

The Tabernacle #2: The Holy Place

by Stephen Kaung

Stephen Kaung explores the significance of the Tabernacle in illustrating the stages of a believer's life and ministry, focusing on purification, enlightenment, and union with God.

Duration: 1:11:38

Scripture: Genesis 49:28, Exodus 25:30, Exodus 30:18, Deuteronomy 19:15, Matthew 5:14, Acts 2:4, 1 John 1:3

Topics: "The Cross", "Christian Fellowship"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of the cross in our approach to God. The cross is not only the means by which our sins are forgiven, but it also removes our old sinful nature and releases the life of God in us. Through the cross, we receive eternal life and become children of God. The speaker also highlights the purpose of the church, which is to point people to Christ and uplift Him. The church is compared to a golden lampstand, shining the light of Christ to the world. Additionally, the speaker discusses the significance of the golden table of showbread in the Holy Place, symbolizing fellowship and communion with Christ as our sustainer and source of life.

Transcript

May we look to the Lord in prayer. Dear Heavenly Father, how we do praise and thank Thee that Thou has given us Thy only begotten Son. Thou has given us that unspeakable gift, even Thy own Son.

Oh, we just worship Thee, and we just thank Thee. We pray that even tonight Thou will reveal Thy Son much more to us, that we may see Him more, that we may worship Him more. In Thy precious name, Amen.

What we will share this time is on this matter of the believer's life and ministry, as illustrated in the tabernacle. We would like to use the tabernacle to illustrate a believer's life and also his ministry. And as we mentioned last night, the tabernacle is divided into three parts.

The outer court, the holy place, and the holiest of all. So far as a believer's experience is concerned, we enter into the outer court first, and then we get into the holy place, and finally we find ourselves in the holiest of all. So this is the approach that we will use for this time.

Of course we know according to the purpose of God, the order is just reversed. It begins with the holiest of all, it comes out to the holy place, and then it reaches the outer court. We feel that these three parts in a

sense represent the three stages in a believer's life and ministry.

The outer court speaks of purification, the holy place speaks of enlightenment or transformation, and the holiest of all speaks of union. Now in the outer court, you find there are two pieces of furniture. At the very entrance of the outer court, there stands a huge piece of furniture, the brazen altar of burnt offering.

We mentioned last night that it speaks of the cross of our Lord Jesus. There is no way to come to the presence of God except through the cross of our Lord Jesus. The cross is the way to God, and you find it stands right at the entrance.

You cannot fail to see it, and you're not able to bypass it. In our approach to God, we have to come to Him by the cross of our Lord Jesus. The cross is the most basic and the most comprehensive theme in the word of God.

We find that not only by the cross, the blood of the cross of our Lord Jesus, our sins are forgiven, but through the death on the cross of our Lord Jesus, we find that our old man was removed. It is through the cross that the life of God is released, that we may have life, eternal life. And it is because of cross we become the children of God.

And it is the same cross that separates us from the world. So far as the world is concerned, we are crucified. And so far as we are concerned, the world is crucified.

And it is also through the cross that our Lord Jesus has captive, captured the principalities and authorities, and has destroyed all the power of darkness, and delivered us out of the kingdom of darkness, translating us into the kingdom of the Son of God's love. So you'll find everything is based upon the cross. We find that the cross, the blood, has not only washed our sins away, but God has made us a kingdom of peace.

So by the cross we are not only saved, but by the cross we are also saved to serve. The cross stands at the very entrance. Then we find the second piece of furniture in the altar court, the brazen labor.

The priests, when they begin to serve in the tabernacle, whether they come to the brazen altar to offer sacrifices, or they enter into the holy place to minister to God, they have to wash their hands and their feet. We mentioned last night that we who believe in the Lord Jesus, our sins have been washed by the blood. And also we find that we have been washed with water, not in the sense of taking away our sin, but water baptism speaks of a new position.

We are now in a new position. We belong to Christ. Every believer is a priest.

As we come to the Lord, we are all living stones, being built up together into a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. So the universal priesthood of believers is the teaching of the Bible. Today every child of God, whether man or woman, grown up, or children, if they believe in the Lord Jesus, everyone, every child of God is at the same time a priest unto God.

And as priests, of course, we know our vocation is to serve God. So we mentioned last night, no matter what your vocation may be, your vocation as a believer, as a priest, is in the service of God. But let us remember that the God whom we serve is a holy God.

He is a living God. He is a holy God. Therefore we cannot serve Him if our feet are dirty and our hands are unclean.

