

I. “Where there is no vision, the people cast off restraint” (Prov. 29:18): **A.** In the Bible vision denotes an extraordinary scene; it refers to a special kind of seeing—a glorious, inward seeing—and to the spiritual scenery that we see from God. **B.** In order to have a vision, we need revelation, light, and sight. **C.** The heavenly vision governs us, restricts us, controls us, directs us, preserves us, revolutionizes us, keeps us in the genuine oneness, and gives us the boldness to go on. **D.** When we see this vision, our entire inner being has an inward turn, and we are changed in thought, concept, and attitude. **E.** The heavenly vision motivates us, energizes us, holds us, gives us endurance, brings us into the Lord’s up-to-date move, and causes our life to be full of meaning and purpose. **F.** Everyone who serves the Lord must be a person with a vision; the inner vision will revolutionize the way we serve the Lord. **G.** Under the heavenly vision we are directed toward God’s destination, and our life is controlled according to God’s economy. **H.** The governing vision of the Bible is the Triune God working Himself into His chosen and redeemed people in order to saturate their entire being with the Divine Trinity for the producing and building us of the Body of Christ consummating in the New Jerusalem.

II. “Buy truth, and do not sell it” (Prov. 23:23): **A.** Truth is something that we have to buy, something that has a price. **B.** The divine truth is absolute, and we must be absolute for the truth and uphold the absoluteness of the truth. /To be absolute for the truth means to set aside feelings, to ignore personal relationship, and to not stand for the self. /The truth is the unique standard, and we must stand on the side of the truth to oppose ourselves; upholding the absoluteness of the truth is possible only when we are delivered from ourselves. **C.** For the consummation of the divine economy, we need to be absolute for the present truth. /The present truth includes the revelation concerning the eternal economy of God, the Divine Trinity, the person and work of the all-inclusive Christ, the consummated life-giving Spirit, the eternal life of God, the church as the Body of Christ, and the New Jerusalem. /The present truth includes the high peak of the divine revelation—the revelation that God became man so that man may become God in life and nature but not in the Godhead—to produce and build up the organic Body of Christ for the fulfillment of God’s economy to close this age and bring Christ back to set up His kingdom. **J.**

III. “The spirit of man is the lamp of Jehovah, / Searching all the innermost parts of the inner being” (Prov. 20:27): **A.** Man’s spirit is God’s lamp within man. /Just as a lamp contains light and expresses it, man’s spirit was created to contain God and express Him. /In order for the divine light to shine into man’s inward parts, God’s Spirit as the oil must soak (mingle with) man’s spirit as the

wick and “burn” together with man’s spirit. /If we respond to the spirit’s shining, we will walk according to the spirit. **B.** The Spirit of God is also a lamp, with a sevenfold intensity to His shining. /Man’s spirit and God’s spirit are both lamps, together enlightening the inward parts. **C.** When we exercise our spirit to pray properly, there is a lamp shining. /As we pray, our spirit functions as a shining lamp, searching all the parts of our soul. /The more we exercise our spirit in prayer, the more we are enlightened. /Our inward parts will be thoroughly searched by the Lord. /After such a time of prayer, we will feel bright and transparent, filled with God.

IV. “Keep your heart with all vigilance, / For from it are the issues of life” (Prov. 4:23): **A.** The soul is the person himself, but the heart is the person in action. /We have something in our inner being that represents us, and this representative is our heart. /The relationship that we have with God first depends on our heart, because the heart is the organ by which we express ourselves and by which we make decisions to receive or reject things. /Although our spirit is pure, what is expressed from our spirit depends on our heart. **B.** The heart is the entrance and exit to our whole being. /Our spirit is the source of our being, but our heart is the passage, the entrance and the exit, through which the traffic in our being passes. /In order to be a proper Christian, we need to exercise our spirit and guard our heart by keeping it with all vigilance. **J.** **C.** The Hebrew word rendered “keep” in Proverbs 4:23 means “guard”. /We should guard our heart above all because out of it are the issues of life. /Issues in Proverbs 4:23 implies sources and springs as well as issues. /The heart is related to the sources of life, the springs of life, and the issues of life. /The fountain, the source, of what we are, of our real being, flows out from our heart. **D.** We guard our heart by caring for our heart and having a thorough dealing with our heart before the Lord in the way of life; the more we deal with our heart, the more we guard our heart. **E.** In order to grow in life for God’s building, we need to love the Lord, take heed to our spirit, and guard our heart with all vigilance to stay on the pathway of life.

