

# International Training for Elders and Responsible Ones

March 2026

## GENERAL SUBJECT: THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD AND GOD'S DISPENSING FOR GOD'S ECONOMY

### Message One

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

RK *Hymns*: 779

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

|            |                                                                                                                                                                                     |
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| Acts 6:4   | But we will continue steadfastly in prayer and in the ministry of the word.                                                                                                         |
| Jude 20    | But you, beloved, building up yourselves upon your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit,                                                                                     |
| Mark 11:20 | And as they passed by in the morning, they saw the fig tree withered from the roots.                                                                                                |
| Mark 11:21 | And Peter remembered and said to Him, Rabbi, behold, the fig tree which You cursed has withered.                                                                                    |
| Mark 11:22 | And Jesus answered and said to them, Have faith in God.                                                                                                                             |
| Mark 11:23 | Truly I say to you that whoever says to this mountain, Be taken up and cast into the sea, and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says happens, he will have it. |
| Mark 11:24 | For this reason I say to you, All things that you pray and ask, believe that you have received them, and you will have them.                                                        |
| Eph 3:17   | That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love,                                                                            |
| Eph 3:18   | May be full of strength to apprehend with all the saints what the breadth and length and height and depth are                                                                       |
| Eph 3:19   | And to know the knowledge-surpassing love of Christ, that you may be filled unto all the fullness of God.                                                                           |

#### 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.
  - Mark 8:34 And He called the crowd to Him with His disciples and said to them, If anyone wants to follow after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me.
  - Mark 9:29 And He said to them, This kind cannot come out by any means except prayer.
- 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.
  - Matt 26:39 And going forward a little, He fell on His face and prayed, saying, My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as You will.
  - John 4:34 Jesus said to them, My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to finish His work.
  - John 5:30 I can do nothing from Myself; as I hear, I judge, and My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will but the will of Him who sent Me.
  - John 6:38 For I have come down from heaven not to do My own will but the will of Him who sent Me.
- 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:
  - Jude 20 But you, beloved, building up yourselves upon your most holy faith, praying in the

- Holy Spirit,  
 John 14:13 And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.  
 John 15:7 If you abide in Me and My words abide in you, ask whatever you will, and it shall be done for you.
1. Prayer is the contact of the human spirit with the divine Spirit, during which we inhale God—Jude 20; John 4:24.
 

Jude 20 But you, beloved, building up yourselves upon your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit,  
 John 4:24 God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truthfulness.
  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:
 

Jude 20 But you, beloved, building up yourselves upon your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit,  
 Eph 6:18 By means of all prayer and petition, praying at every time in spirit and watching unto this in all perseverance and petition concerning all the saints,  
 Rom 8:16 The Spirit Himself witnesses with our spirit that we are children of God.  
 1 Cor 6:17 But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit.

    - 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.
 

Jude 20 But you, beloved, building up yourselves upon your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit,  
 Rom 8:4 That the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the spirit.  
 Rom 8:26 Moreover, in like manner the Spirit also joins in to help us in our weakness, for we do not know for what we should pray as is fitting, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.
    - 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.
 

James 5:17 Elijah was a man of like feeling with us, and he earnestly prayed that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the earth for three years and six months.
  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.
 

Jude 20 But you, beloved, building up yourselves upon your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit,  
 2 Cor 13:14 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.  
 Phil 2:1 If there is therefore any encouragement in Christ, if any consolation of love, if any fellowship of spirit, if any tenderheartedness and compassions,
  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.
 

Rev 5:8 And when He took the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell before the Lamb, each having a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which bowls are the prayers of the saints.  
 Rev 8:3 And another Angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer, and much incense was given to Him to offer with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne.  
 Rev 8:4 And the smoke of the incense went up with the prayers of the saints out of the hand of the Angel before God.
- 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:

Matt 18:18 Truly I say to you, Whatever you bind on the earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on the earth shall have been loosed in heaven.