That is the reason why you find the priests have to wash their hands and their feet every time they serve God. Our feet speak of our walk. As we walk through the world, unconsciously we pick up the dirt of the world.

We unconsciously, the spirit of the spirit, seem to affect our communion with the Lord. And therefore you find it is of utmost importance, whenever we begin to serve the Lord, we have to have our feet washed. Washed by the water, that our spirit will be renewed, and our relationship with the Lord is fresh and living, so that our service may be acceptable to God.

And not only that, but our hands. We cannot serve God with the hands of the flesh, because the flesh in the sight of God is defilement. We need to have our hands washed.

We cannot serve God in our fleshly energy, with our fleshly cleverness, or even with our natural talents. We have to be washed in the water, so that we may serve God with clean hands. And we mentioned also last night that the water there that washes is different from the blood that washes.

The blood washes us from our sins, but the water washes us from defilement. And the water here stands for the life of our Lord Jesus. The life of our Lord Jesus in us is this water, that continues to cleanse us with the word, so that we may be fit to serve God as priest.

And furthermore, we mentioned that the brazen altar is made of the mirrors of the women, who assembled before the entrance of the tent of meeting. That is to say, these women, their lives were so devoted to God, that they were willing to give up their mirrors. The mirrors in the old days were made of brass.

They were willing to give up their mirrors. They have no use for these mirrors. They have no use for vanity, because they seek the glory of God.

And these mirrors were made into the brazen laver. So whenever a priest approaches the laver, immediately it convicts him. It judges him.

It reveals his dirty feet and unclean hands, so that the water may wash him clean. So that is what we mentioned last night. I cannot repeat the whole thing, but because some of you were not there, so just fill you up a little bit.

Then of course, not only in the outer court you have the life, but you have the ministry. So our ministry in the outer court simply means the cross that saves us, is the cross that we serve. We preach Jesus Christ and him crucified.

That is our ministry. This evening we would like to go a step further, into the holy place. Now we know the holy place is the place of the priests.

The children of Israel can enter into the outer court, but they are not allowed to enter into the holy place, because the holy place is the place of the priests. So brothers and sisters, we do thank God that we are not only made children of God, but we are also being made a kingdom of priests. And as priests, we can enter into the holy place.

You know the holy place stands between the holiest of all and the outer court. So in one sense, the holiest of all represents heaven, where God dwells, and the outer court speaks of the world. But the holy place stands in between the holiest of all and the outer place.

Actually it speaks of the church. Why? Because the church, so far as its calling and nature are concerned, it is heavenly. But so far as its location and testimony is concerned, it is on the earth.

So you find we are a spiritual house, as well as a holy priesthood. We are the church of God, and we are the priesthood that serves in the house of God. One thing you notice, in the outer court everything is made of copper or brass.

The brazen altar is made of wood, but overlaid with copper. The brazen laver is made purely of copper. We mentioned last night that copper in the scripture speaks of divine righteousness, dealing with human responsibility.

And because of this, it speaks of judgment. So in the outer court everything is of copper. It speaks of judgment.

God is righteous, and anything that is unrighteous has to be judged. God is holy, anything that is unclean has to be judged. And being judged, thank God he has made provision for us for cleansing, for purification.

So in the outer court it is mainly a matter of purification. That speaks of the first stage of our believer's life. We are all concerned with this matter of cleansing.

How can I be cleansed from my sins? How can I be cleansed from all defilements? This is what occupies us in the first stage of our believer's life. But when you enter into the holy place, you'll find everything is of gold. The golden altar of incense is made of acacia wood, but overlaid with gold.

And you'll find the golden table of showbread is made of wood, but overlaid with gold. And then you'll find the golden lampstand, or the candlestick, it is of pure gold. Everything there is gold.

Now we know gold in the scripture speaks of God's nature. Incorruptible, noble, beyond everything. That speaks of the nature of God, the nature of God's life.

So here you'll find in the holy place, the whole concept is not on the matter of judgment and purification. Rather it is on this matter of enlightenment and transformation. In the outer court, we are occupied with what the Lord can do for me.

But in the holy place, it is what the Lord is to me. The first thing you notice in the holy place is the golden lampstand. You know in the outer court, it is surrounded, but there is no cover.

So in the outer court, people move around by the sunlight. But when you enter into the holy place, you'll find it is not only surrounded, but it is covered with layers of coverings. So that the natural light cannot penetrate into the holy place.

