

## **Guidelines for the exercise of the Lord's day Propheying Message Ten : Avoiding Division, Which Is versus the Oneness That We Keep, and Rejecting Apostasy, Which Is versus the Faith That We Contend For**

### **I. Overview:**

According to Moses' word in Deuteronomy 12 and 13, we must avoid division and reject apostasy. Apostasy insults and damages the person of Christ, and division destroys the Body of Christ. Division is all-inclusive; it includes all negative things, and divisions come out of different teachings. The apostles taught the same thing to all the saints in all the churches. The genuine oneness is an all-inclusive, comprehensive oneness that includes all positive things. For the recovery and preservation of the genuine, all-inclusive oneness, we must destroy the high places. We must be fully exercised to separate ourselves from any heresy, apostasy and heretics, apostates to earnestly contend for the faith. Our Christian faith is composed of our belief concerning six basic items: the Bible, God, Christ, the work of Christ, salvation, and the church by By exercising our spirit to enjoy the Blessed Trinity and contend for the faith.

### **II. Truth and Enlightenment:**

Day 1 —

A. Expound that Paul in Romans 16:17 is very narrow and strict.

In Romans 14 and 15 Paul is generous, broad-minded, and all-embracing, but in Romans 16:17 he is very narrow and strict. "I exhort you, brothers, to mark those who make divisions and causes of stumbling contrary to the teaching which you have learned, and turn away from them." On the one hand, we need to receive all kinds of genuine believers; on the other hand, we need to be narrow and strict in dealing with divisive ones.

B. Explain the meaning of apostasy in the Old and New Testament.

The New Testament term for apostasy is heresy. Apostasy and heresy are an insult to the person of God. In the Old Testament the apostates turned away from God and followed idols. In the New Testament the heretics denied that Jesus Christ is God incarnated to become a man. Such a denial is apostasy. This heresy damages the person of Christ. In both the Old Testament and the New Testament, God does not tolerate apostasy or heresy.

Day 2 —

A. Why is division all-inclusive?

Division is all-inclusive. It comprises such negative things as Satan, sin, worldliness, the flesh, the self, the old man, and evil temper. If we are enlightened concerning the nature of division, we will see that it includes every negative thing. Do not think that division stands by itself and that it is not related to such things as the flesh, the self, and worldliness; to be in division is to be in death.

B. State the divisions among all the Christians were all due to a ministry.

Throughout the church history, the divisions, confusions, and problems that have taken place among all the Christians were all due to a ministry. All the different kinds of Christian groups come out of different ministries. A ministry is mainly a teaching. We must realize that the teaching that a Christian teaches ministers something. To serve others with something is to minister.

Day 3 —

A. Explain what our practice of oneness is based upon.

Our practice of oneness is based upon the attribute of the oneness of the church: one Spirit, one Lord, one God, one Body, one faith, one baptism, and one hope. Moreover, the practice of this oneness is according to the apostles' teaching. The apostles taught the same thing to all the saints in all the churches. At the same time, the practice of this oneness is also according to the same speaking of the Spirit to the churches.

B. Expound the reason for this oneness is that God Himself is one.

Oneness is His nature. In all God's acts we see one origin, one element, and one essence. In God's creation we see one God and one corporate man. In His selection we also have the one God and one man. Moreover, in the church we have the one Spirit and one new man. Eventually, in the New Jerusalem we are full of the characteristics of oneness.

Day 4 —

A. Explain in Deuteronomy 12 what they should do to protect God's people in oneness.

In Deuteronomy 12 Moses charged the children of Israel to “completely destroy all the places where the nations have served their gods, on the high mountains and on the hills and under every flourishing tree”. Having destroyed all these things, they were to come to the unique place of God’s choice. According to 1 Kings, the temple was built in Jerusalem, the place God had chosen, a unique place for His presence.

B. Expound the significance of high places and what issues.

The significance of high places is division. To preserve the oneness, God required that they come to the unique place of His choice. The high places were a substitute for this unique place. The unique place, Jerusalem, signifies oneness, whereas the high places signify division. Just as all manner of evil and abominable things were related to the setting up of the high places, so, in New Testament terms, all manner of evil is related to division.

Day 5 —

A. Explain what Second John 7 says, “...the deceivers and the antichrist.”

The deceivers mentioned here were heretics, like the Cerinthians, the false prophets. These deceivers do not confess Jesus Christ coming in the flesh. Thus, they deny the deity of Christ. An antichrist is one who denies Christ’s deity, denying that Jesus is the Christ, that is, denying the Father and the Son by denying that Jesus is the Son of God, not confessing that He has come in the flesh through the divine conception of the Holy Spirit.

B. Expound John’s word in 2 John 10 how to deal with the heretics.

In 2 John 10 John says, “If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house, and do not say to him, Rejoice!” The pronoun him refers to a heretic, an antichrist, a false prophet, who denies the divine conception and deity of Christ, as today’s modernists do. Such a one we must reject, not receiving him into our house or greeting him.

Day 6 —

A. Explain the faith in Jude 3.

The faith in Jude 3 is not subjective faith as our believing but objective faith as our belief, referring to the things we believe in, the contents of the New Testament as our faith, in which we believe for our common salvation. This faith, not any doctrine, has been delivered once for all to the saints. For this faith we should earnestly contend.

B. Expound how a sinner gets saved.

A sinner must repent to God and believe in Christ for forgiveness of sins, for redemption, for justification, and for regeneration in order that he may have the eternal life to become a child of God and a member of Christ. This is our salvation by God through faith.

### III. Conclusion:

According to Moses’ words in Deuteronomy 12 and 13, we must avoid division and reject apostasy. Division destroys the oneness of the Body of Christ and it comes out of a different teachings, teachings other than God’s economy. In Romans 14 Paul is very generous, broad-minded, and all-embracing in accepting people who differ in doctrine or practice. But in Romans 16 he is very narrow and strict to mark those who make divisions and causes of stumbling contrary to the teaching which we have learned. Apostasy insults God and destroys the person of Christ, denying Christ’s deity, not confessing that He has come in the flesh through the divine conception of the Holy Spirit, that is, not acknowledge Jesus as God incarnated and denies the divinity of Christ. Avoiding division, we must destroy all high places, also come to worship in the only place He chooses, and teach the same things in God’s economy. Rejecting apostasy, we have to exalt Christ and should earnestly contend for such a faith.