

**THE ONE NEW MAN
FULFILLING GOD'S PURPOSE IN CREATING MAN**

(Friday—Evening Session)

Message Six

**The Prayer Needed for the Reality and Practicality
of the One New Man**

Scripture Reading: Luke 11:1-13; Eph. 6:17-18; Col. 1:3, 9; 3:1-4, 15-17; 4:2, 12;
Heb. 2:17; 4:14; 7:26; 8:1-2; Rev. 5:6

I. The governing principle of our prayer should be that prayer brings us into God—Luke 11:1-13:

- A. Whenever our prayer does not bring us into God, it is wrong, and we should not continue to pray in this way.
- B. The issue of proper prayer is that we find ourselves in God—vv. 2-4.

II. The experience during times of genuine prayer enables us to touch the reality of the one new man—Col. 1:3, 9; 4:12; Phil. 1:20-21a:

- A. During times of genuine prayer, we are in our spirit, and we are one spirit with the Lord; it is at these times that we live Christ—1 Cor. 6:17; Phil. 1:20-21a:
 - 1. Our daily living should be the same as our experience in times of genuine prayer.
 - 2. Our experience in prayer should become a model of our daily Christian life.
 - 3. When we pray, we enter into fellowship with the Lord and become conscious of the fact that we are truly one spirit with Him and that He is actually one spirit with us—1 Cor. 6:17.
 - 4. If we keep ourselves in a praying condition, we will be outside of culture, and we will be one spirit with the Lord, enjoying His presence and spontaneously living Him.
- B. Whenever we experience genuine prayer, we are outside of our culture; in particular, we are outside of our cultural opinion—Col. 3:10-11:
 - 1. The more genuine prayer we have, the more we will have the experience of being outside of our cultural opinion.
 - 2. When we pray with others in a genuine way, we are truly one in the praying spirit:
 - a. Then we touch the reality of the one new man.
 - b. Then we realize that the new man is constituted with Christ alone and that in this realm there are no differences of culture.

III. We need to persevere in prayer because prayer involves a battle, a fight—4:2; Eph. 6:17-18:

- A. In order to fight on God's side against Satan, we need to persevere in prayer.
- B. As those who take sides with God, we find that the whole universe is against us and, in particular, against our prayer—Col. 2:1-3:
 - 1. Almost everything in our environment is contrary to prayer.

2. Resistance to prayer lies not only outside of us but even within us—Matt. 26:41.
3. To pray is to go against the current, the trend, in the fallen universe:
 - a. In order to pray, we must go against the current of our environment.
 - b. If we fail to pray, we will be swept downstream.
 - c. Only prayer can enable us to go against the current; therefore, we need to persevere in prayer, to pray persistently—Luke 18:1-8.

IV. Persevering in prayer for the one new man is related to the peace of Christ, to the word of Christ, and to living in union with Christ—Col. 3:15-17:

- A. The peace of Christ, which is Christ Himself, has made the Jews and the Gentiles one new man, and now we should let this peace arbitrate in our hearts for the Body life and for the practical existence of the one new man—v. 15.
- B. The way for Christ to exercise His headship and to minister His riches to us is through His word—2:19; 3:16:
 1. We should not be closed but should open our being to the Lord and to His word and be willing to be filled with the word of Christ.
 2. We need to allow the word of Christ to move, act, and have its being within us, letting our whole being be permeated and saturated with the word of Christ.
 3. In order for the word of Christ to dwell in us richly for the one new man, we need to let the peace of Christ arbitrate in our hearts.
- C. To live in union with Christ means that in our living we are not apart from Christ; rather, we are one with Him and do everything in His name by acting in the Spirit—v. 17.
- D. We need to be ruled by the peace of Christ, to be inhabited by the word of Christ, and to live in union with Christ.

