

THE WILL OF GOD

(Lord's Day—Second Morning Session)

Message Eight

Meeting to Know and Do the Will of God

RK Hymns: 564

Scripture Reading: Matt. 7:21; 12:50; 18:20; Eph. 3:8; Col. 1:12; 1 Cor. 14:26; Heb. 10:25

- Matt 7:21 Not everyone who says to Me, Lord, Lord, will enter into the kingdom of the heavens, but he who does the will of My Father who is in the heavens.
- Matt 12:50 For whoever does the will of My Father who is in the heavens, he is My brother and sister and mother.
- Matt 18:20 For where there are two or three gathered into My name, there am I in their midst.
- Eph 3:8 To me, less than the least of all saints, was this grace given to announce to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ as the gospel
- Col 1:12 Giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you for a share of the allotted portion of the saints in the light;
- 1 Cor 14:26 What then, brothers? Whenever you come together, each one has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up.
- Heb 10:25 Not abandoning our own assembling together, as the custom with some is, but exhorting one another; and so much the more as you see the day drawing near.

I. To meet is to know and do the will of God; our goal, our purpose, on earth is to do the will of the Father, and we do this by coming to the meetings of the church—Heb. 10:25.

Heb 10:25 Not abandoning our own assembling together, as the custom with some is, but exhorting one another; and so much the more as you see the day drawing near.

II. We need to realize that besides our inner life with the Lord, nothing is as crucial, important, and profitable as the church meetings—1 Cor. 14:23-26:

- 1 Cor 14:23 If therefore the whole church comes together in one place, and all speak in tongues, and some unlearned in tongues or unbelievers enter, will they not say that you are insane?
- 1 Cor 14:24 But if all prophesy and some unbeliever or unlearned person enters, he is convicted by all, he is examined by all;
- 1 Cor 14:25 The secrets of his heart become manifest; and so falling on his face, he will worship God, declaring that indeed God is among you.
- 1 Cor 14:26 What then, brothers? Whenever you come together, each one has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up.

A. As indicated by the Greek word *ekklesia*, the church—the dwelling place of God—is a meeting or an assembly of the called-out ones—Matt. 18:17-20:

- Matt 18:17 And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to hear the church also, let him be to you just like the Gentile and the tax collector.
- Matt 18:18 Truly I say to you, Whatever you bind on the earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on the earth shall have been loosed in heaven.
- Matt 18:19 Again, truly I say to you that if two of you are in harmony on earth concerning any matter for which they ask, it will be done for them from My Father who is in the heavens.
- Matt 18:20 For where there are two or three gathered into My name, there am I in their midst.
1. The church is a gathering of the believers, a meeting of a collective people.
 2. When God's called-out ones meet together, this is the church—Acts 2:42; 8:1.
Acts 2:42 And they continued steadfastly in the teaching and the fellowship of the apostles, in the breaking of bread and the prayers.
Acts 8:1 And Saul approved of his killing. And there occurred in that day a great persecution against the church which was in Jerusalem; and all were scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles.
 3. Our Father has predestinated us to meet together; coming to the meetings is God's

will—Eph. 1:5; Rom. 8:29; 1 Cor. 14:26.

Eph 1:5 Predestinating us unto sonship through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,

Rom 8:29 Because those whom He foreknew, He also predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the Firstborn among many brothers;

1 Cor 14:26 What then, brothers? Whenever you come together, each one has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up.

B. The Christian life is a meeting life—Heb. 10:25; 1 Cor. 14:23-26:

Heb 10:25 Not abandoning our own assembling together, as the custom with some is, but exhorting one another; and so much the more as you see the day drawing near.

1 Cor 14:23 If therefore the whole church comes together in one place, and all speak in tongues, and some unlearned in tongues or unbelievers enter, will they not say that you are insane?

1 Cor 14:24 But if all prophesy and some unbeliever or unlearned person enters, he is convicted by all, he is examined by all;

1 Cor 14:25 The secrets of his heart become manifest; and so falling on his face, he will worship God, declaring that indeed God is among you.

1 Cor 14:26 What then, brothers? Whenever you come together, each one has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up.

1. Much of the grace that we receive is in the meetings, and much of the work that the Lord does is also in the meetings—Acts 4:33; 13:1-2.

Acts 4:33 And with great power the apostles gave testimony of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all.

