

Guidelines for the Exercise of the Lord's Day Prophesying

Message Three : The Maturity of the Bride

I. Overview:

The meaning of the word mature in Greek is “at the end point”; the word mature refers to the believers' being full-grown and perfected in the life of Christ. The last stage of transformation is maturity, the fullness of life. A mature believer knows and cares for the Body of Christ, being Body-conscious. The prerequisite for maturity in the spiritual life is to grow continually in the divine life. The Lord Jesus is actually the unique Farmer. While we are awaiting with long-suffering the Lord's coming, He, as the real Farmer, is awaiting with patience our maturity in life. The secret of the maturity of the seeking one is that her will has been completely subdued; then it will be strong in resurrection and like the tower of David, the armory for the spiritual warfare. The life of Jacob reveals that everything that happens to us is under God's sovereignty for our transformation and maturity. The strongest sign of Jacob's maturity was his blessing others. The readiness of the bride depends on the maturity in life of the overcomers. The wedding will bring in the reign of the Lord, the kingdom, because all the guests called to the wedding will be both the corporate bride and the co-kings of the Bridegroom.

II. Truth and Enlightenment:

Day 1 —

A. Explain the difference between transformation and maturity.

The last stage of transformation is maturity. Maturity means the fullness of life. The more life we have, the more mature we are. An infant is obviously not mature, but a grown man is mature. Transformation is a metabolic change in life. Thus, transformation is not a matter of fullness; it is a matter of change. Only through transformation can we reach maturity.

B. Unveil the words in Romans 12:2 and in 2 Corinthians 3:18.

The word translated “transformed” in Romans 12:2 also appears in 2 Corinthians 3:18. The word “transformed” in these two verses indicates that in our Christian life we need a metabolic change. We do not need outward correction and alteration; rather, we need an inward change in nature and in life. This metabolic change begins with regeneration.

Day 2 —

A. Explain the word in Philippians 3:12-15.

The apostle Paul tells us how he pursued growth and maturity in the life of Christ. In this matter, he was never contented with himself but always pursued, forgetting the things which were behind and stretching forward to the things which were before, pressing toward Christ, who is the goal and the mark. This he did in order to gain Christ that he might grow and mature in His life. We should have this mind and set this as the goal.

B. Expound the words in Matthew 5:48 and how to experience this.

The Lord commands us to be perfect (in life) as our heavenly Father is perfect. To be perfect in life is to grow and mature in life. The Lord commands us in this way in the conclusion of the law of the new life in the kingdom of the heavens because we are children born of our Father with our Father's life. This life is able to make us perfect as our Father is perfect.

Day 3 —

A. Explain the words in James 5:7 and its spiritual significance.

In James 5:7 James uses the illustration of a farmer eagerly awaiting with long-suffering the precious fruit of the earth. The Lord Jesus is actually the real Farmer, the unique Farmer. As we are awaiting His coming, He, as the real Farmer, is awaiting our maturity. We may pray, “Lord, come back quickly.” However, He may say, “My children, mature quicker. While you are awaiting My coming back, I am awaiting your maturity.”

B. Expound that in Song of Songs 4:4, the Lord likens the seeking one's neck to the tower of David.

In Song of Songs 4:4, the Lord likens the seeking one's neck to the tower of David. Hair and neck signify our will. Those who are rebellious toward God in the Bible are called stiff-necked. A flock of goats appearing on the mountain shows the subduing of her will, and the tower of David illustrates how strong her will is in resurrection. The tower of David build up as armory.

Day 4 —

A. Explain the meaning of the word mature.

The meaning of the word mature in Greek is "at the end point." This word is used many times in the New Testament, referring to the believers' being full-grown, mature, and perfected in the life of God. Although we receive the life of God when we are regenerated, after regeneration we still need to grow and mature unto perfection in this life.

B. Expound the discipline of the Holy Spirit.

The discipline of the Holy Spirit refers to what the Holy Spirit is doing in our outward environment; it refers to His arranging of all people, things, and happenings, through which we are being disciplined. The major work of God toward us through the Holy Spirit, aside from the Holy Spirit as the anointing, is in His outward discipline.

Day 5 —

A. Why must Jacob's history become our biography?

We must believe that everything in our daily life is under God's sovereign hand. Everything that happened to Jacob was for his transformation and maturity. In order to be transformed, Jacob had to be pressed into situations that gave him no choice except to undergo a change. The Lord is working among us, on us, and in us to transform us and to cause us to mature.

B. Describe from Jacob's experience we seeing God's sovereignty.

From Jacob's experience we see that everything that happens to us is under God's sovereignty for our transformation and maturity. Nothing is accidental. God's eternal purpose can only be accomplished through our transformation and maturity. Jacob had come to know God's mercy. In his experiences through all his life, he eventually realized that it was God's mercy, not his skill and ability,

Day 6 —

A. Explain the mature life becoming the reigning life.

We all should have the aspect of maturity and the aspect of reigning. Actually, it was not Joseph who was reigning in Egypt—it was Jacob, Israel. If you could have asked an Egyptian who was reigning over him, he would have said that a Hebrew, an Israelite, was reigning. Israel was reigning in Egypt because Israel had matured in life.

B. Expound regarding the marriage of the Lamb.

The marriage of the Lamb will come after the rapture of the majority of raptures and before the wedding, there will be the judgment at the judgment feast. If you are rewarded at the judgment seat of Christ, you will participate in the wedding feast. If you are not rewarded but are disapproved of by the Lord, you will not perish; yet you will suffer a loss like that described in 1 Corinthians 3:15.

III. Conclusion:

Romans 8:28; We know that all things work together for good to those who love God. Pressure and heat are "all things" that work together for our good; according to verse 29, this "good" is that we may be conformed to the image of Christ. The more we love God, the more He uses "all things" to form us in the image of Christ. We need to understand that God is in control of everything. He directs our circumstances and encounters, appoints spouses and children that are just right for us, and uses them to shape us. God has already placed us in the mold of Christ, where we will be pressed and shaped to take on the image of Christ. I am fully convinced that at the end of this age, the Lord will restore a small number of believers to build together in preparation for His return. This will pave the way for His return. The built-up Body and the prepared bride are the reality of the kingdom.