

Guidelines for the Exercise of the Lord's day Prophesying
Message One : The intrinsic significance of the experience of Christ

I. Overview:

The experience of Christ is a mystery. God is a mystery, Christ is the mystery of God, and the church is the mystery of Christ; hence, the church is actually a mystery within a mystery. In the midst of suffering, we should simply love the Lord and experience Him; then we will magnify Christ, expressing Him as the One who is unlimited; it is a joy to magnify Christ through suffering. Philippians unveils that the experience of Christ is our fellowship unto the furtherance of the gospel until the Lord Jesus comes back. The more fellowship we have in the furtherance of the gospel, the more Christ we experience and enjoy; this kills our self, ambition, preference, and choice. Philippians is a book not only on the experience of Christ but also on the enjoyment of Christ; if you do not have much enjoyment of Christ, it indicates that you are not one in soul, joined in soul. If we think the one thing, immediately the enjoyment of Christ will be our portion.

II. Truth and Enlightenment:

Day 1 —

A. Why do we say that our Christian living is a mystery?

Our Christian love and humility are also mysterious. Whatever we live out from within us should be mysterious. Although human love is limited, the proper love lived out by a Christian is unlimited. Hence, it is a mystery. We Christians need to live out a patience that is unlimited. This is a mystery; it causes others to wonder how we can be so patient.

B. Why is human love limited as Christ is unlimited?

If we live by Christ in any matter, that matter will be unlimited. If we love others with our own love, we will discover that eventually our love will be exhausted. Although we may be exhausted, Christ is never exhausted. The more love we require, the more love He affords to meet our requirements.

Day 2 —

A. Expound whatever of Christ we live out is also a mystery.

We all are mysterious because Christ lives in us. For example, we may speak by Christ, but our speaking by Christ is a mystery. Although it is a mystery, it is nonetheless a fact. What we are experiencing of Christ today is a mystery. Day by day our living is mysterious. The sum total of all these mysteries is the church life. This mystery manifests the One who is unlimited.

B. Explain that our forgiveness of others needs to be a magnification of Christ.

In Matthew 18 Peter asked the Lord how many times he should forgive his brother. He asked if he should forgive him even seven times. But the Lord told him that he must forgive seventy times seven. This is inexhaustible forgiveness. Such forgiveness is the magnification of Christ. Our forgiveness is the inexhaustible Christ Himself. This unlimited forgiveness is Christ magnified in us.

Day 3 —

A. Why is the experience of Christ the fellowship unto the gospel until the Lord Jesus comes back?

From the time we are saved until the time the Lord Jesus comes back, our Christian life should be a gospel-preaching life. Our living should be our preaching; our life is primarily a gospel-preaching life. Whether I speak or remain silent, my life, my living, my being, and my entire person are a preaching of Christ.

B. Why should our gospel-preaching life not be individualistic rather be corporate?

This is the reason that in the preaching of the gospel we have fellowship. The Greek word rendered "fellowship" means communication, mutual interchange. Either Christians do not preach the gospel or they preach it individualistically, not corporately. Because there is no fellowship unto the gospel, there is no experience of Christ.

Day 4 —

A. How can we have one spirit and one soul?

This is not possible by our spirit, for our spirit is a spirit of envy. When we see others taking the lead, we are envious. Then we begin to strive in the spirit of rivalry. To be one in spirit and in soul is possible only in the Spirit of Jesus; we will have the experience of Christ and be one spirit and one soul with others. Then we will strive together for the gospel and that we are not individualistic but corporate.

B. Are all the members in one spirit with one soul, this will be convincing and attractive to others?

When we have such a subduing and convincing oneness, we will experience Christ and enjoy Him. We will enjoy Christ by being in one spirit with one soul. By preaching the gospel we express our oneness in spirit and in soul. When we preach the gospel in this way, we have the enjoyment of Christ. The more we preach like this, the more we enjoy Christ.

Day 5 —

A. Explain a distinction between the experience of Christ and the enjoyment of Christ.

The experience of Christ is a matter primarily in our spirit, but the enjoyment of Christ is in our soul. Sometimes parents force their children to eat certain foods. Although the children may eat out of the fear of being disciplined, they do not enjoy the food they are eating. Sometimes we experience Christ not in the way of enjoyment. Thus, we can have the experience of Christ without the enjoyment of Christ. The problem here is with our soul.

B. Explain that many lose the enjoyment of Christ is the problem they have in the soul.

The young people may be very active in preaching the gospel on the campuses, but all this may become merely the carrying out of a duty. There may not be much enjoyment of Christ. If you do not have much enjoyment of Christ, it indicates that you are not one in soul. The reason Euodias and Syntyche were not one was that they had a problem in the soul. They were not thinking the same thing.

Day 6 —

A. Explain Paul in Philippians 2 was encouraging the saints to think the one thing.

The one thing is not merely the objective Christ but the subjective experience of Christ as our enjoyment for the church life. This one thing should occupy our mind all the time. We should constantly be thinking about how to experience Christ as our rich enjoyment so that we may have the proper church life. The Body life is the issue of the experience and enjoyment of Christ.

B. Expound that we are disobedient and rebellious whenever we think other things.

To think something other than the one thing is to rebel against God's economy. God's economy is that we think the one thing. Has a certain brother offended you? You should not think about that offense, for God's economy does not allow you to do so. If you think about the offense, you rebel against God. This is a serious matter. Murmuring is also rebellious.

III. Conclusion:

Our Christian living is not a living of religion, rather it is a living of the experience of Christ and the enjoyment of Christ; whenever we enjoy and experience of Christ, there will be an issue of the fellowship unto the furtherance of the gospel. Paul charges the saints in Philippi to conduct themselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, which is to stand firm in one spirit, with one soul striving together along with the faith of the gospel. When all the members in the church are in one spirit with one soul, this oneness will be convincing, subduing, and attractive, and we will experience Christ and enjoy Him. Among the Philippians there was dissension in their thinking, which troubled the apostle; hence, he asked them to think the same thing, even the same one thing, that they might make his joy full. To experience Christ with enjoyment, we need to be in one spirit with one soul; in order to enjoy Christ, we need to have a proper soul that is one with the souls of other saints.