

Guidelines for the Exercise of the Lord's Day Prophecy Message Five : How to Conduct Ourselves in the House of God— Exercising Ourselves unto Godliness

I. Overview:

What Paul ministered to Timothy was entirely concerning how to conduct himself in the church. Respecting the headship of Christ and bearing the truth are two governing principles that we must follow in order to know how to conduct ourselves in the church life. In order to properly conduct ourselves in the house of God, the church, we need to take care of the healthy teaching. Godliness is a mystery; godliness is God manifested in man, being godlikeness, being like God, expressing God. As believers in Christ, we should pursue godliness; to pursue godliness is to live a daily life that manifests. The way to conduct ourselves in the church life is to exercise ourselves unto godliness. We all have to exercise our spirit, and need to build up the habit of exercising our spirit. Whenever we are in a hard situation, we have to force ourselves to exercise our spirit. To exercise our spirit is to set our mind on the spirit, to discern our spirit from our soul.

II. Truth and Enlightenment:

Day 1 —

A. Expound the two points concerning how to conduct ourselves in the house of God.

What Paul ministered to Timothy was entirely concerning how to conduct himself in the church in a time of degradation. We should respect the headship of Christ. Respecting the headship of Christ safeguards us from many kinds of mistakes in the church life. The second matter is that the entire church is the pillar and base of the truth. Every member in the church should practice to know the truth for becoming a pillar.

B. Explain in order to properly conduct ourselves in the house of God, we need to take care of the healthy teaching.

Second Timothy 4:3 says, "The time will come when they will not tolerate the healthy teaching; but having itching ears, and they will turn away their ear from the truth and will be turned aside to myths." The word tolerate is used to indicate enduring some kind of suffering. To some the healthy teaching becomes something that must be tolerated. We need to conduct ourselves in the church not according to our itching ears but according to the healthy teaching.

Day 2 —

A. Expound the meaning of the term, godliness.

The word godliness is used nine times in 1 and 2 Timothy. The proper definition of the term godliness is God manifested in the flesh, or the manifestation of God in the flesh. First Timothy 3:15 says that the church is the house of the living God, the pillar and base of the truth. Verse 16 indicates that the church is God manifested in the flesh, or the manifestation of God in the flesh.

B. Explain the word in First Timothy 3: 16 refers to the church's rapture.

Most Bible scholars do not realize that 1 Timothy 3:16 reveals that the mystery of godliness is God manifested in the church; they think that this verse refers only to Christ. However, because taken up in glory is the last phrase in verse 16, it must refer not only to Christ's ascension but also to the church's rapture, for Christ's ascension preceded His being preached among the nations.

Day 3 —

A. Expound that we need to lead a life in all godliness with First Timothy 2:2.

First Timothy 2:2 says that we need to lead a quiet and tranquil life in all godliness. The kind of pictures we hang in our bedroom may indicate whether or not we care for godliness in our private life. The pictures we choose may manifest God to others, or they may manifest something else. We can apply the same principle to hundreds of things in our daily life.

B. Explain how we should lead a life in all godliness in our conversations.

The words out of our mouth should give others the impression of God being manifested in the flesh. We should not allow loose talk and gossip to come into the church life. We must exercise our spirit to reject such talk, which does not bear any impression of God being manifested in our flesh. Even in the small things, we need to lead a life in all godliness.

Day 4 —

A. Expound the way to conduct ourselves in the church life.

The way to conduct ourselves in the church life is to exercise ourselves unto godliness. We should not do anything that is not a proper testimony of godliness to others. We do not need to consider whether or not something is legal or right but whether it is an expression of godliness, God manifested in the flesh.

B. Explain the godly life issuing from God's dispensing depending upon the exercise of our spirit.

God's economy is His household administration, His plan, to dispense Himself into us. His dispensing produces a life of godliness. Actually, godliness is the issue of the divine dispensing. Such a godly life issuing from God's dispensing depends upon the exercise of our spirit. A godly life comes out of God's dispensing, but which depends upon our coordination, and our coordination is the exercise of our spirit.

Day 5 —

A. Fellowship learning to set our mind on the spirit.

The mind is the great part of the soul, and the soul is in between our outward flesh and our inward spirit. We must learn to set our mind on the spirit. Our mind is very "talkative." If we do not control our mind, we can wander in our imagination all over the globe within a short time. This is why we must direct our mind to the spirit. When we do this, we will sing to the Lord, praise the Lord, or speak forth the Lord.

B. Expound the word discern in Hebrews 4:12.

It says that the word of God can divide our soul from our spirit and is able to discern the thoughts and intentions of the heart. Quite often our thoughts are deceiving. But if we exercise our spirit, there is a discernment that our thoughts are evil, because behind our thoughts there is an evil intention. To discern the thoughts and intents of the heart equals the dividing of the soul from the spirit.

Day 6 —

A. Explain that we exercise unto godliness in 1 Timothy 4:7.

Refusing the profane and old-womanish myths, we should exercise unto godliness. Such exercise is like gymnastics. The words unto godliness mean "with a view to godliness." Godliness is Christ lived out of us to be the manifestation of God. Today this very Christ is the Spirit dwelling in our spirit (2 Cor. 3:17; Rom. 8:9-10; 2 Tim. 4:22). Hence, to exercise ourselves unto godliness is to exercise our spirit to live Christ in our daily life.

B. Testify how we should be if we want to fan our spirit into flame.

We need to open up our mouth, open up our heart, and open up our spirit. Paul wrote 2 Timothy 1:6-7 according to his experience. He reminded Timothy to fan into flame the gift of God within him. Then he said that God has given us a spirit of power and of love and of sobermindedness. Power belongs to our will. Love belongs to our emotion. Sobermindedness belongs to our mind.

III. Conclusion:

Our meetings need to be full of the exercise of the Spirit. When we come together to meet, before we sing, pray, read the Bible, or do anything else, all of us should exercise our spirit. In all our meetings we should have such a worshipping spirit. All the saints must arise to exercise their spirit. We must help the saints to realize that we need to use our spirit to worship. We must help the saints to realize that our human spirit is God's lamp, fitted for God's use. Not only that, but also this Spirit is beautiful before God as the hidden man. Moreover, when our spirit is regenerated, we become the inner man. The hidden man is an invisible man, but the inner man can be very active and positive. According to Ephesians 3, the inner man must be very active and positively living out the Lord.