the wrong path or go astray. They exhibit some immature states and behavior in their life for a while, or sometimes grow weak and negative, say the wrong things, slip and fall, or suffer a failure. From God's point of view, such things are all normal, and He would not make a fuss over them. Seeing how profoundly corrupted they are, that they will never be able to satisfy God, brings pain to some people's hearts, and people who are capable of such remorse are often the objects of God's salvation. Those who do not feel they need salvation, who think they are already perfect, are not the ones who will be saved by God. Why am I telling you this? What I mean is that you must have faith: "Despite the fact that I am now weak, and that I have fallen down and failed, one day I will grow, one day I shall be able to satisfy God, understand the truth, and be saved." You must have this faith. No matter what setbacks, difficulties, or failures and falls, you must not be negative; you must know what kind of people are saved by God. In addition, if you feel that you are unfit for salvation by God, if you occasionally have a state in which you feel you are loathsome or displeasing to God, or if there was a time in the past when you were wholly unapproved of or rejected by God, do not worry. You now know this, and so it is not too late; as long as you repent, God shall give you your chance at salvation.

Excerpted from "Entry Into Life Is Most Important to Faith in God" in Records of Christ's Talks

Many people would rather be condemned to hell than speak and act honestly. Little wonder that I have other treatment in store for those who are dishonest. Of course, I know full well how difficult it is for you to be honest. Because you are all so clever, so good at measuring people with your own petty yardstick, this makes My work much simpler. And since you each hug your secrets to your bosom, well then, I shall send you, one by one, into disaster to be "schooled" by fire, so that thereafter you may become dead set on your belief in My words. Ultimately, I shall wrest from your mouth the words "God is a faithful God," whereupon you shall beat upon your

breast and lament, “Devious is the heart of man!” What will be your state of mind at this time? I imagine you will not be as triumphant as you are now. And much less will you be as “profound and abstruse” as you are now. In the presence of God, some people are all prim and proper, they take pains to be “well-behaved,” yet they bare their fangs and brandish their claws in the presence of the Spirit. Would you number such people among the ranks of the honest? If you are a hypocrite, someone who is skilled in “interpersonal relations,” then I say that you are definitely someone who tries to trifle with God. If your words are riddled with excuses and valueless justifications, then I say that you are someone who is loath to put the truth into practice. If you have many confidences that you are reluctant to share, if you are highly averse to laying bare your secrets—your difficulties—before others to seek the way of the light, then I say that you are someone who will not attain salvation easily, and who will not easily emerge from the darkness. If seeking the way of the truth pleases you well, then you are someone who dwells always in the light. If you are very glad to be a service-doer in the house of God, working diligently and conscientiously in obscurity, always giving and never taking, then I say that you are a loyal saint, because you seek no reward and are simply being an honest person. If you are willing to be candid, if you are willing to expend your all, if you are able to sacrifice your life for God and stand firm in your testimony, if you are honest to the point where you know only to satisfy God and not to consider yourself or take for yourself, then I say that such people are those who are nourished in the light and who shall live forever in the kingdom. You should know whether there is true faith and true loyalty within you, whether you have a record of suffering for God, and whether you have wholly submitted to God. If you lack these, then there remains within you disobedience, deceit, greed, and complaint. As your heart is far from honest, you have never received positive recognition from God and never lived in the light. How one’s fate will work out in the end hinges upon whether they have an honest and blood-red heart, and whether they have a pure soul. If you are someone who is very dishonest, someone with a heart of malice, someone with an unclean soul, then you are sure to end up in the place where man is punished, as is written in the record of your fate.

Excerpted from “Three Admonitions” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Those among brothers and sisters who are always giving vent to their negativity are lackeys of Satan, and they disturb the church. Such people must one day be expelled and eliminated. In

their belief in God, if people do not have a heart of reverence for God, if they do not have a heart of obedience toward God, then not only will they be unable to do any work for Him, but on the contrary will become those who disturb His work and who defy Him. Believing in God but not obeying or revering Him, and instead resisting Him, is the greatest disgrace for a believer. If believers are just as casual and unrestrained in their speech and conduct as unbelievers are, then they are even more evil than unbelievers; they are archetypal demons. Those who give vent to their poisonous, malicious talk within the church, who spread rumors, foment disharmony, and form cliques among the brothers and sisters—they should have been expelled from the church. Yet because now is a different era of God’s work, these people are restricted, for they face certain elimination. All who have been corrupted by Satan have corrupt dispositions. Some have nothing more than corrupt dispositions, while others are different: Not only do they have corrupt satanic dispositions, but their nature is also extremely malicious. Not only do their words and actions reveal their corrupt, satanic dispositions; these people are, moreover, the genuine devil Satan. Their behavior interrupts and disturbs God’s work, it impairs the brothers’ and sisters’ entry into life, and it damages the normal life of the church. Sooner or later, these wolves in sheep’s clothing must be cleared out; an unsparing attitude, an attitude of rejection, should be adopted toward these lackeys of Satan. Only this is standing on the side of God, and those who fail to do so are wallowing in the mire with Satan.

