

Week Seven

Christ—the True Prophet Typified by Moses

MC Hymns: 193 (stanzas 1-3, 8)

Scripture Reading: Deut. 18:15-19; Acts 3:22-23

Outline

Day 1

- I. **Prophets are God's spokesmen—Deut. 18:15; Amos 3:7; Isa. 6:1-8:**
 - A. **The function of the prophets is to speak for God—1 Cor. 14:31; 2 Tim. 4:2.**
 - B. **According to the Bible, the main function of a prophet is not to predict things that are coming but to speak for God and to speak forth God by God's revelation—Amos 3:7; Exo. 4:10-16.**
 - C. **God, who is a speaking God, spoke in the Old Testament to people in many portions and in many ways in the prophets—Heb. 1:1:**
 1. God is hidden, but through the speaking of the prophets, God Himself and His intention are made known—Isa. 45:15, 19; 1:1-2a; 6:1-8.
 2. Prophets receive God's revelation directly and are borne by the Spirit of God to speak for God and speak forth God—2 Pet. 1:20-21:
 - a. No prophecy was ever borne by the will of man—v. 21.
 - b. Man's will, desire, and wish, with his thought and exposition, were not the source from which any prophecy came.
 - c. The source was God, by whose Holy Spirit men were borne, as a ship is borne by the wind, to speak out the will, desire, and wish of God.
 - d. No prophecy of Scripture is of the prophet's or the writer's exposition, for no prophecy was ever borne, or carried along, by the will of man; rather, men spoke from God while being borne by the Spirit—vv. 20-21.

- D. A false prophet is one who speaks a word presumptuously in God's name, which God did not command him to speak—Deut. 18:20-22.**

Day 2

II. Moses was a prophet, and as a prophet, he typifies Christ—v. 15:

- A. In his forty years of leading the children of Israel, Moses continually spoke to them for God; especially in Deuteronomy, Moses repeatedly spoke God's words to the children of Israel—1:1, 9-11, 18; 4:1-2; 5:11; 6:1-9.**
- B. Moses, as the spokesman of God, was like an aged, loving father speaking to his children with much love and concern—30:1-14:**
1. Although it was Moses who spoke, he did not speak his own words; he spoke God's words—32:1-47.
 2. He spoke for God, spoke forth God, and spoke God into the children of Israel—11:8-25.
- C. Moses was a person not only soaked and saturated with the thought of God but also constituted with the speaking God Himself; therefore, the word that proceeded out of his mouth was the word of God spoken through this one spokesman—Exo. 34:29-35; Num. 12:6-8:**
1. For forty years Moses served as God's spokesman, speaking for God, speaking forth God, and predicting; every word that he spoke became God's word—Deut. 10:12-22.
 2. He predicted that the children of Israel would forsake God and be cast by God into all the nations but that when they would repent and turn to God, He would gather them from the nations—29:25-28; 30:1-3.
 3. As such a prophet, Moses is a type of Christ—Acts 3:22-23.
 4. Moses spoke to the children of Israel all that God had commanded him to speak; likewise, the Lord Jesus spoke all that the Father commanded Him to speak—John 12:49-50.

Day 3

III. The Old Testament prophet Moses prophesied, saying, “A Prophet will Jehovah your God raise up for you from your midst, from among your brothers, like me; you shall listen to Him”—Deut. 18:15:

A. Jehovah would put His words in the mouth of the Prophet, who would speak all that God commanded Him—v. 18b.

B. The Prophet raised up by God would be according to all that the children of Israel asked of Jehovah their God at Horeb—vv. 16-17:

1. They had told Moses that they could not bear to hear God’s voice—5:22-28; Exo. 20:18-19.
2. Because they wanted a prophet, Moses promised that God would fulfill their desire for a prophet.

