

Guidelines for the Exercise of the Lord's Day Prophesying

Message One : Christ as Our Virtues, the Peace of God, Our Secret, and the One Who Empowers Us

I. Overview:

Paul considers forbearance and the lack of anxiety as the first two aspects of the expression of a life that lives Christ. Anxiety came from Satan and forbearance came from God, which is the sum total of a life that lives Christ. According to Christian experience, forbearance includes all Christian virtues; forbearance is actually the all-inclusive Christ as the all-inclusive Spirit with His bountiful supply. With respect to space, the Lord is near us, ready to help; with regard to time, the Lord is at hand, coming soon. When we have problems in our daily life, we do not have to seek advice from others, because we have a spirit in us. There are six governing aspects of a life that lives Christ; 1) a life is true, ethically truthful, 2) a life is dignified, worthy of reverence, 3) a life is righteous, right before God and man, 4) a life is pure, single in intention and action, 5) a life is lovely with lovable, 6) a life is well spoken of, renowned. Paul learned the secret of how to live Christ, how to magnify Christ, and how to have the church life. If we would experience Christ as the empowering One, we need to cooperate with Him, be persons who pray continually by coming before God, entering into Him, and living in the light of His face.

II. Truth and Enlightenment:

Day 1 —

A. Exound what the real expression of a life that lives Christ is.

This expression is found in the virtues listed in 4:5-9. In the same principle, in chapter 2 Paul sets forth Christ as our pattern. The same is true with respect to Paul's word in chapter 3 concerning counting all things as loss, even refuse, in order to gain Christ. Again the expression is seen in 4:5-9.

B. Explain what the forbearance is.

Forbearance is the most important element of a tranquil life. Forbearance is reasonableness and consideration in dealing with others, and without strictness of legal right. Forbearance includes patience and moderation but goes beyond them. If you have forbearance, you will not argue or debate with others. Rather, you are patience and moderation in dealing with others and say anything in response to provocation.

Day 2 —

A. Why is forbearance all-inclusive?

The Greek word rendered "forbearance" not only means satisfied with less than our due but also means sweet reasonableness. The word includes self-control, patience, moderation, kindness, and gentleness. Furthermore, according to Christian experience, forbearance is all-inclusive, for it includes all Christian virtues.

B. State that forbearance is actually Christ Himself.

The reason we sometimes behave in an unseemly manner is that we lack forbearance. Negative attitudes and unkind words also come from a shortage of forbearance. When we fail to love, it is because we have no forbearance. Likewise, we may be intolerant because we lack forbearance. Even talkativeness may result from having no forbearance.

Day 3 —

A. Explain the meaning of the word of forbearance and how to practice it.

The Greek word for forbearance means "reasonable, considerate, suitable, and fitting." A forbearing person is one who always fits in, one whose behavior is always suitable. The reason some saints do not fit in is that they are not forbearing. A forbearing person is one who always fits in, whose behavior is always suitable, no matter what the circumstances or environment may be.

B. Exound how the Lord treats the disciples who go the way of downward.

The life of the Lord Jesus is the best illustration of forbearance. Consider how He spoke to those two disciples on the way to Emmaus. How forbearing the Lord was to listen to the disciples speak things that He knew much better than they did! In all of this we see the Lord's forbearance in His speaking, patience, and behaviour.

Day 4 —

A. Explain the words in Philippians 4:6 and its practicing.

In Philippians 4:6 Paul speaks of prayer, petition, and thanksgiving. Prayer is general; petition is special and is related to particular needs. Daily we need to have a time to contact the Lord, to have fellowship with Him, and to worship Him. During the course of our fellowship, we may have particular requests. Both our prayer and petition should be accompanied by thanksgiving to the Lord.

B. Exound “In nothing be anxious” in Philippians 4:6.

Anxiety undermines the living of Christ. Instead of being anxious, in everything by prayer and petition with thanksgiving, we should make our requests known to God. Then the peace of God will guard our hearts and thoughts in Christ Jesus. The peace of God saves us from worry and anxiety. Being free from anxiety is for the purpose of keeping us calm and tranquil.

Day 5 —

A. Exound the first governing aspect of a life that lives Christ being “what things are true.”

The first governing aspect of a life that lives Christ is “what things are true.” The word true here means “truthful ethically,” not merely true in the matter of fact. In the expression of a life that lives Christ, there can be no falsehood, no lying. Everything we do or say must be truthful. A life that is the expression of Christ is a truthful one.

B. Explain that if we live Him, we will have true dignity.

We should not think that only older people should be weighty. Even a young brother in junior high school should have dignity, for he has God within him. To have dignity is not to act important; it is to live God. We are a vessel containing Christ. If we live Him, we will have true dignity.

Day 6 —

A. Explain the importance of the secret.

In teaching people to do things, even insignificant things, we mainly teach them the secret. We may talk a great deal about the book of Philippians but not know the secret of experiencing Christ. Because we do not have the key, we cannot open the door to the experience of Christ. On the one hand, Paul says, “I have learned the secret”; on the other hand, he testifies, “I am able to do all things in Him who empowers me”.

B. Exound the words I have learned the secret in Philippians 4:12.

The words I have learned the secret in Philippians 4:12 is a metaphor, which refers to a person’s being initiated into a secret society with instruction in its rudimentary principles. After Paul was converted to Christ, he was initiated into the church life. And he was instructed in the secret of how to enjoy Christ, how to take Christ as life, how to live Christ, how to magnify Christ, how to gain Christ, and how to have the church life.

III. Conclusion:

Philippines is a book that speaks about Paul’s circumstances. In it, we have seen the secret of Christian life and the practical way to live a church life, which is the indwelling Christ living in us. Regardless of our circumstances, we have a wonderful person living in us, bearing our burdens. We need to learn to turn to Christ taking Him as our person, letting Him replace us. All of our circumstances teach us the secret of living by Him. All of our circumstances force us to put ourselves aside and accept Him as our person. This is the main lesson we need to learn in this book. We need to experience and enjoy Christ as our empowerer, enabling us to stand firm in Him, to be rejoicing always in the Lord. Let the peace of Christ arbitrate in our heart, expressing the highest human virtues in all things.