Excerpted from “A Warning to Those Who Do Not Practice the Truth” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Every church has people who cause trouble for the church or meddle in the work of God. They are all Satans who have infiltrated the house of God in disguise. Such people are good at acting: They come before Me with great reverence, bowing and scraping, living like mangy dogs, and devoting their “all” to achieve their own objectives—but in front of the brothers and sisters, they show their ugly side. When they see people who practice the truth, they strike out at them and shove them aside; when they see people more formidable than themselves, they flatter and fawn upon them. They run wild in the church. It can be said that such “local bullies,” such “lapdogs,” exist in the majority of churches. They act devilishly together, sending each other winks and secret signals, and none of them practices the truth. Whoever has the most venom is the “head demon,” and whoever has the highest prestige leads them, bearing their flag aloft. These people rampage through the church, spreading their negativity, venting death, doing as

they please, saying what they please, and no one dares to stop them. They brim with the disposition of Satan. No sooner do they cause a disturbance than an air of death enters the church. Those within the church who practice the truth are cast out, unable to give their all, while those who disturb the church and spread death run rampage within—and, what’s more, most people follow them. Such churches are ruled by Satan, plain and simple; the devil is their king. If the congregants do not rise up and reject the head demons, then they, too, will sooner or later come to ruin. From now on, measures must be taken against such churches. If those who are capable of practicing a little of the truth do not seek to, then that church will be expunged. If a church contains no one who is willing to practice the truth and no one who can stand witness for God, then that church should be completely isolated, and its connections with other churches must be severed. This is called “burying death”; this is what it means to cast out Satan. If a church contains several local bullies, and they are followed by “little flies” that entirely lack discernment, and if the congregants, even after having seen the truth, are still incapable of rejecting the binds and manipulation of these bullies, then all those fools will be eliminated in the end. These little flies might not have done anything terrible, but they are even more deceitful, even more slick and evasive, and everyone like this will be eliminated. Not a single one shall remain! Those who belong to Satan will be returned to Satan, while those who belong to God will surely go in search of the truth; this is decided by their natures. Let all those who follow Satan perish! No pity will be shown to such people. Let those who search for the truth be provided for, and may they take pleasure in God’s word to their hearts’ content. God is righteous; He would not show favoritism to anyone. If you are a devil, then you are incapable of practicing the truth; if you are someone who searches for the truth, then it is certain that you will not be taken captive by Satan. This is beyond all doubt.

Excerpted from “A Warning to Those Who Do Not Practice the Truth” in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

People who genuinely believe in God are those who are willing to put God’s word into practice and are willing to practice the truth. People who are truly able to stand firm in their testimony to God are also those who are willing to put His word into practice and can genuinely stand on the side of the truth. People who resort to trickery and injustice all lack the truth, and they all bring shame to God. Those who cause disputes in the church are Satan’s lackeys, they are the embodiment of Satan. Such people are so malicious. Those who have no discernment

and are incapable of standing on the side of the truth all harbor evil intentions and tarnish the truth. More than that, they are the archetypal representatives of Satan. They are beyond redemption, and shall naturally be eliminated. God's family does not allow those who do not practice the truth to remain, nor does it allow to remain those who deliberately dismantle the church. However, now is not the time to do the work of expulsion; such people will simply be exposed and eliminated in the end. No more useless work is to be expended on these people; those who belong to Satan cannot stand on the side of the truth, whereas those who seek the truth can. People who do not practice the truth are unworthy of hearing the way of the truth and unworthy of bearing witness to the truth. The truth is simply not for their ears; rather, it is directed at those who practice it. Before every person's end is revealed, those who disturb the church and interrupt God's work will first be left aside for now, to be dealt with later. Once the work is complete, these people will each be exposed, and then they will be eliminated. For the time being, while the truth is being provided, they will be ignored. When the whole truth is revealed to humanity, those people should be eliminated; that will be the time when all people will be classed according to their kind. The petty tricks of those without discernment will lead to their destruction at the hands of the wicked, they will be lured away by them, never to return. And such treatment is what they deserve, because they do not love the truth, because they are incapable of standing on the side of the truth, because they follow evil people and stand on the side of evil people, and because they collude with evil people and defy God. They know perfectly well that what those evil people radiate is evil, yet they harden their hearts and turn their backs on the truth to follow them. Are these people who do not practice the truth but who do destructive and abominable things not all committing evil? Although there are those among them who style themselves as kings and others who follow them, are their God-defying natures not all the same? What excuse can they have to claim that God does not save them? What excuse can they have to claim that God is not righteous? Is it not their own evil that is destroying them? Is it not their own rebelliousness that is dragging them down into hell? People who practice the truth will, in the end, be saved and made perfect because of the truth. Those who do not practice the truth will, in the end, bring destruction upon themselves because of the truth. These are the ends that await those who practice the truth and those who do not.