Acts 13:1 Now there were in Antioch, in the local church, prophets and teachers: Barnabas and Simeon, who was called Niger, and Lucius the Cyrenian, and Manaen, the foster brother of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

Acts 13:2 And as they were ministering to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, Set apart for Me now Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.

2. Since the Christian life is a meeting life and much of the Lord's work is carried out through the meetings, we should regard the meetings as being of great importance—Heb. 10:25.

Heb 10:25 Not abandoning our own assembling together, as the custom with some is, but exhorting one another; and so much the more as you see the day drawing near.

III. In the meetings God makes His will known to us—Psa. 73:16-17:

Psa 73:16 When I considered this in order to understand it, / It was a troublesome task in my sight,

Psa 73:17 Until I went into the sanctuary of God; / Then I perceived their end.

A. Doing God's will depends on knowing His will—John 7:17.

John 7:17 If anyone resolves to do His will, he will know concerning the teaching, whether it is of God or whether I speak from Myself.

B. In our meetings there are many wonderful things underneath the surface, one of which is knowing God's will.

C. When the psalmist went into the sanctuary of God, he was able to know God's will—Psa. 73:16-17:

Psa 73:16 When I considered this in order to understand it, / It was a troublesome task in my sight,

Psa 73:17 Until I went into the sanctuary of God; / Then I perceived their end.

1. God's sanctuary, His habitation, is in our spirit and in the church—Eph. 2:22; 1 Tim. 3:15.

Eph 2:22 In whom you also are being built together into a dwelling place of God in spirit.

1 Tim 3:15 But if I delay, I write that you may know how one ought to conduct himself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and base of the truth.

2. In order to go into the sanctuary of God, we need to turn to our spirit and go to the meetings of the church.
3. Once we are in the sanctuary—in the spirit and in the meetings of the church—we receive another view, a particular perception, of our situation—Psa. 73:16-20.

Psa 73:16 When I considered this in order to understand it, / It was a troublesome task in my sight,

Psa 73:17 Until I went into the sanctuary of God; / Then I perceived their end.

Psa 73:18 Surely You set them in slippery places; / You cast them down into ruins.

Psa 73:19 How they are made desolate in a moment! / They are utterly consumed by terrors.

Psa 73:20 Like a dream, when one awakes, You, O Lord, / Upon arising, will despise their image.
4. God's way is made known in the sanctuary of God—v. 17:

Psa 73:17 Until I went into the sanctuary of God; / Then I perceived their end.

 - a. In our spirit and in the meetings we receive divine revelation—Rev. 1:10; Eph. 1:17-18.

Rev 1:10 I was in spirit on the Lord's Day and heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet,

Eph 1:17 That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the full knowledge of Him,

Eph 1:18 The eyes of your heart having been enlightened, that you may know what is the hope of His calling, and what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,
 - b. When we exercise our spirit and attend the meetings of the church, God's way becomes clear to us—Psa. 73:17.

Psa 73:17 Until I went into the sanctuary of God; / Then I perceived their end.

IV. Since the will of God is in Christ, concentrated in Christ, and for Christ, and Christ is everything in the will of God, we do God's will through exhibiting Christ in the meetings—Col. 1:9, 15-18, 12; 3:4, 11; 1 Cor. 14:26:

