

**Outline of
the Messages for the Full-time Training
in the Fall Term of 2023**

**GENERAL SUBJECT:
THE CRUCIAL POINTS OF THE TRUTH IN PAUL'S EPISTLES—
FIRST CORINTHIANS**

Message Fourteen

Living in the Blending and Reality of the Body of Christ

Scripture Reading: 1 Cor. 12:12-27

- I. The central revelation of God is the progressive revelation of God in the Bible—the “bachelor” God, the incarnated God, the redeeming God, the compounded God, the intensified God, the indwelling God, and the incorporated God; the incorporated God is the Body-Christ that ultimately consummates in the “married” God, the ultimately incorporated God, the New Jerusalem.**
- II. The Lord’s present recovery is the recovery of the Body-Christ (“the Christ”) in the church life; the Body-Christ is the incorporated God; thus, to walk in Christ (Col. 2:6) is to walk in Him as the Body-Christ, who is the incorporated God (1 Cor. 12:12-13; Acts 9:4-5, 15; Col. 2:19; Eph. 4:1-6, 15-16; John 14:20, 23; 17:21):**
- A. First Corinthians 12:12 says, “Even as the body is one and has many members, yet all the members of the body, being many, are one body, so also is the Christ”; “the Christ” in this verse is not the individual Christ but the corporate Christ, the Body-Christ, Christ incorporated with all His members.
 - B. This is the corporate “Me” that the apostle Paul saw in his vanquishing conversion to Christ; he saw that the Lord Jesus and His believers are one great person—the wonderful “Me”; the Christ in whom we need to walk today is not only the individual Christ but also the wonderful “Me,” the Body-Christ, who is the incorporated God (Acts 9:3-5; Col. 2:6); thus, Paul is the only writer in the New Testament to use the term *the Body of Christ* (Rom. 12:4-5; 1 Cor. 12:12-27; Eph. 1:22-23; 2:16; 4:4, 16).
 - C. To receive and to walk in Christ are to receive and to walk in the Body-Christ because Christ today is a corporate Body; Christ is no longer only the individual Christ but also the corporate Christ, the Head with the Body; it makes a great difference in our Christian life for us to walk in the corporate Christ.
 - D. The Lord’s recovery is the recovery of “Christification,” a recovery purely and wholly of the person of Christ to gain the reality of the Body-Christ in the church life—1 Thes. 5:23; Phil. 1:19-21a; 3:8-14; 2 Cor. 2:10; Col. 3:10-11.
 - E. Today the Lord is building the Body-Christ in the church life; in the Body-Christ, Christ is built into all His members, and all His members are built into Him by the growth in life and transformation in life for the expression of Christ—2:19; Rom. 12:2; 2 Cor. 3:18; 1 Cor. 12:12-13:
 - 1. In the Body-Christ we enjoy Christ as everything—vv. 3b, 13.
 - 2. In the Body-Christ there is the function of all the members—vv. 14-22; 14:31.

III. God has blended the Body together—12:24:

- A. The word *blended* means “adjusted,” “harmonized,” “tempered,” and “mingled” and implies the losing of distinctions; blending means that we should always stop to fellowship with others.
- B. Fellowship tempers us, fellowship adjusts us, fellowship harmonizes us, and fellowship mingles us; we should not do anything without fellowshiping with the other saints who are coordinating with us; fellowship requires us to stop when we are about to do something.
- C. To be blended means that you are touched by others and that you are touching others, but you should touch others in a blending way.
- D. Blending requires us to be crossed out; blending requires us to be by the Spirit to dispense Christ and to do everything for the sake of His Body.
- E. A short time before Brother Lee left us to be fully with the Lord, he wrote “A Letter of Fellowship with Thanks” on March 24, 1997; in it he says, “The Lord has shown me that He has prepared many brothers who will serve as fellow slaves with me in a blended way. I feel that this is the Lord’s sovereign provision for His Body, and the up-to-date way to fulfill His ministry” (*The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1994–1997*, vol. 5, p. 525).

