

Lighting the Lamps in the Sanctuary of God by Serving as Priests Clothed with the Expression of Christ

For our Christian life, we must treasure light. We must make sure that we **live in the light** and **walk in the light**, because where there is light, there is **our God who is light**. If we are not in the light, surely, we are away from God and detached from Him. Even worse, if we find ourselves in darkness, surely, we are in Satan's realm. Darkness is a curse and a sign of the fall. It is a great salvation to be brought back to the realm of light. **As priests**, one of the first things we must learn to do in our priestly service is to **light the lamps**, which is to cause light to arise.

In typology lighting the lamps in the sanctuary of God signifies **the proper way to meet as Christians**. All proper students of the Bible agree that this matter of the lighting of lamps in the sanctuary is a type of our **Christian meetings**. The tabernacle was a place both for God's dwelling and for the meeting of the children of Israel; hence, it was called "the tabernacle of the Tent of Meeting". On the one hand, the sanctuary of God is His **dwelling place**, His habitation; on the other hand, this sanctuary is the **Tent of Meeting**, indicating that this is the place where God's people meet together. It is crucial that we have light so that when we meet together, we are not meeting in darkness. All our meetings must be in the light. In this Tent of Meeting, the first thing that we must do is to light the lamps, to make sure that the lights are turned on. We need to see that this matter of lighting the lamps is very much related to the proper way for us Christians to meet together.

God called us **out** of the world. What did He call us out of the world to do? He called us out to come together, to meet; we are called **out to meet together**. Meeting is the most basic characteristic of the church – *ekklesia*. For a local church not to meet, not have any meetings, would be very strange. If that were the case, we would have to wonder what kind of church that is. Every church **must meet**. Praise the Lord for our meetings! Nevertheless, the Lord has to continue to recover the meetings of the church. If we are not careful, our meetings could slowly and gradually drift toward those found in Christianity. If in our meetings we merely come together to do some religious things, to listen to some messages, or to carry on a religious formality, then we are not meeting according to what is revealed in Exodus 27:20-21. Meeting in a routine way is the same as what is done in Christianity; it is degradation. Every genuine, proper meeting of the church must be a meeting that **brings forth light**, a meeting that causes light to arise. The Lord must fully recover this among us.

According to the record in the Word, the priests have primarily **three functions**: first, they **offer sacrifices** upon the altar of burnt offering; second, they **light the lamps** in the sanctuary; and third, they **burn the incense** on the incense altar. These are the three main functions of the service of the priests. The offering of the sacrifices upon the bronze altar in the outer court may be somewhat rough, but after the priests enter into the tabernacle, they have to light the lamps and burn the incense, both of which are finer. These two finer functions are closely related to each other and quite particular. We need to see that the lighting of the lamps in the sanctuary is **a key function of the service** of the priests, not an activity for the common people.

The one who lights the lamps is a person who is possessed by God, who is saturated with God, and who lives absolutely for God. Whatever such a person says and does in the sanctuary of God is the lighting of the lamps; **all his actions are the lighting** of the lamps. If we are such priests and realize that we are God's purchased possession, His acquired possession, we will live a life that is wholly and absolutely for God, and we will be filled and saturated with Him. Then everything that we do in the meetings – whether it be **a little prayer, a little singing, a little prophecy**, or even just **saying Amen** – will be lighting the lamps. If the priest is such a person, whatever he says and every little activity he does in the sanctuary lights the lamps.

It would be very hard to speak before a congregation that never said Amen. Such a situation would suppress the spirit of the speaker very much. We should worship the Lord that we can be with a group of people that knows how

to say **Amen**. Even by our Amens, we are lighting the lamps. Not only is the one speaking the word of God lighting the lamps, but the ones hearing the word and inwardly exercising to receive the word and say Amen are also lighting the lamps. Every activity that we carry out in this sanctuary as priests is our lighting of the lamps.

For the building up of the church as the house of God, we need to take care of and strengthen the meetings of the church. If we are not careful, our meetings will slowly slip into the degraded situation of Christianity. This message is crucial, and there is **a practical application**. If we love the church, we need to love the meetings. We need to be burdened that all the meetings will be **full of light**. We cannot leave the meetings to chance or allow them to be loose or unattended. We should be burdened that every meeting, whether large or small, in the local churches would be full of light. We must be the **bearers of light**. As [we are] under the dispensing of what the Lord is speaking to us in the book of Exodus, we are being constituted sons of light, children of light, and even priests of light so that we will become light-bearers... To care for the meetings of the church, there are six practical points that we should consider:

First, we need to **honor every meeting** of the church. We should never despise a meeting. In recent years, I have noticed that some have begun to think that there are too many meetings of the church. They think that instead of going to the meetings, it is sufficient to get together with the saints for casual or recreational activities outside of the meetings. We must realize that the meeting is the basic characteristic of the church. This is the sanctuary, the Tent of Meeting, the place where God dwells. Every meeting needs to be honored. We should **never think that it is a waste of time to go to the meeting**. We will redeem the time by going to the meeting. One day in the house of God is better than a thousand.

Second, we need to **come to the meeting with a joyful heart**. When we come to the meeting, our attitude and countenance matter. We should not come to the meeting with a gloomy, grim face. Instead, we should come to the meeting to light the lamps. When some saints come into the meeting, it is as if a dark cloud comes in and dims the whole meeting. Such ones often sit in the back and slump in their chairs as if they are machine that has been turned off. This brings heaviness to the meeting. We need to come to the meeting with a joyful heart, a heart that is bubbling and ready to light up the meeting. We should not bring gloom to the meeting or spread darkness, which is death. We must come to the meeting to bring light, which is life. **our happy face means a lot**. Although we should not pretend or artificially alter our appearance, we should come not with a grim face but with a genuinely joyful heart.

Third, we need to **come to the meeting with a pure heart to seek after God**. We should not come to seek for friendship or to meet old friends. We need to come to the meeting with only one goal – to seek God. Fourth, on the practical side, we need to **come to the meeting early, or at least on time**. Regrettably, in some churches many saints come late as a matter of habit. We should not consider it to be normal to come late. Brother Lee said, “Late-comers are meeting-killers”. We need to honor the meeting and come early, or at least on time, because we are coming to the light the lamps in the meeting.

Fifth, we need to come to the meeting **ready to exercise and release our spirit to cause light to ascend**. We need the Lord to deliver us from any kind of formality or religious ritual. We need to come with our spirit ready to cause light to ascend. We should come to the meetings ready to exercise our spirit to light the lamps, forgetting about all other matters and persons. There is no special class in the meetings, because all the believers are priests. Therefore, we should all come to light the lamps and cause the meetings to shine. The Lord’s recovery is spreading throughout the earth, and many new believers and gospel contacts are coming to the meetings. What they see in the meetings should be the light. They should be convicted by the light so that they will be captured and gained by the Lord. Sixth, everything we do in the meeting needs to **minister life, which releases the light**. We should never spread darkness in the meeting but should come to the minister life and spread the light. *(Excerpt from The Ministry of the Word, vol. 20, no. 7, July 2016. Ministry Magazine, pp. 197-228)*