- Col 1:9 Therefore we also, since the day we heard of it, do not cease praying and asking on your behalf that you may be filled with the full knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding,
- Col 1:15 Who is the image of the invisible God, the Firstborn of all creation,
- Col 1:16 Because in Him all things were created, in the heavens and on the earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones or lordships or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through Him and unto Him.
- Col 1:17 And He is before all things, and all things cohere in Him;
- Col 1:18 And He is the Head of the Body, the church; He is the beginning, the Firstborn from the dead, that He Himself might have the first place in all things;
- Col 1:12 Giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you for a share of the allotted portion of the saints in the light;
- Col 3:4 When Christ our life is manifested, then you also will be manifested with Him in glory.
- Col 3:11 Where there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all and in all.
- 1 Cor 14:26 What then, brothers? Whenever you come together, each one has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up.
- A. The will of God for us is that we would experience and enjoy the all-inclusive Christ and live Him as our life—Col. 1:9, 15-18; 3:4, 11.
- Col 1:9 Therefore we also, since the day we heard of it, do not cease praying and asking on your behalf that you may be filled with the full knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding,
- Col 1:15 Who is the image of the invisible God, the Firstborn of all creation,
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 Col 3:4 When Christ our life is manifested, then you also will be manifested with Him in glory.
 Col 3:11 Where there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all and in all.
- B. Our meetings are to exhibit Christ, so when we come to a meeting, we need to bring with us the Christ whom we have enjoyed—1 Cor. 14:26.
 1 Cor 14:26 What then, brothers? Whenever you come together, each one has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up.
- C. The proper church life depends upon the church meetings where all the saints exhibit Christ with His unsearchable riches—Eph. 3:8.
 Eph 3:8 To me, less than the least of all saints, was this grace given to announce to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ as the gospel
- D. The goal of our meeting is to exhibit Christ, and the Christian meeting is an exhibition of our Christian daily life—1 Cor. 14:26; cf. Deut. 12:5-7, 13-14.
 1 Cor 14:26 What then, brothers? Whenever you come together, each one has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up.
 Deut 12:5 But to the place which Jehovah your God will choose out of all your tribes to put His name, to His habitation, shall you seek, and there shall you go.
 Deut 12:6 And there you shall bring your burnt offerings and your sacrifices and your tithes and the heave offering of your hand and your vows and your freewill offerings and the firstborn of your herd and of your flock;
 Deut 12:7 And there you shall eat before Jehovah your God, and you and your households shall rejoice in all your undertakings, in which Jehovah your God has blessed you.
 Deut 12:13 Be careful that you do not offer up your burnt offerings in every place that you see;
 Deut 12:14 But in the place which Jehovah will choose in one of your tribes, there you shall offer up your burnt offerings, and there you shall do all that I am commanding you.
- E. We exhibit Christ in the meetings by offering to God Christ as the reality of the offerings, enjoying Christ together with God—Heb. 10:8-10, 25; 13:20-21.
 Heb 10:8 Saying above, "Sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin You did not desire nor delight in" (which are offered according to the law),
 Heb 10:9 He then has said, "Behold, I have come to do Your will." He takes away the first that He may establish the second,
 Heb 10:10 By which will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.
 Heb 10:25 Not abandoning our own assembling together, as the custom with some is, but exhorting one another; and so much the more as you see the day drawing near.
 Heb 13:20 Now the God of peace, He who brought up from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep, in the blood of an eternal covenant,
 Heb 13:21 Perfect you in every good work for the doing of His will, doing in us that which is well pleasing in His sight through Jesus Christ; to Him be the glory forever and ever. Amen.
- F. We need to function in the meetings to exhibit Christ—Col. 1:12; 1 Cor. 14:26:
 Col 1:12 Giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you for a share of the allotted portion of the saints in the light;
 1 Cor 14:26 What then, brothers? Whenever you come together, each one has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up.
1. Due to the influence of Christianity, many believers do not bear responsibility in the meetings.
 2. The concept that we may attend a meeting but are not responsible for the meeting is a fundamental error; it is a ploy of Satan to render the members of the Body of Christ useless so that they do not function.

