

Guidelines for the Exercise of the Lord's Day Prophesying
Message Nine : The Status of the Church -- the Counterpart of Christ

I. Overview :

The entire Bible is a divine romance, a record of how God courts His chosen people and eventually marries them. The love between God and His people is like the affectionate love between a man and a woman. In Genesis 2 we see a picture of Christ and the church in the types of Adam and Eve. Although God is absolutely and eternally perfect, He is not complete without the church as His wife. God did many things in order to produce a counterpart for Himself. He brought creatures to Adam, but there was not found a helper as his counterpart. In order to produce a counterpart for Himself, God first became a man, caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and then took one of his ribs to build which into a woman. He brought her to the man, who said that this is bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh, and this one shall be called Woman. A man shall leave his father and mother and shall be joined to his wife, and the two shall be one flesh, living a married life together as husband and wife.

II. Truth and Enlightenment :

Day 1 --

A. What's God's intention in giving His law to His chosen people in Exo. 20:6?

In bringing His people out of Egypt and giving His law to them, God was courting them, wooing them, and seeing to win their affection. The covenant enacted at the mountain of God through the giving of the law was an engagement covenant, in which God betrothed the children of Israel to Himself. The Ten commandments, especially the first five, gave the terms of the engagement between God and His people.

B. What did God reveal to us in Eph. 5:25-27?

In the past, Christ as the Redeemer gave Himself up for the church for redemption and the impartation of life; in the present, He as the life-giving Spirit is sanctifying the church through separation, saturation, transformation, through, and building up; and in the future, He as the Bridegroom will present the church to Himself as His counterpart for His satisfaction.

Day 2 --

A. Why do we need to have Eve and the church then to satisfy God's heart?

God's purpose in creating the church is that she may be the counterpart of Christ. Christ alone is only half; there must be another half, which is the church. In God's sight Christ alone is not good enough. Therefore, having Adam alone or Christ alone is not enough to satisfy God's heart. With God there must also be Eve, that is, there must also be the church. Then his heart will be satisfied.

B. Explain that God Jehovah said, "It is not good for the man to be alone".

God desired to have both Adam and Eve. His purpose is to have a victorious Christ plus a victorious church, a Christ who has overcome the work of the devil plus a church which has overthrown the work of the devil. His purpose is to have a ruling Christ and a ruling church. This is what God has planned.

Day 3 --

A. Expound that Adam's deep sleep typifies Christ's death on the cross.

Christ's death on the cross is for the producing of the church as His counterpart. Through Christ's death the divine life within Him was released, and through His resurrection His released divine life was imparted into His believers for the constituting of the church. Through such a process God in Christ has been wrought into man with His life and nature so that man can be the same as God in life and nature in order to match Him as His counterpart.

B. Adam needed a counterpart and what did God do to meet this need?

Here says very clearly that all of the things made of earth and not taken out of the body of Adam could not be his counterpart. We must remember that Eve was formed out of a rib taken from Adam, therefore, Eve was the constituent of Adam. This means that the church comes out of Christ. Only that which is out of Christ can be the church. Anything that is not of Christ is not the church.

Day 4 --

A. How are Adam a type of Christ and his sleep a type of Christ's death?

One day the real Adam was put to sleep on the cross where He slept for six hours. The sleep of Adam's was a type of Christ's death on the cross for producing the church. This the life-releasing, life-imparting, life-propagating, life-multiplying, and life-reproducing death of Christ, which is signified by a grain of wheat falling into ground to die and to grow up in order to produce many grains for the making of the loaf which is the Body, the church.

B. Explain "No bone of His shall be broken".

The bone typifies the divine life that is signified by the water flowing out of Christ's side. None of His bones was broken. This signifies that His divine life cannot be broken. His physical life was killed, but nothing could break His divine life which flows out to produce the church.

Day 5 --

A. Compare the difference between Adam's sleep and Christ's sleep on the cross.

During Adam's sleep, God took one of his ribs from his side. Likewise, when Christ was sleeping on the cross, the soldier pierced His side, out came blood and water. At Adam's time there was no sin, so there was no need of redemption. However, by the time that Christ was sleeping on the cross, there was the problem of sin. The blood came out of Christ's side for redemption; the water came out, which is the flowing life to produce the church.

B. Explain Eve in Gen. 2 is the New Jerusalem, the ultimate Eve.

New Jerusalem is the ultimate Eve, the ultimate consummation of the universal bride built up with the precious materials produced by the resurrection life of Christ. This bride, the New Jerusalem, will fulfill the two aspects of the purpose of God. First, the New Jerusalem will be the full expression of God in God's full image. Second, this New Jerusalem will subdue the enemy, conquer the earth.

Day 6 --

A. In God's sight with Eph. 2:6 how is the church?

Eph. 2:6 tells us that the church has been resurrected with Christ, and now the church is seated in the heavenlies with Christ. Therefore, the church is absolutely and purely of the element of Christ, absolutely in resurrection, and absolutely remaining in the heavenlies with Christ. We may say that today the church is "Christly," "resurrectionally," and heavenly.

B. The revelation concerning the garden of Eden and the New Jerusalem, what do they have in common?

Both contain four things; the tree of life as the center of God's eternal economy, the river flowing to reach the four directions of the earth, three kinds of precious materials, and a couple. What is revealed in these two parts of the Scriptures is the central line of the divine revelation of the entire Holy Scriptures and should be a controlling principle of the interpreting and understanding of the Holy Scriptures.

III. Conclusion :

The Lord's recovery is for the preparation of the bride of Christ, who is composed of all the overcomers. The overcomers will be with Christ together composed of a stone which was cut out without hands to crush in the great human image which signified the totality of human government. This is a spiritual warfare. We need to love the Lord with our best love to become His duplication for preparing the bride. We also need to grow in life unto maturity; we can not be alone and must be in the body, being corporate to prepare the wedding garment and let Him infuse us with His elements in manifesting His beauty. Last, be prepared to face all spiritual fightings, becoming Christ's warriors.