

IV. A Mature Testimony of Life—Producing the Church Life for Brothers to Dwell in Unity

Psalm 133 (A Psalm of Ascents of David)

¹ Behold, how good and how pleasant it is For brethren to dwell together in unity! ² It is like the precious oil upon the head, Running down on the beard, The beard of Aaron, Running down on the edge of his garments. ³ It is like the dew of Hermon, Descending upon the mountains of Zion; For there the Lord commanded the blessing—Life forevermore.

A. Loving God and loving the brothers

1. In Psalm 132 we see that because the psalmist loves God, he cares for what God wants. He desires what satisfies God's heart. He would rather be ill-treated so that God's heart can be satisfied. This is a man who truly loves God.
2. There is another advance in Psalm 133. The previous psalm is about loving God; this psalm is about loving the brothers. 1 John 4:20 tells us, "...for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen?" If a person loves God, he will also love God's children. If a person cares for God's things, he will also care for the things of his brothers. He will care for his brother's need and sacrifice himself in order to perfect his brothers.
3. If God can rest, then we can rest. If God cannot find rest with us, then we also cannot rest; this is a natural fact. To love God is the center and to love the brothers is the circumference. In order to love one another and dwell in unity, the secret is to love God. If we all can be encouraged by God's love and be touched by God's love, we will rise up to love God. The result naturally is to love our brothers and sisters. Therefore Psalm 133 is the mature testimony of the church life.

B. Our mature testimony—the testimony of oneness

1. The content of this Psalm is the expression of a mature life. It is not a momentary expression of our emotions. We always read this Psalm with a lot of feelings; we are touched and

enjoy those feelings. These kinds of feelings and emotions are temporary, they do not count as the reality of this Psalm.

2. Behold, the brothers dwell together in unity. When you and I both lose ourselves, we are no longer individualistic; we are brothers dwelling in unity. This is a mature expression.
3. If we still don't see this kind of condition in our church life, do not be disappointed because this should be the goal of our growth unto maturity. We must be clear that when the Lord is transforming us and working in us, when we are struggling to gain Him, then we will have this reality. Behold how good and how pleasant it is for the brothers to dwell in unity.
4. When David wrote this psalm in his prophesying spirit, he saw the One who is greater than him and who will be sitting on his throne, Christ. When He comes again, all those who were redeemed by Him will dwell in unity. They will be constituted into the Body and live out the body life. All the members will dwell in unity and care for one another in love so that God's name will be glorified.
5. In John 17, before the Lord departed, He prayed earnestly for the oneness of those He loved. This prayer shows us that in order for the saints to be one, there are three aspects: first, we must be in the name of the Father through His eternal life; second, we must be in the Triune God through the sanctification of the Word; and third, we must be in the glory of God expressing the Triune God. This oneness is not outward, but rather it is inward; it is in the spirit, it is in God's divine life, and it is in God's glory. Only this kind of oneness is real and genuine.
6. After the Lord's resurrection and ascension, there were about 120 saints gathered together. They prayed in one accord and brought in the outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost. They were baptized into one body. There were 3,000 who got saved that day. They gathered together in one accord, keeping the teaching and fellowship of the apostles. They continued in breaking bread and prayer. They lived together and shared all things. Daily, God was adding many to the church. This is the oneness of God's work.

7. Paul's letters of encouragement to the churches
 - a. To the saints in Corinth: "Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment" (1 Cor. 1:10).
 - b. To the church in Ephesus: "I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love" (Eph. 4:1-2).
 - c. To the church in Philippi: "fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind" (Phil. 2:2).
 - d. God's purpose is for us to be one. God's desire is for us to dwell in unity. To be in oneness is a spiritual matter; to dwell in unity is an outward expression. Since we are one in life, then we should also dwell in unity in our daily life.

C. How good and how pleasant it is

1. The psalmist did not tell us to what extent is this goodness and pleasantness because it is so good and pleasant that it is impossible to describe.
2. The word *good* in the Bible is different than our concept. Only things that can satisfy God's heart, that can accomplish God's purpose, that come from God and return back to God to God's praise and glory, can be considered good and pleasant.
3. The root of the word *pleasant* in Hebrew is like a symphony which has many musical instruments. When it starts to play, it has all kind of sounds. Some of them are high and some of them are low, yet they are in harmony. The word *pleasant* denotes this kind of harmonious music. Those who hear it can sense comfort, peace and satisfaction. How pleasant it is for the brothers to dwell in unity.

D. Fine oil and the dew of Hermon

“It is like the precious oil upon the head, Running down on the beard, The beard of Aaron, Running down on the edge of his garments.”

1. In Exodus 30:22-30, God commanded the Israelites to make the holy anointing oil with myrrh, cinnamon, calamus and cassia mixed with olive oil. When Aaron was anointed to be the high priest, he put on the high priestly garment and Moses poured the anointing oil on his head. The oil ran down upon his beard and ran down upon the hem of his garment.
2. Here Aaron represents Christ. Our Lord Jesus Christ is the high priest. In His ascension, God anointed Him to be the Lord and Christ. God poured the Holy Spirit upon Him. He received the promised Spirit and He poured the Spirit upon the earth, upon the beard and down to the hem of the garment. The Body and the Head are one. In this oneness, each member of the Body was also anointed by the anointing oil.
3. *Christ means the anointed One.* The Holy Spirit anointed Him without measure. 2 Cor. 1:21 says, “Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and has anointed us is God.” Our Lord, Christ was anointed by God to be the high priest today. He serves in the holy temple and the real tabernacle. We are His Body and when we are joined with Him, we are also anointed in His anointing.
4. As long as we live in the body and dwell with the brothers in unity, the anointing oil will flow to us and also will flow to others. Every brother and sister will be anointed by the Holy Spirit and serve in a living way. Such a condition is “how good and how pleasant.”
5. “It is like the dew of Hermon, Descending upon the mountains of Zion.” Mount Hermon is located in the north of Palestine. It is a high mountain and fills with dew. When we went there, the tour guide told us that the amount of dew is like rain coming down.
 - a. Hermon represents the heavens in the Bible. (In Song of Songs, Hermon represents the heavens.) Christ went through death and resurrection; now He ascended to the

heavens. In the sphere of ascension, He is the dew. What is dew? Dew forms in a cold night. In other words, Christ went through death, resurrected, and in His ascension became the grace that refreshes us.