- G. As Christians, we are members of Christ, and our most important service is to meet—12:4-11, 14-27; Heb. 10:25:
- 1 Cor 12:4 But there are distinctions of gifts, but the same Spirit;
- 1 Cor 12:5 And there are distinctions of ministries, yet the same Lord;
- 1 Cor 12:6 And there are distinctions of operations, but the same God, who operates all things in all.
- 1 Cor 12:7 But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for what is profitable.
- 1 Cor 12:8 For to one through the Spirit a word of wisdom is given, and to another a word of knowledge, according to the same Spirit;
- 1 Cor 12:9 To a different one faith in the same Spirit, and to another gifts of healing in the one Spirit,
- 1 Cor 12:10 And to another operations of works of power, and to another prophecy, and to another discerning of spirits; to a different one various kinds of tongues, and to another interpretation of tongues.
- 1 Cor 12:11 But the one and the same Spirit operates all these things, distributing to each one respectively even as He purposes.
- 1 Cor 12:14 For the body is not one member but many.
- 1 Cor 12:15 If the foot should say, Because I am not a hand, I am not of the body, it is not that because of this it is not of the body.
- 1 Cor 12:16 And if the ear should say, Because I am not an eye, I am not of the body, it is not that because of this it is not of the body.
- 1 Cor 12:17 If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole were the hearing, where would the smelling be?
- 1 Cor 12:18 But now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body, even as He willed.
- 1 Cor 12:19 And if all were one member, where would the body be?
- 1 Cor 12:20 But now the members are many, but the body one.
- 1 Cor 12:21 And the eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of you; nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you.
- 1 Cor 12:22 But much rather the members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary.
- 1 Cor 12:23 And those members of the body which we consider to be less honorable, these we clothe with more abundant honor; and our uncomely members come to have more abundant comeliness,
- 1 Cor 12:24 But our comely members have no need. But God has blended the body together, giving more abundant honor to the member that lacked,
- 1 Cor 12:25 That there would be no division in the body, but that the members would have the same care for one another.
- 1 Cor 12:26 And whether one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or one member is glorified, all the members rejoice with it.
- 1 Cor 12:27 Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually.
- Heb 10:25 Not abandoning our own assembling together, as the custom with some is, but exhorting one another; and so much the more as you see the day drawing near.
1. The church meetings are the best opportunity to exhibit Christ—Col. 3:11.
Col 3:11 Where there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all and in all.
 2. As Christians, we are commissioned to exhibit Christ in the meetings and thus do the will of God—Matt. 7:21; 16:18; Eph. 3:8; Col. 1:12.
Matt 7:21 Not everyone who says to Me, Lord, Lord, will enter into the kingdom of the heavens, but he who does the will of My Father who is in the heavens.
Matt 16:18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.
Eph 3:8 To me, less than the least of all saints, was this grace given to announce to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ as the gospel
Col 1:12 Giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you for a share of the allotted portion of the saints in the light;
 3. “The Father we would glorify, / Exalting Christ the Son, thereby / The meeting’s purpose satisfy / That we exhibit Christ” (*Hymns*, #864, stanza 8).

V. Since the Father's eternal will and the desire of His heart are to build up the church as the Body of Christ, we do His will by functioning in the meetings according to the scriptural way to meet for the building up of the Body—Matt. 7:21; 12:50; Eph. 4:16; 1 Cor. 14:26:

Matt 7:21 Not everyone who says to Me, Lord, Lord, will enter into the kingdom of the heavens, but he who does the will of My Father who is in the heavens.

Matt 12:50 For whoever does the will of My Father who is in the heavens, he is My brother and sister and mother.

Eph 4:16 Out from whom all the Body, being joined together and being knit together through every joint of the rich supply and through the operation in the measure of each one part, causes the growth of the Body unto the building up of itself in love.

1 Cor 14:26 What then, brothers? Whenever you come together, each one has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up.

A. The meetings of the believers should always be linked to God's New Testament economy; we should come to the meetings with a vision of the divine economy, and what we speak in the meetings should focus on the economy of God—1 Tim. 1:4; Eph. 3:9; 1 Cor. 14:26.

1 Tim 1:4 Nor to give heed to myths and unending genealogies, which produce questionings rather than God's economy, which is in faith.

Eph 3:9 And to enlighten all that they may see what the economy of the mystery is, which throughout the ages has been hidden in God, who created all things,

1 Cor 14:26 What then, brothers? Whenever you come together, each one has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up.

B. The recovery according to the Lord's mind is to bring His believers out of the clergy-laity system and to replace this system with the scriptural way to meet and to serve for the building up of the Body of Christ—v. 26; Eph. 4:12, 16.

1 Cor 14:26 What then, brothers? Whenever you come together, each one has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up.

Eph 4:12 For the perfecting of the saints unto the work of the ministry, unto the building up of the Body of Christ,

Eph 4:16 Out from whom all the Body, being joined together and being knit together through every joint of the rich supply and through the operation in the measure of each one part, causes the growth of the Body unto the building up of itself in love.

C. The Lord desires to recover the church meetings in mutuality with all functioning for the building up of the Body of Christ—1 Cor. 14:4b, 24a, 26, 31:

1 Cor 14:4b ... but he who prophesies builds up the church.

1 Cor 14:24a But if all prophesy and some unbeliever or unlearned person enters, he is convicted by all, ...

1 Cor 14:26 What then, brothers? Whenever you come together, each one has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up.

1 Cor 14:31 For you can all prophesy one by one that all may learn and all may be encouraged.

1. When we come to the church meetings, we should have something of the Lord to share with others—v. 26.

1 Cor 14:26 What then, brothers? Whenever you come together, each one has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up.

2. Before coming to a meeting, we should prepare ourselves for the meeting with something from the Lord or of the Lord, either through our experience of Him or through our enjoyment of His word and fellowship with Him in prayer.