V. In His heavenly ministry Christ is interceding, ministering, and executing God's administration, and we need to be those who respond to Christ's activities in His heavenly ministry—Heb. 2:17; 4:14; 7:26; 8:1-2; Rev. 5:6; Col. 3:1-4; 1:9; 4:12:

- A. As the High Priest, He intercedes; as the heavenly Minister, He ministers; and as the Redeemer with the seven eyes of God, He administers the government of God for the accomplishment of God's purpose.
- B. Christ's ministry in the heavens requires our response—3:1-4:
 1. We need to become on earth the reflection of Christ's heavenly ministry.
 2. To seek the things which are above means that we correspond to Christ's heavenly ministry—v. 1.
 3. When we seek the things which are above, we respond to Christ's heavenly ministry and reflect it.
 4. The purpose of our living with Christ is to be one with Him in His intercession for the churches, in His ministry of the heavenly life supply to the saints, and in His administration of God's government.
- C. Through our prayer Christ, the Head, is given a way to carry out His administration through His Body—1:18; 2:19; 3:1-2:

1. As the Head is working in heaven by interceding, ministering, and administering, we, the Body, are working on earth responding to the heavenly ministry of Christ and reflecting what He is doing—Heb. 2:17; 4:14; 7:26; 8:1-2; Rev. 5:6.
 2. When we pray, we are a heavenly ambassador on earth as the extension of God’s kingdom—Col. 1:9, 12-13; 4:11-12.
- D. If we seek the things which are above and have one life and one living with Christ, we will be wholly occupied with the enterprise of our Master—3:1-4, 17:
1. Our heart will be with Him in heaven, where He is interceding for the churches, supplying the saints, and administering God’s government.
 2. We should aspire to be one with the Lord in His heavenly ministry and to have a heart that is one with His heart, and we should long to be one with Him in His priesthood, ministry, and administration.
- E. In order for the recovery to be the *Lord’s* recovery, it must be under His direction—Rev. 5:6; Eph. 1:19-23:
1. Between Christ in heaven and us on earth, there is a divine transmission, a heavenly current—v. 22.
 2. If we continuously receive the divine transmission, being infused with a supply from heaven and experiencing the transaction between the heavenly Christ and us, we will respond to Christ’s interceding, ministering, and executing of God’s administration.

Excerpts from the Ministry:

PRAYING OURSELVES INTO GOD

In Luke 11:1-13 we have the Man-Savior’s teaching on prayer. If we read this section carefully again and again, we shall see that prayer means that we pray ourselves into God. When some hear this, they may say, “We cannot find such a point in the pattern of prayer set up by the Lord Jesus in His teaching. How can you say that to pray is to pray ourselves into God?” Apparently, this matter is not found in 11:1-13. Actually, in these verses we see that to pray is to pray ourselves into God.

Verse 1 says, “While He was in a certain place praying, when He ceased, a certain one of His disciples said to Him, Lord, teach us to pray, even as John also taught his disciples.” We do not know what the Lord was praying for. When the disciples saw Him praying, they wanted Him to teach them to pray. Then the Lord went on to say, “When you pray, say, Father, Your name be sanctified; Your kingdom come. Give us each day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone indebted to us. And do not bring us into temptation” (vv. 2-4). I have spent much time considering this brief word. My conclusion is that if we would pray this way again and again, the result will be that we shall pray ourselves into God. In other words, the issue of this prayer is that we find ourselves in God.

If we pray according to the Lord’s teaching in these verses, we shall be persons in God. I encourage you to pray, “Father, Your name be sanctified; Your kingdom come.” If you pray this a number of times, you will find that you are in God. This is both my understanding and my experience. From experience I can testify that to pray according to the Lord’s instruction is to pray ourselves into God.

Once we have prayed ourselves into God, what shall we do now that we are in God? We shall simply receive Him with His riches into us. As fallen human beings, we were altogether

outside of God and had nothing to do with His riches. Hence, we could not enjoy the riches of God. We need to pray ourselves into God and then, as those in Him, receive Him and His riches.

When some hear about the need to pray ourselves into God in order to receive Him and His riches, they may say, "Before we were saved, we were not in God. But now we are children of God." Yes, as believers, we are children of God. Nevertheless, we must recognize the fact that often in our experience we are not in God. We do not stay in God; we do not remain in Him. For example, before going to bed, a brother loses his temper with his wife. When he rises up the next morning, he rises up outside of God. What should he do? He should pray himself into God.

