

Guidelines for the Exercise of the Lord's Day Prophesying

Message Three : Life and Building in Peter's Epistles

I. Overview:

The central thought of Peter's Epistles and of the entire Scripture is life and building. Life is the Triune God embodied in Christ and realized as the Spirit dispensing Himself into us for our enjoyment, and building is the church, the Body of Christ, God's spiritual house, as the enlargement and expansion of God for the corporate expression of God. God's goal is to have a spiritual house built up with living stones. We were created of clay, but at regeneration we received the seed of the divine life, which by its growing in us transforms us into living stones. In order to grow in life for God's building, we must love the Lord, take heed to our spirit, guard our heart with all vigilance to stay on the pathway of life, and also experience the breaking of the cross so that the following obstacles within us can be dealt with and removed. In order to be nourished with the guileless milk of God's word, we must receive His word by means of all prayer and muse on His word. Our corporate priestly service is to tell out as the gospel the virtues of the One, so that we may "offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

II. Truth and Enlightenment:

Day 1 —

A. Expound the life and building being the theme of the New Testament.

The matter of life and its issue, which is the building, is actually the theme of the whole New Testament. Life is simply the Triune God, who, after passing through a lengthy process, became the Spirit of life. The building is the church, the Body of Christ. This building comes out of life. The church is the issue of the divine life.

B. Explain that the divine life is the divine power.

God has given us the marvelous and mysterious divine power. God as the divine power passed through creation, redemption, and resurrection to become the life-giving Spirit. Today as the life-giving Spirit, He offers Himself to us as the divine power in resurrection. When we receive the Lord Jesus, the very Triune God enters into us as life in resurrection, which is the divine power.

Day 2 —

A. Explain the significance of a living stone.

A living stone is one that not only possesses life but also grows in life. This is Christ for God's building. Peter changed his metaphor from a seed, which is of the vegetable life, to a stone, which is of the minerals. The seed is for life-planting; the stone is for building. As life to us, Christ is the seed; for God's building, He is the stone.

B. Expound how we can become stones.

We, the believers in Christ, are living stones, like Christ, through regeneration and transformation. We were created of clay. But at regeneration we received the seed of the divine life, which by its growing in us, transforms us into living stones. How, then, can we become stones? We become stones through the process of transformation.

Day 3 —

A. Explain the spiritually hypocrisy.

A smooth stone does not have any sharp edges or protrusions. When such a person is saved, he becomes a smooth Christian in the church. He never argues at home or causes trouble outside. We see him doing many things, but he never gives his opinion. He is spiritually hypocrisy. A person's spirituality is not determined by outward appearance but by how he takes care of Christ.

B. Expound life being Christ.

Life is God Himself, life is Christ, and life is the Holy Spirit. Anything that is not of God, Christ, or the Holy Spirit is not life. Hence, regardless of how much a person can meet—and even go beyond—the standard of morality, this is still not necessarily life. Christ operates and moves in us in order to make us clear about His

will and requirements. However, if we do not obey His leading, this unwillingness and opposition are rebellion.

Day 4 —

A. Explain the five sinful matters in 1 Peter 2:1, and how we should do.

According to the sequence of the five sinful matters in 1 Peter 2:1, malice is the root, the source, and evil speaking is the expression. We may have malice as a root within us. Then there will eventually be evil speaking as the expression of this malice. The development from malice to evil speaking includes guile, hypocrisies, and envyings, three downward steps from malice toward evil speaking.

B. Fellowship the words in 1 Peter 2:1-2, how we should practice.

The nourishment contained in the guileless milk of the word is an antibiotic for guile. Peter indicates that, as newborn babes, we need to practice putting away all guile, and we also need to desire the guileless milk of the word. The purpose of putting away the evil root of malice is that we may long for, desire, the milk of the word. If you want to desire the drinking of the milk in the word, you need to hate your malice and abstain from speaking evil things about others.

Day 5 —

A. Explain the words in 1 Peter 2:5 and its significance.

In 1 Peter 2:5, spiritual denotes the capacity of the divine life to live and grow; holy, the capacity of the divine nature to separate and sanctify. The house of God subsists mainly by the divine life; hence, it is spiritual. The priesthood subsists mainly by the divine nature; hence, it is holy.

The coordinated body of priests is the built-up spiritual house.

B. Expound the words in 1 Peter 2:9 and what its significance is.

In 1 Peter 2:9, race, priesthood, nation, and people are all collective nouns, referring to the believers corporately. As a race, we, the believers, are chosen; as a priesthood, a body of priests, we are royal, kingly; as a nation, we are holy; as a people, we are God's possession, a possession particularly acquired and owned by God as His treasure.

Day 6 —

A. State Paul as a pattern of willing to be subject to God.

Paul was so spiritual because he learned to take the Lord's restriction. For example, Paul wanted to go to Rome, but he did not expect to go there in bonds. Those bonds were the Lord's measure, His limitation. God did not measure out Rome to Paul in a free way. Instead, God led him there as a prisoner. Paul was willing to be subject to God's measuring. He neither transgressed this restriction nor rebelled against it.

B. Explain how Lord is using the young people.

If the young ones do not have a heart to serve the Lord, He will stir them up to serve Him. But once they have been stirred up, He will limit them. When we are down, He will lift us up. But when we get too far up, He will lower us down. If we can take God's ups and downs, we will eventually become useful in His work.

III. Conclusion:

We should long for the guileless milk of the word in order that by it you may grow unto salvation. Growing up is a matter of life, and it is also a matter in life. We have received God's life by regeneration, and we need to be nourished by the milk transmitted by God's words, and grow up in this life and because of this life. We should long for the guileless milk of the word as the spiritual antibiotics, but also to receive nourishment, so that we may grow up. In the morning, we should drink Christ as milk of the word. Then throughout the day, there should be a process of transformation within us. In the evening, we should come to the church meeting and fellowship with the saints. This is building. Today we go out as royal priests, and sometimes we come to the valley of Sephorim, and even to the valley of the shadow of death, and we encounter many difficulties and hardships, but we have God's blessing to bring to others.