3. We must labor on Christ, our good land, so that we may reap some produce of His riches to bring to the church meeting and offer—Col. 1:12; Eph. 3:8.

Col 1:12 Giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you for a share of the allotted

- portion of the saints in the light;
Eph 3:8 To me, less than the least of all saints, was this grace given to announce to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ as the gospel
4. Thus, the meeting will be an exhibition of His riches and will be a mutual enjoyment of Christ shared with all the attendants before God and with God for the building up of the saints and the church—1 Cor. 14:26.
1 Cor 14:26 What then, brothers? Whenever you come together, each one has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up.
 5. Whatever we do in the church meeting must be for the building up of the saints and the church—vv. 3-5, 12.
1 Cor 14:3 But he who prophesies speaks building up and encouragement and consolation to men.
1 Cor 14:4 He who speaks in a tongue builds up himself, but he who prophesies builds up the church.
1 Cor 14:5 I desire that you all speak in tongues, but especially that you would prophesy; and greater is he who prophesies than he who speaks in tongues, unless he interprets, that the church may receive building up.
1 Cor 14:12 So also you, since you are zealous of spirits, seek that you may excel for the building up of the church.
- D. In the practice of the scriptural way to meet and to serve, we emphasize prophesying—the excelling gift for the building up of the church—vv. 1, 4b, 24-25, 31:
- 1 Cor 14:1 Pursue love, and desire earnestly spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy.
1 Cor 14:4b ... but he who prophesies builds up the church.
1 Cor 14:24 But if all prophesy and some unbeliever or unlearned person enters, he is convicted by all, he is examined by all;
1 Cor 14:25 The secrets of his heart become manifest; and so falling on his face, he will worship God, declaring that indeed God is among you.
1 Cor 14:31 For you can all prophesy one by one that all may learn and all may be encouraged.
1. The significance of prophesying in 1 Corinthians 14 is to speak for the Lord, to speak forth the Lord, and even to speak the Lord, to minister, to dispense, the Lord, into others; in the sense of the divine dispensing, the entire Bible consummates in all prophesying—vv. 3, 24-25, 31.
1 Cor 14 be omitted.
1 Cor 14:3 But he who prophesies speaks building up and encouragement and consolation to men.
1 Cor 14:24 But if all prophesy and some unbeliever or unlearned person enters, he is convicted by all, he is examined by all;
1 Cor 14:25 The secrets of his heart become manifest; and so falling on his face, he will worship God, declaring that indeed God is among you.
1 Cor 14:31 For you can all prophesy one by one that all may learn and all may be encouraged.
 2. Prophesying, speaking for God and speaking forth God with God as the content, ministers God to the hearers and brings them to God—v. 25.
1 Cor 14:25 The secrets of his heart become manifest; and so falling on his face, he will worship God, declaring that indeed God is among you.
 3. God desires that each of the believers prophesy, that is, speak for Him and speak Him forth—vv. 1b, 31; cf. Num. 11:29.
1 Cor 14:1b ... and desire earnestly spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy.
1 Cor 14:31 For you can all prophesy one by one that all may learn and all may be encouraged.
Num 11:29 But Moses said to him, Are you jealous for my sake? Oh that all Jehovah's people were prophets, that Jehovah would put His Spirit upon them!
 4. The characteristic of prophesying is to minister Christ for the organic building up of the church as the Body of Christ; prophesying is the particular gift for the building up

of the church—1 Cor. 14:3-5, 12, 24, 26.

- 1 Cor 14:3 But he who prophesies speaks building up and encouragement and consolation to men.
- 1 Cor 14:4 He who speaks in a tongue builds up himself, but he who prophesies builds up the church.
- 1 Cor 14:5 I desire that you all speak in tongues, but especially that you would prophesy; and greater is he who prophesies than he who speaks in tongues, unless he interprets, that the church may receive building up.
- 1 Cor 14:12 So also you, since you are zealous of spirits, seek that you may excel for the building up of the church.
- 1 Cor 14:24 But if all prophesy and some unbeliever or unlearned person enters, he is convicted by all, he is examined by all;
- 1 Cor 14:26 What then, brothers? Whenever you come together, each one has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up.