C. Moses prophesied that Jehovah would raise up a Prophet from their midst, from among their brothers—Deut. 18:15, 18a:

1. This indicates that God would raise up this Prophet through the incarnation of Christ to speak the word of God—John 1:14; 3:34; 7:16-17; Heb. 1:2a.
2. From the midst of their brothers (Deut. 18:18a) indicates that Christ as the coming Prophet would be human as well as divine—John 1:1, 14; Rom. 8:3:
 - a. If Christ were merely God, He could not have been raised up from among the Israelites—Luke 1:31, 35.
 - b. As God, Christ could not be from among the Jews as a brother, but as the incarnated One, the One who put on human nature and was a Jew, Christ was from among His brothers.
 - c. As the incarnated God, Christ put on human nature and became a Jew; thus, He is the Prophet raised up “from your midst,” as prophesied by Moses—Deut. 18:15, 18.
3. Acts 3:22-23 applies Deuteronomy 18:15-19 to Christ, who is God incarnated to be a man, indicating that Christ is the Prophet promised by God to His people, the children of Israel.

IV. In His first coming, Christ ministered as the Prophet raised up by God—Acts 3:22-23; 7:37:

A. Through incarnation Christ became the Prophet to speak the

word of God—John 3:34.

- B. Christ is the Word of God and the speaking of God—1:1; Rev. 19:13; Heb. 1:2a:**
 - 1. When Christ was on the earth speaking for God and teaching people, His teaching was not His own but was according to what the Father had taught Him—John 7:16; 8:28b.
 - 2. He did not speak from Himself; as the Father spoke to Him, so He spoke—12:49-50.
 - 3. As God's Prophet, Christ spoke for God, spoke forth God, and revealed God to the disciples—Matt. 11:27.
- C. During His earthly ministry, Christ also prophesied, predicted, by declaring the things that are coming—John 16:12-13; Matt. 24:2—25:46.**
- D. Today Christ as the Prophet is in us still speaking for God to reveal God and speaking God into people—Rom. 8:10; 2 Cor. 13:5; Col. 1:27.**

Day 4

- V. As a prophet typifying Christ as the true Prophet, Moses might have spoken something of his own feeling, but even this became the word of God; his speaking in Deuteronomy was like Paul's speaking in 1 Corinthians 7:**
 - A. Because Paul was a man constituted with God, his opinion became a part of God's word as the divine revelation in the New Testament:**
 - 1. In his speaking, Paul was one with God; therefore, what he spoke was God's speaking—6:17; 7:25.
 - 2. The principle is the same with Moses' speaking in Deuteronomy.
 - B. First Corinthians 7 conveys the spirit of a person who loves the Lord, who cares for the Lord's interests on earth, who is absolutely for the Lord and one with the Lord, and who in every respect is obedient, submissive, and satisfied with God and the circumstances arranged by Him.**

Day 5 & Day 6

C. Because Paul was one with the Lord, when he spoke, the Lord spoke with him; thus, in 1 Corinthians 7 we have an example of the New Testament principle of incarnation—vv. 10, 12, 25, 40:

1. The principle of incarnation is that God enters into man and mingles Himself with man to make man one with Himself; thus, God is in man, and man is in God—John 15:4-5.
2. In the New Testament the Lord becomes one with His apostles, and they become one with Him and speak together with Him; thus, His word becomes their word, and whatever they utter is His word—1 Cor. 2:12-13.
3. The principle in 1 Corinthians 7:10 is the same as that in Galatians 2:20, the principle of incarnation—two persons living as one person.
4. In 1 Corinthians 7:25 and 40 we see the highest spirituality—the spirituality of a person who is so one with the Lord and permeated with Him that even his opinion expresses the Lord's mind.
5. If we are saturated with the Spirit, what we express will be our thought, but it will also be something of the Lord because we are one with Him; this is the experience of Christ as the Prophet living in us to speak for God and to speak forth God—6:17.

WEEK 7 — DAY 1

Morning Nourishment

Amos 3:7 Surely the Lord Jehovah will not do anything unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets.

2 Pet. 1:20-21 Knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of one's own interpretation; for no prophecy was ever borne by the will of man, but men spoke from God while being borne by the Holy Spirit.

