

Guidelines for the Exercise of the Lord's Day Prophesying
Message Five : Living the Christian Life by Enjoying the Flow of Life with the Ministry of Life out of and for the Magnificent House of God

I. Overview:

In order to live the Christian life, we need to enjoy the flow of life out of the house of God in Ezekiel 47. In order for the water to flow, there must be a threshold, an opening. The river of God flows in the direction of God's glory. The flow of life must have the preeminence within us, becoming the controlling factor in our living and work. The flowing is by the side of the altar, showing that we need the dealing of the cross and a full consecration to enjoy the flow of life. For the increase of the flow of life, we need to be measured by the Lord as the man of bronze. The depth of the flow depends on how much we have been measured by the Lord. Our enjoyment of Christ as the flow of life is for us to be sowers, planters, waterers, begetters, feeders, and builders. Song of Songs portrays that in the proper church life, the perfected believers coordinate with the transforming Spirit to perfect Christ's loving seekers by ministering the Triune God to them for their transformation by the Triune God's attributes being wrought into them to become their virtues. This is for the building up of the church as the organic Body of Christ to consummate the New Jerusalem for the accomplishing of God's eternal economy.

II. Truth and Enlightenment:

Day 1 —

A. Explain the meaning of the water flowing out from under the threshold of the house to the east. Ezekiel 47:1a says, "Then He brought me back to the entrance of the house, and there was water flowing out from under the threshold of the house to the east." In order for the water to flow forth, there must be a threshold, an opening, through which it can flow. This indicates that if we, through Christ, have more contact with God and draw closer to Him, there will be an opening which will allow the living water of God to flow out from the church.

B. Expound what the meaning of the water flowing out of the right side of the house is. Ezekiel 47:1c also tells us that the water flows out from the right side of the house. According to the Bible the right side signifies the highest position. The flowing of the water from the right side indicates that the flow of the Lord should have the preeminence. We need to give the Lord the highest position, and we also need to give the flow of the Lord the highest position. Then the flow will be prevailing and become the controlling factor in our living and work.

Day 2 —

A. Explain the Lord being a bronzer coming to measure us a thousand cubits. The man came with a measuring reed in his hand to measure the flowing of the river in Ezekiel 47:3. When this man first measured the river, there was only a trickle. Then he measured a thousand cubits, and it became deeper, up to the ankles. Again he measured a thousand cubits, and it became deeper, up to the knees. After this the man measured yet another thousand cubits, and the flow became even deeper, up to the loins. When he for the fourth time measured a thousand cubits, the flow became a river to swim in.

B. Fellowship how we should do as we are judged by the Lord. As we are judged by the Lord, we need to make a thorough confession. We need to allow the Lord to be our Judge and let Him bring us into His light and expose us. The Lord's judging and testing of us are not once for all. In Ezekiel 47 the man measured four times. This four measurings here indicate that as a creature we need to be thoroughly judged and tested by the Lord and then be fully taken over by Him.

Day 3 —

A. Explain the words in Ezekiel 47:8 and how to apply them. The river in Ezekiel 47:8 goes down into the Arabah, which means the wilderness, the dry land, the parched land that grows nothing; hence, the desert. This land needs the watering. The river is for watering the dry land and healing the Dead Sea. The Arabah is close to the Dead Sea. Because of the flow of the river into the sea, the salt water in the sea is healed. This watering and healing are for the purpose of producing life.

B. Expound in Ezekiel 47:9, where the river flows, everything shall live and be full of life.

Where the river flows, everything shall live and be full of life. This river is the river of life, and only life can cause things to live. Mere teachings and gifts are not important here, because they cannot impart life. In this flow the trees live and bear sweet, delicious fruit every month. Also, the water brings forth an abundance of fish.

Day 4 —

A. State that the salt water of the Dead Sea will be healed.

By the flowing of the river out of the house, the salt water of the Dead Sea will be healed. This means that death will be swallowed up by life. When there is a rich and deep flow of life in a local church, much death will be swallowed up by life. However, if there is no flow in a particular church, that church will become a “dead sea” full of salt.

B. Expound that the Lord Jesus rebuked the church in Laodicea.

The Lord Jesus rebuked the church in Laodicea for being lukewarm and neither hot nor cold. He also said that if they remained lukewarm, He would spew them out of His mouth. To be lukewarm is to be in a compromising situation, to be in a marsh. Our stand concerning the church must be absolute. If you stand on the ground of the church, you must stand absolutely.

Day 5 —

A. Expound six statures of a competent minister of the new covenant.

A sufficient minister of the new covenant is a person who ministers life to others in order to help them grow in life. In this chapter we will go on to see six statures of a competent minister of the new covenant as revealed in 1 Corinthians: a sower, a planter, a waterer, a begetter, a feeder, and a builder. These six statures are related to the matter of life, that is, to our experience and enjoyment of Christ as the life-giving Spirit.

B. Explain as ministers of the new covenant needed to be sowers.

In 1 Corinthians 9:11 Paul says to the Corinthians, “We have sown to you the spiritual things.” The spiritual things refers to spiritual seeds. A seed is a container of life, and to sow a seed is to impart life. Hence, sowing the spiritual things is a matter of life. The Lord Jesus came as a Sower to sow Himself as the seed of life into the human race. We as ministers of the new covenant need to be sowers.

Day 6 —

A. Expound as the minister of life needed to be feeders.

After begetting spiritual children, we need to feed them with the spiritual milk. Hence, we need to be feeders. To give others milk to drink is to feed them. Feeding is a matter of life. It differs from teaching, which is a matter of knowledge. We should be constantly nourished with Christ as spiritual food so that we may be able to feed others.

B. Explain Paul being not only a father, but also a mother who fed them.

In order to practice the proper church life, we need the genuine experience of life. Paul was not only a father who begot spiritual children but also a mother who fed them. We need to be spiritually strong and healthy so that, like Paul, we may be able to beget spiritual children and adequately produce the spiritual milk to feed them.

III. Conclusion:

For the flow of life within us to increase in the temple, the Lord must measure us. He is the tester, the judge, the examiner, and the possessor, for He measures us. The more He measures us, the deeper and wider the stream flows. After He has completely measured us, the stream becomes a river. In every city, we need a river; this river comes from the measurement of the bronze man in the temple. It is not enough to live at a local church; we all need to be measured by the Lord. We are already in a local church, but the living water of life may not be so deep. The stream in the church may not be a river. We will have a river after we are fully measured by the Lord. The Lord is not satisfied with just the flow of living water. He longs for a river, because a river can nourish, heal, and produce things. A river gives life to all things; rivers produce trees, fish, and livestock.