Excerpts from the Ministry:

TO PARTICIPATE IN THE ASSEMBLING TOGETHER OF THE BELIEVERS THEMSELVES

Hebrews 10:25 says, “Not abandoning our own assembling together, as the custom with some is, but exhorting one another; and so much the more as you see the day drawing near.” The apostle Paul wrote the book of Hebrews to encourage the hesitating, backslidden Hebrew believers to go forward within the veil and to go outside the camp (6:19; 13:13). To go “outside the camp” was to go outside of the old Jewish religion, and to enter “within the veil” was to enter into the Holy of Holies, where Christ is.

We must realize that our proper meeting is the Holy of Holies. To be gathered together in a proper way is to meet in the Holy of Holies. The Holy of Holies is wherever the Lord Jesus is. The Lord is dwelling in the heavens (Rom. 8:34). The Lord is also dwelling in our spirit (2 Tim. 4:22), which is the Holy of Holies (Heb. 4:12, 16; see footnote 4:161, Recovery Version). Since the Lord is in the third heaven today, the third heaven is the Holy of Holies (9:12; cf. v. 24). Since He is now in our spirit, our spirit is the Holy of Holies. Because the Lord Jesus is in our meeting whenever we meet together, our meeting is also the Holy of Holies (10:22, 25). For the Hebrew believers to forsake their Christian meeting was for them to forsake the Holy of Holies and go back to their religious camp.

The book of Exodus shows us that after the children of Israel worshipped the golden calf (32:8), they became a camp. They had the Lord in name, but in reality they worshipped something else and hence became a religious camp among whom it was impossible to have the Lord’s presence. Moses knew that God, according to His holiness, would no longer stay among the people, for the camp had become idolatrous. Therefore, Moses took his tent, which formerly had been in the camp, and pitched it outside the camp. This tent then became the tent of God, the tent of meeting (33:7). If the people would not go out of the camp but would remain in it, they would not have the presence of the Lord. The presence of the Lord was no longer in the camp but in the tent (v. 9).

When the Lord Jesus was on this earth, there was a separation between the Jewish religionists, the camp, and the Lord Himself, the real tabernacle (John 1:14; 2:19, 21). The Lord Jesus was the very embodiment of God, and the real Holy of Holies was wherever He was. Outside of and around Christ, there was a religious organization, an old religion, a camp, which did not have God’s Holy of Holies. In that religious organization of Judaism, God was not there. At the time the Lord Jesus walked upon this earth, the proper worship was always held in the temple according to the rituals ordained by God. Yet we must ask ourselves who the Lord Jesus is. Actually, He is the very God, the One whom the children of Israel worshipped in their temple.

One day Jesus entered into the house in Bethany (12:1-11). He was in that home, yet the Jewish priests still worshipped God in the temple in Jerusalem. During that time, where was God? Was He in

the Holy of Holies within the temple at Jerusalem or in the small home at Bethany? No doubt, He was in the small home in Bethany. Because God was in that home in Bethany, that home became the very Holy of Holies. The Holy of Holies in the temple was forsaken by God because it had become a part of the camp (Matt. 23:38—24:2). At that time, if anyone desired to worship God, they had to forsake the temple and go to that little home in Bethany. That little home was the Holy of Holies.

The principle is the same today. In order to worship God, you have to go outside of the camp of religion and enter within the veil to enjoy Christ in the Holy of Holies. The Lord Jesus as God is not in the old, religious, human organization, which is just a camp. In Hebrews Paul charged the hesitating, wandering, backsliding Hebrew believers to forget about their old religion, old temple, and old ritualistic worship and to go forth outside the camp to enter into the Holy of Holies to enjoy Christ (6:19; 10:22; 13:13). This Holy of Holies is the proper Christian meeting.

The Holy of Holies in Hebrews denotes three things: the third heaven, our spirit, and the Christian meeting. Whenever we come together properly, our gathering is the Holy of Holies. Of the three, which do you prefer, the third heaven, our spirit, or the Christian meeting? The heavens are difficult to reach, and we are often unable to remain in our spirit all day long, day and night. But according to my Christian experience, the meetings keep me in the Lord, in His Holy of Holies. I do not enjoy the Lord's presence elsewhere as much as I do in the meetings. It is enjoyable to be in our spirit, but the meeting as the Holy of Holies is much better and higher.

