

KNOWING THE BODY—THE BUILDING UP OF THE BODY

Evening Session—Message Two

The Living and Service of the Body of Christ

Scripture Reading: Phil. 3:10; 4:12-13; Rom. 15:16; 1 Cor. 15:58

I. The living of the Body of Christ has four aspects:

- A. The living of the Body of Christ takes Christ as its Head, life, content, principal object, center, and goal:
 - 1. Christ as its Head, life and content is concerning Christ as the source and element of His Body and refers to the origin and being of the Body—Eph. 5:23; Col. 3:4a, 11b.
 - 2. Christ as its principal object, center, and goal is concerning Christ as the meaning and expression of His Body and refers to the capacity and function of the Body—1 Cor. 12:12; Eph. 1:23; Phil. 3:14.
- B. The living of the Body of Christ has the Spirit as its essence and reality and takes the Spirit as its secret and effectiveness:
 - 1. The Spirit as its essence and reality is concerning the inward nature and the real outward state of the Body, and refers to the inward being and outward manifestation of the Body—Eph. 4:4a; 1 John 5:6.
 - 2. The Spirit as its secret and effectiveness is concerning the skill and ability of the Body and refers to the skillfulness and achievements of the Body—Phil. 4:12-13; Rom. 15:13.
- C. The living of the Body of Christ takes the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ as its regulation:
 - 1. We need to be regulated in the negative aspect by the crucifixion of Christ:
 - a. Our crucifixion with Christ is an accomplished fact realized through divine revelation—6:6.
 - b. Our crucifixion with Christ should be our daily experience, enjoyed by us through the effectiveness of the Spirit—8:13b; Gal. 5:24.
 - 2. We need to be regulated in the positive aspect by the resurrection of Christ:
 - a. Our resurrection with Christ is an accomplished fact—Eph. 2:6a.
 - b. Our resurrection with Christ should be our daily experience—Phil. 3:10; S. S. 2:8-9, 14; Psa. 91:1.
- D. The living of the Body of Christ takes life and the Body as the principle:
 - 1. We need to take the inward life of God, Christ, as the principle, not outward conduct or outward ethical morality—1 John 5:11-12; Rom. 9:11b; Gal. 2:16a.
 - 2. We need to take the Body as the principle, living Christ out by the Spirit of life and living corporately and coordinating to live out the Body of Christ to be the fullness of Christ to express Him—Phil. 1:19-21a; Rom. 12:5; Eph. 1:23.

II. The service of the Body of Christ is living, organic, and particular, with each member receiving a particular burden from the Lord to fulfill his own service:

- A. The service of the Body of Christ is the service of the New Testament priesthood of the gospel—1 Pet. 2:5, 9:
 - 1. This service is centered on the preaching of the gospel to save sinners and offer them as sacrifices to God—Rom. 15:16.
 - 2. The goal of this service is to build up the Body of Christ—Eph. 4:11-12.
- B. In the service of the Body of Christ, we need to take Christ as the Lord according to His desire and for His purpose—Acts 2:36; 2 Cor. 4:5; Acts 13:2.
- C. In the service of the Body of Christ, we need to take the Holy Spirit as power and authority—Acts 1:8; Matt. 28:18-19:
 - 1. We need to preach the Word of God by the power of the Holy Spirit—Acts 4:31b; 1 Cor. 2:4; Acts 6:8, 10.
 - 2. We need to dispense life by the Spirit—Acts 11:18; 2 Cor. 3:6.
- D. In the service of the Body of Christ, we need to take the Body as the means—Rom. 12:5:
 - 1. Every member of the Body should participate in service—v. 4; 1 Cor. 12:7, 11.
 - 2. This is the corporate service of the Body in the coordination of the Body—Rom. 12:5:
 - a. We need to preach the gospel to save sinners—Rom. 15:16.
 - b. We need to feed the Lord's lambs and shepherd the Lord's flock—John 21:15-17.
 - c. We need to perfect the saints to build up the Body of Christ—Eph. 4:11-12.
 - d. We need to prophesy, speaking for the Lord to build up the church—1 Cor. 14:1, 3-5, 12, 24, 31.
 - 3. The Body builds itself up through every joint of the supply and through every functioning member—Eph. 4:16.
- E. There are three steps of offering by the priests of the gospel in the Body:
 - 1. We lead sinners to salvation and offer them as sacrifices to God—1 Pet. 2:9b, 5b; Rom. 15:16.
 - 2. We nourish the believers so that they may grow up and present themselves as living sacrifices to God—1 Pet. 2:2; Rom. 12:1.
 - 3. We labor and struggle in all wisdom to present every one of the saints full grown in Christ—Col. 1:28-29.
- F. Our labor for the Lord in His resurrection life and with His resurrection power will never be in vain, but will result in the fulfilling of God's eternal purpose through the preaching of Christ to sinners, the ministering of life to the saints, and the building up of the church with the experiences of the processed Triune God as gold, silver, and precious stones—1 Cor. 15:58; 3:12.