

Guidelines for the Exercise of the Lord's day Prophesying

Message Five : Laboring according to God's Operation to Present Every Believer Full-grown in Christ for the Function and Consummation of the One New Man

I. Overview:

Ephesians 2:15 mentions that the new man has been created; Ephesians 4:13 talks about that the new man needs to grow up until arriving at a full-grown man, at the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. We need to grow up into Christ, the Head, in all things, that is to have Christ increase in us. In 4:13-16 we see the perfecting of the new man in relation to his function. The organically perfect new man needs to be perfected through the growth of life in order to function in a proper way. Colossians 1:28-29 reveals the practical existence of the one new man, we need to labor and struggle to present all the saints full-grown in Christ. When the one new man was created in our spirit through regeneration, it was complete as far as organs are concerned; however, because the new man has not yet been completed in function, there is the need for growth and renewing. The growth of the new man results in the function of the new man. We may have a foretaste of the consummation of the one new man by setting our mind on the things above and by giving a free way for the new man in our spirit to spread into our whole being.

II. Truth and Enlightenment:

Day 1 —

A. Expound we need to proceed to the oneness in practicality until arriving at a full-grown man.

A full-grown man is a mature man. Maturity in life is needed for the practical oneness. The fullness of Christ is the Body of Christ, which has a stature with a measure. To arrive at the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ is necessary for the practical oneness. Hence, we should proceed from the oneness in reality to the oneness in practicality.

B. Explain how to reach the building up of the church.

The details of the building up of the church are found in 4:16. The saints need to be perfected by the gifts given to the Body by the Head. By growing up into the Head, the members of the Body have something to share with one another. Furthermore, there will be the operation in the measure of each part, and the result will be the growth of the Body unto the building up of itself in love.

Day 2 —

A. Explain to be no longer little children needing to grow up into Christ.

By holding to truth in love we grow up into Christ in all things. To be no longer little children we need to grow up into Christ. This is to have Christ increase in us in all things until we attain to a full-grown man. We grow by caring only for Christ and the church. We should grow up into Christ, not up into ourselves or into something else apart from Christ.

B. Why is that our growth must be in the Body?

We are to grow up into the One who is the Head. This indicates that our growth must be in the Body. In order to grow into the Head, we must surely be in the Body. Many Christians are apparently growing spiritually; however, their supposed growth is not in the Body. We are to grow up into the Head, that can take place only in the Body.

Day 3 —

A. Take Colossians 2:19 to explain something proceeds out from the Head to causes the Body to grow.

As we enjoy Christ and hold Him as the Head, we absorb His riches. According to Colossians 2:19, something proceeds out from the Head which causes the Body to grow with the growth of God. When we enjoy Christ in the heavens and in our spirit, we hold the Head and absorb His riches. Then out from the Head something will proceed to produce the growth of God in us to make the Body grow.

B. Explain the work of assimilation being a good illustration of dispensing.

Immediately after eating, the fine work of dispensing begins in order to dispense the food into the cells, fibers, and tissues of our being. In the same way, the dispensing of the Triune God is to make the Triune God the very constitution of our being. This fine work of dispensing continues day by day and will be finalized when the sealing ink of the Spirit permeates our entire body. This will be the redemption of our body.

Day 4 —

A. Explain the difference between something that is perfect organically and something that is perfect functionally. At birth, an infant is perfect organically; that is, the infant has all the necessary organs. However, a child is not functionally perfect at birth. In order to develop properly and to function normally, every child needs to be nourished and cherished. This principle also applies to the church as the new man.

B. Expound the new man can be perfect in his functions only through receiving the proper nourishment. Through the growth spoken of in chapter 4, the new man comes into function. Through the operation in the measure of each part, the Body grows unto the building up of itself in love. The creation of the new man was the responsibility of the Lord alone. But we must fulfill our responsibility to perfect the new man through nourishing and cherishing.

Day 5 —

A. Expound that our aim in preaching the gospel should be to present others mature in Christ. As we preach the gospel to unbelievers, minister Christ to them, and help them to receive the Lord, our goal is not merely that they should be saved from the lake of fire and from God's condemnation. Our goal is not only for them to experience God's forgiveness; it is to minister Christ into them so that they may eventually be presented full-grown in Christ.

B. Why is it a very difficult task to present others full-grown in Christ? This task can be accomplished only by struggling according to Christ's operation. In presenting others full-grown in Christ we need to follow the principle set up in Genesis 2; man tills the ground, and God sends the rain. As we trust in God and look to Him for the rain, we should be faithful in our responsibility to till the ground. This means that we must fulfill the principle ordained by God. We should not merely pray, but also labor.

Day 6 —

A. Explain that migration is not a movement, but is the move of the one new man. It is the move of Christ, the heavenly Solomon, in His palanquin. If the Lord is to move among us in such a way, we should not function in an individualistic way. Rather, we should function in the Body in the way of coordination. In order to function in this way, we need to experience Christ and to grow in Him.

B. Expound the thought of Paul's word concerning the perfecting of the saints. God's intention is to have every believer able to do the things that the gifted persons do. In today's Christianity, a certain group of people is a clerical class, who annuls the spiritual, organic function of all the believers. There is a capacity in the divine life that the believers possess, and this capacity needs to be developed unto their ability. For the function to be developed, there is the need for the growth of life and practice.

III. Conclusion:

In Colossians 1:28-29 Paul saw the producing of the new man. In experience, we must take Christ as our person; in service, we should labor on people and present every man full-grown in Christ. In this message Brother James Lee mentioned the great revival of the church in Yantai in 1943. On the one hand, it was the work of the Holy Spirit, and on the other hand, it was the result of Brother Lee's three years laboring in service with a blueprint of the building from Brother Nee. For thirteen hours a day, he had worked with much laboring, hired a chef to cook, invited saints to dine, and transmitted his burdens to them so that the organic functions of the saints were inspired. It is a great way to change the heart of the heart, to make the heart of the heart useful, to lead the saints to go from house to house visit, and this great revival has a great deal to do with labor and struggle. It is a great way to change the cold heart into the warm heart, to make the warm heart more useful, to lead the saints to go visiting from house to house, and this great revival has a great deal to do with labor and struggle.