After some of us attend a ten-day training or a conference, and we are returning to our localities, we may feel that we are in the outer court and not in the Holy of Holies. We may long for the time when we can gather together again. This experience illustrates the reason Paul urged the Hebrew believers not to forsake the assembling of themselves together. If they forsook their assembling together, it meant that they went back to their old religion, their former camp. Thus, Paul charged them to go outside the camp and to enter within the veil. To enter within the veil includes three things: to enter into the heavenly Holy of Holies; to enter into our spirit, which is linked to the heavenly Holy of Holies; and to enter into the Christian meeting. The Christian meeting is the best because it nourishes, strengthens, edifies, and enlightens us, becoming a great spiritual benefit to us. The meetings are wonderful.

The meeting in the New Testament is referred to as a gathering (Matt. 18:20) and an assembly (Heb. 10:25). The assembling together of the believers, the meetings, should not be in the nature of fulfilling mixed purposes. Frequently, in Christianity the meetings are not pure in their purpose. The meetings of the believers should be purely in the nature of carrying out God's New Testament economy. If we were to hold a meeting that is not pure and that has a mixed purpose, it would be difficult to have the Lord's presence. The proper Christian meeting must be pure in its purpose. The essence, the nature, of the meeting must be purely to carry out God's New Testament economy.

God's New Testament economy is to get a people through Christ to be the church so that God may have a corporate expression in His fatherhood. Every Christian meeting must be pure in nature to carry out this economy of God so that God may express Himself as a great Father in all His children. To have a meeting with such a motive and purpose is really pure.

TO HAVE THE FULL MUTUALITY

In Speaking

The Christian meetings should be full of mutuality in speaking (Eph. 5:19). To fill the Christian meetings with mutuality is not very easy, but to have the mutuality is wonderful. Whether we come together with fifty, one hundred, or one hundred fifty, everyone should function. This creates a mutuality that fills up the entire meeting. One speaks for one minute, another speaks for half a minute, another speaks for five minutes, someone may speak for eight minutes, and someone else may speak for ten minutes. By this practice of everyone speaking according to their measure, we all would

produce a meeting that is full of mutuality.

I hope that we would improve, grow, and advance to a condition where many would speak. Some would speak for forty seconds, others for four minutes, and another for thirty minutes. We not only need the short speaking; we also need some longer speaking. There may be a meeting in which many speak in a short way and one would speak in a new, living, refreshing, and high way for perhaps forty minutes. This would be wonderful. The first chapter of Luke illustrates this. In this chapter there are three different kinds of speaking. The record of Elizabeth's speaking is the shortest (vv. 42-45). Mary, the mother of Jesus, spoke for a longer time (vv. 46-55). Finally, Zachariah, full of experiences, spoke the longest (vv. 68-79). Zachariah's speaking in Luke 1 contains no wasted words, and it is full of riches. How long you should speak depends upon your age and experience. Your experience and knowledge of the word of God constitute the content and the length of your speaking.

If everyone in the meeting speaks for a short time, and the meeting is full of mutuality, the new ones who come to the meeting will be convinced (1 Cor. 14:24-25). They may be shocked at first, asking what kind of meeting this is. They may have been Christians for many years, but they may never have seen a meeting with such mutuality—with everyone speaking.

We should also learn not to speak lightly. We must speak with weight. Otherwise, some may say that our speaking does not have much content. Our speaking must be with content. This needs the proper learning, practice, and training; therefore, the churches should train the saints to speak with content. If we all learn to give living and weighty words whenever and wherever we speak, we will surely be welcomed by all the churches. On the other hand, if we go to the meetings and only sit without saying anything, we will not be appreciated that much. Learn to speak, but do not speak lightly. This needs our daily practice. Every morning we should contact the Lord, reading a few verses to enjoy the Lord by enjoying His Word. We should pick up something from the Word and practice speaking the Lord the entire day. This will enrich our being, our person, and this will constitute the proper speaking. Then wherever we go, we will have not only the boldness but also the practice and habit of speaking. If I go to visit a church and stay for a few days, I cannot refrain from speaking. I am addicted to speaking. Wherever I go, I must speak—the more, the better. Build up a habit and taste for speaking.

When you speak, you get the firstfruits of the benefit. While I am speaking, you get some benefit, but I get the firstfruits of the benefit. This is why I am so strong. Learn to speak. To merely listen weakens you. On the one hand, listening nourishes you. On the other hand, if you listen only to others' speaking, it does nourish you, but it does not allow you to grow. The more help you receive in this way, the more you will eventually die. We must learn to speak, speak, speak.

