

**Outline of
the Messages for the Full-time Training
in the Fall Term of 2006**

GENERAL SUBJECT: THE REALITY OF THE BODY OF CHRIST

Message Eleven

The Consciousness of the Body of Christ

Scripture Reading: 1 Cor. 12:26-27; 2 Cor. 11:28-29; Col. 2:19; Rom. 12:4-5, 15; Phil. 1:8

- I. According to the teaching of the Bible and our spiritual experience, there is something called the consciousness of the Body of Christ—1 Cor. 12:26-27; 2 Cor. 11:28-29.**

- II. The consciousness of the Body of Christ comes from the enjoyment of Christ—Col. 2:16-19:**
 - A. The dear, precious One we enjoy as our food, drink, and breath is the Head of the Body—1 Cor. 10:3-4; John 20:22; Col. 1:18; 2:19:
 1. What we enjoy of Christ is actually something of Him as the Head; thus, when we enjoy Christ, we hold Him as the Head—vv. 10, 16-17, 19.
 2. It is the enjoyment of Christ that causes Him to be our Head subjectively and experientially—Eph. 3:8, 17; 4:15.
 - B. When we enjoy Christ, He, the Head, causes us to become conscious of the Body—Col. 2:19.
 - C. The more we enjoy Christ, the more we will realize experientially that the Christ we enjoy is the Head of the Body; this realization will make us conscious of the Body and cause us to love all the members of the Body.
 - D. The Christ we enjoy is the Head who causes us to be conscious of the Body; therefore, the issue of enjoying Christ and holding Him as the Head is that we become conscious of the Body of Christ—vv. 16-19.

- III. The consciousness of the Body of Christ is the sense of Christ's life within us—3:4, 15; Rom. 8:2, 6, 10-11; 12:4-5:**
 - A. The mystical Body of Christ is formed by Christ as life in each of us, mingled with us—Col. 3:4; 2:19:
 1. If we are still living in our own life, we cannot know this life which mingles with us to form the Body of Christ—Matt. 16:24; 1 Cor. 2:14; 3:1-3; 12:12-27; Eph. 4:13-16.
 2. The Bible and our experience prove that, though each one of us is a member of the Body of Christ, the life in each one of us is not a *member* life but a *Body* life—1 John 5:11-12; Rom. 12:4-5.
 3. In the Body of Christ, when one member is joined to the Body or is having fellowship with the Body, his life is the life of the Body, and the life of the Body is his life—1 John 1:1-3.
 4. This life mingles with us to become the Body of Christ—Rom. 8:10; 12:4-5.

- B. Concerning the consciousness of the Body of Christ, we need to begin with the sense of the divine life within us—8:6:
 - 1. This sense originates from the Spirit of God and from God's life in our spirit—vv. 2, 10.
 - 2. The divine life within has feelings, and our regenerated spirit also has feelings—vv. 6, 16; 2 Cor. 2:13.
 - 3. This sense is called the sense of life, and it is also the consciousness of the Body of Christ—Rom. 12:15; 1 Cor. 12:26-27.
 - C. If we exercise this sense, it will cause us to be conscious of matters related to the Body—Rom. 12:15.
 - D. If we cultivate this sense, it will enable us to detect problems in the Body.
 - E. If we exercise this sense often and if we love God and care for the church, this sense will become the sense of the Body—2 Cor. 11:28-29.
 - F. Because of self-consideration and love for our particular work, our inner sense is suppressed; this shows that our sense of being in the Body is not adequate and that we still remain in ourselves—Rom. 12:4-5.
- IV. The Body of Christ is universal, the life within us is universal, and the sense of the Body is universal—1 Cor. 12:26-27; 2 Cor. 11:28-29:**
- A. Once the divine life and the Spirit enter into us, we should have a universal sense—the consciousness of the Body—Rom. 8:2, 10-11; 12:4-5, 15.
 - B. The sense of the Body is a universal matter, but this sense has been restricted in us because of our own feelings and views—Prov. 14:10; 2 Cor. 6:11-13.
 - C. The more we experience the Lord's breaking and are delivered from ourselves, the more we will discover that the sense of the Body is universal—11:28-29.
 - D. If we have the sense of the Body, when others suffer or are blessed, we will identify with them and feel the same hardship or blessing—1 Cor. 12:26-27.
- V. The consciousness of the Body of Christ is closely related to our frame of mind—Col. 2:18; 3:2; Rom. 12:2-3; Eph. 4:23:**
- A. Our frame of mind is our perception of things and is very critical; when there is the proper and thorough perception of matters, the frame of mind is normal.
 - B. If we do not have an adequate understanding of the Body of Christ, our frame of mind is not proper, and we will not be able to have the common recognition of the Body of Christ—Rom. 12:4-5; Eph. 4:22-24.
- VI. As members of the Body of Christ, we need to have the consciousness of the Body and a feeling for the Body—Rom. 12:15; 2 Cor. 11:28-29:**
- A. To live the Body life, we need to be conscious of the Body—1 Cor. 12:26-27.
 - B. Paul took the inward parts of Christ Jesus as his own inward parts in caring for the church—Phil. 1:8:
 - 1. Paul took care of the Body of Christ by taking Christ's feeling as his own feeling—cf. Acts 9:4-5.
 - 2. Christ's feeling for the Body became Paul's feeling for the Body.
 - 3. Like Paul, we should take the feeling of the Head as our own feeling.
 - C. If we have the consciousness of the Body of Christ and care for the Body, we will take the Body as the rule in our thoughts and actions—Eph. 4:15-16.