Matt 18:19 Again, truly I say to you that if two of you are in harmony on earth concerning any matter for which they ask, it will be done for them from My Father who is in the heavens.

Mark 11:23 Truly I say to you that whoever says to this mountain, Be taken up and cast into the sea, and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says happens, he will have it.

Mark 11:24 For this reason I say to you, All things that you pray and ask, believe that you have received them, and you will have them.

Eph 1:20 Which He caused to operate in Christ in raising Him from the dead and seating Him at His right hand in the heavenlies,

Eph 1:21 Far above all rule and authority and power and lordship and every name that is named not only in this age but also in that which is to come;

Eph 1:22 And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church,

Eph 2:6 And raised us up together with Him and seated us together with Him in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus,

Eph 6:12 For our wrestling is not against blood and flesh but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenlies.

Eph 6:13 Therefore take up the whole armor of God that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

Eph 6:18 By means of all prayer and petition, praying at every time in spirit and watching unto this in all perseverance and petition concerning all the saints,

Eph 6:19 And for me, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known in boldness the mystery of the gospel,

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.

Matt 18:18 Truly I say to you, Whatever you bind on the earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on the earth shall have been loosed in heaven.

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.

Matt 18:18 Truly I say to you, Whatever you bind on the earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on the earth shall have been loosed in heaven.

E. Praying with authority is praying the prayer in Mark 11:23-24:

Mark 11:23 Truly I say to you that whoever says to this mountain, Be taken up and cast into the sea, and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says happens, he will have it.

Mark 11:24 For this reason I say to you, All things that you pray and ask, believe that you have received them, and you will have them.

1. Faith is believing that we have received what we have asked for—v. 24:

Mark 11:24 For this reason I say to you, All things that you pray and ask, believe that you have received them, and you will have them.

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:

Mark 11:20 And as they passed by in the morning, they saw the fig tree withered from the roots.

- Mark 11:21 And Peter remembered and said to Him, Rabbi, behold, the fig tree which You cursed has withered.
- Mark 11:22 And Jesus answered and said to them, Have faith in God.
- Mark 11:23 Truly I say to you that whoever says to this mountain, Be taken up and cast into the sea, and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says happens, he will have it.
- Mark 11:24 For this reason I say to you, All things that you pray and ask, believe that you have received them, and you will have them.
- 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.
 

Zech 4:7 Who are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you will become a plain, and he will bring forth the topstone with shouts of Grace, grace to it.

Matt 21:21 And Jesus answered and said to them, Truly I say to you, If you have faith and do not doubt, you will not only do what was done to the fig tree, but even if you say to this mountain, Be taken up and cast into the sea, it will happen.
  - b. God has commissioned us to command what He has commanded and give orders to what He has given orders to—17:20.
 

Matt 17:20 And He said to them, Because of your little faith; for truly I say to you, If you have faith like a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, Move from here to there, and it will move; and nothing will be impossible to you.
  - 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.
 

Matt 6:10 Your kingdom come; Your will be done, as in heaven, so also on earth.

Matt 18:19 Again, truly I say to you that if two of you are in harmony on earth concerning any matter for which they ask, it will be done for them from My Father who is in the heavens.

Matt 18:20 For where there are two or three gathered into My name, there am I in their midst.
  - d. Prayer with authority has much to do with the overcomers; every overcomer must learn to speak to "this mountain"—Mark 11:23.
 

Mark 11:23 Truly I say to you that whoever says to this mountain, Be taken up and cast into the sea, and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says happens, he will have it.

## 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.
 

Acts 6:4 But we will continue steadfastly in prayer and in the ministry of the word.
- 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:
 

Eph 3:17a That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, ...

    - 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.
 

Gal 2:20 I am crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.
  2. The Christ who is making His home in our hearts is an unlimited, immeasurable

Christ—Eph. 3:18:

Eph 3:18      May be full of strength to apprehend with all the saints what the breadth and length and height and depth are

- 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:

Eph 3:19      And to know the knowledge-surpassing love of Christ, that you may be filled unto all the fullness of God.