Prophets are God's spokesmen. They speak for God and speak forth God; sometimes they also predict. According to the Bible, the main function of a prophet is not to predict the things to come but to speak for God. For example, in Exodus 3 and 4 when Moses was called by God, he told God that he was slow of speech and of a slow tongue (4:10). So God gave Aaron to Moses to be his prophet (4:14-16; 7:1). Aaron did not predict for Moses; rather, he spoke for him. In the whole Bible, to prophesy is mainly to speak for God and to speak forth God; sometimes it is also to predict. To predict, however, is secondary. This is the proper meaning of prophesying in the Bible. (Truth Lessons—Level One, vol. 2, p. 19)

Today's Reading

[In 2 Peter 1:20] one's refers to the prophet who spoke the prophecy or the writer who wrote the prophecy. Literally, the Greek word for interpretation means loosening, untying; hence, disclosure, exposition, solution. One's own interpretation means the prophet's or writer's own exposition or solution, which is not inspired by God through the Holy Spirit. Peter's thought here is that no prophecy of Scripture is of the prophet's or writer's own concept, idea, or understanding; that no prophecy comes from that source, the source of man; that no prophecy originates from the private and personal thought of any prophet or writer. This is confirmed and explained by the following verse.

For [in verse 21] gives the explanation of the preceding verse. No prophecy of Scripture is of the prophet's or writer's solution, for no

prophecy was ever borne or carried along by the will of man, but men spoke from God, being borne by the Holy Spirit.

The Greek word translated “borne” also means carried along. The same word is used in verses 17 and 18. No prophecy was ever carried along by the will of man. Man’s will, desire, and wish, with his thought and solution, are not the source from which any prophecy came. The source is God, by whose Holy Spirit men were carried along, as a ship by the wind, to speak out the will, desire, and wish of God.

Because the prophets were carried along by the Holy Spirit, what they uttered was not of their own interpretation or will. On the contrary, what they spoke was the will of God, the concept of God uttered by a prophet who was carried along by the Holy Spirit.

Verses 20 and 21 prove that the prophetic word is altogether reliable and trustworthy. The prophecy in the Scriptures did not come from man’s opinion. This prophecy is God’s word, God’s speaking. For this reason, we should believe whatever is prophesied in the Old Testament. Peter seems to be saying here, “The prophecy in the Bible is genuinely of God. Therefore, it is trustworthy. Do not listen to the heretical teachings of the apostates, of those who have deviated from the track of divine truth. Instead, you should give heed to the prophecies of the Old Testament and also hold to our testimony.” (Life-study of 2 Peter, pp. 73-74)

Deuteronomy 18:20-22 concerns the false prophet. A false prophet was one who spoke a word presumptuously in God’s name which God did not command him to speak or who spoke in the name of other gods (v. 20a). Such a prophet was to be put to death (v. 20b). When a prophet spoke in the name of Jehovah and the thing did not happen, that was the thing which Jehovah had not spoken (v. 22). (Life-study of Deuteronomy, pp. 141-142)

Further Reading: Truth Lessons—Level One, vol. 2, lsn. 14; Life-study of 2 Peter, msg. 8

WEEK 7 — DAY 2

Morning Nourishment

Deut. 18:15 A Prophet will Jehovah your God raise up for you from your midst, from among your brothers, like me; you shall listen to Him.

18 A Prophet will I raise up for them from the midst of their brothers like you; and I will put My words in His mouth, and He will speak to them all that I command Him.

The first crucial point in Deuteronomy is that Moses as the spokesman of God was like an aged, loving father speaking to his children with much love and concern. This book contains God's word more than any other book of the Bible—the words of God spoken through this one spokesman.

Some may think that there is more of God's word in Job than in Deuteronomy. This view, however, is not correct. The book of Job does contain God's word, but it also contains the word of Job and his three friends, who spoke according to human opinion, logic, philosophy, and psychology. Eventually, the young man Elihu spoke what was on God's heart. In the book of Job God's word is not as abundant as in the book of Deuteronomy.

Moses spoke for God for forty years, from the age of eighty to the age of one hundred twenty. He was a person not only soaked and saturated with the thought of God but also constituted with the speaking God Himself. So the word that proceeded out of his mouth was the word of God spoken through this one spokesman. (Life-study of Deuteronomy, p. 14)

Today's Reading

In Deuteronomy 18:15-19 Moses spoke concerning Jehovah God's raising up of a Prophet (the coming Christ) like Moses for the children of Israel. Acts 3:22 applies these verses to Christ, indicating that Christ is the Prophet promised by God to His people, the children of Israel.