V. “Love covers all transgressions” (Prov. 10:12): **A.** “He who covers a transgression seeks love, / But he who repeats a matter separates close friends” (Prov. 17:9). **B.** To cover is love; to uncover is not love. **C.** Covering brings in blessing, but uncovering brings in a curse. **D.** “Love covers all things” (1 Cor. 13:7), not only the good things but also the bad things. /“Our uncovering of the members under our eldership, our shepherding, annuls our qualification”. /We need to shepherd others according to God, with a love that covers all transgressions. **E.** “Above all, have fervent love among yourselves, because love covers a multitude of sins” (1 Pet. 4:8).

CP1: All the Lord's workers need to see the vision of God's economy and keep the absoluteness of the truth

OL1: "Where there is no vision, the people cast off restraint"—Prov. 29:18a. **OL2:** In order to have a vision, we need revelation, light, and sight. Acts 26:19 Therefore, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision. Many Christians read the Bible with a veil. This is why Paul says that we should look unto Christ with an unveiled face.... Paul says that when the sons of Israel read the books of Moses, they have a veil upon them and see nothing. Paul then says that whenever their heart turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away and that wherever the Spirit is, there is freedom. This means that when we are veiled, we are bound; we are imprisoned; we do not have freedom. When the veil is gone, we are released. This freedom comes from the Spirit of God. We need to learn to come to the Bible every day by coming to God. We should confess our sins to make a clear situation so that we can have fellowship with God in the Spirit.... The veil should be gone, and the light should come. Furthermore, we need the sight. If we are blind, we will not be able to see anything, even if the veil is removed and the light is here. We need the revelation, the light, the vision through the light, and the sight. Then the veil is gone, the vision is here, and we have the light with the sight. We also have the understanding of the vision through the Spirit's wisdom.

OL3: "Buy truth, and do not sell it"—Prov. 23:23. **OL4:** To be absolute for the truth means to set aside feelings, to ignore personal relationships, and to not stand for the self.

OL5: The truth is the unique standard, and we must stand on the side of the truth to oppose ourselves; upholding the absoluteness of the truth is possible only when we are delivered from ourselves. If we cannot pay the price to obey any part of the truth, we can only condemn ourselves and confess our weakness; we cannot lower the standard of the truth just because we cannot make it or because it creates dire consequences for us. Every worker of the Lord must uphold the absoluteness of the truth. This is possible only when a man is delivered from himself. Many brothers and sisters are not absolute to the truth; they are affected by people, things, and personal feelings. If a man is not absolute to the truth, he will, in the course of his work, sacrifice God's truth for man, himself, or his own desires. A basic requirement for being a servant of the Lord is to not sacrifice the truth.

Application to the serving ones

In order to have a vision, you need revelation, light, and vision through the light and sight. Revelation in English means to remove the covering. The covering of your conceptions must be removed. Then you need to receive the light and see with your sight the vision of God's economy concerning Christ and the church. Reading through Volume I, 1981 of the Collective Works of Witness Lee, in Part 2, "Living and Working Under the Central Vision of God's Economy... Experiencing and Supplying Christ and Building the Body of Christ", of

"Paul's Central Vision of Finishing the Work", Brother Lee encourages us to use enough time to pray and fellowship concerning the vision of God's economy.