In the holy place, it will be utter darkness if the lampstand is not shining. So in the holy place, you'll find people move around guided by the light from the golden lampstand. Now brothers and sisters, we know in the early stage of our believer's life, probably what decides our walk or what guides our decision, probably it will be more in the way of natural reasoning.

In other words, whenever we are confronted with a problem, we try to reason it out, the pros and the cons, the good and the evil. So in the early days of our Christian life, probably we are guided by natural reasoning. But as you grow in the Lord, you will find that a Christian life is no longer guided by natural reasoning.

Instead you'll find he is guided by the light that comes out from the golden lampstand. Now what is the light that comes from the golden lampstand? We remember our Lord Jesus said, I'm the light of the world. He who follows me shall not walk in darkness, but shall walk in the light of life.

In other words, this golden lampstand and the light upon it speaks of our Lord Jesus as the light of life. If we walk in the light, as God is in the light, we have fellowship with one another. And the blood of God's Son, Jesus Christ cleanses us from all our sins.

And before this verse, 1 John 1, 7, you have 1 John 1, 5. It is said, God is light and there is no darkness in him. So brothers and sisters, we find that not only God's word is light, but God himself is light. God is light.

And God dwells in the light. If we walk in the light, now the light there does not refer to God's word. Of course, God's word is light that shines upon our path.

That is true. But in 1 John, you'll find the light there refers to God is light. So in other words, you'll find if we walk in the light, it means if we walk in the light of life, as God lives in the light, then we have fellowship with one another.

Now brothers and sisters, do you know that the life that we receive at new birth, it is the life of our Lord Jesus. And this life that has been given to us, every child of God has this life in him or in her. And this very life sheds light from within.

In other words, we are not guided by external light, but we are guided in the service of God by the light within. Our Lord Jesus said in Matthew chapter 6, the eyes are the lamps of the body. If your eye is single, then the whole body is light.

But if your eye is double or wicked, then your whole body is darkness. And how dark will be that darkness? Now what the Lord is referring to is nothing external. It is what is within.

So dear brothers and sisters, let us remember that we all have the light of life within us. The life of the Lord Jesus will shed its light upon us from within. And when it begins to shine from within, then it is our responsibility to walk in the light, as God dwells in the light.

Now let me use an illustration. God is light, and he dwells in the light. And of course, if we use an illustration, may we say he is, his light is perfect, his light is complete, his light is absolute, his light is full.

May we say it is a hundred candle light. That is what God is. But do you know that when you believe in the Lord Jesus, that life has entered into your life? And that life of Christ in you, because you are newly born, you are a new baby in Christ, so that light in you probably is just one candle light.

The light is new, so the light is small. But at least you have one candle light. And this one candle light will shine from within to tell you how you should walk before God.

You are no longer given by outside reasonings, what people say, or even what your own reasons say. But you are to be guided in your walk by the light of life shining from within. And when the light shines, it is

your responsibility to walk in the light, as God is in the light.

And when you do that, you have fellowship with one another. Now it is true, God's light is a hundred candle light, and your light is only one candle light. Now even there is a great difference of degree, but remember, it is the sameness of kind.

Because it is the very life of God. Therefore you find even though the degrees are different, the kind is the same, therefore there can be fellowship. And the blood of God's Son, Jesus Christ, cleanses us from all sins.

You find that as you obey the one candle light you have, and God begins to have fellowship with you, He will begin to show you something that needs cleansing. And the blood of the Lord Jesus is there, available for you. So that you may grow into two candle lights.

But as you obey and walk in the two candle lights, as God is in the light, you again have fellowship. And when you have fellowship with God, you find that light begins to shine upon you and show you something more that needs cleansing. And when you obey it, you begin to get three candle lights.

And this is the way that we grow in life. You know, our spiritual growth is not based upon anything external. It is based upon the life within.

And the life shines, and continues to shine. And if we obey, then we grow. And our fellowship with God is uninterrupted.

Brothers and sisters, sometimes we ask the question, how can God fellowship with me? God is perfect. I am imperfect. How can He have fellowship with me? Well, if it waits until we get to a hundred candle lights, we have no hope.

But thank God. God, as a grown-up, deals with a child. We are but a baby.

But not because we are a baby, there are many things we do not understand. And there are many dirt and many uncleanness and many sins that we do not even know about. They are there, but we are not conscious of it.

Now, anything that we are conscious of is being enlightened by the light of life. And whenever we are enlightened by the light of life, we need to confess. And the blood of Jesus cleanses us from all our sins.

But there are many many defilements, many many uncleanness in us yet. But, because we have only one candle light, and we do not see all these dirt and dust, God still can have fellowship with us. Thank God for that.

