

## **KNOWING THE BODY—THE PRINCIPLES OF THE BODY**

First Morning Session—Message Three

### **The Limitation of the Body of Christ**

Scripture Reading: 1 Cor. 12:18; Rom. 12:3; 2 Cor. 10:13; Eph. 4:7, 16

#### **I. As members of the Body, we must allow ourselves to be limited by the other members, not going beyond our measure:**

- A. God has placed all the members of the Body even as He willed—1 Cor. 12:18:
  - 1. The Head sets us in our special place in the Body and points us to our special function—Rom. 12:4; 1 Cor. 12:15-17.
  - 2. Each one of us members has our own place in the Body of Christ; it is assigned by God and should be accepted by us.
  - 3. Since such an assignment is according to God's will, every member is necessary—vv. 19-22.
  - 4. Every member has a definite place, a definite assignment, and a particular portion with which he serves the Body of Christ.
  - 5. Each member has his own characteristics, and each has his own capability; these characteristics constitute the place, position, or ministry of each member—Rom. 12:4-8.
- B. A basic requirement for the growth and development of the Body is that we recognize our measure and not go beyond it—Eph. 4:7, 16:
  - 1. We must be willing to be limited by our measure—Rom. 12:3, 6a.
  - 2. As soon as we go beyond our measure, we go beyond the authority of the Head and move out from under the anointing.
  - 3. When we go beyond our measure, we interfere with the order of the Body.
  - 4. To think more highly of ourselves than we ought to think without a sober mind is to annul the proper order of the Body life—v. 3.

#### **II. Like Paul we should move and act according to how much God has measured to us, staying within the limits of God's ruling, God's measuring—2 Cor. 10:13:**

- A. When we give a testimony about our work, experience, or enjoyment of the Lord, we must testify within measure, that is, within a certain limit.
- B. Although we expect the work to spread, we must learn how to be under God's restriction; we should not expect a spread that is without measure—vv. 13-15:
  - 1. If we spread the work according to the Spirit, there will always be a certain limit—cf. 2:12-14.
  - 2. Inwardly, we shall have the consciousness that the Lord intends to spread the work only to a certain extent; inwardly, we do not have the peace to spread the work beyond a certain point.
  - 3. Outwardly, in the environment, the Lord may cause certain matters to restrict the spread of the work; the environment does not allow us to go beyond a particular boundary line—cf. Rom. 15:22-24.
- C. In the church service, we need to realize that God has measured out only so much to us, and we should not overstretch ourselves—12:3-4, 6a.