Excerpted from "A Warning to Those Who Do Not Practice the Truth" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

No matter how they are tried, the allegiance of those who have God in their heart remains unchanged; but for those who do not have God in their heart, once the work of God is not advantageous to their flesh, they change their view of God, and even depart from God. Such are those who will not stand fast in the end, who only seek God's blessings and have no desire to expend themselves for God and dedicate themselves to Him. Such base people will all be expelled when God's work comes to an end, and they are unworthy of any sympathy. Those without humanity are incapable of truly loving God. When the environment is safe and secure, or there are profits to be made, they are totally obedient toward God, but once that which they desire is compromised or finally refuted, they immediately revolt. Even in the space of just one night, they may go from a smiling, "kind-hearted" person to an ugly-looking and ferocious killer, suddenly treating their benefactor of yesterday as their mortal enemy, with out rhyme or reason. If these demons are not cast out, these demons that would kill without blinking an eye, will they not become a hidden danger? The work of saving man is not achieved following the completion of the work of conquest. Although the work of conquest has come to an end, the work of purifying man has not; such work will only be finished once man has been wholly purified, once those who truly submit to God have been made complete, and once those disguisers who are without God in their heart have been purged. Those who do not satisfy God in the final stage of His work will be completely eliminated, and those who are eliminated are of the devil. As they are incapable of satisfying God, they are rebellious against God, and even though these people follow God today, this does not prove that they are those who will finally remain. In the words that "those who follow God to the end will receive salvation," the meaning of "follow" is to stand firm in the midst of tribulation. Today, many believe that following God is easy, but when God's work is about to end, you will know the true meaning of "follow." Just because you are still able to follow God today after being conquered, this does not prove that you are one of those who will be made perfect. Those who are unable to endure the trials, who are incapable of being victorious amid tribulation will, ultimately, be incapable of standing fast, and so will be unable to follow God to the very end. Those who truly follow God are able to withstand the test of their work, whereas those who do not truly follow God are incapable of withstanding any of God's trials. Sooner or later they will be expelled, while the overcomers will remain in the kingdom. Whether or not man truly seeks God is determined by the test of his work, that is, by God's trials, and has nothing to do with the decision by man himself. God does not reject any person on a

whim; all that He does can utterly convince man. He does not do anything that is invisible to man, or any work that cannot convince man. Whether man's belief is true or not is proved by the facts and cannot be decided by man. That "wheat cannot be made into tares, and tares cannot be made into wheat" is without doubt. All those who truly love God will ultimately remain in the kingdom, and God will not mistreat anyone who truly loves Him.

Excerpted from "God's Work and Man's Practice" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Now, whether or not your pursuit has been effective is measured by what you currently possess. This is what is used to determine your outcome; this is to say, your outcome is revealed in the sacrifices you have made and the things you have done. Your outcome will be made known by your pursuit, your faith, and what you have done. Among all of you, there are many who are already beyond salvation, for today is the day of revealing people's outcomes, and I will not be muddle-headed in My work; I will not lead those who are entirely beyond salvation into the next age. There will be a time when My work is finished. I shall not work on those stinking, spiritless corpses that cannot be saved at all; now are the last days of man's salvation, and I will not do useless work. Do not rail against Heaven and earth—the end of the world is coming. It is inevitable. Things have come to this point, and there is nothing you as a human being can do to stop them; you cannot change things as you wish. Yesterday, you did not pay a price to pursue the truth and you were not loyal; today, the time has come, you are beyond salvation; and tomorrow, you will be eliminated, and there will be no leeway for your salvation. Even though My heart is mild and I am doing My utmost to save you, if you do not strive on your own behalf or give any thought for yourself, what does this have to do with Me? Those who think only of their flesh and who enjoy comfort; those who seem to believe but who do not really believe; those who engage in evil medicine and sorcery; those who are promiscuous, tattered and ragged; those who steal sacrifices to Jehovah and His possessions; those who love bribes; those who dream idly of ascending to heaven; those who are arrogant and conceited, who strive only for personal fame and fortune; those who spread impertinent words; those who blaspheme God Himself; those who do nothing but make judgments against and slander God Himself; those who form cliques and seek independence; those who exalt themselves above God; those frivolous young, middle-aged and older men and women who are ensnared in licentiousness; those men and women who enjoy personal fame and fortune and pursue personal status among