However, suppose the brother prays something like this: "Father, You are just and fair. You know that my wife is wrong. I ask You to vindicate me." The more the brother prays like this, the farther he will be away from God in his experience. He needs to pray, "O Father, sanctify Your name. Your kingdom come. Father, give me bread for this day, and forgive me even as I forgive my wife. Father, do not bring me into that trial again." The more the brother prays like this, the more he will find himself in God. This illustrates the point that to pray is to pray ourselves into God.

Often we are distracted from God. We may be distracted from Him simply by an advertisement in the newspaper. Because we are easily distracted from God, we should spend time every morning with Him, praying ourselves into Him. There is no need to pray in detail concerning our shortcomings. It is sufficient to say, "Father, forgive me." There is no need to go through the details. The prayer, "Father, forgive me as I forgive others," is inclusive. The more you pray like this, the more you will realize that you pray yourself into God. Then in God you will receive the life supply. (*Life-study of Luke*, pp. 230-231)

RESPONDING TO CHRIST'S HEAVENLY MINISTRY

We need to be those who respond to Christ's heavenly ministry. For centuries, Christ has tried without adequate success to get a people to respond to His ministry in the heavens. By His mercy and grace, there is on earth today a group of people in the Lord's recovery responding to Christ's heavenly ministry. Let us be those who tell the Lord that we are one with Him in this ministry. Day and night, we need to respond to the Christ who is above all. When I respond to the Lord, saying, "Amen, Lord," I have the conviction deep within that Christ is interceding and ministering, that He is transmitting His riches into me and infusing me with the element of God. Because of this transmission and infusion, I am filled and stirred for the Lord's interests. Sometimes I am so beside myself with joy that I hardly know what to do. This is what it means to seek the things above.

If we seek the things above and are one with Christ in the things above, we shall not care for religion, philosophy, or ethical teachings, all of which are elements of the world. Rather, we shall care only for Christ's intercession for His Body and for the transmission of His riches into His members. I have the full assurance that many of the saints in the local churches are experiencing the transfusion of the riches of Christ. Because we have such a transfusion, we do not need ethics, culture, or religion. We simply need more and more oneness with Christ in His heavenly ministry. Praise Him for His intercession, for His ministry, and for the traffic between heaven and earth!

We need to be impressed with the fact that the Christ who is in heaven is very busy. Consider how many local churches He takes care of throughout the world. Christ's ministry in heaven is all for the goal of building up the Body and forming His bride. However, Christ's ministry in heaven requires our response. We need to become on earth the very reflection of

that heavenly ministry. When we seek the things above, we respond to the Lord's heavenly ministry and reflect it. Our experience testifies of this. If in our prayer we are willing to forget insignificant matters and care for the things above, we shall become conscious of the traffic between us and Christ in heaven. We shall sense a current flowing back and forth between Him and us. By means of this kind of prayer, the divine riches are transfused into us. This enables us to be one with others and to be right with everyone. This also issues in the renewing of the new man. Through the heavenly transmission and transfusion, the new man comes into existence in a practical way. Hence, the new man is not produced by teaching; the new man is produced by the heavenly traffic, transaction, and transfusion. (*Life-study of Colossians*, pp. 546-548)

PRAYER AND WARFARE

According to Paul's word in Colossians 4:2, the thing that requires our perseverance is prayer. We need to persevere in prayer because prayer involves a battle, a fight. Two parties, God and Satan, are hostile to each other. The meaning of the name Satan is "adversary." Satan is both the enemy without and the adversary within. On the one hand, he is the enemy trying to defeat God; on the other hand, he is the adversary within God's realm seeking to cause damage. As the adversary, Satan opposes God from within God's realm, God's kingdom. This is the reason the Bible clearly indicates that even today Satan has access to the place of God's throne. In the book of Job we see that Satan can stand before the throne of God and accuse people before Him (Job 1:6-12). It is difficult for us to understand why God allows His enemy such freedom. According to Revelation 12:10, Satan accuses us day and night.

Although the battle raging in the universe is between God and Satan, another party is involved. This third party consists of God's chosen and redeemed people, the ones who will actually decide the outcome of the battle. If we take sides with Satan, God will lose, even though He is almighty. As the infinite, all-powerful Creator, God will not lower Himself to fight against one of His creatures. Thus, it is necessary for another of God's creatures—man—to fight against Satan. In a very real sense, God needs us. Without us, He would not have a way to carry on the battle against Satan. He must maintain His status as the Creator. For this reason, He needs us to carry on the actual work of warfare.

