

PRAISING

Message 3

Praising the Lord in the Church Meetings

Scripture Reading: Psa. 45:8; 1 Cor. 14:26a; Heb. 2:12; Rev. 14:1-3

I. “From palaces of ivory, harpstrings have made You glad”—Psa. 45:8b:

- A. Palaces in Psalm 45:8 signify the local churches; ivory, a bone-like substance, signifies the unbroken resurrection life of Christ (John 19:36 and note 2); and harpstrings signify sweet, melodious praises.
- B. The local churches, which are beautiful in the eyes of the Lord and which are His expression, are built with the resurrection life of Christ, and from the local churches come the praises that make Him glad.
- C. In all the local churches praising must be the central feature, because from the palaces of ivory, harpstrings make Him glad.

II. “What then, brothers? Whenever you come together, each one has a psalm”—1 Cor. 14:26a:

- A. We must realize that the first thing we must do in the meetings is to sing praises:
 1. First Corinthians 14:26 says that when we all come together everyone has something, and the first item is a psalm; therefore, the psalm is the primary function in the meeting; a psalm refers to singing, to praising.
 2. The central matter in the meeting of the church is to prophesy, to speaking something for Christ, that the church might be built up, but the first thing in the meetings of the church is to praise.
 3. We all must drop our background and linger no longer in the present, degraded situation; we must be brought back to the original way; singing and praising must be on the top; we must consider praising the first item we need in the meetings of the church.
- B. “I am expecting and looking to the Lord that one day in our meetings three-fourths of the time will be for praising and one-fourth left for prophesying. You may say that that is too much time for praise, but I hope that it will be so much...The real edifying, the real building up of the church, is in the praising”—*The Collected Works of Witness Lee*, 1969, Vol. 1, p. 232.

III. “I will declare Your name to My brothers; in the midst of the church I will sing hymns of praise to You”—Heb. 2:12:

- A. “I will declare Your name to My brothers”—this was fulfilled in the Lord’s resurrection—v. 12a; Psa. 22:22:
 1. On the morning of the resurrection day, Jesus said to Mary, “Go to My brothers and say to them, I ascend to My Father and your Father, and My God and your God”—John 20:17.
 2. Before the day of resurrection no human being was a brother to Christ as a Son of God; it was by His resurrection that all the disciples, all the believers in Him, became His brothers—1 Pet. 1:3.
 3. God has regenerated us as His sons; so we have become the brothers of the Lord; it was at that time that He declared the name of the Father to His brothers.

- B. “In the midst of the church I will sing hymns of praise to You”—this is fulfilled by the Lord Jesus’ singing within us:
 - 1. Today Christ is in heaven, but we need to realize that the very Christ who is in heaven is also in the midst of the church singing hymns of praise to the Father
 - 2. Christ cannot sing if we do not sing, for He sings in our singing:
 - a. In the church He and we, we and He, praise the Father together in the mingled spirit—cf. Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:6.
 - b. He, as the life-giving Spirit, praises the Father in our spirit, and we, by our spirit, praise the Father in His Spirit; this is the church life.
 - c. The proper church life is a life in which Christ sings in our midst, that is, in us, and we sing in Him, with Him, and through Him—Heb. 13:15.
- C. We need to have the assurance that whenever we open our mouth and sing hymns of praise to God, Christ is singing in our singing:
 - 1. Although we hope that the saints will be released in the meetings, we should not be released in a loose or a light way but in a weighty way; if we are loose or light, it will be very difficult for the Lord to sing in our singing:
 - a. Although we need to be released in the meetings, we also need to be restricted.
 - b. It is not right to be silent in the meetings, nor is it right to be released in a light and loose way.
 - c. If we follow the flow of the Spirit in the meetings, we will be released in a proper and balanced way.
 - 2. Our singing must be proper; it must be in our spirit and out from our spirit.
 - 3. When we meet together as Christians, we should not care for traditions, habits, customs, and personal tastes; we should care only for the Lord Himself and what pleases Him.

IV. “I heard a voice out of heaven like the sound of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder; and the voice which I heard was like the sound of harp-singers playing on their harps. And they [the hundred and forty-four thousand] sing a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders”—Rev. 14:2-3.

- A. Revelation 14:2-3 tells us that the apostle John heard a voice out of heaven singing a new song.
- B. Revelation 14:2 says that the voice out of heaven was “like the sound of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder”:
 - 1. The sound of many waters indicates a great noise; to be like thunder means not only that there is a great noise but that in this noise there is something majestic.
 - 2. Our praises must be a great noise, but with them there must also be something of majesty, something of weight; we should not give the sense of lightness or looseness in our praising.
- C. Revelation 14:2 also says that the voice was “like the sound of harp-singers playing on their harps”:
 - 1. This means that the praising voice is musical, harmonious, and exceedingly pleasant.
 - 2. Our praising should be pleasant to all the ears, just as harp singers playing on their harps.