

West Coast Christian Conference
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Christ is the Hope of Glory

Lord, we are full of thanksgiving to You. Again and again you gather us before You and You continue to speak to our hearts. You show us mercy and may this afternoon all of us be prepared vessels to receive Your grace. Whether it is he who speaks, translates or hears, may we be full of your anointing. Lord, Your presence is the greatest blessing. It is our greatest joy to give You all the glory. May You gain the whole meeting and fill each corner of this place. We give worship to You from the bottom of our hearts; listen to our prayer, in the precious Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, amen.

Colossians 1:23-27 if indeed you continue in the faith firmly established and steadfast, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel that you have heard, which was proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, was made a minister. Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I do my share on behalf of His body, which is the church, in filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions. Of this church I was made a minister according to the stewardship from God bestowed on me for your benefit, so that I might fully carry out the preaching of the word of God, that is, the mystery which has been hidden from the past ages and generations, but has now been manifested to His saints, to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

Hebrews 3:6 but Christ was faithful as a Son over His house – whose house we are, if we hold fast our confidence and the boast of our hope firm until the end.

Eph 1:17-19 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him. I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might.

God's Greatest Act for His Glorious Will: Establishing the Body of Christ

Christ is all and in all is the theme of this conference. I am responsible to share Christ is the glorious hope of the Church. Yesterday we already shared that God gave Christ to be the hope of glory in us, that Christ in us is the hope of glory. This afternoon we'll move on and we'll speak of how Christ is the hope of glory in His divine plan. We know God has given us His eternal purpose and our elderly brother had already made very clear this morning that God's purpose is *for* His Son, and *is* His son. We also see that God not only has a glorious will, but for His glorious will, He has His glorious acts. His acts include His economy, government and works. God's acts are for the purpose of accomplishing His will. His greatest act on earth is to establish the Church His body. The reason God created everything, including creating man, is because His greatest desire is to receive His church from all creation. His greatest act on earth is to establish the body of Christ on earth. Apart from this, God has no other interest. We thank God as it is for this will that He has chosen

us. As Christians on earth, apart from this, we should have no other interest. This should be our purpose of living on earth. How can we please God? Allow Him to build us up into the Church, the body of Christ.

Difficulties in Building the Body of Christ

But from the Old to the New Testament, we clearly see that the building of the body of Christ is full of chaos. Because of the chaos, it has caused pain, confusion and despair for many saints and servants of the Lord. Why there is such confusion? The Bible gives us some reasons. First, it is because of the work of the enemy and attack and destroying work of the enemy. These are but outward things. Second, man does not recognize God's will. Our flesh and self blocks God's work. Our flesh can be separated to two extremes: on one hand it can be very cold and slack when we simply do not care. Many Christians, after they are saved care nothing for God's will and cause difficulties. On the other extreme, some people are very zealous and serve God according to their own will. All this produces difficulties in God's work. Another important reason is because of the mistakes of man, and we build God's Church according to our own imagination. God has His own plan in building His Church. We should only build God's Church according to His own plan. Whatever we build out of our own zeal is unacceptable to God. Regardless of whether in the New or Old Testament time, man constantly makes these mistakes. In Jeremiah 1:10, when Jeremiah was first called by God, God told Jeremiah that he was going to do the work of *plucking out, breaking down, destroying and overthrowing*. Why? Because there remained too many things of man's own good desire and intentions. What does it mean to pluck out? It means what is planted is not according to God's will. What we planted according to our own flesh is not acceptable to the will of God. To break down means it is not in accordance with God's heart. God will destroy all these things and overthrow. When I was young, our elderly brothers said to look at Church history. There are too many illegal buildings built out of man's desire. Today in society, if we are constructing a building not in accordance with building codes and regulations, it is an illegal, condemned building. So from the Old Testament to New, man is constantly building while God is constantly tearing down, because God absolutely cannot accept the things that are not according to His will. These are important reminders to us. These artificial and man-made mistakes will cause chaos and confusion in the work of God. Brothers and sisters, we know that these have caused much pain, confusion and despair among God's servants.