The Prophet was to be from among their brothers (Deut. 18:15a). This indicates that Christ as the coming Prophet would be human as well as

divine, that He would be God incarnated to be a man, the God-man. As God, Christ could not be from among the Jews as a brother, but as the incarnated One, the One who has put on human nature and who was a Jew, Christ was from among His brothers. Moses told the children of Israel that they were to listen to this Prophet (Deut. 18:15b). (Life-study of Deuteronomy, pp. 140-141)

A prophet is God's spokesman, not mainly to predict things that are coming but to speak for God and speak forth God by God's revelation. In his forty years of leading the children of Israel, Moses continually spoke to them for God, and especially in Deuteronomy he repeatedly spoke God's words to them. Although it was Moses who spoke, he did not speak his own words; he spoke God's words. He spoke for God, spoke forth God, and spoke God into the children of Israel. Every word he spoke also became God's word. As such a prophet Moses was also a type of Christ (Acts 3:22-23).

[Deuteronomy 18:15] indicates that Moses' being a prophet was not of his own doing or of his own making; he was raised up by God. So also is Christ as God's Prophet.

Moses was raised up by God as God's prophet [v. 18]. In his forty years of leading the children of Israel, he was God's spokesman, speaking for God to them all that God commanded him. Likewise, when Christ was on the earth, He spoke to His disciples for God; His teaching was not His but was according to what the Father had taught Him (John 7:16; 8:28b). He did not speak from Himself; as the Father said to Him, so He spoke (John 12:49-50). As God's Prophet, He spoke for God, spoke forth God, and revealed God to the disciples. Today He is still in us speaking for God, speaking forth God, and speaking God into us. (Truth Lessons—Level Three, vol. 1, pp. 118-119)

Further Reading: Life-study of Deuteronomy, msgs. 2, 20, 28-29; Truth Lessons—Level Three, vol. 1, lsn. 13

WEEK 7 — DAY 3

Morning Nourishment

John 3:34 For He whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for He gives the Spirit not by measure.

8:28 ...I do nothing from Myself, but as My Father has taught Me, I speak these things.

Rev. 19:13 ...His name is called the Word of God.

[Deuteronomy 18:18] indicates that God would raise up this Prophet through the incarnation of Christ to speak the word of God (John 1:14; 3:34; 7:16-17; Heb. 1:2a). When the Lord Jesus came, He surely spoke God's word. To speak God's word is to dispense God, to speak God forth into others. This is what the Lord Jesus did as the Prophet raised up by God. (Life-study of Deuteronomy, p. 141)

Today's Reading

In His earthly ministry the Lord Jesus never spoke His own word. Whatever He spoke was the Father's speaking. On one occasion He said, "My teaching is not Mine, but His who sent Me" (John 7:16). In not speaking from Himself the Lord did not seek His own glory but the glory of the One who sent Him (v. 18). Instead of speaking His own words, He spoke God. When He spoke God's word, God was expressed through His speaking. God came forth from Him through His words. He lived a life of speaking God, a life of expressing God for His glory.

In John 12:49 and 50 the Lord Jesus says, "I have not spoken from Myself; but the Father who sent Me, He Himself has given Me commandment, what to say and what to speak. And I know that His commandment is eternal life. The things therefore that I speak, even as the Father has said to Me, so I speak." This clearly reveals that in His ministry the Lord spoke the Father's word. In particular, the commandment that the Father gave Him to speak was eternal life. Therefore, He came with living

words, and whoever receives His words will have eternal life.

In John 14:10 the Lord Jesus goes on to say, “The words that I say to you I do not speak from Myself, but the Father who abides in Me does His works.” Once again the Lord makes it clear that He did not speak His own word but the Father’s word. While the Son was speaking in this way, the Father was working. The Son’s speaking was the Father’s working.

In His ministry the Lord Jesus revealed the Father to the disciples. Matthew 11:27 says, “No one fully knows the Son except the Father; neither does anyone fully know the Father except the Son and him to whom the Son wills to reveal Him.” This indicates that to know the Father requires the Son’s revelation. The Greek word for wills in verse 27 means to deliberately exercise the will through counsel. This the Lord did in revealing the Father to the disciples.

