

Message Six

(Saturday—Evening Session)

The Urgent Need to Deal with Our Disposition

Scripture Reading: Matt. 16:24-26; Rom. 6:6; Gal. 2:20

I. The most important matter that must be dealt with in our life with the Lord is our disposition:

- A. The thing which most damages our usefulness in the Christian life, in the church life, and in the work is our living according to our disposition.
- B. Our disposition has become our problem; it hinders us from growing in life and from being used by the Lord, and it has made trouble for us, causing us to suffer.
- C. How useful we will be to the Lord or how much trouble we will make to the church depends upon how much our disposition is killed; therefore, dealing with the disposition is a crucial matter—2 Tim. 2:21.
- D. The greatest hindrance to our usefulness is our disposition; disposition is the factor that spoils our usefulness in the hand of the Lord—Matt. 25:24-30:
 - 1. Many dear saints have remained in the church, but their usefulness has been annulled by their disposition.
 - 2. Many are useless and out of function mainly because of their disposition; if all the saints would deny their disposition, they would all be very useful.
- E. Our disposition is the greatest problem for our growth in the divine life; the real enemy of our growth in the divine life is our disposition—cf. 2 Pet. 1:5-11.
- F. We need the Lord to touch our disposition, and we need to deny it.

II. We use the word *disposition* to help the saints to understand the soul-life, the self, the “I,” the old man, and naturalness—Matt. 16:24-26; Rom. 6:6; Gal. 2:20:

- A. In our Christian experience, there is something within us called our disposition.
- B. Our disposition is what we are in our makeup by birth; each of us has a particular and unique disposition.
- C. Our disposition has been poisoned by the cunning, subtle serpent.
- D. There are four terms mentioned in the New Testament which are closely related to the matter of disposition: the old man (Rom. 6:6), the “I” (Gal. 2:20), the soul-life (Matt. 16:25-26), and the self (v. 24):
 - 1. Disposition is implied in the terms *mind*, *self*, and *soul-life*; disposition includes all of these elements.
 - 2. The soul is the life of the self; disposition is closely related to both the self and the soul.
 - 3. Practically speaking, to deny the self is simply to deny our disposition.
- E. To deal with our disposition means to deal with our self, our old man, our soul-life, and the “I.”

- F. Since the disposition is implied in the “I,” the old man, the soul, the self, and naturalness, our dealing with these things includes our dealing with our disposition.

III. Our dealing with sins, sin, the world, and the conscience are superficial dealings, but our dealing with our disposition is the deepest dealing—1 John 1:7; 2:15; Acts 24:16; Matt. 16:24-26:

- A. Although our disposition is something made by God, it still needs to be dealt with by God; this is according to the divine revelation, and it is also confirmed by our experience.
- B. Our fallen disposition is close to the edge of the deep well of sin and mistakes; our mistakes and wrongdoings are closely related to our disposition.
- C. Our disposition is the most difficult part of our being to deal with, and often there is a particular part of our disposition—a “burl”—that is the hardest thing to deal with:
 - 1. We must learn to take care of the “burl” in our makeup, our disposition.
 - 2. If we deal with this “burl,” we will grow quickly and have a free way in our spiritual life without any hindrances to our growth in life, and we will also become more useful to the Lord.
- D. Transformation is mainly with our disposition; in order to experience transformation, we need the breaking of our disposition because it is a great obstacle to God’s dispensing of Himself into us and to His transforming work in us—Rom. 12:2.
- E. The breaking of the outer man is the breaking of our disposition.
- F. The best way to be dealt with is to hate our disposition; our disposition is the depth of the self, which must be denied—Matt. 16:24.

IV. The solution to the problem of our disposition is the cross—Gal. 2:20:

- A. Only the death of the cross can deal with our disposition.
- B. In order to deal with our disposition, we must realize and remember that we have already been crucified and that, as a crucified person, we should remain under this realization day by day—Rom. 6:6; Gal. 2:20.
- C. Because we have been crucified, we should not live according to our disposition, according to what we are naturally.

V. The church life, fruit-bearing, and lamb-feeding are three matters that kill our natural disposition—John 15:4-7; 21:15-17:

- A. If we are not useful in the Lord’s hand for taking care of people, it is due to our raw, natural disposition:
 - 1. Because of our disposition we have no interest in others, or if we do have such an interest, we are unable to minister life to others.
 - 2. Our disposition is the cause for our not bearing fruit and not using our talent to care for people.
 - 3. The burden to care for others requires us to deal with our disposition.
- B. Receiving the believers because the Lord has received them requires us to deal much with our natural disposition—Rom. 14:1; 15:7.

- C. A person who is capable and who is also against his or her disposition is the most useful person to the Lord—Matt. 25:14-23; 16:24.
- D. What the Lord needs is the exercise of our talent with the growth in life; in order to have this, the basic condition is to deal with our disposition.