The Process of God's Construction Work: The Hope of the Church is Christ

We can look at this from another angle. When a man wants to build a house, the process of construction is full of chaos. Recently we had a friend come and remodel our house, and our friend has made a mess of our house. Sometimes we don't know where to step. He said, "Take it easy, wait a while, you will see how beautiful your house will become." This is a process. We can look at the process of God's construction throughout history. We thank God because in such a condition, we need to place our focus on Christ. The hope God gave to man is Christ, so the hope of the Church should be Christ. If Christ in us becomes the hope of glory, then we will be like the saints who love the Lord throughout the generations. They may be sad but not despairing, in pain, but not give up. They will weep, but not be negative because Christ in them is the hope of glory. Brothers and sisters, the hope of the Church is Christ. The Church herself is not the hope. If we place our hope on the Church, we

will be doomed to despair. Our attitude should be that we have hope for the Church, but the Church herself is not the hope. We thank God, for God to build the Church is full of hope, but that hope is on Jesus, not on the Church. Many Christians today place their hope on the Church, which causes much despair. If we hope on something that is not hope, then the result is despair and hopelessness. The Bible clearly tells us the hope of the Church is Christ Himself.

In Ephesians 1, before creation when God began His glorious counsel, God looked at the Church through Christ, and God predestined and worked according to His own pleasure. When God was doing the work of choosing, He was choosing according to His own pleasure. Think about this, if God gave this authority of choosing into our hands and allows us to choose, maybe most of us would not be chosen. Isn't it so? We are so weak and corrupt. Even though we are saved and are all brothers and sisters, we are not so lovely, including myself. If it is up to us to choose, and we're forced to make such a decision, we would choose unhappily. But remember, when our God chose us, He rejoiced with His choosing. Why and how could He have pleasure? Because He is looking at the Church through His Son. Today we should also look at the Church through Christ's eyes. If we see the Church through Christ, then we will not despair. We need learn to put our hope on Christ Himself. Outside of Christ, any other hope will bring us to despair and hopelessness. If we have our hope on a person, a person cannot help but cause you disappointment. An organization cannot become your hope. Gifts cannot give you hope. Even the talents and the wisdom of man will cause us to despair. If we carefully read the Old and New Testament history, you will clearly see that there are many such examples. Today we can only place our hope on the Lord Jesus Christ. For this reason, in the New Testament the disciples also encouraged us that we should fix our eyes on the Lord, and consider Jesus because only He can bring us encouragement. In the entire building process of God, there is no way you can find a perfect model church. You will never find a church that will completely satisfy your needs. Wherever you go you will find discontentment. God shows us that the hope for the Church is on Christ.

Revelation: Vision and Prophecy

Thank God, in God's building process, God has chosen many workers to work together with Him. As we enter into the work of the Church, we discover that there are many difficulties in our midst. Many things easily cause us to feel discouraged and despair. So in order to encourage God's people and workers, God encouraged them through revelation. This revelation from the Bible comes in two forms. This revelation includes vision and prophecy. In the Bible we see many examples of this revelation. Regardless of vision or prophecy, they are expressions of the meaning of Christ. Vision shows that the purpose predestined by God in Christ will never change. No matter how time or circumstances will change, but God shows us through vision that His purpose never changes. What about prophecy? It means that the will of God in Christ Jesus will be fulfilled. That's why the Bible is full of visions and prophecies. We thank our God, for by these He encourages us so that we may be filled with the hope of glory. Before creation, God had already set His will. But in His work in time and space, He uses these two aspects to encourage us. Visions bring us back to the original purpose of God. Prophecies bring us to the condition of what God will accomplish in the future. These are very important things. All servants of Gods are encouraged through

these revelations so they can serve and follow God in this hope. So visions and prophecies are the greatest encouragement and hope for saints in tribulation. This is God's encouragement to man in His divine acts.