Moreover, after you have seen a vision of God's economy, you must not sell it. Selling the truth or vision of God's economy means bending it at your own convenience. For example, when Brother Lee began his ministry in the United States, "it is certain that in the Bible, Christ is the Spirit, but saying that would cause many people to stumble, so don't say it", was strongly requested. However, in order to uphold the absoluteness of the truth, Brother Lee continued to speak, "Christ is the Spirit, the life-giving Spirit". This is because Christ being the life-giving Spirit is the lifeline of God's economy. Brother Lee's absolute attitude toward truth is an example for us all. You need to "make Christ and the church life your center", according to God's economy. You must put this into practice. But to do that, you need to crucify your opinions and excuses on the cross concerning the absoluteness of the truth.

Brother's testimony: When I started serving full-time, I intended to continue it for the rest of my life, but the Lord's environmental leading led me to work. At that time, I desired to work with my full-time serving spirit. When the work actually started, there were many temptations and setbacks, but with Lord's mercy and the help of my wife, I was able to stay focused in the church life. Many brothers advised that "if you are doing the same as you were serving full-time, you should be careful as you may get fired from the company". The brothers were right about their advices, as full-time serving was very rare at that time. But in my heart I said "Grateful for the advices given. But I would like to experiment what I heard in Taiwan and see if it would work in Japan. My wife agreed and said "Take the plunge and do it". After more than 30 years of experiment in my business life, I can strongly declare that the vision of Christ and the church is feasible in Japan as well. The dispensing of Christ's love is more than conquerous to overcome the cultural barriers of Japan. Rom. 8:35 Who Shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation or anguish or persecution or famine or nakedness or peril or sword? ... 37 But in all these things we more than conquer through Him who loved us. 38 For I am persuaded that neither death nor life nor angels nor principalities nor things present nor things to come nor powers 39 Nor height nor depth nor any other creature will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Prayer: Oh, Lord Jesus, remove my covering and show me the vision of God's economy. I crucify my own opinions and excuses on the cross, so I can follow the vision I have seen, I shall not sell the truth by lowering or bending the standard of the truth because of my own convenience or desires. I take Brother Lee's absolute attitude toward the truth as my pattern, follow God's economy, make Christ my life, and place church life at the center of my life.

CP2: We need to keep our heart with all vigilance, for from it are the issues of life

OL1: “The spirit of man is the lamp of Jehovah, / Searching all the innermost parts of the inner being” —Prov. 20:27.

There are some people who live according to the flesh. Their only concern is the pleasure of the moment. Others live according to their soul. They are elated when things go well for them but depressed when their circumstances are not favorable. Sometimes they are pleasant toward their associates, but other times they are critical or even hateful. There are others who also live according to their soul but are highly regarded by those who know them. Rather than being changeable like the weather, they act rationally and think ahead as to what course of action they will take. Their behavior is controlled by their thoughts.

The Spirit of God touched your conscience, which is part of the spirit. Your spirit was activated, leading you to repent and confess your sins. Your spirit is now a lamp indwelt by the Spirit of God, who is also a lamp. The spirit wants to enlighten every part of your soul. By responding to the spirit's shining, you will be walking “according to the spirit” (Rom. 8:4). Rev. 4:5 ...And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.

The spirit may shine on our emotions, especially the sisters', but we close up, sometimes even weeping, begging the Lord not to touch that area. The same thing may happen with our will, especially the brothers'; if we close our will, the spirit cannot fulfill its function of shining.

OL2: “Keep your heart with all vigilance, / For from it are the issues of life” —Prov. 4:23. We will have a good dealing with the Lord, and we will allow Him to have the ground and the way to deal with us in a proper way. Then we will have the Triune God within us as life and the anointing. This requires our cooperation.... Put all this into practice. Practice to be clear in your mind, love the Lord with your emotion, have a right conscience, and be softened in your will. The only way to do this is by praying. We need to go to the Lord to pray, “Lord, give me a clear mind, an understanding heart.” The prayer in Song of Songs 1:4, “Draw me; we will run after you,” is a prayer for a loving heart. We also have to pray, “Lord, give me a loving heart toward You and emotions that love only You.” We also must pray for this, and also pray for our conscience to be right. Then when we pray, we will see that our will is not only hardened but stubborn, so we need to pray for our will to be softened.

