

Message Five

The Three Aspects of the Lord's Recovery

(3)

The Practice of the Church

Scripture Reading: Matt. 16:18-19; Rev. 1:4, 11; 1 Cor. 1:10-13; 12:24; Rom. 14:17

- I. The universal Body of Christ is both the universal house of God and the kingdom of God—Eph. 1:23; 1 Tim. 3:15-16; Matt. 16:18-19.**
- II. The universal Body of Christ appears in various cities as local churches, with one city having only one church in order to keep the oneness and prevent division—Deut. 12:5-18; Acts 8:1; 13:1; Rev. 1:4, 11.**
- III. The local churches are scattered in different places by geography, yet they are not divided by any doctrine or matter—1 Cor. 1:10-13.**
- IV. The unique church of God is expressed as many local churches throughout the whole globe, yet they are still the unique Body of Christ and should not be divided into sects or denominations—10:16-17.**
- V. Among the churches there are the apostles who set up the churches, and in every church there are also elders who manage the church and deacons who serve the church; however, besides the order of these holy services, there should not be any hierarchy—religious organization or system of rank—9:1-3; 1 Tim. 3:1-13.**
- VI. Although the local churches in various localities are many, they all take the eternal economy of God as their center to bear the unique testimony of Christ, not teaching any doctrine that is unrelated to the eternal economy of God and has nothing to do with the testimony of Christ—1:3-4.**
- VII. In these local churches there should be righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit as the reality of the kingdom of God—Rom. 14:17.**
- VIII. We need to know what our practice is under today's divisive and confusing degradation of Christianity:**
 - A. We do not and should not participate in the Catholic heresy, the Protestant denominations, and any kind of free groups of Christians.
 - B. But we recognize and receive the individual believers in Christ who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, redeemed by His blood and regenerated by the Holy Spirit, who are not factious (Titus 3:10), not making divisions (Rom. 16:17), not worshipping idols, nor living in sin (1 Cor. 5:11), even if they are still related to any of the above listed divisions.
 - C. We are one with all the believers who are in the Lord's recovery throughout the world.
 - D. We do not have any creed; we have only the unique Bible properly translated and interpreted by and according to the Bible itself.
- IX. In order to keep the unique oneness of the universal Body of Christ, we need to be blended together—1 Cor. 12:24:**

- A. The word *blended* means adjusted, harmonized, tempered, and mingled, implying the losing of distinctions; blending requires us to be crossed out and to be by the Spirit to dispense Christ for the sake of His Body.
- B. Among us we should have the blending of all the individual members of the Body of Christ, the blending of all the churches in certain districts, the blending of all the co-workers, and the blending of all the elders.
- C. Such a blending is not social but the blending of the very Christ whom the individual members, the district churches, the co-workers, and the elders enjoy, experience, and partake of.
- D. This blending is for the building up of the universal Body of Christ (Eph. 1:23) to consummate the New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:2) as the final goal of God's economy according to His good pleasure (Eph. 3:8-10; 1:9-10).

X. In the practice of the church life today, we need to pay attention to the following present urgent needs:

- A. Every brother and sister needs to ask the Lord for a new revival; this revival is the God-man life. "I hope that the elders and the co-workers in every locality will create an environment in the church to nurture the saints to be God-men to live an overcoming life" (*The Issue of the Union of the Consummated Spirit of the Triune God and the Regenerated Spirit of the Believers*, p. 88).
- B. We need to produce vital groups and endeavor to gain people to be members of the Body of Christ for the building up of the Body of Christ—Heb. 10:24-25.
- C. We need to pursue prophesying for the building up of the Body of Christ—1 Cor. 14:1, 4b, 12, 31.