Encouragement and Hope through Vision and Prophecy

I mentioned previously that we had a friend come and remodel our house. He is a very good friend. He has done his best. While he was breaking and taking down many things in the room, I saw that it was a mess. In the beginning, it looked fine and orderly, but now after the destruction, it looked terrible. However, when he came in and saw the mess, he smiled. I saw the mess and I frowned. Why was this? It's because he had a vision, and I did not. He already foresaw the beauty of the room in the future, so he just patted my shoulder and said, "Take it easy, and don't worry. It will look very different and beautiful in about ten days." But I couldn't see it. What I saw was a mess because I had no vision. He had a vision, so he prophesied. Thank God, this is the same way the Lord leads us today. We cannot see, so we worry and despair. This is why God gives vision to His servants to give to the saints. When their eyes are opened, and God tells them what a glorious future we all have, then they are greatly encouraged. Then they will have hope even in the midst of hopelessness, just like Abraham. Brothers and sisters, the Church cannot lose vision in any generation, and the Church cannot lack prophecy. Any time the people of God have no vision and do not understand prophecy, there will be a great backsliding, compromise and change. Many people's goals change and lose their hope for the Church. This proves they do not have vision or they do not understand prophecy. On earth, if the Church has no vision, and do not understand prophecy, we will encounter crisis. This is a time of great chaos. We know God's work is about to be complete, and before the work is complete, we know that these times will be more chaotic than all ages past. Our Lord has already told us that when we see these things happening, we should lift up our heads, because the time of our redemption draws near. If we lack vision today or do not understand prophecy, then we will be just as worried and anxious like worldly people. We forget that the will of God will be accomplished, and the last days will be more and more confusing. Even outwardly, the Church will look more and more weak. This is a great reminder from God; the people who have this vision and the people of God who understand prophecy will be strong and encouraged. How we need His mercy and we need to pray, that the Lord may give us the spirit of wisdom and revelation, to enlighten our eyes so we can see Him, and see Him in His fullness. We thank God that in these days as we gather here, the Lord through our brothers give us His vision and prophecies from the Bible. Every one of us ought to pray, "Lord open my eyes, I want to see. Enlighten my inner eyes so I truly see." For only prophecies and vision can bring us hope. This is such an important matter. In the Bible we can see some examples of this.

Illustrations from Prophets

In the past meetings, our brothers already spoke of the experiences of the prophets. I want to share about the experiences of these prophets some more. We hope to find encouragement from these examples so that we can live before God. Of course, there are many examples in the Bible. Let me first illustrate from some of the Old Testament prophets.

Elijah

In 1 Kings 17-19, when Elijah came out to serve the Lord, he was called the prophet of fire. When he first came out to serve, he was so brave and so courageous. When he prayed, the sky was closed for three and a half years. Then on Mt. Carmel, he asked God to send down fire, which killed all 450 prophets of Baal. Next he prayed for rain. He asked King Ahab to get in his chariot and return. Then he girded up his loins and outran Ahab. He ran faster than Ahab's chariot horses! When we read these Old Testament stories, we see such a servant of God! A person like that is so strong and courageous; he must never fail and never despair. However unexpectedly in chapter 19, when Queen Jezebel spoke one simple sentence, she blew away this mighty servant of God. She spoke only one word! His condition changed completely. He lost hope, was discouraged, became afraid and fled. When I read this passage in the past, I did not understand. Such a mighty and gifted prophet, how can he fear a woman? With just one utterance, he was afraid. This doesn't make sense. So when he went into the wilderness, he begged for death. Why did he ask to die? When a person becomes completely hopeless, he will commit suicide. But Elijah even lost the courage to commit suicide as he begged the Lord to take his life away. It is hard to imagine a servant of God in this condition. But thank God, brothers and sisters, in the New Testament time, when James wrote his epistle, he said that Elijah is of the same temperament as us. He means that Elijah was just as weak as are. If you are following the Lord today and a person's one utterance causes you to stumble, you ought to be encouraged. Elijah had the same experience.

Brothers and sisters, from the Bible we can see that many servants of God are just weak vessels. We easily despair, are easily discouraged, and we complain easily. No exception for Elijah. Brother Hudson Taylor said one thing as many people think he is a great servant of God. But he said, "I am not a great servant of God. I am a small servant of a great master." Today we understand that only God is great. Elijah's situation is something we can sympathize with and his condition is also a great encouragement and comfort to us. What does this tell us? God tells us through Elijah that gifts and talents are not reliable. These things are good things that God gives to us for His work. However, if we place our hope on our gifts and talents, if we place our hope on people with these gifts and talents, or if we hope that we can obtain gifts and talents, all these things will not become our hope. As we follow the Lord today, there are many people who desire these things. Remember when Jesus led His disciples on earth, and one day when they passed a village in Samaria, the Samaritans refused to receive Him because Jesus was walking towards Jerusalem. James and John became very angry, and they asked the Lord, "Do you want us to command for fire to down from heaven like Elijah did?" How much we desire to be like Elijah, to simply pray and be able to call down fire from heaven, or pray and close up the heavens from rain. If we had this power, then perhaps the Church would have hope! But Elijah tells us that this is not the hope that God gave us. Thank God, at the end when he went to Mount Horeb, the Lord clearly tells us that there was a great wind, but God was not in it. God was not in the great earthquake or in the great fire. After the great fire, there was the gentle, small voice. Thank God, only He is powerful. God didn't need to speak loudly to Elijah; He could just speak with a still, small voice. There Elijah met with God and was once again encouraged. But because he was there accusing God's people, God told him to pass his work to Elisha. We know that our God is a God of mercy and grace; He did not abandon Elijah because of