others; those unrepentant people who are trapped in sin—are they not, all of them, beyond salvation? Licentiousness, sinfulness, evil medicine, sorcery, profanity, and impertinent words all run riot among you; and truth and the words of life are trampled in your midst, and the holy language is defiled among you. You Gentiles, bloated with filth and disobedience! What will your final outcome be? How can those who love the flesh, who commit sorcery of the flesh, and who are ensnared in licentious sin have the audacity to continue living! Do you not know that people such as you are maggots beyond salvation? What entitles you to demand this and that? To date, there has not been the slightest change in those who do not love the truth and only love the flesh—how can such people be saved? Those who do not love the way of life, who do not exalt God and bear testimony to Him, who scheme for the sake of their own status, who extol themselves—are they not still the same, even today? What is the value in saving them? Whether you can be saved does not depend on how great your seniority or how many years you have been working, and much less does it depend on how many credentials you have built up. Rather, it depends on whether your pursuit has borne fruit. You ought to know that those who are saved are the “trees” that bear fruit, not the trees with lush foliage and abundant flowers that yet yield no fruit. Even if you have spent many years wandering the streets, what does that matter? Where is your testimony? Your reverence for God is far less than your love for yourself and your lustful desires—is this kind of person not a degenerate? How could they be a specimen and model for salvation? Your nature is incorrigible, you are too rebellious, you are beyond salvation! Are such people not those that will be eliminated? Is the time when My work is finished not the time of the arrival of your last day? I have done so much work and spoken so many words among you—how much of it has truly entered your ears? How much of it have you ever obeyed? When My work ends, that will be the time when you stop opposing Me, when you stop standing against Me. As I work, you act against Me constantly; you never comply with My words. I do My work, and you do your own “work,” making your own little kingdom. You are nothing but a pack of foxes and dogs, doing everything in opposition to Me! You are constantly trying to bring those who offer you their undivided love into your embrace—where is your reverence? Everything you do is deceitful! You have no obedience or reverence, and everything you do is deceitful and blasphemous! Can such people be saved? Men who are sexually immoral and lascivious always want to draw coquettish harlots to them for their own enjoyment. I absolutely will not save such sexually immoral demons. I hate you filthy demons, and your lasciviousness and coquettishness

will plunge you into hell. What have you to say for yourselves? You filthy demons and evil spirits are repulsive! You are disgusting! How could such trash be saved? Can they who are ensnared in sin still be saved? Today, this truth, this way, and this life do not attract you; rather, you are attracted to sinfulness; to money; to standing, fame and gain; to the enjoyments of the flesh; to the handsomeness of men and charms of women. What qualifies you to enter My kingdom? Your image is even greater than God's, your status even higher than God's, to say nothing of your prestige among men—you have become an idol that people worship. Have you not become the archangel? When people's outcomes are revealed, which is also when the work of salvation will draw near its end, many of those among you will be corpses beyond salvation and must be eliminated.

Excerpted from "Practice (7)" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

XX. God's Promise to Man and Man's Destination

1. What are God's promises to those who have attained salvation and been perfected?

Relevant Words of God:

The kingdom is expanding in humanity's midst, it is forming in humanity's midst, and it is standing up in humanity's midst; there is no force that can destroy My kingdom. Of My people who are in the kingdom of today, which of you is not a human being among human beings? Which of you lies outside the human condition? When My new starting point is announced to the multitude, how will humanity react? You have seen with your own eyes the state of humankind; surely you do not still harbor hopes of enduring forever in this world? I am now walking abroad amongst My people and I live in their midst. Today, those who bear genuine love for Me—such people are blessed. Blessed are those who submit to Me, they will surely stay in My kingdom. Blessed are those who know Me, they will surely wield power in My kingdom. Blessed are those who seek after Me, they will surely escape from Satan's bonds and enjoy My blessings. Blessed are those who are able to forsake themselves, they will surely enter into My possession and inherit My kingdom's bounty. Those who run around for Me I will remember,

those who make expenditures for Me I will joyfully embrace, and to those who make offerings to Me I will grant enjoyments. Those who find enjoyment in My words I will bless; they will surely be the pillars that hold up the ridgepole in My kingdom, they will surely have matchless abundance in My house, and no one can compare with them. Have you ever accepted the blessings that you were given? Have you ever sought the promises that were made for you? You will surely, under the guidance of My light, break through the stranglehold of the forces of darkness. You will surely not, in the midst of darkness, lose the light guiding you. You will surely be the master of all creation. You will surely be an overcomer before Satan. You will surely, at the downfall of the kingdom of the great red dragon, stand up amid the myriad throngs to bear witness to My victory. You will surely stand firm and unwavering in the land of Sinim. Through the sufferings you endure, you will inherit My blessings, and will surely radiate My glory throughout the entire universe.

Excerpted from “Chapter 19” of God’s Words to the Entire Universe in The Word Appears in the Flesh

Only those who love God are able to testify of God, only they are God’s witnesses, only they are blessed by God, and only they are able to receive God’s promises. Those who love God are God’s intimates; they are the people beloved by God, and they can enjoy blessings together with God. Only people such as this will live to eternity, and only they will forever live under God’s care and protection. God is for people to love, and He is worthy of all people’s love, but not all people are capable of loving God, and not all people can testify of God and hold power with God. Because they are able to testify of God and devote all their efforts to God’s work, those who truly love God can walk anywhere beneath the heavens without anyone daring to oppose them, and they can wield power on earth and rule all the people of God. These people have come together from across the world. They speak different languages and have different skin colors, but their existence has the same meaning; they all have a heart that loves God, they all bear the same testimony, and have the same resolve, and the same wish. Those who love God can walk freely throughout the world, and those who testify of God can travel across the universe. These people are beloved by God, they are blessed by God, and they will forever live within His light.