But on the contrary, if you have three candle lights, and you only walk in two candle lights, then your fellowship with God will be interrupted. And that is the reason why, dear brothers and sisters, you can never judge any brother or any sister. Because he has to walk in the light that God has given him.

And you have to walk in the light that God has given you. How can you judge your brother and your sister? Sometimes you may have five candle lights, and he may have only two candle lights, but he is walking with the Lord, with his conscience void of offence, and he has fellowship with God, and sometimes you think, how can he do that? I can see there are certain things in his life that is not right yet, but God is more generous than you are. This is the way that we grow in the Lord.

It is the light of life. The inner light. If we walk in the light, if we follow the Lord Jesus, he is the light of life, if we follow him, then we do not walk in darkness.

But we have the light. Well, maybe I can use another way of explaining it. You know, in 1 John 2, verse 27, it is said, we have the anointing within us, or the unction within us.

You do not need anybody to teach you. You have the anointing within you, and what the anointing teaches is true, and is not false. Obey the teaching of the anointing, and you abide in Christ.

Now, this is just another way of putting it. In other words, we know the anointing in us speaks of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the oil, the ointment.

And as the Holy Spirit operates, it is like anointing, like something that is anointed upon you. You know, brothers and sisters, when the Holy Spirit works in your life, it is just like an ointment being poured on your wounds. It is soothing, it is gentle, it is never forcing, overwhelming, but it is gentle, it is persistent, but it is very soothing.

And you find the Holy Spirit gently move upon your wounds. The reason is not to hurt you, but to cure you, but to heal you. So it is the anointing within you.

The Holy Spirit will speak with a still, small voice. It is not like a big fire, it is not like an earthquake. No, we are waiting for an earthquake.

But God is not there. It is a still, small voice. And deep within our spirit, we hear it.

This is the way, walk ye. And brothers and sisters, if we obey the teaching of anointing, then we abide in Christ. And you find the Holy Spirit within us is not only the anointing that teaches us in all things, He is also the law of the Spirit of Life.

He not only teaches, but He gives us the power to enable us to obey whatever He teaches. And that is grace. So dear brothers and sisters, you find in the holy place, you begin to experience Christ as the light.

You begin to see that He is leading you day by day. You walk by His light. And how blessed that is.

There is no reason why you shall stumble. You stumble in darkness. You have the light.

And if you obey the light of life, then you find you grow in the Lord. And you are able to serve God accordingly. That is the golden light.

Then you find in the holy place there is another piece of furniture called the golden table of showbread. You know, whenever you think of a table, like what we did before, lots of tables here, and you know what it is. A table speaks of fellowship.

Let's break bread together. It is fellowship. It is communion.

And then on the table, what you enjoy is whatever is put on the table for you to enjoy. It is your food. So in other words, here you will find Christ is not only our delight of life, but He is the bread.

He is our life. Christ is our life. He is the one who supports us, sustains us, nourishes us, gives us strength.

He is our very life. The showbread in the original, literally it means the bread of the presence. The bread of the presence.

In other words, here you find our Lord Jesus as the showbread on the table. With the frankincense spread on the cakes. And the fragrance ascended up to God for God to enjoy.

Our Lord Jesus is a joy to the Father. You remember our Lord Jesus when He was on earth? The heavens opened again and again and again and said, this is my beloved Son in whom is my delight. Our Lord Jesus is a fragrance, is a sweet order, the bread of the presence in the sight of God.

That is towards God and towards us. You will find the showbreads, after they have been exhibited for a week, every Sabbath the priest will change the new showbread and whatever is taken down from the table becomes the food. So brothers and sisters, our Lord Jesus is not only a fragrance to the Father, but He is our food.

We are priests, therefore we are privileged to take Him as our food, as our life. Brothers and sisters, you know in the beginning of our Christian life, we know that our Lord Jesus is our Savior. Now thank God for that.

He is our Savior. His blood is shed for the remission of our sins. Our sins are forgiven.

Thank God for that. But we do not know that He is also our life. If you only know Christ as your Savior, yes, your sins were forgiven, the past is solved, but how about the present? How are you going to live day by day before God? How are you going to live your Christian life? Many people know the Lord as their Savior, and after they are saved they feel that now we are saved, we have to live a good life, we have to live a life that will be pleasing to God, so you determine, you make resolutions, now I'm going to do the will of God, I'm going to please God, I'm going to live a good Christian life, all right, try.