this. When Jesus was on the Mount of Transfiguration, Moses and Elijah appeared there with Him. How God continues to have mercy on man. Elijah became the representative of Old Testament prophets. God's love is truly immeasurable. Only God was the hope for Elijah. Today, brothers and sisters, God makes Christ to be our hope of glory. May the Lord draw us so we can fix our eyes on the Lord Jesus.

Isaiah

When we read Isaiah 6, we know that this was the greatest turning point in Isaiah's life. Isaiah truly loved the Lord and one who loved Israel. He lived through four kings. In his youth, King Uzziah was the king of Judah. King Uzziah was a king of great works. In 2 Chronicles 26, it records the greatest deeds of King Uzziah. So King Uzziah became a hero in the heart of Isaiah. Isaiah thought, "It was enough to have King Uzziah. Our king is great!" The Bible tells us that in King Uzziah's early years of serving God, the prophet Zechariah was helping him, and he listened to the prophet. Thus whatever he did was successful and prosperous. He defeated all the Philistines. His fame spread even to Egypt. This was a famous king. Many servants of God have this desire too, to not only become famous among Christians, but also throughout the world. Even the Egyptians knew Uzziah's name. The Bible said that he was strong and the territory of Israel was restored to almost like the time of King Solomon. He was a person of great talent and gifts; he also liked architecture and built things. He built many cities. He worked on agriculture, and established a great army. In his reign, Israel became a great nation and the Bible also said he had marvelous help. Though we don't know what kind of help this was but to have a king like this in God's kingdom, young Isaiah was truly excited. We believe that whatever Uzziah did, Isaiah would be very excited. When he saw Uzziah, he was very happy and glad. Isn't this just like Church history when there are great servants of God, and many children of God become very happy? We all hope among the children of God to have a leader like this.

Unfortunately, King Uzziah was still a man and because he was so successful, he became proud and did some wicked things. He sinned against God and went into the temple to burn incense even with all the priests trying to stop him. However, he thought he became somebody and was qualified to burn incense. At that moment, God's hand judged him and he immediately became a leper. The priests drove him out of the temple, and he was a leper to the day of his death. Isaiah 6 spoke of the death of Uzziah. For the Chinese, we cannot use the word "death" when referring to a king's death, but rather a different term: "beng" [an explosion or to burst]. To Isaiah, it was truly as if a mountain had exploded. This was a great blow to Isaiah because he had placed all his hope on Uzziah. He placed all of Israel's hope on Uzziah. Until one day, he actually died. Some Bible scholars have said that it was good that he exploded. It was because this death brought a great turning point to Isaiah, for Isaiah truly loved the Lord and His kingdom. So he went into the temple with great sorrow in his heart. Unexpectedly, he saw a great vision in the temple. He saw the Lord sitting on the throne and the train of His robe filling the temple, and the seraphim were shouting, "*Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts.*" Even the foundations of the threshold shook, and the whole temple was filled with God's glory. Dear brothers and sisters, we understand that in this moment, God used this vision to encourage the young Isaiah. God told him that only the Lord of hosts is the hope of glory. Not only that, but the Lord declared, "... *The Lord of hosts, the whole earth is full of His glory.*" Today we on earth, it's as if we cannot see the glory of

God outwardly. But actually, God's glory is filling the earth. If our spiritual eyes are open, you will see that the whole earth is full of God's glory. What an encouragement to Isaiah! The kings of earth will die and the king in front of Isaiah also fell. He saw the true King behind all of this. This brought a great encouragement to him. From then on, we see a great change in Isaiah's ministry. Before, he served the Lord, but now he serves only Christ. He is the prophet that prophesied about Christ the most clearly. Though our Lord was not yet born at that time and will not be born for another 700 years, but in revelation and vision Isaiah already saw the Christ, from His birth to His death. He was able to foretell Christ ever so clearly. His ministry was only Jesus and to him, it was only Jesus. So in the Old Testament, he is considered the messianic prophet. The Lord took all his hopelessness and despair away. In Isaiah's experience, it tells us that apart from the Lord, there is no person that we can place our hope in.

