

Guidelines for the exercise of the Lord's day Prophesying Message Two : Living the All-inclusive, Extensive Christ instead of Our Culture

I. Overview:

The central thought of the Bible is that God desires us to live Christ for the church as the Body of Christ, the one new man. The Christian life is the life in which the believers of Christ live Christ and magnify Him. If we would live Christ, we must take Him as our person and be one person with Him; He and we must be one. According to the full revelation in the Bible, God's intention is to work Himself in Christ into His chosen people. Those who do not have Christ certainly need to live according to culture, for culture preserves, regulates, and improves people. After we have received Christ, we should not allow culture to limit Christ or to frustrate us from experiencing and enjoying Christ; rather, we should begin to learn to live according to Christ, not according to culture. Every kind of culture is versus Christ, and Christ is versus every kind of the culture. If we see such a vision of the indwelling, all-inclusive, extensive Christ, we will spontaneously drop our culture.

II. Truth and Enlightenment:

Day 1 —

A. Expound what the central thought of the Bible is.

God desires us to live Christ for the building up of the Body of Christ. The main point of our Christian life is to live Christ. To live Christ should be our primary goal; all the troubles in our Christian life come because of our not living Christ. We need to practice to live Christ, realizing that He is the life-giving Spirit in our spirit, until we live Christ habitually.

B. Why do we say the climax of the divine revelation in whole Bible being to live Christ?

In order to live Christ, we must practice being one spirit with Him, and in order to practice being one spirit with Him, we must exercise our spirit to pray unceasingly. The habit of living Christ is the habit of prayer. Apart from unceasingly praying, we cannot live Christ. Part of the secret of living Christ is telling the Lord again and again that we love Him.

Day 2 —

A. Expound the economy of God in the book of Colossians.

According to the revelation in the book of Colossians, Christ is the portion of the saints, the Firstborn of all creation, the image of the invisible God, the Head of the Body, the Firstborn from among the dead, the One in whom all the fullness is pleased to dwell, the mystery of God's economy, the mystery of God, the reality of all positive things, and the constituent of the new man.

B. Explain God's intention being to dispense Christ into us.

Since Christ is everything, there is no need for us to decide to do anything or to be anything. Instead, we should simply turn to the Lord. We need to see the heavenly vision that in His economy, God wants nothing except Christ. All that Christ is and all that He has obtained and attained have been compounded into the all-inclusive Spirit.

Day 3 —

A. How do we treat culture properly?

The crucial point is not that we drop our culture; it is that we live Christ. The issue is not culture versus no culture; it is culture versus Christ. We need to care for Christ and live by Him. Children need culture until they are old enough to experience Christ and live by Him. Anyone who has not received Christ must have culture in order to live properly.

B. Expound what the two things hinder the accomplishment of God's full salvation.

Two of the more obvious hindrances are sin and worldliness. The most subtle hindrance, however, is culture. Culture frustrates God's chosen people from experiencing Christ and enjoying Him. The all-inclusive Christ is versus culture. However, after receiving Christ, we should live according to Christ, not according to culture.

Day 4 —

A. How do we see culture being versus Christ?

If we try to drop our culture without seeing that Christ is our life and our everything, we shall succeed only in exchanging one kind of culture for another. Apart from Christ, whatever we are and whatever we do is related to culture in some way. Any culture, no matter what kind of culture it is, is versus Christ. Apart from Him, every human product and development is part of culture.

B. Explain that we should not try to drop culture without Christ.

We should not endeavor to drop our culture without a vision of Christ. Since we have received Christ, we should not allow culture to become a substitute for Him. In Christ we have the liberty to set aside our culture in order to enlarge our capacity to enjoy the Lord. All the room within us must be given over to Christ.

Day 5 —

A. How do we exercise to take Christ replacing culture in our daily living?

As we sing and praise the Lord in the church meetings, we may conform to the atmosphere of the meetings. But at home we live according to our culture. We may learn in a practical way how to take Christ as our life and person to replace our culture. Once again I say that the point is not that we drop our culture. It is that we take Christ as our life and as our person.

B. How can we see a vision concerning the all-inclusiveness of Christ?

Christ must become everything to us in our daily living. The Christ who is the expression of God and the mystery of God's economy now lives in us. He is the One who is the image of the invisible God, the embodiment of the fullness of God, and the focal point of God's economy. Such a Christ now dwells in us.

Day 6 —

A. How should we do in order to make the enjoyment of meeting consistent with life?

In the church meetings, we may enjoy singing. However, when the meeting is over, we are the ones who live, not Christ. Instead of Christ living in us, our inward being is occupied with ourselves. But if we see the vision of Christ living in us, we shall stop all our doing. How blessed it is to do nothing and to let Christ live in us!

B. How should we beware of culture in every form?

In the Epistle to the Colossians, Paul tells us to beware of philosophy, tradition, and the elements of the world. This means that we should beware of culture in every form. We should not allow culture to become a substitute for Christ. Instead, we see that we are living plants rooted in Christ. We should simply walk in Him as the living land and grow by absorbing the riches of the soil into us.

III. Conclusion:

We need to consider this thing of culture correctly. Anyone who has not received Christ must have culture in order to live properly. God uses culture to preserve man, to correct man, and to improve man, especially as a child grows up, they need not only culture, but also law. These things will teach them to honor their parents, to love others, and to share their possessions with others; otherwise they will be reckless, unrestrained, and crude like a barbarian. And when they attain to a certain maturity, they will decide to receive Christ into them. Then we need to help them grow into Christ and with Christ. Gradually we can help them turn from culture to Christ. Eventually, instead of living according to culture, they will live according to Christ.