The more you try, the more you get nervous. That's the reason why there are so many nervous Christians today, because no one can live a Christian life by himself or herself. The Lord Jesus has not only saved us from our sins, but He has saved us from ourselves.

I often say, when we preach the gospel to the sinners, we tell the sinner, don't be afraid to die, because Christ has died for you, so you won't die anymore. When a saint dies, it is not death, it is sleep. But there is a gospel for believers.

You don't need to be afraid to live. You don't need to live. Somebody lives for you.

Christ lives for you. So why live? Brothers and sisters, lots of Christians are tired of living. Are you tired? Some people say, I'm retired, but not tired.

Maybe you're tired, but you haven't retired. You're still trying, you're still trying. Why? Because you don't know that Jesus is your life.

He is the showbread. He is the golden table of showbread. He is communicating, giving Himself to you to be your very life.

Now what is life for if it is not for living? So let Him live. Why do you want to live yourself such a miserable life? Why not just give up and let Him live? The apostle Paul said, I'm crucified with Christ, no longer I. Thank God, no longer I. I'm tired of living. It is Christ who lives in me.

Christ is our life. You begin to see that He is your life, He is your light, and then in the holy place you have the golden altar of incense. Now the golden altar of incense speaks of Christ as our High Priest.

Christ our High Priest. Why? Because the incense speaks of the virtues, the beauty, of our Lord Jesus. It is made of fragrant drugs, and it is made into incense.

And the incense is to be burned and ascended to God, to be a sweet smelling to God, to satisfy, to please God's heart. And that is what our Lord Jesus is. He is our High Priest.

In Hebrews chapter 7 we are told, He is able to save those who come to God through Him to the uttermost. We have a High Priest who is holy, blameless, separated from sinners, become higher than the heavens, and He is now at the right hand of God His Father, making intercession for us, in order that He may save us to the uttermost, to the end. Dear brothers and sisters, do we know our Lord Jesus as our High Priest? You know the whole book of Hebrews is on this subject, that Christ is our High Priest.

Why? Because if we do not know Christ as our High Priest, we cannot live today. How can we live today if we do not know Him as our High Priest? On the earth He is our Apostle. God sent Him to this earth to accomplish a mission, the work of redemption, and it is finished.

Therefore you'll find He sits at the right hand of God. No more to do. The work of redemption is completed.

You cannot add anything to it. But at the same time you'll find our Lord Jesus does not sit in heaven and nodding His head and have a nap. He is very busy in heaven.

As the High Priest you'll find He stands in the midst of the seven golden lambs. As the Apostle He sits. It is finished.

As the High Priest He stands because He is still serving. He is there ministering unto His own church. He loves His church.

He is sanctifying the church by the washing of the water with the Word, in order to present the church to Himself, a glorious church, without spot or wrinkle or any of such sort, holy and without blemish. He is interceding for us. And brothers and sisters, the best way to explain it is, while He is interceding before the Father, the Holy Spirit is working in us.

And this is the High Priesthood of our Lord Jesus. We need to know Him as our High Priest. Without His intercession, I cannot live.

So brothers and sisters, you'll find that in the holy place, you begin to realize that Christ is your life. He is your light. And He is your High Priest.

In other words, everything that you need to live a Christian life has been provided. And it is a person. Christ Jesus.

He is the provision of God. Well, this is a believer's life in the holy place. Now we'll turn to the believer's ministry in the holy place.

Because the holy place is the place where the priests really minister. Every morning, the priest will enter into the holy place to trim, to dress it. And he will use a golden snuffer.

Because you know, in the old days, it's not like the electric lamp that we have today. It is a vessel, you know, you put oil in it, and put a wick in it. And when the wick draws the oil, and you light the wick, then the light begins to shine.

But after it has been burning for a while, you'll find the oil, the level of the oil will go down. And the wick being used becomes charred at the point, you know. And when that happens, you'll find that the light begins to be dimmed.

So every morning, every evening, twice a day, the priest will dress the lamp from evening to morning, and morning to evening. The reason is to keep the light burning, day and night. Everything in the holy place speaks of the church.

Because the holy place itself speaks of the church. The golden lampstand speaks of the church. How do we know? Because in Revelation chapter one, you remember that John, in the Isle of Patmos, he saw a vision.

And the vision he saw was one like the Son of Man, standing in the midst of seven golden lampstands. And the lampstands are explained to the Apostle John. The lampstands are the churches.

So we know a lampstand represents a church. In other words, on the earth you have the church in Ephesus. But before God, there is a golden lampstand that represents the church in Ephesus.

