

THE BODY OF CHRIST AND THE LOCAL CHURCHES

Evening Session—Message Three

Practicing the Church Life in the Consciousness of the Body of Christ

Scripture Reading: 1 Cor. 1:2, 9; 10:16-17; 12:12-27

- I. The local churches are many in existence but are still one Body universally in element—Gal. 1:2; Eph. 4:4:**
 - A. In element all the churches are one; we are one church, one Body, one new man, and thus we cannot be autonomous—Matt. 16:18; Eph. 4:4; 2:15.
 - B. In the spiritual element all the churches should be blended together as one.
 - C. In the eyes of the Lord, all the churches are one; the Lord has only one Body—Matt. 16:18; Eph. 1:22-23.
 - D. All the churches are and should be one Body universally, doctrinally, and practically—1 Cor. 4:17; 7:17; 11:16; 14:33b; 16:1.
- II. In the church life we should learn to have the consciousness of the Body; as members of the Body, we should have a feeling for the Body—1 Cor. 12:12-27:**
 - A. In order to have the Body life, we must care for our fellow members and must be full of feeling for the Body—Rom 12:15; 1 Cor. 12:26-27.
 - B. We should take the feeling of the Head as our own feeling—Acts 9:4-5:
 1. Paul took care of the Body of Christ by taking Christ's feeling as his own feeling; Christ's feeling became his feeling for the Body—Phil. 1:8.
 2. If we as members have the feeling of the Head in everything and care for the Body, we will take the Body as the rule in our mind, thoughts, words, and actions—Eph. 4:15-16; Col. 2:19.
 - C. Wherever there is Body-revelation, there is Body-consciousness, and wherever there is Body-consciousness, individual thought and action are ruled out.
 - D. We should deny ourselves and identify ourselves with the Body—Matt. 16:24; Rom 12:4-5, 15; 1 Cor 1:2; 12:12-27:
 1. By doing this, there will be no separation or disconnection from the Body.
 2. If we do this, the life we live will fully be the Body life, and the Lord will gain the expression of the Body—Eph. 4:15-16; 1:22-23.
 - E. Our enjoyment of Christ causes us to become conscious of the Body of Christ—Col. 2:16-17, 19:
 1. What we enjoy of Christ is actually something of the Head; thus, when we enjoy Christ, He causes us to become conscious of the Body.
 2. The more we enjoy Christ, the more intense is our desire for the Body.
 3. Since the Christ we enjoy as our everything is the Head of the Body, the more we enjoy Him, the more we become Body-conscious.
- III. Whatever we do involves the Body; therefore, whenever we do something, we must have a proper consideration of the Body—2 Cor. 8:21; Eph. 4:16:**
 - A. We should not do anything without taking care of the Body—1 Cor. 12:12-27.