Ezekiel

Our brother also mentioned the book of Ezekiel in these couple of days. We know the background of Ezekiel. He was born during a very chaotic time and the kingdom of Judah had been destroyed. The city of Jerusalem and the temple had been destroyed. The kingdom of Judah was destroyed and all the Israelites had been taken captive to Babylon. Ezekiel became a slave laborer by the river Chebar and we know that he previously was a priest. When he was thirty years old, I believe that he was very sorrowful in his own situation. He may have felt hopeless because he may have also known the prophecy of Jeremiah concerning the seventy years of exile. He probably thought, "I'm thirty years old right now, and in seventy years, I will be one hundred! Can I live that long? Do I have hope?" Looking around him, it was entirely hopeless. However when he turned his heart to God, all of a sudden he received a great vision. Out of the north came a great cloud with thunder and lightning. Glory appeared by the river Chebar. People tell us that that glory encompasses many things for it is the glory of the holy of holies. Here God tells us that the temple can be abolished, but there is no enemy who can even touch the glory inside. So from many miles away, God brought His glory from Jerusalem to Chebar. This gave a great hope to Ezekiel. Brothers and sisters, our entire hope is in the spiritual realm. Today, if your hope is still on the earth, sooner or later, you will be disappointed. The prophet Ezekiel tells us that the hope that God gives is in the spiritual realm. Though Ezekiel lived in the Old Testament time, he foretasted the heavenly realm. He experienced during the Old Testament time the experience of the New Testament. The Spirit of God was upon him, so that his entire ministry was spiritual. God's Spirit worked in him, and he beheld Him sitting on the throne, he beheld the Son of Man, which speaks of Christ, and he also saw two wheels next to the throne. This speaks of the throne, which is in control of all the things on earth. For this reason, Ezekiel was greatly encouraged. God encouraged His servant with this vision.

Then God showed him a city. Thank the Lord that He showed him this city, though honestly, this was just a model. Why? It is because it's easier to look at just a model. If God were to show us a blueprint, we may not understand it. Only experts understand blueprints. If we see a model, we can immediately understand. So in a vision, Ezekiel saw the entire holy city of God in a model form. One time I visited a brother's company, and he owned a shipping company. Before I went into his office, there was a large exhibit hall and I saw five large

glass cases with ship models on display. At first, I did not understand. I thought that my brother had a hobby of collecting model ships. But my brother said, "These are not toys. You see these five models? Out on the sea, there are five exact ships like this." Sometimes God helps us using simple methods. Thank God. Our brother tells us that God has measured this city and temple very carefully using His own standard. It tells us that even though the outward temple and city are destroyed, but the city and temple in God's heart is still complete. We need spiritual eyesight and vision today. We see the church on earth may be broken, but in God, the church is complete. Thank God that with this encouragement, during that time in such impossible circumstances, God used Ezekiel as His vessel.

Additionally, Ezekiel was very good at preaching. The Bible has very few descriptions of how wonderfully a person can preach. Ezekiel 33:32 says, *Behold, you are to them like a sensual song by one who has a beautiful voice and plays well on an instrument.* Brothers and sisters, have you ever heard preaching like this? Preaching that is like hearing an instrument or a song with a beautiful voice. We know that Paul did not preach like this. The Corinthians said that his preaching amounted to nothing and was weak, not like when we speak with loud voices and shout. But when Ezekiel started to preach, it was like listening to music, it was such a beautiful ministry of the word. Unfortunately, it continued to say that though it was a beautiful voice preaching, *but they do not practice them.* Sometimes speaking for the Lord is not easy. If you speak less eloquently, nobody listens. If you speak like singing song, still no one listens. But thank God, because Ezekiel had hope, he also became a prophet who prophesied. From Ezekiel we learn that no matter how hopeless the circumstance, as long as our inner eyes are open and can see Christ, then truly we will know that Christ in God's divine acts is the hope of Glory. How we need to have this spiritual eyesight, especially today in these last days, as outwardly it appears that the Church's condition is so desolate. We need to have this eyesight and be encouraged.

