

BEING BLENDED BY PRAYING WITH THE RELEASE OF OUR SPIRIT

- The new need of the vital groups requires praying in a new way
- To have living prayer in our group, we need to exercise our spirit to be simple and open to the Lord and to our group
- Praying in this way will cause us to be blended and made one

Praying in a New Way to Meet the New Need

For the vital groups, the first thing is our prayer. Thus, the first matter in this training will be to train the vital group members concerning how to pray in the new way to meet the new need. First, we should not repeat our old prayers. Our way of prayer has become a form; week after week we pray in a habitual way, repeating the same prayers to the Lord. Such prayers are not genuine prayers. When we pray, we should simply tell the Lord directly what we want: "Lord, we want to be revived. We are dead and cold. We want to be burning." To say this much is good enough. In the Bible we cannot find any example of habitually repetitious prayers. In Luke 18:41 the Lord Jesus asked the blind man, "What do you want Me to do for you?" The blind man answered, "Lord, that I may receive my sight!" The Lord said to him, "Receive your sight," and instantly the man received his sight (vv. 42-43). In the Lord's table meeting we can pray, "Lord Jesus, You are so fair. You are the chief among ten thousand; I love You, Lord." That is good enough. There is no need for us to pray long prayers in which we teach, explain, and expound the Scriptures to the Lord.

We all need to pray. No one should excuse himself by saying that he does not have the burden to pray. How can human beings not have a burden to pray? We all need God. If we need to breathe, we need to pray. We need to pray just as we need to breathe. Nearly everyone eats three meals a day without having any special "burden." Thus, we should not take the excuse that we do not have the burden to pray.

We need to learn to pray in a new way and to pray new prayers. We need the Lord to come and stir us up that we may pray in a new, refreshing, and living way. In our prayer there is no need for us to tell the Lord what to do. If we desire to be revived by the Lord, we should simply ask Him to revive us. We may pray, "Revive me, Lord. I am pitiful. I need You to revive me." This is good enough. He does not need us to tell Him what to do. Our telling the Lord what to do is not prayer; it is instruction.

Before we open our mouth to pray, we should consider carefully what we should say. We should not pray anything in the habitual way. When we

say, "Lord Jesus, I praise You," we must mean that we praise Him. Instead of "Lord, I praise You," the Lord may lead you to say, "Lord, I just worship You." When you say that you worship the Lord, you should mean it. Often when certain saints begin their prophesying, they say "Praise the Lord" several times. This is a bad habit. It is meaningless and simply wastes time. I beg you to take my word concerning your prayer. (*Fellowship Concerning the Urgent Need of the Vital Groups*, Chapter 9)

The Burning of the Spirit depending on Our Being Simple and Open

We must not only pray but also thank the Lord, praise Him, and rejoice in Him. To do this is to open our mouth, our "chimney." Instead of keeping the chimney closed and thereby choking off the draft, we must open the chimney. When we take the cover off the chimney by opening our mouth to rejoice, we cause the Spirit to burn...Today [among Christians] there are two kinds of people. On the one hand, there are the worldly, backslidden believers who have no heart for the Lord. They are indifferent toward spiritual things, the things of the Lord, and come to the meetings in an indifferent way. Obviously, it is very difficult for such persons to open themselves. On the other hand, there are the so-called spiritual believers who are often so spiritual that they close themselves. Thus, both the backsliding believers and the spiritual believers close themselves so that there is no opening or entrance for the draft and, consequently, no burning of the Spirit in them.

We should not consider ourselves better than the backslidden believers. We should not think that although they have not seen a vision, we have. We should not think that we are so spiritual or consider ourselves higher than others. Instead, we should remove the cover from our being, allow the draft to come in, and let the Holy Spirit burn. We should be simple and open like a child (Matt. 18:3). For example, when we pray, we should not pray in an overly spiritual manner; rather, we should pray like a child (cf. Luke 18:10-14). Our urgent need as Christians who are seeking the Lord is to open ourselves, make ourselves simple, and remove all the coverings so that the Spirit can get through and can burn within us.

