

Guidelines for the Exercise of the Lord's day Prophesying Message Four : Living the Kingdom Life by Taking Care of Others according to the Spirit

I. Overview:

Matthew 7 concerns the principles of the kingdom people in dealing with others and reveals that the kingdom people requires that they take care of others according to the spirit, living in a humble spirit, and always judge themselves, not others. We should not give that which is holy to the dogs or cast our pearls before the hogs, lest they trample them with their feet and turn and tear us. As we are contacting people and dealing with them, we must ask, seek, and knock for the proper way to contact them. In order to live the kingdom life, we must be humble and not despise any believer but love our brother and forgive our brother. We must see and realize that in the kingdom of God there are five kinds of forgiveness: eternal forgiveness, instrumental forgiveness, restorative forgiveness, governmental forgiveness, and kingdom forgiveness.

II. Truth and Enlightenment:

Day 1 —

A. Explain the basic principle hidden in Matthew 7:1-12.

It is that we must forget ourselves and take care of others. Do you know why you criticize others and judge them? It is because you think of yourself too much. You neglect the feelings of others and do not care for them. If we center around ourselves and ignore the feelings of others, we shall criticize them. But if we take care of others, we shall not judge them.

B. How do you look at the beam in your eye bigger than the splinter in our brother's.

As the kingdom people, living in a humble spirit under the heavenly ruling of the kingdom, we must consider the log, the beam, in our own eye whenever we look at the splinter in our brother's eye. As long as the beam remains in our eye, our sight is blurred, and we cannot see clearly. In pointing out a brother's fault, we must realize that we have a greater fault.

Day 2 —

A. Explain you do not give the holy things to dogs, nor cast your pearls before hogs.

When you are about to give something holy to others, you must consider those you are speaking to. When you talk to others about the holy things, or the truths, and the pearls, or the experiences, you must observe the basic principle of taking care of others. You must determine whether people can receive what you intend to share and do not speak according to your feelings or desires; rather, speak to them according to their capacity to receive what you have to say.

B. How do we have the wisdom to contact people with a proper way?

We must look to the heavenly Father as we are dealing with others. We must ask Him, seek Him, and knock for Him. Sometimes simply asking will not be adequate. We must seek and even knock. This indicates that contacting people is a serious matter. Never think that it is an insignificant thing. Rather, we must do so by taking care of others. We must ask for a way, seek after a way, and even knock at the heavenly door for a way.

Day 3 —

A. Explain in Matthew 7, what the principle with the proper way to contact people is. The best way for the kingdom people to contact others is according to the kingdom and according to the Holy Spirit. As we deal with others, we must ask, seek, and knock. Eventually, we shall receive the guidance to deal with people according to the kingdom and the Spirit. Thus, the principle for our contact with others is the kingdom and the Spirit. If our contact with others is based upon this principle, we shall not make mistakes.

B. What are the four crucial points we must keep in mind concerning the spiritual and divine things for the church?

First, we must go through the cross. Our native flavor should be crossed out by Christ. Both the Americans and the Chinese should be crossed out. In the church there is room for no natural person, but Christ is all and in all. On the cross both the Jews and the Gentiles were crossed out. Second, everything should be by the Spirit. Third, this is to dispense Christ to others. Fourth, everything is for the building up of the church.

Day 4 —

A. Expound the meaning and application of forgiveness according to the Bible.

According to the Bible, to forgive is to forget. How difficult it is to forget an offense against us! Without the Lord's mercy and grace, we would remember others' offenses. But when God forgives, our Father in heaven considers us as if we have never sinned, for He has forgiven and forgotten our sins. Genuine forgiveness means that we forget the offense.

B. What results do we get if we do not forgive a brother from our heart?

How small is a brother's sin against us or any brother's debt to us compared to our debt to the Lord! If we do not forgive the brother who sins against us, it will grieve the other brothers, and they may bring this matter to the Lord. If we do not forgive the brother who sins against us, we shall be disciplined by the Lord until we forgive him from the heart; this implies that if we do not forgive a brother from our heart today, we shall not be allowed to enter into the kingdom in the coming age.

Day 5 —

A. Expound forgiveness concerning our salvation called God's eternal forgiveness. This is the forgiveness spoken of by the Lord Jesus in Luke 24:47: "That repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem." This forgiveness is called eternal forgiveness because once God forgives our sins, He forgives them eternally. This is the forgiveness we obtained at the time we were saved. The moment we believe in the Lord Jesus, we are forgiven of all our sins; the Lord removes all of our sins.

B. What is instrumental forgiveness? Explain in illustration

John 20:22-23, the Lord charged the church to be His representative on earth in sending the Holy Spirit to His church. The church has become His vessel. Forgiveness is now granted through the church. This is called instrumental forgiveness. The church has such authority because it is under the authority of the Holy Spirit. In this forgiveness God forgives men through the church; the church acts as His channel.

Day 6 —

A. Explain what governmental forgiveness is.

When we sin against God, God will forgive us when we confess our sins to Him. However, we cannot stop Him from using other methods to discipline us. God will forgive us, and our fellowship with Him can be restored, but He may change His way with us. Governmental forgiveness is related to the way God manages, rules over, and deals with us.

B. Explain God's governmental hand with the example of David's sins.

David committed two sins: adultery and murder. David confessed his sins and felt the shame, the defilement, and the offense that he had committed against God. His fellowship with God was restored after his confession in Psalm 51. God had already put away David's sins, but He would cause the son born to Uriah's wife to die and the sword not to depart from his house. This is God's governmental hand.

III. Conclusion:

We must see and realize that in the kingdom of God there are five kinds of forgiveness: eternal forgiveness, instrumental forgiveness, restorative forgiveness, governmental forgiveness, and kingdom forgiveness. Among all of five the most crucial and sober one is Governmental forgiveness, because this kind of forgiveness involves God's arrangement, sovereignty, discipline, and hand. Through the examples of David and Moses, we are also alerted and reminded. In the church life, learn to be kind, loving, and generous to your brothers and learn always to forgive. If you keep complaining about the conduct of others and continue to count the ill treatment you receive from them, please bear in mind that this will bring you into God's governmental hand. Stop all idle talk and criticism. When others are in trouble, it is the time for us to help them, not the time for us to criticize them. We must be generous toward others if we want to avoid God's governmental hand! May we learn to love and forbear one another.