Now, what is the church? The church is a lampstand. Now, what is a lampstand? A lampstand is an instrument or a vessel for the light, to uplift the light, so that the light may shine over the whole house. A lampstand is not an end in itself.

It is a means to an end. So the church is not an end in itself. The testimony of Jesus may shine forth, and people may see and hear Christ.

That is what the church is. Brothers and sisters, when God's people come together, anyone that enters into the midst of God's people, immediately he is convicted by the Spirit of God, and he will bow down and say, God is in your midst. That is what the church is.

The church never draws attention to itself. It points people to Christ. It is a means to an end.

It is to uplift Christ. That is the only reason for the existence of a church. If the light is gone, then that lampstand is to be removed.

In other words, in God's eyes, it is no use anymore. It may continue on earth, but before God it is gone. The testimony is gone.

So that is what the church is, a golden lampstand. Dear brothers and sisters, you find it is very strange in a sense. You know, what is the church? We say a church is composed of believers.

I think we know better, the church is not a building on one corner of the city square. And often times you have the city square, three corners, you have three different churches building, and one corner is a court. Now that is not what the church is.

The church is not made of bricks, or stone, or mud, or wood, or whatever it is. I think we know better. What is the church? The church is made up of God's people.

God has called out of every nation, every tribe, every people, every tongue, and gathered these people together unto himself, and that is the church. Where two or three are gathered together unto my name, the Lord said, there am I in the midst of them, that is what the church really is. Now if that is the case, there is something wrong here.

Why? Because if that is the case, the lampstand should be made of wood, and overlaid with gold. Would that be more right? We are wood, right? Wood represents human nature, and we are humans, and we are the people made of the church, so it should be made of wood. But then God overlaid with gold.

Now that is what the lampstand should be. But strangely you find in God's revelation this is not the case. You'll find in God's revelation the lampstand has no wood in it.

It's all gold. It's all gold. Because the church is not made up of you, or me, and me.

Well, if the church is made up of you and me, woo to the church. You will find even two people are so different, and we will fight. The church will be divided.

No two flesh can dwell together. Thank God it is not you and me. It is the Christ in you, and the Christ in me.

That is why it is gold. It is all gold. There is no good there.

In other words, everything that is you, or me, has to be crossed out, and what is left is Christ. And it is the Christ in you and me that are built up together into that golden lampstand. You know, I love one illustration.

You know, when God's people come together to break the bread, you see on the table a loaf of bread. That is Christ. That represents Christ.

His body. The Word became flesh, incarnated. God took upon Himself the likeness of sinful flesh.

And in this body He lived thirty-three years, absolutely, perfectly for God. And on the cross, that body is broken for us. So when we come to remember the Lord, before we break the bread, that loaf represents Christ, His own person.

But when we break the bread, you take a piece, I take a piece, everyone take a piece, there is no more bread. But when God looks down from heaven, He sees that bread, still complete. And that bread is the Christ.

That is the Church. In 1 Corinthians chapter 12, we are told that the body is one, has many members, though the members are many, yet one body, so also is the Christ. In other words, you find Christ is in us.

And He is represented corporately by His people. So the lampstand represents the Church. And the Church means that you and I, it is true, it is Christ in you, and Christ in me, and Christ in every one of us, but remember it is Christ, not Christ and you.

See, the trouble with Christianity today is, when we bring Christ in, we bring ourselves in too. And we find that it is a greater measure of ourselves, and a very small measure of Christ. And that is the reason why we have all these confusions, all these problems.

How we need the cross to work in our lives, so that it will be Christ and Christ. There is much we can say, but I cannot go into more details, we have to hurry on. In other words, you find we are the lampstand.

Our purpose of being together is only one, to contain Christ and to uplift Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit. But then you find we are not only the lampstand, we are the priest too. In other words, you find the priest is to dress the lamp.

So it is our responsibility as priests, to see that the light is burning. And this is a 24 hour service. In other words, it is the responsibility of every brother, every sister in the church, to see that the oil is being supplied.

You remember in Zechariah's vision, in chapter 4 of Zechariah, he saw a golden lampstand, and on the two sides of the golden lampstand, two olive trees. And these two olive trees continually pouring gold into the bowl. And then you find the gold as it is burnt, turned into oil for the light.

Now these two trees, olive trees, represent these sons of oil. In other words, they are filled with the Holy Spirit. And because they are filled with the Holy Spirit, they are able to supply the oil to the lamp, that the light may shine.

So brothers and sisters, remember, to be filled with the Holy Spirit is just not for your personal enjoyment, or for your personal pride. Not so. To be filled with the Holy Spirit is to supply the oil to the lamp.

