

Guidelines for the Exercise of the Lord's Day prophesying

Message Twenty : Being Measured by God's Building

I. Overview :

The entire Bible is a book of building; the main subject of the Bible is the building of God. The book of Ezekiel begins with a vision of the appearance of the glory of the Lord and ends with a vision of the holy building of God; this indicates that the glory of the Lord, the judgment of God, and the recovery of the Lord are all for the holy building of God. According to the prophecy in typology in 2 Samuel 7, Christ is both the One who builds the church and the element with which the church is built. The Lord instructed Ezekiel to describe God's house to God's people so that they would be measured by the house and be ashamed of their iniquities. The Body life is the greatest test of our spirituality; if we cannot pass the test of the Body life, our spirituality is not genuine.

II. Truth and Enlightenment :

Day 1 --

A. Why do we say that God's eternal purpose is to have a building?

The three previous sections of Ezekiel are for the last section; that is, the glory of the Lord, the judgment of God, and the recovery of the Lord are all for the holy building of God. We may even say that the issue of the glory of the Lord, the judgment of God, and the recovery of the Lord is the building of God. God's eternal purpose is to have a building.

B. What revelation did we get from 2 Samuel 7 in serving the Lord?

David wanted to build God's house, but in this chapter God wanted David to realize that he needed God to build Christ into him. There is no need for us to build something for God. We simply are not able to do this. We need God to build up Christ into our intrinsic constitution so that our entire being will be reconstituted with Christ.

Day 2 --

A. Explain that Christ is building Himself into us in Ephesians 3:17.

Here Paul says that Christ is making His home in our hearts. This is building. What is of crucial importance today is the question concerning how much of Christ has been built into us. How much has Christ been built not only into your spirit but into your heart in order to make His home there? Everyday our hearts are filled with other things, as a result, Christ is imprisoned in our spirit.

B. How does God carry out His building work within us?

God is working Himself in Christ into us to make a house not only for us but to us. This house will be both God's house and our house, a mutual abode. Actually all our problems today are due to one thing, that is, our shortage of having God in Christ built into our being. Thus, our need today is for God to carry out His building work within us.

Day 3 --

A. Why does God charge Ezekiel to show His house to the people?

The Lord did not charge Ezekiel to teach God's people the law and the Ten Commandments as He had charged Moses. Rather, He told Ezekiel to show God's house to the people. Here the Lord seemed to be saying, "From now on, it is a matter not of the dispensation of the law but of the dispensation of My house. Simply to keep the law is not good enough. You have to keep the form, the fashion, the ordinances, the statutes, the laws, the comings in, and the goings out related to the house.

B. Why do people feel ashamed of their iniquities?

The temple of God is a pattern, and if the people would examine themselves in light of this pattern, they would know their shortcomings. It was God's intention to check the living and conduct of the people of Israel by His house, His habitation, as a rule and pattern. The living of the people of God must match the temple of God. Showing the temple to God's people exposes their sins and shortcomings and causes them to be ashamed of their iniquities.

Day 4 --

A. How to be measured by God's building in cherubim and palm trees?

As one who is in the church life, do you have the image of Christ? Do you express the glory of Christ and the victory of Christ? Have you experienced God's "carving"? Do you have any wounds or scars which testify that God has been carving you? If we are measured by the temple in this way, we may realize that we are still "smooth wood," wood that does not have cherubim and palm trees carved into it.

B. Are we independent pieces of wood/Have been built into a building?

In the building there are no independent pieces. Every piece of material has been built in. Every piece is related to others, and no piece is independent. What about you? Are you independent? Have you been built into the building? You may say that you like this and not that, but the question is not what you like or don't like but whether or not you fit into the building, into the church.

Day 5 --

A. What are the two points summed up by the law of the house?

The house must be upon the top of the mountain, and it must be most holy. To be on the mountain is to be in resurrection and in the position of ascension. This indicates that the church life must be high, on the top of the mountain. The church must also be holy, separated, and sanctified from anything worldly. Height is the position of the church, and sanctification is the nature of the church.

B. Why do we say that the requirement of the indwelling Christ is not according to the law but according to His house?

Everyone must be measured and checked according to the measurement of God's house. We are not under the dispensation of the law; we are under the dispensation of the house. This is the age of the church. What we are and what we do cannot fit into the church life, it amounts to nothing in the sight of God and may even be an abomination to Him, a kind of whoredom.

Day 6 --

A. Why should we be like bees, not like butterflies in the body life?

Some Christians are like butterflies; they act independently. Others are like bees; they live and move together. The butterfly lives and works individually, but the bee has a body-consciousness. We should all be like bees, having the consciousness of the Body so that we can live together with other members in the Body of Christ.

B. How crucial is it to have spiritual seeing?

Wherever there is Body-revelation, there is Body-consciousness, and wherever there is Body-consciousness, individual thought and action are automatically ruled out. Seeing Christ results in deliverance from sin; seeing the Body results in deliverance from individualism.

III. Conclusion :

The Lord instructed Ezekiel to describe God's house to God's people so that they would be measured by the house and be ashamed of their iniquities. We, in the church life, always concern whether we are spiritual or not and pay much attention to the matter of number increasing, but God cares more about measuring His people by the temple. For example, in the temple the number six is used many times. This indicates that we need to check our humanity by the building and take the humanity of the Lord Jesus as our humanity. Yet another example of being measured by God's building involves the cherubim and the palm trees. If we are measured by the cherubim and palm trees carved into the walls, we will experience God's "carving". Do you have any wounds or scars which testify that God has been carving you? In the light of building up we may see how independent and individual we are! In everyday's morning revival, let us learn to put ourselves aside all the time to mingle with others in order to bring in genuine building.