

Guidelines for the Exercise of the Lord's Day Prophesying
Message Five : The Kingdom People Having the Experience of Praying in Private to Contact
Their Heavenly Father in Secret to Have Some Secret Enjoyment of Him

I. Overview:

We need the experience of praying in our private room and shutting our door; our Father sees in secret. Any time we exhibit ourselves in our righteous deeds, we are not healthy; such an exhibition greatly frustrates our growth in life. We need to learn from the pattern of the Lord living a hidden life. The Lord did not remain in the issue of the miracle with the crowds, but He went away from them to be with the Father privately on the mountain in prayer. Psalm 42:7 says, "Deep calls unto deep". Anything that is not from the depths will never reach the depths of others. We need to allow Christ as the seed of life to take root deep in the soil of our heart as the good earth; Christ is the reality of the good land. In order to live a life in the depths, it is necessary to have direct and intimate fellowship with the Lord. Song of Song 4:12 says, "A garden enclosed is my sister, my bride, / A spring shut up, a fountain sealed."

II. Truth and Enlightenment:

Day 1 —

A. Expound the people of God doing all things to please their heavenly Father instead of doing good deeds to gain men's praise.

Man's flesh, seeking to glorify itself, always wants to do good deeds before men in order to gain men's praise. But the kingdom people, who live in an emptied and humbled spirit and walk in a pure and single heart under the heavenly ruling of the kingdom, are not allowed to do anything in the flesh to gain the praise of men but must do all things in the spirit to please their heavenly Father.

B. Why did the Lord use the word secret regarding each of the three illustrations in Matthew 6?

We must do our righteous deeds in secret, for our Father is in secret. In verse 4 the Lord said that our Father sees in secret. The kingdom people, as children of the heavenly Father, must live in the presence of the Father and care for the Father's presence. Whatever they do in secret for the Father's kingdom is seen in secret by the Father.

Day 2 —

A. Explain the genuine growth in life being to cut off the self.

We should pray much yet not let others know how much we pray. This is healthy. If you pray every day without telling others or letting them know about it, it means that you are healthy and that you are growing. However, suppose you always tell others how much you pray. If you do this, you will not only lose your reward, but you will not grow in life or be healthy.

B. State God being always hidden, always secret.

The universe indicates that God is hidden, that God is secret. Although He has done a great many things, people are not aware that He has done them. We may have seen the things done by God, but none of us has ever seen Him, for He is always hidden, always secret. God's life is of such a secret and hidden nature.

Day 3 —

A. Expound the Lord going up to the mountain privately to pray after performing the miracle.

After performing the miracle of feeding five thousand, the Lord went up to the mountain privately to pray. The Lord did not remain in the issue of the miracle with the crowds but went away from them to be with the Father privately on the mountain in prayer. We need to see and follow the pattern of the Lord Jesus. He did not remain in the issue of the great miracle that He performed. Instead, He went up to the mountain privately to pray.

B. Explain the meaning of going up to the mountain to pray.

To pray with others is good, but often we need to pray by ourselves. When we pray with others, we cannot enjoy the Lord as deeply as when we pray to the Lord privately. Even the Lord Jesus told us that when we pray we should enter into our private room and shut our door and pray to the Father who sees in secret.

Day 4 —

A. Expound the words in Psalm 42:7, and how to use it.

Only a call from the depths can provoke a response from the depths. Nothing shallow can ever touch the depths, nor can anything superficial touch the inward parts. Anything that does not issue from the depths cannot touch the depths. Others can respond deep within to only what issues from deep within us. Only deep calls unto deep. Superficial expressions will not touch the depths of others.

B. Explain one principle in preaching and receiving the word.

The principle is found in the Lord's parable of the sower. There is a little earth on the surface, but underneath there are rocks. When the seed falls into this kind of ground, it springs up quickly, but as soon as the sun comes out, it withers because of the lack of root. A root is growth that occurs beneath the soil; leaves are growth that occurs above the soil. The trouble with many Christians is that, while there is much apparent life, there is very little secret life.

Day 5 —

A. Differentiate bearing testimony from exhibiting one's experience.

Should we not bear testimony? Yes, we should. Paul did so, but bearing testimony is one thing; delighting in exhibiting one's experience is quite another. What is our object in testifying? The love of hearing one's own voice and the desire to be helpful to others are two totally different things. We testify because there is a problem, and we have to speak about it. When the Lord so leads, we should testify because we want to render help to others.

B. Look at that the Lord Jesus sometimes gave His testimony, but He was never talkative.

The Lord healed the sick and insisted that the story of the healing be kept secret. This charge is repeated again and again in the Gospel of Mark. To be without root is to be without any treasure; it is to be without any hidden life or hidden experiences. It is essential that some of our experiences remain covered.

Day 6 —

A. Expound in order to live a life in the depths, it is necessary to have direct and intimate fellowship with the Lord.

What is spoken of in Song of Songs 4:12 is a garden. A garden is not an ordinary plot of land; it is not for general-purpose planting. Neither is it a field, which is specifically for tillage. A garden exists solely for the purpose of beauty and enjoyment. The importance of a garden is in its flowers. They are planted only for their beauty. Flowers are for the pleasure of the eyes.

B. State the description of the garden enclosed and the fountain sealed.

A fountain stands for the joy and contentment we acquire before God. We cannot consciously divulge our experience to men, because it is a sealed fountain.

A Christian should not consciously exhibit his beauty, pursuit, and spiritual experience to others. Everything should be silently sealed up for the Lord. Only this kind of life in the depths will satisfy the Lord's heart.

III. Conclusion:

Jesus Christ went up a mountain to pray alone. First, He indicated that He was asking His Father to bless all those who would benefit from this miraculous event, so that they would not be content with the perishable food but would seek the food that endures forever. He also recognized that He was not only the Son of Man but also the Son of God, sent by His Father and confirmed by Him, and that He could grant them eternal life. Secondly, He sought guidance from His Father on how to care for the five thousand people who had been fed through His miraculous act of distributing five loaves of bread and two fish. In Matthew 14, it is easy to see the miracle of feeding five thousand people with five loaves of bread and two fish, but to learn valuable lessons from this miracle requires divine revelation. However, if we learn from the Lord's methods of performing miracles and gain insight into the detailed aspects of life lessons, we will receive the life dispensing. We must learn these lessons from the Lord so that we may enter into the God-man living.