What does it mean for a person to have a pure heart? It is these four matters—the mind is clear, the emotion is loving, the conscience is right, and the will is soft.

Application to Business person/Graduate Students

The life-giving Spirit has been intensified sevenfold in its function to resist the degradation of the church. The end times is a time of darkness, infested with lawlessness, but at this time, the Spirit is intensified sevenfold in its shining.

FN The seven Spirits: The seven Spirits are undoubtedly the Spirit of God. As seven is the number for completion

in God's operation, so the seven Spirits must be for God's move on the earth. In essence and existence, God's Spirit is one; in the intensified function and work of God's operation, God's Spirit is sevenfold. This is similar to the lampstand in Zech. 4:2. In its existence it is one lampstand, but in its function it is seven lamps. At the time this book was written, the church had become degraded; the age was dark. Therefore, the sevenfold intensified Spirit of God was needed for God's move and work on the earth.

When you see darkness, you should return to the sevenfold intensified Spirit and be burned by this Spirit. Do not become weak by staring only at the darkness. The burning Spirit burns your spirit, illuminating and exposing all that is negative in you, unbelief, murmuring, complaining, the love of the world, hidden personal intension, etc. then at this time you should respond by confessing your sins.

There are many diseases in each part of your heart, conscience, mind, will, and emotion. For example, your inability to forgive others and your prejudice against people are the evidence that your heart is sick. Through confession of sins, intimate fellowship with the Lord, and one-on-one fellowship with brothers and sisters, the conscience can be made right, the mind can be made clear, the emotion can love the Lord fervently, the will can be made flexible, and the heart can be made pure.

Testimony of one on one fellowship with bro. Andrew Yu:

When I was in my late thirties, I had the opportunity to spend an hour or so in private with brother Andrew Yu at a meeting hall in Tokyo during conference. I had a hard time finding a job at first, but because of the Lord's leading and blessing, I took a Manager position at a US-based pharmaceutical company and explained that I was experiencing the Lord at work. He told me, "Don't love your job". I was filled with gratitude to the Lord for getting me to this point, and I wanted my brother to evaluate that. So I was not happy that he told me not to love my job. But dissatisfaction does not allow for open fellowship, so I fellowshipped with him, calling on the name of the Lord in my heart. After this fellowship, I thought to myself, "If I don't love my job, why did Brother Andrew say, 'Don't love your job'? I wondered. I thought to myself, "I don't know, but I must pray because my brother has fellowshipped with me. After a while, I understood that "Do not love your work" means "Do not love the blessings He has given you more than the Lord Himself. And through this prayer, I was often helped and my heart was protected.

Prayer: Oh Lord Jesus, the life giving Spirit is now intensified sevenfold. When I see darkness within and without, I turn to the sevenfold intensified Spirit. Burn my spirit so that I would not become weak by staring at the darkness. Enlighten and expose all the negative things in me, unbelief, murmuring, complaining, love of the world, hidden personal intension, prejudice against people and inability to forgive others. The life flows by confessing the sins that are enlightened and having a pure heart. Amen!

CP3: Guard our heart by having intimate fellowship with the Lord and let God of peace guard our heart

OL1: The Hebrew word rendered “keep” in Proverbs 4:23 means “guard”. We should guard our heart above all because out of it are the issues of life. [Deut. 10:12](#) And now, O Israel, what does Jehovah your God ask of you except that you fear Jehovah your God so that you would walk in all His ways and love Him and serve Jehovah your God with all your heart and with all your soul. [1 Thes. 3:13](#) So that He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints.

The exercise of the spirit works only when our heart is active. ··· If our heart is dormant or asleep, exercising our spirit to call on the name of the Lord will not be effective. This exercise cannot work if our acting agent, our heart, is dormant. This is the reason we need to deal thoroughly with our heart. This dealing must include our mind, emotion, and will. Our mind must be the mind of Christ, our emotion must be saturated with the love of Christ, and our will must be one with His will. If this is the condition of our heart, our heart will be active and functioning. Then if we call on the Lord when our heart is active, this calling will be very effective.