It would be marvelous if we would learn to speak every item of the contents of chapter 1 of this book, [entitled "The God-ordained Way to Meet and to Serve as Revealed in the Holy Word"]. We can tell others, "The Christian meeting is linked to the processed Triune God. It is linked to Christ, who has passed through the processes of incarnation, human living, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension." We should learn to speak these things. Chapter 1 of this book is enough for the saints in the churches to speak on for one year, day by day and in every meeting. The contents of all my writings are embodied in this chapter. The husbands should speak concerning these things to their wives, and the wives to their husbands. I have been speaking concerning God's economy and the processed Triune God for nearly twenty-five years in the United States, and I have not yet exhausted this subject. Speaking concerning the Triune God is like cooking American beef in many different ways. The beef is the same, but the ways of cooking and serving it are many. Learn to speak concerning the processed Christ all the time. In other words, learn to speak the same thing all the time (1 Cor. 1:10). In order to fill the meeting with mutuality, the primary thing is speaking. When everyone speaks, the meeting is always full of mutuality.

**In Considering One Another
and in Exhorting One Another**

Hebrews 10:24 says, “Let us consider one another so as to incite one another to love and good works.” *Consider one another* indicates mutuality. I take care of you, and you take care of me—this is mutuality. Exhorting one another in verse 25 also indicates mutuality. In the New Testament, exhortation is mutual; it is not just in one direction. With exhortation there should be a two-way traffic, as indicated by the words *one another* in verses 24 and 25. In the meetings of Christianity exhortation is usually from one direction—from the pastor to the congregation; there is no exhortation that goes back to the pastor. However, when we meet, our exhortation must be among ourselves; it must be mutual.

In Teaching and in Admonishing

Teaching and admonishing are also in mutuality (Col. 3:16). We speak to one another, teaching and admonishing one another. Sometimes the sisters could admonish the brothers. The sisters should not say that because they are not teachers, they cannot speak. They should not teach (1 Tim. 2:12), but they should admonish. We admonish one another because we love one another. We are members of the same Body, so I admonish you, and you admonish me.

When I was young, I discovered that some Christian teachers said that females could teach in the church meetings, but others said that they could not. One day in Los Angeles in 1963, a brother who was knowledgeable of the Bible attended our meetings. When he observed that the sisters spoke in the meetings, he asked me why we allowed the sisters to speak. He said that the sisters should be silent. I responded by asking him whether or not the sisters were silent in his meetings. He said that they were. I then asked him if the sisters sang in his meetings. He affirmed that they did. Then I asked him whether or not singing was a kind of speaking. In other words, as long as the sisters were singing in his meeting, they were not actually silent. Then I asked why the sisters were allowed to sing and were not allowed to pray.

How strange that was! It is strange that the sisters were qualified to sing hymns but not qualified to pray. According to 1 Corinthians 11:5, however, women may pray and prophesy in the meeting, but they must do this under the covering of the brothers. The sisters must be emancipated to speak in the church meeting. They must be encouraged to speak but not in terms of teaching. The sisters should not teach, but they can exhort and admonish. Many times mothers can admonish their children better than fathers; likewise, the sisters are usually very skillful in admonishing. This is because the sisters are fine, not rough or coarse. Brothers, on the other hand, may be rough and coarse. When the brothers say Amen, it can be very rough. However, when the sisters say Amen, it can be like music, very pleasant to our ears. Since admonishing is a fine work, it is sometimes very difficult for the brothers to admonish. As a brother, teaching is very easy for me. But I may not be as qualified to admonish as some of the sisters. When the brothers admonish, the saints may not listen very much. But when a dear sister comes and admonishes, everyone may listen and obey. This illustrates why we need the sisters to speak. As long as they would speak and not teach, everything is fine.

All the sisters should be encouraged to speak. Many of the sisters need to be “emancipated,” not from man’s control but from their own control. Many sisters control themselves too much. It is always good for a sister to be quiet, gentle, and meek. I agree with and appreciate this. But I do not agree that the sisters’ mouths would be shut in the meeting. The sisters need to be gentle and meek but speaking.

PAYING A HIGH PRICE TO REACH THE STANDARD

To reach the standard of these characteristics of the believers’ meetings requires that we pay a high price. We must endeavor to reach this highest standard so that our meetings could be revolutionized, bearing the proper characteristics. Once our meetings are converted from the old way into the new way, the Lord will have something according to His New Testament economy. (*The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1987, vol. 3, “The Scriptural Way to Meet and to Serve for the Building Up of the Body of Christ,” pp. 300-306*)