In His prayer to the Father before His crucifixion the Lord Jesus said, “I have manifested Your name to the men whom You gave Me out of the world” (John 17:6). The name referred to here is the name Father. The names “God” and “Jehovah” were adequately revealed to man in the Old Testament, but not the name Father, though it is mentioned in Isaiah 9:6; 63:16; and 64:8. In Old Testament times God’s people mainly knew that God was Elohim, that is, God, and Jehovah, that is, the ever-existing One, but they did not know much about the title Father. God is His name for creation, and Jehovah is His name for the relationship between Himself and man. Eventually, the Son came and worked in the Father’s name (John 5:43; 10:25) to manifest the Father to the ones whom the Father gave Him and to make the Father’s name known to them, the name which reveals the Father as the source of life (5:26) for the propagation and multiplication of life, of whom many sons are born (1:12-13) to express the Father. Hence, the Father’s name is very much related to the divine life. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, pp. 743-746)

Further Reading: The Conclusion of the New Testament, msgs. 22, 69, 90; Truth Lessons—Level Three, vol. 2, lsn. 30

WEEK 7 — DAY 4

Morning Nourishment

1 Cor. 7:12 But to the rest I say, I, not the Lord, If any brother has an unbelieving wife and she consents to dwell with him, he must not leave her.

25 Now concerning virgins I have no commandment of the Lord, but I give my opinion as one who has been shown mercy by the Lord to be faithful.

Every word spoken by Moses in Deuteronomy was God's word. Moses might have expressed something of his own feeling, but even this became the word of God. His speaking in Deuteronomy was like Paul's speaking in 1 Corinthians 7. In that chapter Paul said, "I have no commandment of the Lord, but I give my opinion as one who has been shown mercy by the Lord to be faithful" (v. 25). Later, after expressing his opinion, he said, "I think that I also have the Spirit of God" (v. 40). Eventually, because Paul was a man constituted with God, his opinion became a part of God's word as the divine revelation in the New Testament. In his speaking he was one with God; therefore, what he spoke was God's speaking. (Life-study of Deuteronomy, p. 14)

Today's Reading

It is important to see this principle of being absolutely one with the Lord in all circumstances, situations, and conditions. If we are mindful of this principle as we read 1 Corinthians 7, we shall see that Paul is utterly one with the Lord and that in his instructions and answers he spontaneously and unconsciously expresses such an absolute spirit. Because Paul had this kind of spirit, he could answer the Corinthians' questions in a clear and absolute way, in a way that would help them also to become one with God in their situation.

Paul's answers are very different from those given by marriage counselors. The advice given by marriage counselors reveals that they are independent of God and even rebellious against Him. In their instructions,

advice, and answers they are altogether apart from God. Paul, on the contrary, was absolutely under God, for God, and one with God.

Another very important point revealed in this chapter is that those who love the Lord, who are for Him, and who are one with Him must be willing to accept any kind of circumstance or situation. For example, if a brother's unbelieving wife desires to remain with him, he should accept this situation. But if she decides to leave, he should also accept this circumstance.

It is very important for us to see that God is always in our circumstances. We may say that the circumstances are actually God coming to us in disguise. Apparently we are in a particular circumstance; actually that circumstance is God coming to us and God with us. In verse 24 Paul says, "Each one, brothers, in what status he was called, in this let him remain with God." Notice the words "with God." They indicate that when we take our circumstances, we take God. Both within the circumstances and behind them, God is present.

Once again we see that Paul had an excellent spirit, a spirit which was submissive, content, and satisfied. Paul did not have any complaints. In his spirit he was very submissive and content with his situation. No matter how he was treated, he did not complain. To him, every situation was of the Lord, and he would not initiate anything to change it. Paul could say, "To me, everything works for good. This is the reason I don't want to change anything. I know that when I take my circumstances, I take my God. In every situation is my God, the One whom I love and the One to whom I belong absolutely." What an excellent spirit is displayed in this attitude!

