

**GENERAL SUBJECT:
THE WORK, THE LIVING, AND THE VISION NEEDED
FOR THE ORGANIC BUILDING UP OF THE BODY OF CHRIST (2)**

Evening Message One

The Church

Scripture Reading: 1 Tim. 3:15-16; Eph. 1:22-23; 5:25-27; 2:15; Rev. 1:11-12; Psa. 133; Col. 2:19; Eph. 4:15-16; Rom. 8:2, 4; 1 Pet. 2:2; Heb. 5:12-14; 1 Cor. 3:6; 14:4b, 31

I. The church is the heart's desire of God—Eph. 3:9-11; 5:25:

- A. The church is the house of the living God, the pillar and base of the truth, for His manifestation in the flesh—1 Tim. 3:15-16.
- B. The church is the Body of Christ, the fullness of the One who fills all in all, for His expression—Eph. 1:22-23:
 - 1. Christ's Body is constituted of all the believers baptized in one Spirit and given to drink one Spirit—1 Cor. 12:12-13.
 - 2. Christ's Body is constituted with His unsearchable riches—Eph. 3:8, 10.
- C. The church is the wife of Christ, His counterpart—Eph. 5:25-27:
 - 1. As the wife of Christ, the church comes out of Christ—v. 30; Gen. 2:22.
 - 2. The church is one with Christ—Eph. 5:31.
- D. The church is the new man—Eph. 2:15:
 - 1. In the new man, there is only room for Christ, not for any natural person—Col. 3:10.
 - 2. In the new man, Christ is all the members and in all the members—v. 11.
- E. The church is the reproduction of Christ and the reprint of the Spirit—Exo. 25:31-39; Zech. 4:2-6; Rev. 1:11-12, 20.

II. The Lord's word concerning the building up of the church is the greatest prophecy in the Bible—Matt. 16:16-19:

- A. This building up of the church takes place on its unique ground, which is constituted of three crucial elements:
 - 1. The first element is the unique oneness of the universal Body of Christ, the oneness of the Spirit—Eph. 4:3; John 17:6, 11, 14-21, 22-24.
 - 2. The second element is the unique ground of the locality in which a local church is established and exists—Acts 8:1; 13:1; Rom. 16:1; 1 Cor. 1:2; Rev. 1:4, 11.
 - 3. The third element is the reality of the Spirit, who is the living reality of the Divine Trinity—1 John 5:6; John 16:13; Eph. 4:3-6.
- B. On the genuine ground of oneness, we enjoy the blessing of life under the anointing oil and the watering dew—Psa. 133.
- C. The building up of the church is the increase of the Triune God in the believers through their growth in Christ—Col. 2:19; Eph. 4:11-16:
 - 1. By the believers' being strengthened into their inner man and by their walking according to the spirit to enjoy the law of the Spirit of life—Eph. 3:16-19; Rom. 8:2, 4.

2. By the believers' feeding on the guileless milk and the solid food of the word of God—1 Pet. 2:2; Heb. 5:12-14; John 6:57.
3. By the washing of the water in the word—Eph. 5:26-27; S. S. 8:13-14.
4. By being conformed to Christ's death through the power of His resurrection—Phil. 3:10; Matt. 16:24.
5. By doing everything through the cross and by the Spirit to dispense Christ—cf. 2 Chron. 1:10.
6. By the watering of the Body of Christ by its gifted members—1 Cor. 3:6; Acts 6:4.
7. By the prophesying of all the saints—1 Cor. 14:4b, 31.