Excerpted from “Those Who Love God Will Forever Live Within His Light” in The Word Appears in the

Flesh

Based on their different functions and testimonies, the overcomers within the kingdom will serve as priests or followers, and all those who are victorious amid tribulation will become the body of priests within the kingdom. The body of priests will be formed when the work of the gospel throughout the universe has come to an end. When that time comes, that which should be done by man will be the performance of his duty within the kingdom of God, and his living together with God within the kingdom. In the body of priests there will be chief priests and priests, and the remainder will be the sons and people of God. This is all determined by their testimonies to God during tribulation; they are not titles that are given on a whim. Once man's status has been established, the work of God will cease, for each is classed according to kind and returned to their original position, and this is the mark of the accomplishment of God's work, it is the final outcome of the work of God and the practice of man, and it is the crystallization of the visions of God's work and the cooperation of man. In the end, man will find repose in the kingdom of God, and God, too, will return to His dwelling place to rest. This will be the final outcome of 6,000 years of cooperation between God and man.

Excerpted from "God's Work and Man's Practice" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

Once the work of conquest has been completed, man will be brought into a beautiful world. This life will, of course, still be on earth, but it will be totally unlike man's life today. It is the life that mankind will have after the whole of mankind has been conquered, it will be a new beginning for man on earth, and for mankind to have such a life will be proof that mankind has entered a new and beautiful realm. It will be the beginning of the life of man and God on earth. The premise of such a beautiful life must be that, after man has been purified and conquered, he submits before the Creator. And so, the work of conquest is the last stage of God's work before mankind enters the wonderful destination. Such a life is man's future life on earth, the most beautiful life on earth, the kind of life that man longs for, the kind that man has never before achieved in the history of the world. It is the final outcome of the 6,000 years of work of management; it is what mankind yearns for most, and it is also God's promise to man. But this promise cannot come to pass immediately: Man will enter the future destination only once the work of the last days has been completed and he has been completely conquered, that is, once Satan has been utterly defeated.

Excerpted from “Restoring the Normal Life of Man and Taking Him to a Wonderful Destination” in The
Word Appears in the Flesh

“Blessings” means that in the future, you will no longer have the things that you hate, which means that these things will no longer be present in your actual lives; they will have been removed completely, right before your eyes. Family, work, wife, husband, children, friends and relatives, and even the three meals a day that you hate every day, will be gone. (This means not being restricted by time, and walking out of the flesh completely. Only your sated spirit can maintain your body, but this refers to your body, not the flesh. You will be completely free and transcendent. This is the greatest and most evident miracle that God has manifested since the creation of the world.) All particles of soil will be removed from your body, and you will completely be spiritual bodies that are holy and untainted, able to travel throughout the universe and to the ends of the earth. From that time onward, you will also be rid of all that troublesome washing and scrubbing, and you will simply enjoy yourselves to the fullest. From then on, you will no longer think about marriage (because I am ending an age, not creating the world), and there will be no more labor pains that are so torturous for women. Neither will you work or labor any longer in the future. You will immerse yourselves completely in My embrace of love, enjoying the blessings that I have bestowed upon you. This is absolute. While you are enjoying these blessings, grace will continue to follow you. All that I have prepared for you — that is, rare and precious treasures from all over the world — will be given to you. Right now, you can neither conceive of nor imagine all of these, and no one has enjoyed them before. When these blessings come upon you, you will be ecstatic without end — but do not forget that these are all due to My power, My actions, My righteousness, and, even more so, My majesty. (I will be gracious to those to whom I choose to be gracious, and I will be merciful to those to whom I choose to be merciful.) At that time, you will have no parents, and there will be no blood relations. You are all people whom I love, My beloved sons. From that time on, no one will dare to oppress you. It will be a time for you to grow into adults, as well as a time in which you rule the nations with an iron rod! Who dares hinder My beloved sons? Who dares attack them? All shall revere My beloved sons, because the Father has been glorified. All the things that no one could ever imagine will appear before your eyes; they will be unlimited, inexhaustible, and endless. Before long, you will certainly no longer need to be scorched by the sun or endure the

torturing heat, nor will you have to suffer the cold or feel the touch of rain, snow, or wind. This is because I love you, and it will be entirely a world of My love. I will give you everything that you want, and I will prepare for you everything that you need. Who dares claim that I am not righteous? I will kill you immediately, because I have said before that My wrath (against the evil ones) shall last into eternity, and I will not relent even one bit. However, My love (for My beloved sons) will also last forever; I will not hold it back in the least.

