

LESSON SIX

THE PENTECOSTAL MEETING

A. THE HOLY SPIRIT MUST BE IN CHARGE OF EVERY SERVICE.

Pentecostal meetings differ from the services of other churches in that they are not formal with a prescribed form or order. There is life in Pentecostal services and no two services are exactly the same. Man produces things that are identical and without life. God can produce millions of things that are similar but not identical and possessing life. No two people are identical; every leaf and blade of grass differ from the next one. So it is with every service that is directed by and filled with the presence of the Holy Spirit.

The most essential requirement in any Holy Ghost meeting is that the Holy Spirit is in charge. Jesus has promised to be where two or three of his disciples are gathered together in his name. Unless He is there all is in vain. There is nothing more dead than a dead Pentecostal meeting is. It need not have a great deal of manifestation necessarily, to be alive but it must have the presence of God in the meeting.

It is towards this end that every minister must strive in being in charge of meetings. He must watch himself that he doesn't get into any rut or fixed order in directing services. He must pray through until he has the mind of Christ. He must keep his heart open to the leading of the Holy Spirit. He must be a man of discernment that he might detect quickly that which is of the flesh and not of the Spirit. Above all, he must keep himself out of the way so that the Holy Spirit will be free to work in the meeting.

B. WORSHIP IS ESSENTIAL IN EVERY SERVICE.

Some meetings may be bound and stiff. In this case the minister must be perfectly free himself. He must choose hymns and choruses that are of a liberating nature. He should lead the saints in worshipping the Lord. He might call on others to take part in the meeting and get as many as possible to enter into an active part in the meeting. People soon get on fire and blessed when they begin to take active part in the service. Worship will bring the blessing of God down upon all.

True worship springs voluntarily from the heart of man. Because of this, the expression of worship will differ with every individual and personality. One must never make the mistake of condemning a loud expression of praise and say it is of the flesh simply because it is noisy. On the other hand, one must never condemn the quiet person who silently is lost in the Spirit with His Lord. True worship is when it comes from the heart whatever the outward expression may be. Worship is a heart relationship between the saint and the Lord; it is the expression of a soul lost in adoration and love. When the saints truly worship, the blessings of God will sweep over the meeting like waves of glory.

It should be remembered that the Pentecostal service can become formal and dead with its hand clapping and boisterous chorus singing just as much as the church service of a denominational church with its prescribed church order.

C. THE PASTOR SHOULD BE CAREFUL NOT TO QUENCH THE HOLY SPIRIT.

A meeting may run away with fanatical, wildfire manifestations and fleshly excitement. It is here that the spiritual wisdom and discernment of the pastor is really put to the test. Any dead preacher can be in charge of a dead meeting, but it takes a Holy Ghost preacher to be in charge of a Holy Ghost meeting without quenching the Spirit. He must remember that it is better to have a little wildfire than no fire at all. Along with genuine manifestations of the Holy Spirit there is generally some fleshly manifestations as well. The minister must use extreme caution that in trying to keep the meeting steady, he doesn't quench the spirit and bring the people into spiritual bondage for many weeks. He must make sure he himself is in the spirit before he tries to steady the ark. The best way is for him to keep steady himself, and as soon as he has an opportunity to raise a slow hymn. He might ask someone to lead out in public prayer. There is no substitute for the teaching of God's Word along this line. When the saints understand the teaching of the Bible, and have confidence in the minister as their spiritual leader, there should be no difficulty in allowing the saints to be free in the Lord.

Occasionally there is someone in the service that will want to preach when he stands to testify, or to attract attention to himself with some manifestation. The best way to handle such a situation is to sing him down. Sometimes an open rebuke is needed but this is seldom. The preacher should never allow manifestation to interrupt the ministry of God's Word. The Lord will never speak to a congregation in two different ways at the same time. The most important thing is that the minister must make certain that he has the mind of Christ, can be led by the Spirit, and has a thorough knowledge of the teaching of the Word of God on Spiritual Gifts and Manifestations.

D. THE SERVICES SHOULD BE PLANNED TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE CHURCH.

The services of the week should be planned to meet the needs of the entire church. There will be a definite time provided for the various types of services needed. Definite time for each of the following should be planned and provided for: Bible Teaching; Prayer Services; Praying for the Sick; Young Peoples; Evangelism; Tarrying for the Holy Ghost; Testimony; Sunday School; etc.

No definite order can be stated just how to arrange these services for the need will vary from community to community and from country to country. In many churches there is no longer a morning service on Sunday. However, where there is a Sunday morning service this is usually set apart for the saints. It should be the one service in the week above all others when the saints feel free to exercise themselves in the Lord. It is a time of worship and spiritual manifestations. However, this is not always the case. Sometimes there are more unsaved attending the morning service than the evening service. The pastor has to be guided accordingly.

The Sunday evening service should be set apart for evangelistic effort and the winning of souls. The mid-week services may be given over to Prayer, Bible Study, Young Peoples, etc.

E. THE PASTOR MAY REMEMBER A FEW SIMPLE RULES.

The following simple rules may be helpful to young ministers. These rules are copied from the book, *"Making Full Proof of Our Ministry."*

1. If only a handful of people is present, get them to sit together and go down near them yourself.
2. Talk earnestly in natural tones.
3. Talk in a conversational manner. Speak to the people, not at them.

4. Look at the people you are addressing.
5. Talk so plainly that even little children can understand you.
6. Avoid using the pronoun "I" as much as possible.
7. Do not talk while walking to the pulpit. Take your time. Be calm.
8. Act naturally - not too many or too few gestures.
9. A five-second pause will stop whispering in the congregation.
10. Having the congregation stand and sing a chorus will help you to get attention.
11. Start on time regardless the number present.
12. Do not delay in closing for those who wish to go. Dismiss on the top note of blessing.

LESSON SIX

SELF HELP TEST

- A. How should a pastor lead a service that is running away with wild-fire manifestations?

- B. How should a pastor control a situation when a stranger stands to testify and tries to take control of the meeting?

C. Give TEN simple rules a minister may remember in leading a service:

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____
- 6. _____
- 7. _____
- 8. _____
- 9. _____
- 10. _____