

Guidelines for the Exercise of the Lord's Day Prophesying

Message Six : Being Perfect as Our Heavenly Father Is Perfect

I. Overview:

We are the Father's children, having the Father's divine life and divine nature; hence, we can be perfect as our Father is perfect. The organically perfect new man needs to be perfected through the growth in life in order to function in a proper way. The new man can become perfect in relation to his function only through receiving the proper nourishment. The divine love as God's essential attribute is mainly expressed in sending His Son to redeem us and impart God's life into us so that we may become His children. The love of God has been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit. First Corinthians 12:31—13:8 reveals that love is the most excellent way for us to be anything and to do anything for the building up of the Body of Christ. First John 4 tells that the secret of how to stand boldly before the judgment seat of Christ is to abide in love. Perfect love is the love that has been perfected in us by our loving others with the love of God; such love casts out fear and has no fear of being punished by the Lord at His coming back.

II. Truth and Enlightenment:

Day 1 —

A. Expound how the kingdom people to be perfect.

For the kingdom people to be perfect as their heavenly Father is perfect means that they are perfect in His love. They are the Father's children, having the Father's divine life and divine nature. Hence, they can be perfect as their Father is. The demand of the new law of the kingdom is much higher than the requirement of the law of the old dispensation. This higher demand can be met only by the Father's divine life.

B. State that how much the divine life within us can do for us.

All the requirements of these changed laws reveal how much the divine life within us can do for us. These laws are not merely a requirement; they are a revelation, showing us that the divine life can even make us perfect as our heavenly Father is perfect. We have a life with such a divine nature that it can make us as perfect as our Heavenly Father.

Day 2 —

A. Distinguish between something that is perfect organically and something that is perfect according to its function.

At birth, an infant is perfect organically; that is, the infant has all the necessary organs. However, a child is not functionally perfect at birth. Organically, a mother cannot help her child, for she cannot add any organs to the child. But she can help him functionally by feeding him so that he will grow normally. In order to develop properly and to function normally, every child needs to be nourished and cherished.

B. Expound that the new man created by Christ must be perfected in order to function.

At birth, the new man is organically perfect; however, he is not yet able to function. Just as a child needs to be perfected through nourishing and cherishing, so the organically perfect new man needs to be perfected through the growth of life in order to function in a proper way. In the same principle, the new man created by Christ must be perfected in order to function.

Day 3 —

A. Explain what God's nature includes.

God's nature includes Spirit as the nature of God's person, love as the nature of God's essence, and light as the nature of God's expression. Since God is dispensing Himself in His nature into us, the more we are under God's dispensing, the more we have of His Spirit, love, and light. Because God is love as well as Spirit, the more we are under His dispensing, the more love we have.

B. Expound that if we are under God's dispensing, our reactions will be different.

If we are under God's dispensing, our reactions will indicate to others that we have much Spirit, love, and light, even that we are constituted of Spirit, love, and light. The divine love is the nature of God's essence.

Thus, it is an essential attribute of God. God so loved that, by making them alive through His Son with His own life, they might become His children.

Day 4 —

A. Explain that love prevails.

Love prevails. Regardless of how much we shepherd and teach others, without love everything is in vain. Even if we prophesy in the highest way and give everything for others, without love they mean nothing. Both shepherding and teaching need love, not our natural love but His divine love.

B. Expound that our desiring of gifts must go along with the pursuing of love.

We may think that we are living, but we are dead because we do not love. If we do not love our brother, we abide in death and are dead, but if we do love him, we abide in life and are living. First Corinthians 13 speaks of love, and then chapter 14 begins by saying that we are to pursue love while we desire spiritual gifts. Our desiring of gifts must go along with the pursuing of love.

Day 5 —

A. State what the significance of being as His species.

We are God's species because we have been born of Him to have His life and nature. We have been regenerated to be God's species, God's kind, and God is love. Since we become God in His life and nature, we also should be love. This means that we do not merely love others but that we are love itself. As His species, we should be love because He is love.

B. Expound predestinating us unto sonship being motivated by the divine love.

In Ephesians 1:4-5, the phrase in love can be joined with the phrase predestinating us unto sonship. God predestinated us unto sonship in love. John 3:16 says that God so loved the world. He loved us before the foundation of the world. God's giving of His only begotten Son to us that we may be saved from perdition judicially through His death and have the eternal life organically in His resurrection was motivated by the divine love.

Day 6 —

A. Explain the words in 1 John 4:16.

In 1 John 4:16 John says that he who abides in love abides in God and God abides in him. To abide in love is to live a life in which we love others habitually with the love that is God Himself, that He may be expressed in us. To abide in God is to live a life that is God Himself as our inward content and outward expression, that we may be absolutely one with Him. God abides in us to be our life inwardly and our living outwardly. Thus, He can be one with us in a practical way.

B. Expound the love of God being perfected with us.

In our abiding in the love that is God Himself the love of God is perfected in us, that is, perfectly manifested in us, that we may have boldness without fear. in the day of judgment. In verse 17 John speaks of the love of God being perfected with us. The word perfected is a translation of the Greek word *teleioo*, which means "to complete, to accomplish, to finish." The love of God itself is perfect and complete in Himself, but it still needs to be perfected in us.

III. Conclusion:

In the church life, we have our natural tastes. We prefer gentle brothers and kind sisters. We hope that all brothers and sisters would be like that. But this is just a dream, because there are always those who trouble us. God uses these things to reveal our natural preferences. After being exposed, we may say, "Lord, have mercy on me. How much I need Your salvation! I will trust in You." Then we will be perfect as our heavenly Father is perfect. We have the life of the kingdom within us, and we can fulfill the laws of the heavenly kingdom not by ourselves but by the life and nature of our Father. Therefore, we must thank Him for sending numerous trials into our environment, so that He can touch on our persons and expose our beings, making us fully relying on Him and living by Him. Then we will become the true kingdom people.