I appreciate 1 Corinthians 7 not primarily for all the answers it gives, but because this chapter conveys the spirit of a person who loves the Lord, who cares for the Lord's interests on earth, who is absolutely for the Lord and one with the Lord, and who in every respect is obedient, submissive, and satisfied with God and the circumstances arranged by Him. (Life-study of 1 Corinthians, pp. 373-375)

Further Reading: Life-study of 1 Corinthians, msg. 43

WEEK 7 — DAY 5

Morning Nourishment

1 Cor. 7:40 But she is more blessed if she so remains, according to my opinion; but I think that I also have the Spirit of God.

6:17 But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit.

First Corinthians 7 is mysterious and deep. In this chapter Paul never utters the words, “Thus saith the Lord.” The reason Paul does not use such an expression is that the apostles’ teaching in the New Testament is altogether based on the principle of incarnation. According to this principle, God speaks in man’s speaking...When the Lord Jesus spoke to the Pharisees, it seems that He was an ordinary person from Nazareth. There was no indication that He was different, and the Pharisees regarded Him as a man without learning. But the Lord Jesus is God incarnate. With Him there is the reality of incarnation. Thus, while He was speaking, God spoke also. Actually, His speaking was God’s speaking. God spoke with Him. This means that in the Lord Jesus God and man spoke together as one. This is the principle of incarnation. (Life-study of 1 Corinthians, p. 378)

Today’s Reading

On the day of Pentecost the apostles and disciples also began to speak according to the principle of incarnation. This is the reason the writings of Peter, John, and Paul recorded in the Bible could become God’s words. Furthermore, these words are among the contents of the New Testament. Although Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 7 that certain things he says are not the Lord’s word or the Lord’s commandment, everything spoken by Paul in this chapter has nonetheless become part of the divine revelation in the New Testament. This is because Paul was a person absolutely one with God...Because Paul was one with the Lord, when he spoke, the Lord spoke with him. Thus, with Paul in 1 Corinthians 7 we have an example of the principle of incarnation.

I would emphasize the importance of touching Paul’s spirit in 1

Corinthians 7. In his answers to the questions raised by the Corinthian believers, Paul expresses his spirit. This makes it possible for us to sense his spirit. Paul certainly was absolutely for the Lord and one with Him. Even in expressing his opinion, he had the feeling that he also had the Spirit of God. This is the New Testament teaching, and the way we should follow today. Do not follow the superficial Pentecostal way to copy the Old Testament manner of prophesying. Instead, follow Paul's way to touch the depths of the New Testament mystery. This mystery is that the Lord and we, we and the Lord, have become one spirit. (Life-study of 1 Corinthians, pp. 378-379, 383-384)

No spiritual experience is as deep as that revealed in 1 Corinthians 7. Here we have a man who tells us that he does not have the Lord's commandment. Then he proceeds to give his own opinion. After giving his opinion, he tells us, "I think that I also have the Spirit of God" [v. 40]. Here Paul seems to be saying, "I am giving you my word, my opinion, without any commandment from the Lord. But I think that I nevertheless have the Spirit of God."

If we had been able to question Paul concerning this, he might have replied, "Brother, I am now practicing what I wrote about in 6:17. It is certainly right to say that he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit. Now when I say that I think I also have the Spirit of God, I am living the Lord. I live the Lord in this one spirit. Even when I give you my opinion, I still have the Spirit of the Lord, although I do not have the boldness to declare with assurance that I have the Spirit. However, those who are childish and shallow may say with assurance that they have the Spirit of God. Actually, they do not have that kind of assurance. But what I am saying is a description of my living of the Lord." If we see this, we will realize that chapter 7 of 1 Corinthians describes something profound. (CWWL, 1983, vol. 2, "The Divine Dispensing of the Divine Trinity," pp. 400-401)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1983, vol. 2, "The Divine Dispensing of the Divine Trinity," ch. 28

WEEK 7 — DAY 6

Morning Nourishment

1 Cor. 7:10 But to the married I charge, not I but the Lord, A wife must not be separated from her husband.

2:13 Which things also we speak, not in words taught by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual things with spiritual words.