Being Simple and Open in the Meetings

The longer we meet together, the more formal we tend to become, and the more formal we become, the more we quench the Spirit. When we are formal in the meetings, everyone is careful not to open himself, and no one dares to open his mouth. We must break through this barrier, forget about

everything, and make our meetings simple. We should come to the meeting as if we have just been saved. Inwardly, we should be new. There should be nothing old; everything should be in newness.

We should not make the meetings too spiritual, because this kills the meetings. The more spiritual the brothers become, the more dead they become and the more dead the meetings become. We must forget about spirituality and be simple and open. We must endeavor not to know spirituality, Christianity, knowledge, doctrines, or anything else. We should know only to open ourselves, to be simple, to praise the Lord, and to remove the covers and let the draft in so that the Spirit can burn. In our meetings there must be a real burning. We should pray like children so that others will be encouraged to pray. If we were like children, our meetings would be simple, free, and open. Our meetings must liberate and release people, not bind them. Whenever people come to our meetings, they should have the sense that they have been liberated, set free, and released. For this we need the burning of the Spirit. (*The Exercise of Our Spirit for the Release of the Spirit*, Chapter 3)

Prayer Not Being Limited by Topic

We should not limit our prayer to a specific topic. Since the emphasis of prayer is on the exercise of the spirit, the topic is not the most important item. We can pray when there is a specific topic, and we can also pray when there is not a specific topic. Actually, there are many matters that can be the focus of our prayer. For example, the building of the church, the gathering of students during winter break, the release of the spirit, the blending of the spirit, and the fellowship in the spirit are all worthwhile matters for our prayer. Hence, it does not matter whether we have a particular topic but whether our spirit is released. If we are skilled in our exercise, we can always release our spirit and blend in spirit, no matter what the topic is. Often we feel that there is no topic, burden, or leading in regard to our prayer simply because we have not exercised our spirit. As we exercise our spirit, we will become more skillful in sensing a topic of prayer, and there will be opportunities for prayer in every meeting. As long as our spirit is living and we are diligent, we should not be concerned about a topic for prayer.

Believing That We Can Release Others' Spirits

When we pray, we must have the faith that our released spirit will touch and open up the spirits of others. Each time we open our mouth to pray, we

should believe not only that our prayer will be heard by God but also that it will touch the spirits of the saints. Every person who exercises his spirit in prayer must have such faith. This again can be compared to playing soccer. As long as we are willing to put the ball in motion, others will follow. As soon as we open our mouth to pray, others will follow. Once our spirit is opened and released, the spirits of the saints will be stirred up.

Being Open to Let the Spirit Come Forth to Be Blended and Made One

Being open means to let our spirit come forth; it does not mean to speak frankly with others and to point out their wrongdoings. In these days we often speak of being open. However, some saints think that this means to speak forthrightly and to be willing to point out wrongdoings. This kind of "openness" only opens up a tomb and spreads death. The more that one speaks in this way, the more he is filled with death. We should never practice this. The openness that we speak of involves the release of the spirit. We should not close our spirit; rather, we should try our best to let our spirit come forth. When we are meeting together, our spirit should be open; when everyone's spirit is open, the saints will be blended spontaneously.

This is wonderful. When we pray with an open spirit, there is no need to point out the wrongdoings of others because everyone will see their own wrongdoings in God's light and receive correction from one another in spirit. When we begin to pray, we may have different opinions concerning a matter, but as we pray and our spirits are released, we will become of one mind. Actually, it is not that our opinions will automatically become the same but that we will become one in spirit. When our spirits are in one flow and fully blended, spontaneously we will be one, and we will not be governed by different opinions. (*The Priesthood and God's Building*, Chapter 4)

Fellowship Questions:

1. As your group has been meeting together, have you seen a development in your prayer together?
2. What are some of your group's specific needs to advance in prayer?
3. Share a specific time when you were refreshed and enlivened by your group's prayers.
4. How can your group mutually encourage one another to be simple and open to the Lord in prayer?

5. How does oneness result from of the release of the spirit? Have you experienced this with your group?