Excerpted from “Chapter 84” of Utterances of Christ in the Beginning in The Word Appears in the Flesh

Those that God intends to perfect will all receive His blessings and His inheritance. That is, they take in what God has and is so that it becomes what they have within; they have all the words of God wrought into them; whatever God is, you are able to take it all in exactly as is, and thereby live out the truth. This is the kind of person who is perfected by God and who is gained by God. Only someone such as this is eligible to receive the blessings bestowed by God:

1. Gaining the whole of God’s love.

2. Acting in accordance with the will of God in all things.

3. Gaining the guidance of God, living in the light of God, and gaining God’s enlightenment.

4. Living out on earth the image that God loves; loving God truly as Peter did, crucified for God and worthy to die in recompense for God’s love; having the same glory as Peter.

5. Being beloved, respected, and admired by everyone on earth.

6. Overcoming every aspect of the bondage of death and Hades, giving no opportunity for Satan to do its work, being possessed by God, living within a fresh and lively spirit, and not growing weary.

7. Having an ineffable sense of elation and excitement at all times throughout life, as if one has beheld the arrival of the day of God’s glory.

8. Winning glory together with God and having a countenance that resembles God’s beloved saints.

9. Becoming that which God loves on earth, that is, a beloved son of God.

10. Changing form and ascending with God to the third heaven and transcending the flesh.

Excerpted from “Promises to Those Who Have Been Perfected” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

2. What will humanity's wonderful destination look like?

Bible Verses for Reference:

“And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away” (Rev 21:2–4).

Relevant Words of God:

As My words are consummated, the kingdom is gradually formed on earth and man is gradually returned to normality, and thus there is established on earth the kingdom in My heart. In the kingdom, all the people of God recover the life of normal man. Gone is the frosty winter, replaced by a world of cities of spring, where spring lasts all year. No longer are people faced with the gloomy, miserable world of man, and no longer do they endure the cold chill of the world of man. People do not fight with each other, countries do not go to war against each other, no longer is there carnage and the blood that flows from carnage; all lands are filled with happiness, and everywhere teems with warmth between men. I move throughout the world, I enjoy from atop My throne, and I live among the stars. The angels offer unto Me new songs and new dances. No longer does their own fragility cause tears to run down their faces. No longer do I hear, before Me, the sound of the angels weeping, and no longer does anyone complain of hardship to Me. Today, you all live before Me; tomorrow, you will all exist in My kingdom. Is this not the greatest blessing that I bestow upon man?

Excerpted from “Chapter 20” of God’s Words to the Entire Universe in The Word Appears in the Flesh

When man enters the eternal destination, man will worship the Creator, and because man has gained salvation and entered eternity, man will not pursue any objectives, nor, moreover, will he need to worry about being besieged by Satan. At this time, man will know his place, and will perform his duty, and even if they are not chastised or judged, each person will perform their duty. At that time, man will be a creature in both identity and status. There will no longer

be the distinction of high and low; each person will simply perform a different function. Yet man will still live in a destination that is orderly and suitable for mankind; man will perform his duty for the sake of worshiping the Creator, and it is this mankind which will become the mankind of eternity. At that time, man will have gained a life illuminated by God, a life under the care and protection of God, a life together with God. Mankind will lead a normal life on earth, and all people will enter onto the right track. The 6,000-year management plan will have utterly defeated Satan, meaning that God will have recovered the original image of man upon his creation, and as such, the original intention of God will have been fulfilled.

Excerpted from “Restoring the Normal Life of Man and Taking Him to a Wonderful Destination” in The
Word Appears in the Flesh

When humans have been restored to their original likeness, and when they can fulfill their respective duties, keep to their own proper places and submit to all of God’s arrangements, God will have obtained a group of people upon the earth who worship Him, and He will also have established a kingdom upon the earth that worships Him. He will have eternal victory upon the earth, and all those who are opposed to Him will perish for all eternity. This will restore His original intention in creating humanity; it will restore His intention in creating all things, and it will also restore His authority upon earth, among all things, and among His enemies. These will be the symbols of His total victory. Thenceforth, humanity will enter into rest and begin a life that is on the right track. God will also enter into eternal rest with humanity, and commence an eternal life shared by both Himself and humans. The filth and disobedience upon the earth will have disappeared, and all the wailing will have dissipated, and everything in this world that opposes God will have ceased to exist. Only God and those people to whom He has brought salvation will remain; only His creation will remain.

Excerpted from “God and Man Will Enter Into Rest Together” in The Word Appears in the Flesh

When man achieves the true life of man on earth and the entire forces of Satan are placed in bondage, man will live easily upon earth. Things will not be as complex as they are today: Human relationships, social relationships, complex familial relationships—they bring so much trouble, so much pain! Man’s life here is so miserable! Once man has been conquered, his heart and mind will change: He will have a heart that reveres and loves God. Once all those within

the universe who seek to love God have been conquered, which is to say, once Satan has been defeated, and once Satan—all the forces of darkness—has been placed in bondage, then man's life on earth will be untroubled, and he will be able to live freely upon earth. If man's life were without fleshly relationships and the complexities of the flesh, then it would be so much easier. Man's relationships of the flesh are too complex, and for man to have such things is proof that he has yet to free himself of the influence of Satan. If you had the same relationship with each of your brothers and sisters, if you had the same relationship with each member of your family, then you would have no concerns, and would not need to worry about anyone. Nothing could be better, and in this way man would be relieved of half of his suffering. Living a normal human life on earth, man will be similar to the angels; though still being of the flesh, he will be much like an angel. This is the final promise, the last promise bestowed upon man.