We need to pray, “Lord, have mercy on me. I want to have my mind renewed. I want to have my emotion filled with Your love. I want to have a will that is truly one with Your will.” If we have such a heart, then the heart as our acting agent will be established blameless in holiness, blameless in the state of being made holy. **OL2:** “Love covers all transgressions”—[Prov. 10:12](#). “He who covers a transgression seeks love, / But he who repeats a matter separates close friends”—[17:9](#).

Covering brings in blessing, but uncovering brings in a curse. If a brother is led astray from the truth to attend the denominations or go to the movies, our small group may feel that we do not need him, and we do not accept him because he is not qualified. This is not love; this is hate. Even if we know that he goes to the movies, we should not tell others. This is to cover him. We do not like to uncover him or expose him. To uncover is not love. Hatred stirs up strife, but love covers all sins. We would rather be like the sons of Noah who covered their father’s nakedness, which was due to his drunkenness. We do not like to uncover others. Covering brings in blessing, but uncovering brings in a curse. This is not a small matter. Those who uncover suffer the curse, but those who cover others’ sins, defects, and shortcomings enjoy, gain, and receive blessing.

Application to New Ones, Youth and College Students

Dear junior and senior high school students, college students, and new ones, please learn to keep your heart. [Phil.4:4](#) Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. [5](#) ··· The Lord is near. [6](#) In nothing be anxious, but in everything, by prayer and petition with

thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; [7](#) And the peace of God, which surpasses every man’s understanding, will guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus. FN **the peace of God:** The result of practicing fellowship with God in prayer is that we enjoy the peace of God. The peace of God is actually God as peace infused into us through our fellowship with Him by prayer, as the counterpoise to troubles and the antidote to anxiety. FN **guard:** Or, mount guard over. The God of peace patrols before our hearts and thought in Christ, keeping us calm and tranquil.

The secret to keeping your own heart is as follows. ① Know that if your heart is not right, the life of God in you cannot flow out, and therefore you cannot have a blessed life with a testimony. ② Confess your sins according to your sense of conscience. ③ It is to have an intimate fellowship with the Lord and have our hearts guarded by the God of peace. In other words, you should cooperate with the Lord and keep your heart.

For example, your relationships with your friends, teachers, bosses, and parents are not going well. At this time, you should first keep your own heart and adjust it correctly. In the heart of a fallen person, there is unrighteousness of “blaming others and justifying oneself.” Since God is righteous, we should not think and act on the basis of unrighteousness. You are actually hiding your sins by blaming others. Also, you should not think this way, “Since the other person’s level of sin is 5 and mine is 3, when I subtract, the other person is 2 and I am 0. Therefore, I don’t need to confess my sins”. We should not subtract anything and also your evaluation is subjective and unfair. Therefore, the Bible tells us to confess our sins. [Matt.7:3](#) And why do you look at the splinter which is in your brother’s eye, but the beam in your eye you do not consider? [4](#) ...Or how can you say to your brother, Let me remove the splinter from your eye, and behold, the beam is in your eye? [5](#) Hypocrite, first remove the beam from your eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the splinter from your brother’s eye.

Then, life will flow out in your relationships, and your relationships will gradually improve and be blessed. You should also love your gospel friends and cover their sins in love, just as God loves the people of the world (sinners).

Prayer: Lord Jesus, the flow of life comes out of our hearts, and we need to keep our hearts with all vigilance. To do this, we need to confess our sins according to the senses of our conscience, have intimate fellowship with the Lord, and have our hearts guarded by the God of peace. In my fallen heart, there is unrighteousness that blames others, justifies myself, and tries to hide my sin. I learn to confess my sins, flow out the life, love gospel friends, and cover their sins in love. Lord, make me a vessel through which life can flow.