Daniel

Daniel was exiled when he was young. He spent seventy years in Babylon. We know that he was a man who loved God. When we serve the Lord, sometimes we cannot stand the test of time. Seventy years is very hard to endure. What encouraged our brother? Thank God, he had a very strong and powerful consecrated life. From a young age, he refused the food of the king, and he lived a simple life. Though he had a high position and was the prime minister, he still prayed towards Jerusalem three times a day. Just like our elderly brother who mentioned this morning, in the life of Daniel, the Lord was all and in all. Apart from the Lord he loved nothing else. This was the strong life he had. The Lord was the greatest attraction in his life. From the first day on, he desired to know the things of the future. He never ceased his hope before the Lord. So God gave him the most important revelation concerning human time to Daniel. Daniel received the revelation concerning the seventy sevens. This is an important prophecy. We understand in the book of Revelations that the entire book is based on these prophecies. It not only encouraged him personally, but it has encouraged brothers and sisters throughout many generations. So this is why God said to him that he can rest and wait for the end to come and enjoy of God's gladness.

Apostle Paul

In many situations of hopelessness, God used vision and prophecy to encourage His people.

Once again, outside of time, God's plan is most beautiful and glorious, but within time, the process of building is chaotic, full of confusion. In order to serve God, our spiritual eyes must be open and fixed on heavenly glory. This way we can live in the hope of glory. Thank God, not only has He made Christ to be His glorious will but also He has made Christ *in us* the hope of glory. In the New Testament time, it is even more so. The center of all prophecies and visions speak of the Lord Jesus. The Apostle Paul was a man of vision, and he lived in vision. So he lived through many difficulties, and was able to say *...in my flesh I do my share on behalf of His body, which is the church, in filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions*. For the Church, regardless of the difficulty, he will never feel discouraged. He learned to look at the Church through Christ. Even in the first century, the outward condition of the Church had already deteriorated. But it was not the same for Paul. He does not only look at the difficulty, but he sees Christ behind the problems. So he never despairs. He can weep, feel sorrowful and pain, but he never loses hope. When he wrote to the church in Corinth, the church that gave him the most difficulties and criticized him the most, when he wrote them, he said, *I thank my God always concerning you*. Only a man of vision can speak like this. Brothers and sisters, thank God, in vision he also prophesied about the beautiful condition of the Church in the future. In Ephesians 5, the Church will be unblemished, glorious, holy and blameless. This is an important prophecy, so Paul was full of hope while following the Lord on earth. When he was martyred, his heart was still full of joy. This should bring us much encouragement.

Apostle John

We also know the experience of the apostle John. He was exiled to the Island of Patmos. He was exiled even in his old age, which makes it hard for us to imagine how difficult that situation was. But God gave him such a great revelation. In the book of Revelation, we see that he saw vision of the Son of Man. He saw the Son of Man walking among the midst of many churches that had failed. He knew that even though man fails the Lord, the Lord is eternally faithful and will not give up. He also saw the image of the Lamb, the victorious Lamb, and that the enemy will be defeated. He saw the New Jerusalem descending from heaven. God also showed it to him using a model. He also saw the ultimate outcome of the Church.

We thank our God. He truly knows how to encourage us. Not only does God have His glorious will, but He also has His divine purpose and acts in accomplishing His will. Even though through these acts there are so many difficulties, but as long as we have vision and understand prophecy, it doesn't matter how desolate the outward condition of the Church is today. Christ in us is the hope of glory. Brothers and sisters, the author of Hebrews encourages us and tells us that because *the Son of God is over His house, we can hold fast our confidence and the boast of our hope firm until the end*. We need vision. Thank God that the Holy Spirit is doing this work in His children. If our hearts are honest, open and have this desire, God will work in us like how He has worked throughout the ages. May the Lord open our inner eyes so we can have a clear vision of our Lord. May we not only hear God's Words these days, but also may we say, "Lord, by the Spirit of Truth, lead us into reality." I believe that by His mercy and love, it is His pleasure to reveal His Son in us.

Lord, we thank You with all our hearts, because You have chosen those of us who are weak to accomplish Your will. We have so many difficulties on earth and the Church seems to always be living in weakness. But we know that You are a God of purpose and Your plan is absolutely perfect. You have Your divine acts in time. Though we are still living in this building process, we easily encounter things that discourage us. May the Holy Spirit open us and enlighten the eyes of our hearts so that we may truly see You and truly know You, that we may be like the saints who through all generations who love You. In those difficult times, they were encouraged because of vision and prophecy. They faithfully followed you on earth. Lord, please gain us. We thank You, and we are convinced that Your work will be complete in us. May all brothers and sisters live before You with this glorious hope. We thank You for being with all of us. Hear our prayer. In the precious Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, amen.