How we need to be filled with the Holy Spirit? It is to be filled with the Spirit. Because as you are filled with the Holy Spirit, then the church will not be lacking in oil, and the light will be burning. And then, on the other hand, you'll find the wick.

We have to trim it. You know, sometimes you'll find the wick and the oil are separated, therefore no oil. Or sometimes you'll find the top of the wick is burned, therefore the oil cannot get through.

You need to use the golden snuffer, so that oil can be drawn into it. Now brothers and sisters, it simply means this. We all also like the wick.

You know, it is the oil that gives light. The wick does not give light. If you burn a wick, it's gone, consumed in a few seconds.

But it is the oil. So that's what we are. We are the wick.

You know, we cannot supply the light, but we draw the Holy Spirit come through us, so that the power of the Holy Spirit, in the power of the Holy Spirit, the testimony of Jesus is maintained. We cannot maintain the testimony of Jesus. It is the power of the Holy Spirit, not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord.

But we have a responsibility to see that the wick is clean, that the oil can get through. That's the reason why the Bible says, do not grieve the Holy Spirit. Do not quench the Holy Spirit.

Resist not the Holy Spirit. Obey the Holy Spirit. You know, if we cooperate, then you'll find the Holy Spirit can get through us.

And that is how the light is shining. And this is our responsibility. Brothers and sisters, every one of us is responsible to see whether I am filled with the Holy Spirit.

By being filled with the Holy Spirit, to put it in another way of expression, and that is what the original means, it means to be ruled by the Holy Spirit. Your life is under the rule, the government of the Holy Spirit. And when you are under the government of the Holy Spirit, you are filled with the Holy Spirit.

And the oil will get through, and the light will shine. So here you'll find the church is a lampstand. And we are the priest, ministering at.

Now you find not only the lampstand, so far as our ministry is concerned, there is the golden table of showbread. You know that showbread not only represents Christ as the bread of life, it also represents the church. Why? Because you'll find there are twelve cakes.

Not just one, there are twelve. Represents the twelve tribes of Israel. And it is put in two rows.

Now two in the scripture speaks of witness. If you have two or three witnessing that everything is settled. So the church is for witnessing.

And twelve speaks of governmental perfection. Governmental perfection. So here you'll find the cake on the table, the bread of remembrance also represents the church.

Now the church is a fellowship, isn't it? The table speaks of fellowship. Now what is the church? The church is a fellowship. In other words, we fellowship with God the Father and God the Son, and on that basis we fellowship with one another.

You remember what the Apostle John said? What we have seen and heard, we report to you, that you may have fellowship with us as we have fellowship with the Father and with the Son. So here you'll find that is what fellowship is. We are having fellowship with the Father and with the Son, and on that basis we are fellowshiping with one another.

We are all at the table. We are communing together. We are fellowshiping together.

We are together sharing Christ. Sharing Christ with one another. Now that is fellowship.

And you'll find these cakes in a sense, so far as God is concerned, the fragrance, the frankincense on the cakes, you know, it's called frankincense because it is frank, it is open. In other words, the fragrance just comes out, not hidden. So you'll find that the sweet fragrance ascends to God.

Oh, how God is pleased with the fellowship of the saints. Whenever a brother or a sister is fellowshiping with another brother or sister, there is joy in heaven. And of course, the Apostle John said that your joy may be full.

There is nothing that gives joy more than fellowshiping with brothers and sisters. We are the showbread, and there we are to exhibit it for the glory of God, and also for the food of one another. You know, in fellowship we feed one another.

We feel full. We feel happy, joyful. We receive, I receive Christ from you, and you receive Christ from me.

Therefore, you'll find we grow up in Christ. That is the church. And not only that, you'll find this is where our ministry is.

So brothers and sisters, remember that we are a fellowship. Therefore, we need to fellowship with one another. The more we fellowship with God, with God the Father and God the Son, the more we are able to fellowship with one another.

And fellowship is a two-way street. You never think of fellowship as one way. In other words, there are people who are always giving and giving and giving, and some people are always there receiving and receiving and receiving, and never giving.

Now that's dead sea. Fellowship is two-way. So every brother and sister should share with one another.

Do not just receive and receive and receive. But what you have received, share with somebody else. And as you share, you are enriched.

And the joy will fill your heart, and the Father will be pleased. So a church is a fellowship. That is where our ministry really is.