Excerpted from "Restoring the Normal Life of Man and Taking Him to a Wonderful Destination" in The
Word Appears in the Flesh

Living in rest means a life without war, without filth, and without any persisting unrighteousness. This is to say, it is a life devoid of Satan's disruptions (here "Satan" refers to enemy forces) and Satan's corruption, and nor is it prone to the invasion of any force in opposition to God; it is a life in which everything follows its own kind and can worship the Lord of creation, and in which heaven and earth are entirely tranquil—this is what is meant by the words "restful life of humans." When God rests, unrighteousness will no longer persist upon the earth, nor will there be any further invasion from enemy forces, and humankind will enter a new realm—no longer be a humanity corrupted by Satan, but rather a humanity that has been saved after having been corrupted by Satan. Humanity's day of rest will also be God's day of rest. God lost His rest due to humanity's inability to enter into rest, not because He had originally been unable to rest. Entering into rest does not mean that everything stops moving or ceases to develop, nor does it mean that God stops working or that humans stop living. The sign of entering into rest will be when Satan has been destroyed, when those wicked people who joined it in its evildoing have been punished and wiped out and when all forces hostile to God cease to exist. God entering into rest means that He will no longer carry out His work of humanity's salvation. Humanity entering into rest means that all of humanity will live within God's light and under His blessings, devoid of Satan's corruption, and no more unrighteousness

will occur. Under God's care, humans will live normally upon earth. When God and humanity enter into rest together, it means that humanity has been saved and that Satan has been destroyed, that God's work in humans is entirely complete. God will no longer continue to work in humans, and they will no longer live under Satan's domain. As such, God will no longer be busy, and humans will no longer be constantly on the move; God and humanity will enter into rest simultaneously. God will return to His original place, and each person will return to their respective place. These are the destinations in which God and humans will reside once God's entire management is finished. God has God's destination, and humanity has humanity's destination. While resting, God will continue to guide all humans in their lives upon earth, and while in His light, they will worship the one true God in heaven. God will no longer live among humanity, nor will humans be able to live with God in His destination. God and humans cannot live within the same realm; rather, both have their own respective manners of living. God is the One who guides all of humanity, and all of humanity is the crystallization of God's management work. Humans are the ones who are led, and are not of the same substance as God. To "rest" means to return to one's original place. Therefore, when God enters into rest, it means He has returned to His original place. He will no longer live upon the earth or be among humanity to share in their joy and suffering. When humans enter into rest, it means that they have become true objects of creation; they will worship God from upon the earth, and live normal human lives. People will no longer be disobedient to God or resist Him, and will return to the original life of Adam and Eve. These will be the respective lives and destinations of God and humans after they enter into rest. Satan's defeat is an inevitable trend in the war between it and God. As such, God's entering into rest after the completion of His management work and humanity's complete salvation and entrance into rest have likewise become inevitable trends. Humanity's place of rest is on earth, and God's place of rest is in heaven. While humans worship God in rest, they will live upon the earth, and while God leads the rest of humanity in rest, He will lead them from heaven, not from earth.

Excerpted from "God and Man Will Enter Into Rest Together" in *The Word Appears in the Flesh*

My wisdom is everywhere on earth, and throughout the entire universe. Among all things are the fruits of My wisdom, among all people teem the masterworks of My wisdom; everything is like all things in My kingdom, and all people dwell in rest beneath My heavens like the sheep

upon My pastures. I move above all men and am watching everywhere. Nothing ever looks old, and no person is as he used to be. I rest upon the throne, I recline above the whole universe, and I am fully satisfied, for all things have recovered their holiness, and I can peacefully reside within Zion once again, and the people on earth can lead serene, contented lives under My guidance. All peoples are managing everything in My hand, all peoples have regained their former intelligence and original appearance; they are no longer covered with dust, but, in My kingdom, are as holy as jade, each with a face like that of the holy one within man's heart, for My kingdom has been established among man.

Excerpted from "Chapter 16" of God's Words to the Entire Universe in The Word Appears in the Flesh

"I move above all men and am watching everywhere. Nothing ever looks old, and no person is as he used to be. I rest upon the throne, I recline above the whole universe..." This is the outcome of God's present work. All of God's chosen people return to their original form, because of which the angels, who have suffered for so many years, are released, just as God says "their faces are like that of the holy one within man's heart." Because the angels work on earth and serve God on earth, and because God's glory spreads across the world, heaven is brought to earth, and the earth is lifted up to heaven. Therefore, man is the link that connects heaven and earth; heaven and earth are no longer apart, no longer separated, but connected as one. Throughout the world, only God and man exist. There is no dust or dirt, and all things are renewed, like a little lamb lying in a green grassland beneath the sky, enjoying all of God's grace. And it is because of the arrival of greenness that the breath of life shines forth, for God comes to the world to live alongside man for all eternity, just as it was said from God's mouth that "I can peacefully reside within Zion once again." This is the symbol of Satan's defeat, it is the day of God's rest, and this day shall be extolled and proclaimed by all people, and commemorated by all people. When God is at rest upon the throne, that is also the time when God concludes His work on earth, and it is the very moment that all of God's mysteries are shown to man; God and man will be forever in harmony, never apart—such are the beautiful scenes of the kingdom!