The principle in 1 Corinthians 7:10 is the same as that in Galatians 2:20, where Paul says, “It is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me.” In both verses we see the principle of incarnation; two persons living as one person. In 1 Corinthians 7:10 we have two persons, the Lord and Paul, speaking as one....Why does Paul not say in this verse, “But to the married the Lord charges”? Why does he say that he charges, yet not he but the Lord? The answer to these questions is that Paul realized that he was one with the Lord and that what he spoke was the Lord’s word. Even when he did not claim to have a word from the Lord, because he was one with the Lord, whatever he said was the Lord’s word.

Verse 25 says, “Now concerning virgins I have no commandment of the Lord, but I give my opinion as one who has been shown mercy by the Lord to be faithful.” A wife should not be separated from her husband. This, the apostle says, is the Lord’s commandment (v. 10). But concerning virgins not marrying, he says he has no commandment of the Lord, but he gives his opinion in the following verses. He dares to do this because he has received mercy of the Lord to be faithful to the Lord’s interests, and he is really one with the Lord. His opinion expresses the Lord’s desire. This is again based on the New Testament principle of incarnation. (Life-study of 1 Corinthians, pp. 380-381)

Today’s Reading

Some readers of 1 Corinthians may think that Paul was too strong in giving his opinion when he had no commandment from the Lord. Which

one of us would dare to say that we have no commandment of the Lord concerning a certain matter, but that we give our opinion? Yet this is the very thing Paul does in 7:25. Here we see the highest spirituality, the spirituality of a person who is so one with the Lord that even his opinion expresses the Lord's mind. Paul was absolutely one with the Lord and thoroughly saturated with Him. Because his entire being was permeated with the Lord, even his opinion expressed the mind of the Lord. For this reason, we say that verse 25 expresses the highest spirituality.

All these words indicate the New Testament principle of incarnation, that is, God and man, man and God, becoming one. This differs drastically from the principle of Old Testament prophecy—speaking for God. In the Old Testament, as we have pointed out, the word of Jehovah came unto a prophet (Jer. 1:2; Ezek. 1:3), the prophet being simply the mouthpiece of God. But in the New Testament the Lord becomes one with His apostles and they become one with Him. Both speak together. His word becomes their word, and whatever they utter is His word. Hence, the apostle's charge is the Lord's charge (1 Cor. 7:10). What he says, though not by the Lord, still becomes a part of the divine revelation in the New Testament (v. 12). He is so one with the Lord that even when he gives his own opinion, not the commandment of the Lord (v. 25), he still thinks that he also has the Spirit of God. He does not claim definitely to have the Spirit of God, but he thinks that he also has the Spirit of God. This is the highest spirituality; it is based on the principle of incarnation.

We need to see the principle of incarnation illustrated here and receive mercy and grace from the Lord to speak in a genuine and frank manner without any pretense. In order to speak like this we need to be saturated with the Spirit. Then what we utter or express will be our thought, our opinion, but it will also be something of the Lord because we are one with Him. (Life-study of 1 Corinthians, pp. 381-383)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1985, vol. 5, "Speaking for God," ch. 3; CWWL, 1985, vol. 4, "Everyone Speaking the Word of God," chs. 1-2

<< **WEEK 7 — HYMN** >>

Hymns, #782 How mysterious, O Lord

Prayer — Exercising the Spirit

**1 How mysterious, O Lord,
That Thy Spirit dwells in mine;
O how marvelous it is,
Into one, two spirits twine.**

**2 By the spirit I can walk,
Spiritual in spirit be;
By the spirit I can serve,
And in spirit worship Thee.**

**3 Thru Thy Word and by my prayer
In the spirit touching Thee,
Lifted high my spirit is,
Strengthened shall my spirit be.**

**4 Make my spirit strong I pray
Others' spirits to revive;
Lift my spirit high and free,
Others' spirits then may thrive.**

**5 Every time I speak, O Lord,
May my spirit actuate;
And whatever I may do,
Let my spirit motivate.**

**6 Every time my spirit acts
Others' spirits opened be,
Every time my spirit moves
Others' lifted unto Thee.**

**7 Lord, have mercy, from above
May Thy Spirit breathe on me;
Then my spirit will be rich,
Strengthened and refreshed by Thee.**