- b. Zion is the church that represents God's sovereign rule on earth. When Christ can reign in the church, the saints can dwell in oneness and the ascended Christ with the riches of life from heaven will descend upon the church like dew. Every brother and sister will be filled with life, freshness, energy and power.
 - c. The result is that in the church life, we only see resurrection; every saint is a testimony of resurrection. Here we do not see our flesh, our soul life, and our natural life but only the resurrected Christ. O what a church life; everyone is in resurrection and everyone is enjoying resurrection. Everyone is a testimony of the ascended Christ who supplies us the freshness of His resurrection and becomes our experience of life. Hallelujah.
6. God blesses us with His eternal life, "For there the Lord commanded the blessing—Life forevermore."
- a. In the testimony of Zion, God blessed us with His eternal life. God's appointed blessing is His eternal life; there are no other blessings in the church except the eternal life.
 - b. We need to speak to the Lord and say, "Lord, give us this reality." We don't need the outward excitements; we need the growth in life inwardly. We need to grow; we need to labor; and we need to mature until the mature church life can be expressed among us.

V. A Testimony of a Matured Life—All the Servants in the Church Are Watchful to Wait for the Lord’s Second Coming

Psalm 134:

¹ Behold, bless the LORD, All you servants of the LORD, Who by night stand in the house of the LORD! ² Lift up your hands in the sanctuary, And bless the LORD. ³ The LORD who made heaven and earth Bless you from Zion!

A. A conclusive psalm

This fifteenth psalm of ascents begins with a man who belongs to the Lord and has a heart with an inward longing for the Lord. He is willing to be delivered out of the bondage of the world, abide in the temple of God, and seek the Lord with a pure heart. This man who belongs to God walks step by step in ascension, goes through many steps, is delivered out of the bondage of the world and is cleansed from his sins. He abides in the Lord, receives His light, and realizes that in his flesh there is nothing good. He has received the dealing of the cross and the revelations of God, and he sees God’s eternal purpose. He has experienced the breaking of the soul life so that he can have a deeper union with the Lord whom he loves. He is then able to live a body life (or church life) of brotherly love. Thus, at the conclusion of this psalm of ascents, we can see that in the church there is a group of servants raised up, serving in the presence of the Lord, and being watchful to wait for His second coming.

B. Growing to become the servants of the Lord

1. Because there is a group of servants of the Lord, the church bears a testimony and experiences the anointing of the ointment and the resurrected Christ as its dew of life. The church then produces a group of corporate servants: “All you servants of the LORD, Who by night stand in the house of the LORD!” “Night” means that dawn has not arrived yet, indicating the Lord Jesus has not yet returned. What are we waiting for during the night? We wait only for the Lord’s

second coming. This has been the longing of the saints in many generations, and is even more ours today.

2. “Stand” means that a man does not rest, but rather diligently serves. “Stand in the house of the LORD!” indicates that everyone stands on a positive ground; everyone is watchful, waiting, preparing themselves to be ready in the presence of the Lord for the Lord’s return.
3. Spiritually speaking, we are now living in the night. But we thank and praise our Lord that His words tell us, “The night is far gone; the day is at hand; yet a little while, and our Lord will return.” During this little while, we stay watchful in the house of God, standing, watching, serving, testifying for the Lord, and glorifying God.
4. In the night, especially late at night, some watchmen may sleep. Therefore we need to be watchful and pray. Every brother and sister must fulfill their portion to worship and serve their God in the church. We are all servants of God.
5. “In the house of the LORD!” means in the church life. “Stand in the house of the LORD” is to serve diligently in the church life. In the church life, a group of saints grows unto maturity, becoming the servants of the Lord, and crying out together, “Lord, return.” The church must be mature in order to bring the Lord back; a matured church definitely longs for the Lord’s return and is also ready to receive the Lord’s return. Although we are in the realm of resurrection and ascension and have the highest and richest enjoyment and experience of Christ our head, this experience is still a foretaste. We still need to say, “Lord, may You return.” To us, the Lord’s return becomes more beautiful, more attractive and more glorious.

C. In the church, praying for the Lord’s return and blessing the Lord

“Lift up your hands in the sanctuary, And bless the LORD.” The sanctuary typifies the church. “Lift up hands” signifies prayers. In the church we are watchful to wait for the Lord’s return, praying and blessing the Lord. At the end of the psalms of ascents, we

have a perfectly glorious testimony: matured saints lifting up their hands in the church life, praying for the Lord's return. When we pray in such a way, we can say, "Bless the Lord."

D. The creator Lord blesses us in the church

"The LORD who made heaven and earth Bless you from Zion!"

What a conclusion! The psalms of ascents end here. God wants to pour out His blessings to us from Zion, His throne. Throughout all our life, grace and kindness follow us, and we also abide in the temple of Jehovah forever and ever.

In the beginning of the psalms of ascension, we see that Jehovah our Lord made the heavens and the earth (Psalm 121:2); at the end, this same Lord who made the heavens and the earth now blesses this group of matured servants of the Lord in the church of His new creation! This blessing is the reward which He will give to His servants upon His return.