

Guidelines for the Exercise of the Lord's Day Prophesying Message One : Being Brought Back to Christ Himself for the Genuine Church Life

I. Overview:

God's will, which is His eternal purpose and desire in the universe, is that Christ be everything to us and be wrought into us as our life and everything. Paul wrote his Epistles because he was clear that many good things, such as doctrines, ethics, morality, teachings, and culture, are distractions from Christ. In Philippians, Christ is presented as the goal of the believers' pursuit. On account of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ, Paul counted all things to be loss. Paul's earnest desire was to be found in Christ. We need to see a heavenly vision of God's intention to make Christ everything to us; we should apply Christ in what we are doing. The genuine church life is Christ realized, experienced, and expressed by all the saints in a corporate way, that is, the all-inclusive Christ with His unsearchable riches experienced and enjoyed by us and expressed through us. The genuine church life requires us to take up our cross and follow Him, and all the saints need to experience something of Christ in their daily life and come together with the Christ whom they have experienced to exhibit this Christ, to share Him with one another, and to enjoy Him with God the Father for His pleasure.

II. Truth and Enlightenment:

Day 1 —

A. Expound that God's intention is His eternal purpose.

As believers in Christ, we realize that God loves us, that we are sinful, and that our destiny apart from Christ is to go to the lake of fire. We also recognize the fact that we need certain things of God, such as peace and joy. However, we may never have realized that God's intention and the purpose of His salvation is to work the all-inclusive Christ into us as our strength, light, guidance, health, knowledge, wisdom, and everything.

B. Explain the church in Laodicea giving us an alertness.

The church in Laodicea was satisfied with what it had attained. What the saints in Laodicea possessed became a veil that covered their eyes. For this reason the Lord counseled them to buy eyesalve that they might see. The real eyesalve is the dropping of everything that we have. If there is a handkerchief covering my eyes, the best "eyesalve" is simply to drop the handkerchief.

Day 2 —

A. How to gain the excellency of the knowledge of Christ by illustrating of shopping?

Often when tourists see precious items on display, they become excited. Before they entered the store, they didn't know anything of the excellency of these precious items. But once they saw them and gained the excellency of the knowledge of them, they were willing to pay the price to possess them. Meanwhile, we need a revelation of Christ's excellency of His supreme preciousness. If we have a revelation of Christ's excellency, we shall automatically have the excellency of the knowledge of Christ.

B. Expound how Paul to be found in Christ.

When Paul was still living by the law, he was found in the law. But one day he began to have the excellency of the knowledge of Christ. He saw the vision that Christ must be his everything. On account of this excellency of the knowledge of Christ, he was willing to count all things to be loss. Furthermore, he suffered the loss of all things and counted them refuse in order to gain Christ and be found in Him.

Day 3 —

A. Expound in these last days what the main item that the Lord is recovering is.

May the Lord open our eyes to see that what we need is not to be good but to have Christ as our life and our everything. In these last days the main item that the Lord is recovering in His recovery is the genuine experience of Christ. The Lord is concerned not mainly with recovering various forms or doctrines. Rather, He as the living One wants to recover our experience of Himself as our life and our everything in our daily life.

B. Explain what is our lacking although we have Christ within us.

Although Christ is everything, there is a problem. The problem is that although we have Christ within us, we do not apply Him in our daily life. We have Christ, but when we are thinking about something, we do not think by Christ.

We have Christ, but when we are going to do something, we do not do it by Christ. We have Christ, but when we speak with people, we do not speak by Christ.

Day 4 —

A. Explain that we need to be brought to our end in experiencing of Christ.

To apply Christ in everything we do and to experience Christ as everything to us, we need not only the revelation of who Christ is; we also need to be brought to our end. In Colossians, Paul refers to this numerous times. He says that we are dead, that we have been buried, that we have to put off the old man, and that we have been circumcised.

We have to be “out” so that Christ can come in.

B. Expound what Paul preached is the riches of Christ.

Paul preached not religion, doctrines, or teachings but the riches of a living and divine person, Christ. The riches of Christ, which are unsearchable, are for the church. The unique content of the church is the riches of Christ realized and experienced by all the members of the Body. In order to have a genuine church life, we must experience the riches of Christ.

Day 5 —

A. Expound Matthew 16:24 that if we would follow Him, we must deny ourselves.

Within us there is a natural, soulish life that the Scriptures call the self, and within this self are the “feet” of Satan. Satan is there. Whenever you take care of your self, you are under the hand of Satan. In such a case it is impossible to have the church life. Whenever we do or say something according to our self, we stand together with Satan and damage the building up of the church.

B. Explain what the difference between Christ and us in the experiencing of the cross.

To bear the cross means to apply the death of Christ to our self. With Christ, bearing the cross was first and being crucified followed. However, in our case, first we are crucified, and then we bear the cross. We may say that the Lord has put us on the cross, but now we need to apply the cross to ourselves. This is to bear the cross.

Day 6 —

A. Expound how to be full of strength to apprehend with all the saints the riches of Christ.

First, we were regenerated in our spirit. Now we need to be strengthened into our spirit so that Christ may spread Himself from our spirit into our whole heart, that is, into our whole inner being. By spreading within us in this way, Christ occupies our heart and makes His home in our heart. As a result of Christ’s making His home in our heart, we will be full of strength to apprehend with all the saints the immeasurable dimensions of Christ.

B. Explain the words in Ephesians 5:18 and how to apply them.

In Ephesians 5:18 Paul said, “Do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissoluteness, but be filled in spirit.” The spirit mentioned in this verse is the regenerated human spirit. To be drunk with wine is to be filled in the body, whereas to be filled in our regenerated spirit is to be filled with Christ unto all the fullness of God. We need to be filled in our spirit with the riches of Christ unto all the fullness of God.

III. Conclusion:

In this general subject, not one word is doctrinal, but everything is experiential, as we have seen in Philippians, Paul came to know by vision, revelation, and experience. We must ask the Lord, how far do I know Christ? He is inexhaustible and all-inclusive, and we must experience Him and live Him in all situations, with the goal of having a genuine church life. What we need today is the present, living Christ. Our understanding, sight, and experience of Christ must be fresh. We need to let go of all old experiences, let go of what we have already achieved, and leave nothing in our hands. We should empty our hands to open ourselves to the Lord and look to Him to give us a new experience of the living One.