And then you'll find the Golden Altar of Incense. Now the Golden Altar of Incense you'll find so far as Jewish history is concerned. You know, every day one of the priests will go to the Golden Altar of Incense to burn incense.

It is to be done every day, twice a day, at the time of prayer, the morning prayer, the evening prayer. Then a priest will go into the holy place to burn incense. And it is considered as the highest honor a priest could ever have.

Why? Because the Golden Altar of Incense is closest to the Ark and the Mercy Seat. And when the priest enters in to burn the incense, all the people will be in the Outer Court. Nobody in the temple itself.

The priest is alone there. And there, as he burns incense, he will pray the prayer of the nation. He is not to pray his own prayer, private prayer.

He is to pray the prayer of the nation. And we know the prayer of the nation of Israel is that Messiah. So in other words, here you'll find that is what the Old Testament is.

But in the New Testament, thank God, it is grace. In other words, every one of us has the privilege to go into the Golden Altar of Incense to burn incense there. Every one of us can do that.

You know, in the old days, if a priest, after they get the privilege, they cast lots, and when the lot falls upon that priest to burn incense at the Golden Altar, he can only do it once in his lifetime. He can never repeat it. And many priests serve whole life without that privilege being given.

You read Luke, and you find Zechariah, he is already advancing age, ready to retire, and he was never having that privilege. Then suddenly that privilege came. You know, and Protestants say, thank God, it is wide open to every one of us.

In other words, we are made worshippers. We are made intercessors. What is the Church? The Church is the house of prayer for all nations.

That is what the Church is. We are to worship God, because that is what the Father is seeking. The Father is seeking for true worshippers, those who worship Him in spirit and in truth.

And we are the true worshippers. We can come before Him and worship Him. You know, we worship God through Christ, and we worship God with Christ.

You know, how do you worship? You worship God with Christ, because no one is worthy before God. Only Christ is worthy. So when you worship with Christ, then God accepts that worship.

If you try to worship with yourself, you will be rejected. You find that king, and try to worship with the best of his produce, and he is rejected. But when Abel worshipped with the Lamb, he is accepted.

So brothers and sisters, that is what we are worshipping. When you worship God, you don't worship God with yourself, like that Pharisee, Lord, I fasted twice a week, I gave one tenth to the poor, look how good a man I am. He is not justified.

But here you find a publican, oh God, have mercy upon me, allow me to be atoned. And he went home justified. We worship with Christ.

Brothers and sisters, when we come together to worship God, we worship God with Christ. We thank God for what Christ has done for us. We tell God how we appreciate his gift to us.

And we tell God what Christ means to us. And we worship God with Christ. And when we worship God with Christ, then God's heart is satisfied.

That's worship. And that is the reason why the more we know Christ, the more we are able to worship. Often times we find our worship are just words.

There is no substance there. The reason is, we do not know Christ as we should. If we experience Christ more, then there is much more we can worship God.

Not only worship, but to pray, to intercede. You know the Lord Jesus teaches the church to pray. Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. In other words, prayer is not just asking something for ourselves. Prayer of the church is standing with God for his will to be done on earth as it is in heaven.

And this is our ministry. When the church gathers to pray, we are not praying our individual prayers. We are praying corporately for the interest of God.

For the glory of God. So in the holy place you find that's how we work together as priests. How we minister unto God.

It is a ministry unto God. When you go out to the outer court, you minister to the people. But when you enter into the holy place, you minister.

This is the second stage in our believer's life. So may the Lord help us that we may not just remain in the outer court, but by the grace of God we will enter into the holy place and minister. Shall we pray? Dear Heavenly Father, we do praise and thank thee for the wonderful provision thou has provided for us in Christ Jesus.

We do thank thee that our Lord Jesus is not only the burn offering, the meal offering, the peace offering, the trespass offering, the sin offering, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. We do praise and thank thee our Lord Jesus is the one who washes us with his life by the word that we may be purified from all defilements. We do praise and thank thee that thou has made us a kingdom priest unto God, that we may serve thee with clean hands and clean feet.

And Father, we do thank thee that our Lord Jesus is truly our life, our light, our high priest. We cannot live without him, but with him we can live. Oh, the victory that is in Jesus.

Oh, how we worship thee. And we do praise and thank thee that thou has not only made Christ unto us life, light, and high priest, but thou has called us to be thy vessel of testimony. Thou has called us to be a fellowship.

Thou has called us to be worshipers and intercessors. Lord, we pray that by thy grace through the life and light and high priest, we may be able to fulfill our ministry unto thee. To the praise of thy glory, we ask in the name of our Lord Jesus.

Amen.

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