

Message Ten

**Working Together with God by an All-fitting Life
with the Intimate Concern of the Ministering Life**

Scripture Reading: 2 Cor. 6:1-13; 7:2-3

I. Every believer who loves the Lord and who wants to come up to God's standard should become a minister of the new covenant—Eph. 4:11-12; 1 Tim. 1:16:

- A. The goal of the Lord's recovery is to recover the ministering of Christ by all the believers so that the church as the Body of Christ may be built up.
- B. In order to be new covenant ministers, we need a life of ministering Christ to others for the sake of His Body—Matt. 24:45-46.
- C. This excellent, marvelous ministry needs excellent ministers with an excellent life, whose living and being match their doing.

II. We need to work together with God by a life (not by any gift) that is all-sufficient and all-mature, able to fit all situations, able to endure any kind of treatment, to accept any kind of environment, to work in any kind of condition, and to take any kind of opportunity, for the carrying out of our ministry—John 14:6a; Acts 27:22-25; 28:3-6, 8-9:

- A. To work together with God means that we are in God; only a person who is in God can bring others into God; our closeness to God is the measure of the result of our work—2 Cor. 5:20; 2:10.
- B. If we have been fully saved and have an all-fitting life, then any situation or circumstance is right for us to minister life to others—Phil. 1:20; 4:22; 2 Tim. 4:2a; cf. 2 Chron. 1:10.
- C. There are eighteen qualifications of the ministers of the new covenant and of the pattern of an all-fitting life—2 Cor. 6:4-7a:
 - 1. In much endurance—Rev. 1:9a; 2:10; 3:10a; Heb. 12:1-2a.
 - 2. In afflictions—2 Cor. 1:8-9.
 - 3. In necessities.
 - 4. In distresses—12:10.

2 CORINTHIANS

Message Ten (continuation)

5. In stripes—11:23-24; Gal. 6:17.
 6. In imprisonments—2 Cor. 11:23; Eph. 3:1; 4:1; 6:20.
 7. In tumults—Acts 17:5; 19:23.
 8. In labors—2 Cor. 11:23, 27; 1 Thes. 2:9; 2 Thes. 3:8.
 9. In watchings—2 Cor. 11:27; Acts 16:25; 20:7-11, 31.
 10. In fastings—2 Cor. 11:27.
 11. In pureness—1 Tim. 5:1-2.
 12. In knowledge—Col. 1:9.
 13. In long-suffering—1 Thes. 5:14.
 14. In kindness—Gal. 5:22; Rom. 2:4.
 15. In a holy spirit—2 Cor. 7:1.
 16. In unfeigned love—Luke 10:27; 1 Pet. 1:22.
 17. In the word of truth—Eph. 4:15.
 18. In the power of God—Isa. 40:31; 2 Cor. 12:9.
- D. The new covenant ministers with the pattern of an all-fitting life carry out their ministry through three groups of items—6:7b-8a:
1. Through the weapons of righteousness on the right and on the left—Matt. 6:33; 5:6, 10, 20.
 2. Through glory and dishonor—1 Cor. 4:10-13.
 3. Through evil report and good report—Matt. 5:11.
- E. The new covenant ministers with the pattern of an all-fitting life are seven kinds of persons—2 Cor. 6:8b-10:
1. As deceivers and yet true—Matt. 10:16.
 2. As unknown and yet well known—John 6:15; 2 Cor. 4:5.
 3. As dying and yet behold we live—1 Cor. 15:31; 2 Cor. 4:10-11.
 4. As being disciplined and yet not being put to death—Rom. 8:28-29.
 5. As made sorrowful yet always rejoicing—Matt. 5:4; 2 Cor. 11:28; Phil. 4:4.
 6. As poor yet enriching many—Eph. 3:8.
 7. As having nothing and yet possessing all things—1 Cor. 3:21-23.
- F. If we would have an all-fitting life, we need an enlarged heart, a heart to embrace all of God's people—2 Cor. 6:11-13; cf. 2 Chron. 1:10; 1 Kings 4:29:

CRYSTALLIZATION-STUDY OUTLINES

Message Ten (continuation)

1. To be enlarged by growing and maturing in life is equivalent to being fully reconciled to God.
2. With an enlarged heart we are able to embrace all believers regardless of their condition, and with an opened mouth we are free to speak to all believers frankly concerning the real situation into which they have been misled—Matt. 5:7; 6:14-15; 7:1-2.

III. We need to be enlarged to have the intimate concern of the ministering life—2 Cor. 7:2-3; 1 Thes. 2:8; Phil. 2:19-20:

- A. If we have the ability to carry on a work but lack an intimate concern, our work will be fruitless; our not having the loving and forgiving heart of our Father God and the shepherding and seeking spirit of our Savior Christ is the reason for our barrenness—cf. Luke 15.
- B. Eloquence, gift, and power can never touch people as much as our concern for them—1 Cor. 12:31; 2 Tim. 1:7; Philem. 9-12.
- C. How fruitful we are does not depend upon what we are able to do, but on whether or not we have an intimate concern—1 Cor. 12:31b; 9:22; Matt. 9:12-13.
- D. A ministering life is a life that warms up others by cherishing them in the humanity of Jesus to nourish them in the divinity of Christ with the riches of Christ—Eph. 5:29; Prov. 25:15:
 1. Paul shepherded the saints as a nursing mother and an exhorting father—1 Thes. 2:7-8, 11-12; Acts 20:19-20, 27, 31.
 2. Paul came down to the weak ones' level so that he could gain them—2 Cor. 11:28-29; 1 Cor. 9:22; cf. Matt. 12:20.
 3. As a lover of the church in oneness with the church-loving Christ, Paul was willing to spend what he had, referring to his possessions, and to spend what he was, referring to his being, for the sake of the saints in order to build up the Body of Christ—Eph. 5:25; 2 Cor. 12:15; 11:28-29.