

KNOWING THE BODY—THE PRINCIPLES OF THE BODY

First Morning Session—Message Two

Practicing the One Accord by Keeping the Oneness of the Spirit

Scripture Reading: Ephesians 4:1-4

- I. The oneness of the Body of Christ is the oneness of the Spirit, and to keep the oneness of the Spirit is to practice the one accord—Eph. 4:3:**
- A. God will only grace and bless the one accord, that is, the practice of the oneness; the one accord is the master key to every blessing in the New Testament—Psa. 133; Acts 1:14:
 - 1. Oneness is the full mingling of the Triune God with the saints—John 17:2, 6, 11, 14, 17, 21-22; Eph. 4:4-6.
 - 2. Oneness nullifies the natural man, the world, Satan, and the self—Rom. 16:20.
 - B. When we practice the proper one accord, we must realize the attributes of the church as the unique Body of Christ; every attribute of the church is one—one Body, one Spirit, one Lord, one God, one faith, one baptism, and one hope—Eph. 4:4-6.
 - C. The proper one accord in the church is the practice of the genuine oneness of the Body—Matt. 18:19:
 - 1. To practice the one accord, we must be in one spirit and with one soul—Phil. 1:27.
 - 2. To practice the one accord, we must be attuned in the same mind and in the same opinion—1 Cor. 1:10.
 - 3. When we receive people according to God and not according to doctrine or practice, we demonstrate and maintain the oneness of the Body of Christ—Rom. 14:3; 15:7.
 - D. Whenever we are in one accord, we speak the same thing; we speak with one mouth—Rom. 15:6:
 - 1. This oneness is the reverse of Babel, where the division among mankind caused their language to become confused and divided into many different speakings—Gen. 11:7, 9.
 - 2. The only way to be with one accord and one mouth is to allow Christ the room to everything in our heart and in our mouth that God may be glorified—Eph. 3:16-17; Luke 6:45.
- II. The New Testament reveals that not only all the saints but even all the churches must be in one accord:**
- A. The seven golden lampstands, symbols of the seven churches, were all identical—Rev. 1:11-12, 20:
 - 1. The normal differences among the churches can be only in the business affairs of their administration.
 - 2. The seven churches were the same normally in the positive things concerning the testimony of Christ—Rev. 2:2-3, 6, 9-10, 13, 19; 3:4, 8, 10.

3. The seven churches differed abnormally only in the negative things, which were rebuked, judged, condemned, and corrected by the Lord for elimination—2:1a, 2, 4, 12a, 13-15, 18a, 20; 3:1-3, 14-15, 17.
- B. The seven epistles were written as one book to the seven churches—1:4a:
 1. Each of the seven epistles was addressed by the Lord to a particular church in a certain locality—2:1, 8, 12, 18; 3:1, 7, 14.
 2. All the seven epistles close with the speaking of the Spirit to all the churches—2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22.
- C. The apostle Paul taught the same thing in all the churches—1 Cor. 4:17; 7:17:
 1. An epistle written to a certain church was also for other churches—Col. 4:16.
 2. Teaching differently from God's economy was prohibited—1 Tim. 1:3-4.
- D. All the churches were the same in their custom and practice—1 Cor. 11:16; 14:33-34.
- E. The one solution made at Jerusalem for the problem of circumcision became a decree for all the churches, both Jewish and Gentile, to keep—Acts 15:1-31.
- F. The church in Thessalonica imitated the churches in Judea—1 Thes. 2:14.
- G. All the books of the New Testament, as one New Testament, that is, as one book, were written not only to their receivers but also to all the saints and to all the churches universally, that is, through all the centuries—1 Cor. 1:2.
- H. All the churches throughout the centuries should imitate all the churches unveiled in the New Testament in all their positive aspects.

III. This oneness, the oneness of the Spirit, must be kept diligently by all the believers in Christ with the transformed human virtues strengthened and enriched by and with the divine attributes—Eph. 4:1-4:

- A. The oneness of the Spirit is the Spirit Himself who is in our spirit—v. 3:
 1. If we act apart from the Spirit, we are divisive and lose the oneness—cf. 1 Cor. 1:10; 2:14-15; 3:1.
 2. If we stay in the life-giving Spirit, we keep the oneness of the Spirit—cf. John 4:24; 1 Cor. 6:17.
- B. In the uniting Spirit there is the humanity of Jesus, in whom the transformed virtues are found—Rom. 12:2; 2 Cor. 3:18:
 1. In the church life, what is required is virtue, which is much higher than the morality in human society—cf. Gen. 2:9; Matt. 5:39-42, 48; 6:6.
 2. The church life is the divine attributes expressed, manifested, in human virtues; all the virtues in the church life should be the mingling of God with man—1 Tim. 3:16; Eph. 4:1-2:
 - a. In the church life, we need lowliness; to be lowly is to remain in a low estate—cf. Phil. 2:6-7; Matt. 11:29; Mark 10:45.
 - b. In the church life, we need meekness; to be meek is to not fight for oneself—Eph. 4:2; Matt. 5:40.
 - c. In the church life, we need long suffering; to be long-suffering is to endure mistreatment—Eph. 4:2; 1 Thes. 5:14.
 - d. In the church life, we need to bear one another in love and in the uniting bond of peace—Eph. 4:2-3; Col. 3:12-15.