IV. We need to follow the apostle Paul’s pattern to be Body-conscious and Body-centered so that we may enjoy the supply of the Body; the supply of the Body is the bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, typified by the compound ointment, the holy anointing oil—Phil. 1:19-21a; Exo. 30:23-25:

- A. The compound Spirit is in and for the Body and for the priestly service that builds up the Body—vv. 26-31; Rom. 15:16; 1 Pet. 2:5, 9; Psa. 133:1-3; Eph. 4:3.
- B. We receive the supply of the Spirit by the intercession and fellowship of the members:
 - 1. When we are dry and have no way to go on, we need other brothers and sisters to intercede for us before we can get through—Phil. 1:19; 1 Thes. 5:25; Job 42:8-10.
 - 2. We need to pray ourselves into God to receive the life-giving Spirit as our supply to feed ourselves and all those under our care for the building up of the Body—Luke 11:1-13.
 - 3. We cannot live without the supply of the Body; therefore, we must constantly avail ourselves of the fellowship of the Body—1 Thes. 3:8; 1 Cor. 10:16b; 1 John 1:3.
 - 4. As long as we live in the Body, we will receive the supply of the Body, no matter what our condition is; if a man wants to see light, he has to enter the church, the sanctuary—Psa. 73:16-17; Matt. 5:14; Rev. 1:20.
 - 5. Imprisonment did not isolate Paul from the Body of Christ or cut him off from the supply of the Body—Phil. 1:19.
 - 6. The whole Body is built up through the interdependence among the members—1 Cor. 16:18; Eph. 4:16.

V. In the Body there can be no independence or individualism, for we are members, and members cannot live in detachment from the Body—Rom. 12:5; Eph. 5:30:

- A. Every believer is a member of the Body of Christ, and every member is indispensable—1 Cor. 12:15, 21; Rom. 12:3.
- B. “If we truly see our position in the Body, it will be as though we were saved a second time” (Watchman Nee, *The Mystery of Christ*, p. 16)—John 1:50-51; Gen. 28:17; 1 Tim. 3:15.
- C. Those who see that they are members of the Body treasure the Body and honor the other members—1 Cor. 12:23-24; Phil. 2:29; 1 Cor. 16:18; Judg. 9:9.

- D. Wherever there is Body-revelation, there is Body-consciousness, and wherever there is Body-consciousness, individualistic thought and action are ruled out:
1. If we want to know the Body, we need deliverance not only from our sinful life and our natural life but also from our individualistic life.
 2. Just as the Father is versus the world (1 John 2:15), the Son is versus the devil (3:8), and the Spirit is versus the flesh (Gal. 5:17), so also the Body is versus the individual.
 3. Just as we cannot be independent from the Head, we cannot be independent from the Body; individualism is hateful in the sight of God—cf. Matt. 16:21-26.
 4. What I do not know, another member of the Body will know; what I cannot see, another member of the Body will see; what I cannot do, another member of the Body will do.
 5. If we refuse the help of our fellow members, we are refusing the help of Christ (1 Cor. 12:12; Acts 9:24-25; 2 Cor. 11:30-33); sooner or later, all individualistic Christians will dry up.

VI. If we live in the Body, we will experience the protection of the Body:

- A. The Body renders protection to every member (Matt. 16:18); the Body of Christ puts on the whole armor of God (Eph. 6:10-20).
- B. Spiritual warfare is in this principle—one will chase a thousand, and two will put ten thousand to flight—Deut. 32:30; Eccl. 4:9-12; Rom. 16:20.
- C. An isolated individual is prone to be deceived, so we need the covering of the Body for this as well—Phil. 3:3; Acts 21:4, 11-12.
- D. We all must see the reality of the Body's protection, hide under its protection, and accept its safeguard.

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

- A. 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.
- B. The Head sets us in our special place in the Body and points us to our special function—1 Cor. 12:18.
- C. 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:
 1. As soon as we go beyond our measure, we go beyond the authority of the Head and move out from under the anointing; when we go beyond our measure, we interfere with the order of the Body.
 2. 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—Rom. 12:3.

VIII. We should always consider the Body, care for the Body, honor the Body, and do what is best for the Body—1 Cor. 12:23-27:

- A. The recovery is for the Body, not for any individual or merely for any individual local church—v. 14; Rom. 12:2, 4-5.
- B. The local churches are not the goal of God's economy but a procedure to reach God's goal, which is the reality of the unique Body of Christ.
- C. 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.
- D. We need to be rescued from self-seeking back to a concern for the Body so that we may no longer be for our individual profit but for the building up of the Body.