

Guidelines for the Exercise of the Lord's Day Prophesying

Message One : Steadfastly in Prayer and in the Ministry of the Word

I. Overview:

To pray means that we realize that we are nothing and that we can do nothing; this implies that prayer is the real denial of the self. A man of prayer must be one who seeks God and God's will. The real significance of prayer is to contact God in our spirit and to absorb God Himself. Genuine prayers are prayers that are mingled with God the Spirit in our spirit. Prayer must be a joint prayer in which God is mingled with our spirit. In this prayer God and man mingle together, and God is the Initiator; God prays in man, and man prays in God. The Bible contains a most lofty and spiritual prayer—the prayer of authority. Praying with authority is praying the prayer in Mark 11:23-24. The church can have such a prayer with authority by having full faith, being without doubt, and being clear that what we do is fully according to God's will. Prayer should precede the ministry of the word. When Christ spreads into our hearts, He becomes our person. When Christ makes His home in our hearts, we will be filled unto all the fullness of God.

II. Truth and Enlightenment:

Day 1 —

A. Explain the real significance of prayer.

Many people, upon hearing the term prayer, immediately think that it means man coming before God to make supplication. Because man is in want and needs material supply, or is sick and needs healing, or has other problems and needs some solution, he goes before God, asking Him to supply his needs, heal his sickness, and solve his problems.

B. Expound a real prayer.

A real prayer is also man breathing in God just as he breathes in air. While you are thus breathing in God, spontaneously you are obtaining God, just as when you breathe in air, you receive air. Consequently, not only is God obtained by you to become your enjoyment, but also your whole being surrenders to God, turns unto God, and is wholly gained by God. The more you pray, the more you will be filled with God.

Day 2 —

A. Explain the words in James 5:17.

We often speak of Elijah's prayer. Earnestly prayed in Greek means "prayed with prayer," or "prayed in prayer." This is a very peculiar expression in the Bible. This is what we mean by prayer of two parties. When Elijah was praying, he was praying with, or in, a prayer. In other words, he prayed with the prayer of the Spirit within him. Thus, we can say that Elijah's prayer was God praying to Himself in Elijah.

B. Expound the real prayer as man mingling with God.

Real prayers will certainly cause our being to be wholly mingled with God. When you pray, it is He praying, and when He prays, it is also you praying. When He prays within you, you express the prayer outwardly. He and you are altogether one, inside and outside; He and you both pray at the same time. At that time you and God cannot be separated, being mingled as one.

Day 3 —

A. Explain what the characteristics of the up to standard prayer are.

A prayer that is up to the standard must be one in which man is not praying for himself or for others but for God. Even when we pray for sinners to be saved or for the brothers and sisters to be revived, we ought to be praying for God. The highest meaning of prayer is that it is a means by which God may gain His authority and benefit.

B. Expound the tremendous principle of the proper prayer for measure our prayers.

You must touch this deep and tremendous principle and measure your prayers by it. Then you will discover, even in such a divine matter as prayer, how much you are still filled with yourself and how little you have passed through God's purification. Whether it is in the intention, the motive, or the expectation of your prayer, there is mixture within you. Yes, you are praying to God, but in your heart you are praying wholly on your own and for your own sake.

Day 4 —

A. Expound the real prayer being man cooperating with God.

In the beginning it is God who initiates, in the process you are but one who cooperates with God, and ultimately it is for the glory of God. This is real prayer—man being united with God and cooperating with Him on earth, allowing Him to express Himself and accomplish His purpose through man. A man of prayer must only care for God and His will, having no other desire besides this.

B. Fellowship the pattern of the Lord's Prayer on earth.

We can see this characteristic very clearly in our Lord Jesus when He lived as a man on this earth. When He was praying in Gethsemane, He fellowshiped with God the matter of His death, saying, "If it is possible, let this cup pass from Me." But then He also said, "Yet not as I will, but as You will". Three times He told God, "I want Your will, not Mine."

Day 5 —

A. Why do we need to be strengthened into our inner man?

In Ephesians 3:16 the inner man is our regenerated spirit, which has God's life as its life. It is our spirit regenerated by the Spirit of God, indwelt by the Spirit of God, and mingled with the Spirit of God. In order to experience Christ unto all the fullness of God, we need to be strengthened into our inner man. This implies that we need to be strengthened into our spirit through the Holy Spirit.

B. State Christ making His home in your hearts.

Our heart is composed of all the parts of our soul—the mind, the emotion, and the will—plus our conscience, the main part of our spirit. These parts are the inward parts of our being. Through regeneration Christ came into our spirit. After this, we should allow Him to spread Himself into every part of our heart. Our heart is the totality of all our inward parts and the center of our inward being.

Day 6 —

A. Explain that in our experience of Christ, we should go on to a "cube".

Christ is immeasurable in His spreading forth. As we experience Christ in His spreading, we come to see that the dimensions of the universe are the very dimensions of Christ. In our experience of Christ, we should go on from the two dimensions to three, from a "square" to a "cube." Both in the tabernacle and in the temple, the Holy of Holies was a cube.

B. Expound the genuine church life being the issue of Christ personally making His home in our heart.

The genuine church life is the issue of Christ personally making His home in our heart to occupy every corner of our inner being. The content of the church is the Christ whom we take as our person, the Christ who is wrought into our being. In order for Christ's word in Matthew 16:18 concerning the building up of the church to be fulfilled, the church must enter into a state where many saints allow Christ to make His home in their heart.

III. Conclusion:

When we are saved, Christ enters into our spirit. Now we must give Him opportunity to expand Himself into every part of our inner man. The more Christ expands within us, the more He settles and makes His home in our hearts. As a result, we are filled with Christ. Then, wherever we go, we become apostles—those who are sent—and prophets—those who speak for Christ. We must remember that the ministry of the word should be coordinated by our prayer. Our prayer makes the word alive and powerful. Acts 6:4 reveals to us that we will continue steadfastly in prayer and in the ministry of the word. To carry out the ministry of the word is to do the Lord's work and to be used by the Lord; the reason for prayer is exactly what one can do the Lord's work and be used by the Lord. A person who is used by the Lord is certainly a man of prayer.