

Guidelines for the Exercise of the Lord's Day Prophesying
Message Twelve : Christ Coming with Reward and Punishment, a Lamp Shining in a Dark Place,
and Christ Appearing Privately to His Overcomers as the Morning Star

I. Overview:

In Revelation 22:12 says, "Behold, I come quickly, and My reward is with Me to render to each one as his work is". The Lord repeats His warning, "I come quickly", so that we will consider His reward, to be rendered at His coming back. When the Lord Jesus comes again to possess the kingdom, He will reward or punish all those who belong to Him. He who keeps the words of the prophecy of Revelation is blessed because he will be rewarded.

Eternal salvation has nothing to do with our works, but the kingdom reward will be altogether according to our works that we have done by the Lord's life after being saved. We have the prophetic word made more firm, to which you do well to give heed as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. This will cause and encourage them to earnestly seek the Lord's presence and be watchful so that they will not miss the Lord in the secret part of His coming (parousia), when He will come as a thief. At His coming back Christ will be the rising sun to His people generally, but the morning star to His watchful lovers particularly. Christ as the Root and Offspring of David is related to Israel and the kingdom, whereas His being the bright morning star is related to the church and the rapture.

II. Truth and Enlightenment:

Day 1 —

A. Expound what the warning of the reward in Revelation 22:12 is.

The Greek word translated "reward" in Revelation 22:12 means "wages." At the Lord's coming, this reward will be rendered to each one of the believers after their rapture at the judgment seat of Christ. When He comes again to possess the kingdom, the Lord will reward or punish all those who belong to Him. Some will receive His punishment because the Lord's word "My reward is with Me" implies that there is not only reward but also punishment.

B. Explain the words in 2 Corinthians 5:10.

Every saved one will be manifested before the judgment seat of Christ so that each one may receive the things done through the body according to what he has practiced, whether good or bad; those who practice good will receive a reward, and those who practice evil will receive punishment. It is because of this that even the apostle Paul says that he dared not examine himself, but He who examined him was the Lord.

Day 2 —

A. Explain the words in 1 Corinthians 3:15, and what warnings being given to us.

Some think that to suffer loss in 1 Corinthians 3:15a is to lose one's salvation, that is, to perish. The truth, however, is that we will still be saved, "yet so as through fire". After we are saved, there are still great issues to take care of. Our conduct is an issue, and our work also is an issue. When the Lord comes back, there will be a judgment.

B. State the possibility of punishment in the future being a warning to us.

The Bible reveals that the overcomers will reign for a thousand years, but it does not say how long the punishment for believers will last. However, we can still infer that the receiving of punishment will definitely take place during the millennium. In principle, the Lord wants to motivate us to cooperate with Him and to warn us of the loss that we will suffer for not cooperating with Him.

Day 3 —

A. Expound the words in 2 Peter 1:19.

Both the apostles' witness and the prophetic word in the Scriptures are the shining of the truth. This shining is part of the divine provision, the provision God has made by His power so that His elect children may be able to stay away from heresy and apostasy. Peter indicates that the believers do well to give heed to the prophetic word. This means that they were studying the Old Testament prophecies and giving heed to them.

B. Explain giving heed to the word of the prophecy of Scripture.

Peter says that we do well to give heed to the prophetic word until the day dawns and the morning star rises in our hearts. This also is a metaphor illustrating a coming time that will be full of light, as a bright day dawning, with the morning star rising, before its dawning, in the hearts of the believers, who are illuminated and enlightened by giving heed to the shining word of the prophecy of Scripture.

Day 4 —

A. Fellowship reading the Bible something within is shining.

We love the Word by giving heed to it until something within is dawning and rising in our heart—not the knowledge, not the written code, but the breaking through of day, the rising of the shining star. Sometimes we may take the Bible, read it, and feel that we receive nothing. Other times, however, when we open our heart and give heed to this prophetic word, something within is shining, rising, dawning, breaking through.

B. State what the studying of the prophecies properly is.

In 2 Peter 1:19 Peter is speaking both of a spiritual day and the day of the Lord's coming. As we studied the prophecies, a lamp began to shine within us.

Spontaneously, we had the sense that no longer were we in the night but in the day, for a spiritual day had dawned within us. How pleasant it is for the morning star to rise up in our hearts.

Day 5 —

A. Expound that in His coming back, Christ will be the morning star to the overcomers.

In Revelation 2:28 He gives a promise to the overcomer, saying, "To him I will give the morning star." At Christ's first appearing the wise men, not the Jewish religionists, saw His star. At His second appearing He will be the morning star as a reward to His overcomers who watch for His coming. To all others He will appear only as the sun.

B. Explain that we should love the Lord's appearing.

In Revelation 22:12 the Lord Jesus said, "Behold, I come quickly." In verse 20 the Lord also said, "Yes, I come quickly." Our loving response should be, "Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!" We should always call for His coming. We must tell the Lord, "Lord Jesus, I love You, and I love Your appearing."

Day 6 —

A. Explain the words in Revelation 22:20, and what its warnings are.

The first part of Revelation 22:20 is the Lord's third warning that He is coming quickly. The last part is the apostle John's prayer and response to the Lord's warning. It is also the last prayer in the Bible. After reading this book, we should have such a prayer and response — "Come, Lord Jesus!"

B. Expound that we should be watchful to prepare the Lord's coming again.

At the end of the first century, the Lord said, "Behold, I come quickly," so that we would consider His reward to be rendered at His coming back. This is the Lord's warning. We should not think that because the Lord has been tolerating the situation for more than nineteen centuries, He is slow to come back. We need to look at the world situation today. We must pray and be watchful. We must also be prepared in spirit and in our daily life.

III. Conclusion:

We live on earth, and it is not enough merely to have a clear conscience; the Lord will also judge how we serve Him. According to Matthew 25, perhaps we have not received two or five talents, but at least each one of us has received one talent from the Lord. We cannot say that we are unsaved, lacking of the Lord's life, or devoid of the Holy Spirit; we all have possessed these things. The result of having received these gifts is that each one of us has at least one talent, which we must put to use, engaging in trade to earn profit for the Lord. Scripture shows us that the one who received five talents earned another five, and the one who received two talents likewise earned another two. Both were commended by the Lord for their faithfulness. However, the one who received one talent faced great peril, believing himself inferior, and he buried his gift and was rebuked by the Lord as an evil and lazy servant.