

Guidelines for the Exercise of the Lord's Day Prophesying
Message Four : The Nature of the Church

I. Overview :

The church is divine and "Christly"; which has the nature of God and the element of Christ. Also the church is "resurrectionly" and heavenly; which is an entity absolutely in resurrection and is under God's authority. We need to be watchful and faithful in preserving the nature of the church, and should not let its nature changed. The mingling of God and man is an intrinsic union of the elements of divinity and humanity to form one organic entity. This mingling is the constitution of the Body of Christ; for the church life, we need to see a vision of the mingled spirit.

II. Truth and Enlightenment :

Day 1 --

A. How to explain the nature of the church using "Adam and Eve"?

Just as the nature of Eve is Adam, so also the nature of the church is Christ. Eve was built from a part taken out of Adam's body. As a result, her nature was not only the same as that of Adam; she was Adam. Eve was not only the same as Adam; she was Adam. Eve was Adam, and the church is Christ.

B. How to explain the nature of the church being resurrection?

After Christ terminated the entire old creation through His all-inclusive death, the church was produced in His resurrection (1 Pet. 1:3; Eph. 2:6). The church is an entity absolutely in resurrection; it is not natural, nor is it of the old creation. The church is a new creation created in Christ's resurrection and by the resurrected Christ.

Day 2 --

A. Explain the principle of resurrection in the Bible becoming precious.

The Lord Jesus cannot be held by death. Death has no strength to hold Him. This is resurrection. His life can endure death. God sees the church as a being that can endure death. The gates of Hades are open to the church, but the gates of Hades cannot prevail against her and cannot confine her; thus, the nature of the church is resurrection.

B. How to experience the death and resurrection in our own lives?

Resurrection does not fear death; suffering only proves that one can endure death. Even in our own lives, there are many occasions like this. When we encounter trials and temptations, prayer may cease and it may become difficult to read the Word. The brothers all say that this time we are finished, but not long after, we rise, and the life of God comes forth from us again.

Day 3 --

A. What is the significance of the church being heavenly?

The church is under God's authority; the nature of the church is to submit to God's authority. Heaven as spoken of in the Bible, strongly implies submission to

God's authority. In order to submit to God's authority, His creatures must have the nature of heaven. They must be heavenly. Wherever heaven is, God's authority is there.

B. How can we be saved, as the earthy people?

All earthy people are rebellious toward God. Everything earthy is the serpent's food, that is, something for Satan to devour. However, now there is salvation; that is, heaven has come to earth through the Lord's incarnation. Moreover, in His resurrection the Lord has brought people from the earth to the heavens. He has caused those who would not and could not submit to God's authority to be willing and able to submit to God's authority.

Day 4 --

A. What is the significance of that the church should be like an herb to produce food, but it became a tree?

The church, according to its heavenly and spiritual nature, should be like the mustard, sojourning on the earth. But with its nature changed, the church became deeply rooted and settled in the earth as a tree, flourishing with its enterprises as the branches to lodge many evil persons and things. This has formed the outward organization of the outward appearance of the kingdom of the heavens.

B. What is the relationship between God's economy and Matthew 13?

In His economy, God intends that His children be like wheat or mustard, the smaller and the more tender, the better. The church people must be annuals, not perennials. We should not be rooted deeply into the earth for a long period of time, for the Lord's intention is that we be sojourners on earth. As long as we are annuals like wheat and herbs, we shall afford others excellent food for their nourishment and satisfaction.

Day 5 --

A. Why to say the story of Bethlehem being God mingling with man?

Four thousand years after creation, a man was born in Bethlehem; this man was named Jesus, and He was also called Emmanuel. He was God mingled with man. From that time onward a person with two natures was present in the universe. He was the mingling of the Creator with a creature and a creature with the Creator. This is the story of the incarnation in Bethlehem.

B. Why is the church the Christ, the enlargement of the God-man?

The church is the enlargement of Christ, the God-man. On the day of Pentecost, those in the church were uneducated, insignificant men, but we can see that they were mingled with the almighty God. When Peter and the eleven apostles stood up to speak, although it was Peter's voice, God was speaking.

Day 6 --

A. What is the focus of the divine economy?

The divine Spirit mingles with our spirit. Thus, the two spirits are one. Praise the Lord that these two spirits have been mingled into one spirit. Actually, to walk according to the spirit means to walk according to both the divine Spirit and the human spirit, according to the two spirits mingled as one. The two spirits are mingled not in the heavens or outside of us but within us.

B. Why can Christian life be on the highest level?

Those who live according to the flesh and the lusts of the flesh are the lowest type of people. Those who live according to the mind and the will are somewhat higher. Those who live according to the conscience may be considered the highest type of people. But we are even higher than this, for we live according to the mingled spirit. Therefore, we are on the highest level.

III. Conclusion :

The church's conditions differ from its nature that the former is subject to change, alter and the latter has never changed. When Paul wrote the letter to the church in Corinth, he knew that there are many problems of eleven items there, but he discerned with God's eternal view that the church is of God, Christly, resurrectionly, and heavenly. We should be watchful and faithful in preserving the nature of the church, and not allow it becomes the abnormal development of the outward appearance of the kingdom of the mustard becoming a big tree. And we must continue steadfastly in the teaching of the apostles to enter into the speaking of seven feasts in the Ministry that all of the saints may be constituted with truth and keep living in the principle of life.