Excerpted from "Chapter 16" of Interpretations of the Mysteries of God's Words to the Entire Universe in

The Word Appears in the Flesh

In a flash of lightning, every animal is revealed in its true form. So too, illuminated by My light, man has regained the sanctity he once possessed. Oh, corrupt world of old! At last, it has toppled over into the filthy water and, sinking below the surface, has dissolved into mud! Oh, all mankind, of My own creation! At last they have come back to life again in the light, found the foundation for existence, and ceased to struggle in the mud! Oh, the myriad things of creation that I hold in My hands! How can they not, through My words, be renewed? How can they not, in the light, give play to their functions? Earth is no longer deathly still and silent, heaven no longer desolate and sad. Heaven and earth, no longer separated by a void, are united as one, never to be sundered again. On this jubilant occasion, at this moment of exultation, My righteousness and My holiness have extended throughout the universe, and all mankind extols them without ceasing. The cities of heaven are laughing with joy, and the kingdom of earth is dancing with joy. At this time, who is not rejoicing, and who is not also weeping? Earth in its primordial state belongs to heaven, and heaven is united with earth. Man is the cord uniting heaven and earth, and because of man's sanctity, because of man's renewal, heaven is no longer concealed from earth, and earth is no longer silent toward heaven. The faces of mankind are wreathed in smiles of gratification, and hidden in all their hearts is a sweetness that knows no bounds. Man does not quarrel with man, nor do men come to blows with one another. Are there any who, in My light, do not live peacefully with others? Are there any who, in My day, disgrace My name? All men direct their reverential gaze toward Me, and in their hearts, they secretly cry out to Me. I have searched mankind's every action: Among the men who have been cleansed, there are none who are disobedient to Me, none who pass judgment on Me. All mankind is suffused with My disposition. All men are coming to know Me, are drawing closer to Me and adoring Me. I stand fast in the spirit of man, am exalted to the highest pinnacle in man's eyes, and flow through the blood in man's veins. The joyous exaltation in man's heart fills every place on the face of the earth, the air is brisk and fresh, dense fogs no longer blanket the ground, and the sun shines resplendent.

Excerpted from "Chapter 18" of God's Words to the Entire Universe in The Word Appears in the Flesh

In My light, people see the light again. In My word, people find the things that they enjoy. I have come from the East, I hail from the East. When My glory shines forth, all nations are lighted, all is brought into the light, not one thing remains in darkness. In the kingdom, the life

that God's people live with God is happy beyond measure. The waters dance with joy at the blessed lives of the people, the mountains enjoy with the people My abundance. All men are striving, working hard, showing their loyalty in My kingdom. In the kingdom, rebellion is no more, resistance no more; the heavens and the earth depend on each other, man and I draw close in deep feeling, through life's sweet felicities, leaning one against the other.... At this time, I formally begin My life in heaven. Satan's disturbance is no more, and the people enter into rest. Throughout the universe, My chosen people live within My glory, blessed beyond compare, not as people living among people, but as people living with God. All humanity has gone through Satan's corruption, and drunk the bitter and the sweet of life to the lees. Now, living in My light, how can one not rejoice? How can one lightly forgo this beautiful moment and let it slip away? Ye People! Sing the song in your hearts and dance with joy for Me! Lift your sincere hearts and offer them up to Me! Beat your drums and play joyfully for Me! I radiate My delight through all the universe! To the people I reveal My glorious face! I shall call out in a loud voice! I shall transcend the universe! Already I reign among the people! I am exalted by the people! I drift in the blue heavens above and the people go walking along with Me. I walk among the people and My people surround Me! The people's hearts are joyous, their songs shake the universe, cracking the empyrean! The universe is no longer shrouded in fog; there is no more mud, no more sewage gathering. Holy people of the universe! Under My inspection you show your true countenance. You are not men covered in filth, but saints pure as jade, you are all My beloved, you are all My delight! All things come back to life! The saints have all returned to serve Me in heaven, entering My warm embrace, no longer weeping, no longer anxious, offering themselves up to Me, coming back to My home, and in their homeland they will love Me without surcease! Never changing in all eternity! Where is the sorrow! Where are the tears! Where is the flesh! The earth passes away, but the heavens are forever. I appear to all peoples, and all peoples praise Me. This life, this beauty, from time immemorial till the end of time, shall not change. This is the life of the kingdom.

from "Rejoice, All Ye People!" of God's Words to the Entire Universe in The Word Appears in the Flesh