

Message Two

**The Oneness of the Body of Christ—
the Oneness in the Triune God Typified by the Tabernacle**

Scripture Reading: Exo. 26:15, 24, 26-29; John 17:21-23; Eph. 4:2-3

- I. The oneness for which the Lord prayed in John 17 is the oneness typified by the tabernacle in Exodus 26; because the forty-eight boards of the tabernacle typify the believers built together to be the dwelling place of God, the tabernacle is a clear picture of the oneness in the Triune God.**

- II. The first aspect of the oneness in the Triune God is seen with the three gold rings (the receptacles for the uniting bars), which signify the initial Spirit, the regenerating and sealing Spirit, the all-inclusive Spirit of the Triune God in resurrection for the uniting of the believers—vv. 15, 24, 29; John 3:6; Eph. 1:13; 4:3, 30; cf. Gen. 24:22; Luke 15:22.**

- III. The second aspect of the oneness in the Triune God is seen in the overlaying of the boards (signifying the believers with the human nature) with gold (signifying God with the divine nature)—Exo. 26:29:**
 - A. The oneness of the boards of the tabernacle was not in the acacia wood but in the gold that overlaid the wood; this portrays that the oneness in the church is not in our humanity but in the Triune God with His divine nature—John 17:21.
 - B. The oneness of the boards was not only in the gold, signifying God, but also in the shining of the gold, the expression of the gold, signifying the glory of God; our oneness today is in the Triune God and in His glory, His shining, His expression—vv. 22-24.
 - C. The initial Spirit, who is the Triune God typified by the gold, is the oneness of the Spirit (Eph. 4:3); the overlaying of the gold is actually the spreading of the oneness:
 1. The more we are overlaid with gold, the more oneness we have; the more we have of God, the stronger our oneness is—cf. Col. 2:19.
 2. Instead of being overlaid with gold, we may be merely gilded with gold, like Babylon the Great in Revelation 17:4; the amount of gold that we have may not be enough to keep us in the genuine oneness.
 3. Only when the boards were adequately overlaid with gold were they perfected into one; this indicates that to be perfected into one is to gain more of God—John 17:23.
 - D. “Not having an adequate amount of God can create a serious problem with the oneness. The Lord’s recovery is not a movement. We do not desire to gain a large number of people. In the recovery we are concerned for the genuine weight of gold. The important question is this: How much of God do you have? The Lord’s recovery consists of God overlaying His recovered people with Himself” (*Truth Messages*, p. 86).
 - E. Oneness is a matter of sinking deeply into the Triune God until we are fully overlaid with gold; our problem is that we are short of God, and our need is to gain more of Him—Col. 2:19; Phil. 3:8b:
 1. Everything depends upon how much gold we have; we all can become dissenting if we are short of gold.
 2. Today the Lord needs this genuine oneness; if we do not have this oneness, we cannot go on in the recovery.

3. The only way to be kept in this solid, real oneness is to have an adequate amount of the experienced God—v. 10.
- F. The golden nature of God will never overlay our fallen nature but will overlay only our regenerated and transformed nature, signified by acacia wood:
1. The overlaying of gold occurs simultaneously with this transformation; wherever transformation is, there the overlaying of the gold is also.
 2. Transformation depends upon our loving the Lord, our contacting Him, our listening to His word, our praying to Him, and our walking according to the spirit; as long as we have these five things, we are living Christ—Rom. 8:4; Phil. 1:19-21a.
 3. Only when we all have been transformed and overlaid with gold will it no longer be possible for there to be dissension among us; the only safeguard is to be overlaid with gold—2 Cor. 3:18; Rom. 12:2.

IV. The third aspect of the oneness in the Triune God is seen with the uniting bars, which held the forty-eight boards together and brought them into oneness; these uniting bars signify the initial Spirit becoming the uniting Spirit to join all the members of Christ into one Body—Exo. 26:26-29; Eph. 4:3:

- A. The uniting bars were made of acacia wood for connecting strength and overlaid with gold for uniting; that the bars were made of acacia wood indicates that the oneness of the Spirit involves not only Christ's divinity but also His humanity—cf. v. 2, footnote 1.
- B. In actuality, the uniting bars signify not the Holy Spirit alone but the Holy Spirit mingled with our human spirit (Rom. 8:16)—the mingled spirit, which includes both divinity and humanity.
- C. The uniting of the boards of the tabernacle involved the passing of the bars through the rings on each board to join the boards together; this signifies that the believers in Christ are united when their spirit cooperates with the Spirit, thus allowing the uniting Spirit to pass through them to join them to other believers.
- D. In order for the uniting Spirit to pass through us and thus join us with others, we need to receive the cross, for the uniting Spirit always crosses the standing boards—Matt. 16:24:
 1. The Spirit brings us to the cross, the cross is applied by the Spirit, and the cross issues in more of the Spirit—Exo. 30:22-25; Phil. 1:19:
 - a. The Spirit of the crucified Christ is always bringing us to the cross, conforming us to the death of Christ, and the cross is applied by the Spirit—1 Cor. 1:23; 2:2; Gal. 5:22-24; Phil. 3:10; Rom. 8:13.
 - b. The experience of the cross of Christ issues in the abundance of the Spirit of life—Gal. 2:20; John 12:24.
 2. We are joined into one by our spirit (with our mind, will, and emotion) cooperating with the crossing Spirit; whenever our spirit is one with the crossing Spirit, we experience the uniting Spirit.
 3. The initial Spirit must become the uniting Spirit within us; then we will have the oneness and the building, and we will be safeguarded from dissension and division.