- 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:

Eph 3:17a      That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, ...

Eph 4:16      Out from whom all the Body, being joined together and being knit together through every joint of the rich supply and through the operation in the measure of each one part, causes the growth of the Body unto the building up of itself in love.

- 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.

Matt 16:18      And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.

- 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.

Eph 2:21      In whom all the building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord;

Eph 2:22      In whom you also are being built together into a dwelling place of God in spirit.

Eph 4:16      Out from whom all the Body, being joined together and being knit together through every joint of the rich supply and through the operation in the measure of each one part, causes the growth of the Body unto the building up of itself in love.

## Excerpts from the Ministry:

### CHRIST MAKING HIS HOME IN OUR HEART

The first part of Ephesians 3:17 says, “That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith.” Our heart is composed of all the parts of our soul—the mind, the emotion, and the will—plus

our conscience, the main part of our spirit. These parts are the inward parts of our being. Through regeneration Christ came into our spirit (2 Tim. 4:22). After this, we should allow Him to spread Himself into every part of our heart. Our heart is the totality of all our inward parts and the center of our inward being; therefore, when Christ makes His home in our heart, He controls our entire inward being and supplies and strengthens every inward part with Himself.

In Ephesians 3:17 Paul says that it is through faith that Christ makes His home in our hearts. Faith is the substantiation of things not seen (Heb. 11:1). Christ's indwelling is mysterious and abstract. We apprehend it not by our physical senses but by the sense of faith.

The first three chapters of Ephesians are on the church, and the last three chapters are on the walk worthy of God's calling for the church. However, actually, only the first two chapters are on the church, for chapter 3 marks the beginning of Paul's exhortation concerning a walk worthy of God's calling. In Ephesians 3 Paul presents himself as a pattern of one who could carry out God's eternal purpose concerning the church. If we had only chapters 1 and 2 without chapter 3, we would have the teaching and even the vision regarding the church, but we would not have the way to fulfill the vision. In chapter 3 we see how the church is constituted and realized in a practical way. This chapter is concerned neither with the revelation of the church nor, strictly speaking, with the walk worthy of God's calling for the church; rather, it is concerned with the practical experience of the church being constituted.

The church life is constituted of those in the pattern of the apostle Paul. We all need to follow Paul in receiving the revelation in our spirit and in being strengthened into our inner man. When Paul bowed his knees to the Father, he was so strong in his inner man that nothing could shake him or disturb him. Because his whole being was in his spirit, nothing outward could trouble him. We also need to be strengthened to such an extent that nothing will be able to carry us away from our inner man. Furthermore, we need Christ to make His home in our hearts so that we may be wholly occupied and possessed by Him.

When we are strengthened into our inner man and Christ makes His home in our hearts, we are able to see the revelation. We need to receive the same revelation given to the leading apostles and prophets. Paul could not receive this revelation for us; we must receive it ourselves personally and subjectively by being strengthened into our inner man. This revelation concerning Christ and the church is the economy of God, the hid den mystery. Whether or not we are today's apostles and prophets depends on whether or not we have seen the revelation. If we do not have the revelation, then we cannot be apostles and prophets. If I had come to this country without this revelation, all my speaking would have been in vain. But I did come with a revelation, and I have spoken according to this revelation. This made me a follower of the apostles and prophets in God's New Testament ministry. Today all the saints, including the young people, can be such followers.

When we were saved, Christ came into our spirit. Now we must give Him the opportunity to spread Himself throughout all the parts of our inner being. As we are strengthened into the inner man, the door is opened for Christ to spread in us, to spread from our spirit to every part of our mind, emotion, and will. The more Christ spreads within us, the more He settles down in us and makes His home in us. This means that He occupies every part of our inner being, possessing all these parts and saturating them with Himself. As a result, not only do we receive the revelation, but we also are filled with Christ. Then wherever we may go, we will be the apostles, the sent ones, and the prophets, those who speak for Christ. (*Life-study of Ephesians*, pp. 268-270)