In order to fight on God's side against Satan, we need to persevere in prayer. This perseverance is needed because the course of the whole world is away from God. To pray is to go against the current, the trend, in the fallen universe. Persevering in prayer is like rowing a boat upstream. If you do not persevere, you will be carried downstream by the current. No doubt, to persevere in this way, either in rowing or in praying, requires a great deal of energy. The entire universe is under Satan's influence and is contrary to God's will. Hence, there is a strong current in the world in opposition to the will of God. As those who take sides with God, we find that the whole universe is against us and, in particular, against our prayer.

Many of the experiences we have with respect to prayer day by day prove that Satan opposes our prayer in every way possible. For example, a telephone call may come just when you are at a very important point in your prayer. You have prayed yourself into the Spirit, and you are touching the heavens. Then, at that very moment, the telephone may ring. You may answer the telephone only to learn that someone has dialed the wrong number. Your praying spirit may be seriously damaged by the irritation this causes you. When we try to pray, we may also be disturbed by our children, by callers at the door, or by any animal pets there may be in the house. Because there is so much resistance to our prayer, we definitely need to persevere in prayer.

THE BENEFITS OF PRAYER

Persevering in prayer has many benefits. By prayer we set our mind on the things above. In fact, prayer is the only way to have our mind set on the things in heaven. When we set our mind on things above by praying, we shall not pray for trivial matters. Instead, our prayer will be occupied with Christ's heavenly intercession, ministry, and administration. Because Christ is interceding for the churches around the world, we also pray for the churches. Let the Lord take care of all the small matters in our living. Our responsibility is to seek first the kingdom of God and God's righteousness. Since the Father knows our need, He will take care of us and meet our need.

When we set our mind on the things above during our times of prayer, we become a reflection of Christ's ministry in the heavens. Through our prayer, Christ, the Head, is given a way to carry out His administration through His Body. When we pray, we are a heavenly ambassador on earth with the extension of God's kingdom. However, when we are gossiping, we are not a heavenly ambassador at all. Only when we pray do we become an ambassador of the heavenly kingdom on earth in a practical way.

When we pray, we enter into the Holy of Holies and approach the throne of grace. Hebrews 4:16 says, "Let us therefore come forward with boldness to the throne of grace that we may receive mercy and find grace for timely help." Prayer is the way to come forward to the throne of grace. Coming forward to the throne of grace, we receive mercy and grace to meet our timely need. When we pray, approaching the throne of grace, mercy and grace will become a river flowing in us and supplying us. How rewarding this is! Receiving the flow of grace in prayer is actually more important than having our prayers answered. Whether or not our prayer is answered is secondary. The primary thing is that grace flows like a river from the throne and into our being.

To receive this river of grace is to have our spiritual battery charged with heavenly current. The heavenly current, the divine electricity, is the Triune God as grace flowing out of the throne and into us. The supply and enjoyment this brings is unspeakable.

Christians today are weak because their spiritual batteries are not charged. Because they are short of prayer, they are short of the heavenly transmission. Again and again during the day, we need to be charged with the divine electrical current. This surely is a reward for persevering in prayer.

Another benefit of praying is related to fellowship with the Lord. We all love the Lord's presence and anointing, and we all love to have fellowship with Him. But how can we enjoy the Lord's presence and have fellowship with Him? The only way is to pray. When we pray, we enter into fellowship with the Lord and become conscious of the fact that we are truly one spirit with Him and that He is actually one spirit with us. The more we pray, the more we experience being one with the Lord, and the more we enjoy His presence and have fellowship with Him. What a marvelous reward!

It is always difficult at first to have a proper prayer life. But if you practice this for a long period of time, it will get easier and easier, for you will realize the rewards of praying.

We have seen that for a normal Christian walk we need to set our mind on things above, have the renewing of the new man, have the peace of Christ arbitrating in us, and allow the word of Christ to inhabit us. These four matters, however, all require prayer. To practice them and to experience them, we need to pray. Prayer ushers us into the reality of these four things and keeps us in this reality. (*Life-study of Colossians*, pp. 577-579, 581-583)