Honoring the Body of Christ by Caring for the Feeling of the Body of Christ

- I. **“Whenever we do something, we must have a proper consideration for the Body. We need to consider how the Body would feel about what we are doing. The biggest problem, the unique problem, is not knowing the Body and not caring for the Body. If we take care of the Body and are concerned for the Body, there will be no problems”** (*The Problems Causing the Turmoils in the Church Life*, p. 35).
- II. **“Our attitude depends upon our seeing of the Body. The only remedy is to see the Body of Christ. It is not a matter of yes or no, good or bad. It is a matter of whether or not something is of the Body or not of the Body. We must be Body-conscious to the uttermost. What the Lord wants is the Body. But today not many really care for the Body”** (p. 30).
- III. **“We are here for the Body. Without the backing of the Body, without the backing of the recovery, we have no way to practice the local churches. If we practice the local church life and neglect the view of the Body, our local church becomes a local sect”** (p. 35).
- IV. **“When we do something, we must not forget that we are members of the Body, and the Body is not only a local church. The local church is not a ‘local body’; if it is, it becomes a local sect”** (p. 29).
- V. **“Both the ministry and many churches in the recovery made a decision to quarantine certain divisive ones. Some did not accept this decision and have even joined these divisive ones. They have disregarded the feeling of the Body”** (p. 29).
- VI. **“According to the principle of Romans 14, we accept all of the Lord’s children, but according to Romans 16:17 we have to mark those who make divisions and turn away from them. We cannot receive division-makers who have been quarantined by the Body...Again this is a matter of practicing the Body life. If a local church receives someone who has offended the Body to the uttermost, that local church is obviously not going along with and not one with the Body. We have to take care of the Body”** (pp. 30-31).
- VII. **“Receiving a person who has made trouble in the recovery and who is still making trouble involves the Body very much...The Body surely will check with a local church if there is a division-maker among them whom they have not disciplined. If they do not discipline such a one, they are wrong and are offending the Body”** (p. 31).
- VIII. **“Regardless of how much help we have received from a certain one in the past, if he does something that offends the Body, we must practice the truth. We must know the Body and trust in the Body...Should we listen to the churches or take care of our own personal observation of the situation? If we put the notification of so many churches aside and go to investigate the situation ourselves, this is an offending to the Body. Do we respect the Body or do we respect ourselves?”** (p. 32)
- IX. **“The recovery is for the Body, not for any individual or merely for any individual local church. If we are going to do something, we have to consider how the Body, the recovery, will react. The problems are all due to the lack of seeing the Body and of caring for the Body...We have to honor the Body”** (p. 35).