

THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD AND GOD'S DISPENSING FOR GOD'S ECONOMY

(Friday—First Morning Session)

Message One

“Steadfastly in Prayer and in the Ministry of the Word”

Scripture Reading: Acts 6:4; Jude 20; Mark 11:20-24; Eph. 3:17-19

I. “Steadfastly in prayer”—Acts 6:4:

- A. 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—Mark 8:34; 9:29.
- B. A man of prayer must be one who seeks God and God's will—Matt. 26:39; John 4:34; 5:30; 6:38.
- C. The real significance of prayer is to contact God in our spirit and to absorb God Himself—Jude 20; John 14:13; 15:7:
 - 1. Prayer is the contact of the human spirit with the divine Spirit, during which we inhale God—Jude 20; John 4:24.
 - 2. Genuine prayers are prayers that are mingled with God the Spirit in our spirit—Jude 20; Eph. 6:18; Rom. 8:16; 1 Cor. 6:17:
 - a. Prayer must be a joint prayer in which God is mingled with our spirit.
 - b. True prayers—prayers that involve God and man—are the issue of the Spirit of God being mingled with man's spirit and man's spirit being mingled with the Spirit of God—Jude 20; Rom. 8:4, 26.
 - c. In this prayer God and man mingle together, and God is the Initiator and the Motivator; God prays in man, and man prays in God—James 5:17.
 - 3. If we would have genuine prayers, prayers that are initiated by God and that touch God, we must pray in the Holy Spirit; praying in the Holy Spirit means that we and the Holy Spirit pray together in the fellowship of the two spirits—Jude 20; 2 Cor. 13:14; Phil. 2:1.
 - 4. Prayers in which we contact God, inhale God, absorb God, and are filled with God are genuine prayers; only prayers of this kind should be offered to God—Rev. 5:8; 8:3-4.
- D. The Bible contains a most lofty and spiritual prayer—the prayer of authority—Matt. 18:18-19; Mark 11:23-24; Eph. 1:20-22; 2:6; 6:12-13, 18-19:
 - 1. If we want to be a man of prayer, we have to learn to pray with authority; this is the kind of prayer described by the Lord in Matthew 18:18.
 - 2. In Matthew 18:18 there is a prayer that is called binding prayer and a prayer that is called loosing prayer; to bind and to loose—this is to pray with authority.
- E. Praying with authority is praying the prayer in Mark 11:23-24:
 - 1. Faith is believing that we have received what we have asked for—v. 24:
 - a. According to the Lord's word, we should believe that we have received, not that we will receive.
 - b. To hope means to expect something in the future; to believe means to consider something as having been done.
 - c. Faith is not only believing that God can or will do a certain thing but also believing that God has done that thing already.
 - 2. The prayer in Mark 11:20-24 is a prayer with authority—v. 23:
 - a. A prayer with authority does not ask God to do something; instead, it exercises God's authority and applies this authority to deal with problems and things that ought to be removed—Zech. 4:7; Matt. 21:21.

- b. God has commissioned us to command what He has commanded and give orders to what He has given orders to—17:20.
- c. 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—6:10; 18:19-20.
- d. Prayer with authority has much to do with the overcomers; every overcomer must learn to speak to "this mountain"—Mark 11:23.

II. "Steadfastly...in the ministry of the word"—Acts 6:4:

- A. Prayer should precede the ministry of the word, just as the apostles practiced—v. 4.
- B. An example of the ministry of the word is Ephesians 3:17a: "That Christ may make His home in your hearts":
 - 1. When Christ spreads into our hearts, He becomes our person—v. 17a:
 - a. We need to take Christ not only as life in our spirit but also as the person in our hearts.
 - b. The only way for Christ to be our person is for Him to make His home in our hearts.
 - c. If we take Christ as our person in our hearts, the person living in our hearts will not be the self but Christ—Gal. 2:20.
 - 2. The Christ who is making His home in our hearts is an unlimited, immeasurable Christ—Eph. 3:18:
 - a. As Christ makes His home in our hearts, we apprehend with all the saints the breadth, the length, the height, and the depth; these are the dimensions of the universe, the dimensions of the immeasurable Christ.
 - b. Although Christ is immeasurable, He is nevertheless making His home in our hearts.
 - c. Christ is the universal cube, and our experience of Him in the Body must be "cubical," three-dimensional.
 - 3. When Christ makes His home in our hearts, we will be filled unto all the fullness of God—v. 19:
 - a. The fullness of God is the Body of Christ as the expression of the Triune God to the uttermost, the ultimate consummation of the corporate expression of the Triune God.
 - b. The Body of Christ is the unlimited expression of the unlimited Christ.
 - c. If we let Christ make His home in our hearts, we will be filled with the Triune God to such an extent that we will become His full expression.
 - 4. The genuine church life is the issue of the unlimited and immeasurable Christ personally making His home in our hearts—v. 17a; 4:16:
 - a. The content of the church is the Christ whom we take as our person, the Christ who is wrought into our being.
 - b. If we would have the reality of the Body of Christ, we must allow Christ to make His home in our hearts.
 - c. 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 saints allow Christ to make His home in their hearts, possessing, occupying, and saturating their entire inner being.
 - d. The more Christ occupies our inner being, the more we will be able to be built up with others in the Body—Eph. 2:21-22; 4:16.