

LIVING UNDER THE UNIQUE HEADSHIP OF CHRIST AND IN THE UNIQUE DIVINE FELLOWSHIP

(Saturday—First Morning Session)

Message Four

Holding the Head

Scripture Reading: Col. 2:19; Eph. 4:15-16

- I. To hold the Head means that there is direct and intimate communication between us and Him; in this close communication between the Head and the members, all His riches are ministered into the members, and all the negative things are swallowed up by the supply of life from the Head—Col. 2:19:**
 - A. When we hold the Head, that is, keep ourselves intimately connected to Him, His riches and life supply enter into our being and become our growth in life.
 - B. The phrase *out from whom* in Colossians 2:19 indicates that the Body of Christ grows out from the Head, for all the supply comes from the Head.
- II. To hold the Head is to acknowledge that only Christ is the Head and to come absolutely under His authority—1:18; 2 Cor. 2:12-15; 4:5-6:**
 - A. Only the Lord is our Head, and only He has the authority to direct the moves of the members of His Body; Christ is both the life and the authority of the Body; in fact, true authority is life.
 - B. As the Head, the Lord is the One who decides our pathway; we do not have any ground for our own choice; the Body's only duty toward the Head is obedience and submission without any opinion, idea, or proposal.
 - C. An acceptance of Christ as the Head involves a repudiation of all other heads; Christ alone is the Head of the Body, and no one else can be the head.
 - D. Today we see many human methods and ordinances abounding in the church, but human plans and human decisions are against the headship of Christ.
 - E. If Christ is my Head, then I will not dare to please myself or others; I must seek to please Him alone—5:9; 1 Thes. 2:4; Col. 1:10; cf. Acts 2:36; 9:5.
 - F. Once a man realizes that he is a member in the Body, there will be a feeling of submission in him because submission is a law in the Body; in submission there is power—cf. Judg. 16:17.
- III. Our relationship to the Head determines our relationship to the other members; the basis of our fellowship with one another is our mutual holding of the Head:**
 - A. If we hold the Head, we cannot have a special relationship, feeling, or fellowship with any individual or group of individuals; there is no room for our own preferences in the Body.
 - B. We have no direct communication with one another; the mutual relationship of the members passes through the Head first:

1. For instance, when my left hand hurts, my right hand comes to its aid immediately; the right hand does this because both the left hand and the right hand are under the direction of the head.
2. Forming parties means that a few Christians have a direct relationship with one another and are detached from the authority of the Head; they communicate with each other directly, but their communication has not passed through the Head; they have a special relationship with one another, but their relationship has not passed through the Head; they have a special friendship among themselves that does not issue from their love for the Lord—1 Cor. 1:10-13; 11:19.
- C. If our fellowship is based on man, we are not holding the Head, and our fellowship is Absalom's fellowship, which drew the Israelites away from David—2 Sam. 15:2-6.
- D. In order to hold the Head, we must allow the cross to deeply deal with our flesh and our natural life, on the one hand, and we must learn to walk by the Spirit, on the other hand—Gal. 5:16, 24-25; cf. Rev. 14:4.

IV. If we hold the Head, we cannot have different interpretations of Scripture; differences arise when someone is not holding the Head, because He cannot possibly say one thing to one member and something else to another:

- A. We have to consider “one mouth” in Romans 15:6 and “speak the same thing” in 1 Corinthians 1:10 together with “one new man” in Ephesians 2:15.
- B. The Head of the Body as the one new man is the person of the Body, and this person has one mouth to speak the same thing; when we hold Christ as the Head, we are all taking Him as our unique person, so we all have one mouth and are in one accord to speak the same thing—the unique teaching of God's eternal economy regarding Christ and the church—1 Tim. 1:3-4; Eph. 5:32.

V. The very Christ who is the reality of all positive things is the One who is the Head of the Body; thus, to hold the Head is simply to enjoy Christ as the reality of all positive things—Col. 1:18; 2:16-17, 19:

- A. Since the Christ whom we enjoy as our everything is the Head of the Body, the more we enjoy Him, the more we become Body-conscious:
 1. This indicates that the enjoyment of Christ is not an individualistic matter but a Body matter—cf. Eph. 3:8; 4:15-16.
 2. The more we enjoy Christ, the more we love the other members of the Body—Col. 1:4, 8.
- B. Because Christ's headship is in resurrection (v. 18), the enjoyment of Christ spontaneously brings us into resurrection and saves us from our natural being.
- C. The enjoyment of Christ brings us into the heavenlies in ascension; we can be experientially in the heavens only by enjoying Christ, the Head, as the life-giving Spirit in our spirit—3:1-2; 2 Cor. 3:17; 2 Tim. 4:22; Rom. 8:10, 34.
- D. As we enjoy Christ and hold Him as the Head, we absorb the riches of the extensive, all-inclusive Christ; these riches become in us the increase of God by which the Body grows for its building up—Col. 2:19, 6-8; Eph. 4:16.

VI. In Colossians 2 Paul speaks of being rooted and of holding the Head, and in John 15 the Lord Jesus speaks of abiding in the vine:

- A. Abiding in the vine is equal to being rooted in the soil, and being rooted in the soil is equal to holding the Head; Christ is the vine in which we abide, the soil in which we are rooted, and the Head whom we hold.
- B. As branches, we absorb the life-juice from the vine; as plants, we absorb the riches of the soil; and as members of the Body of Christ, we absorb the nourishing element from the Head; by absorbing the riches of the Head, the Body grows with the growth of God, with the increase of God as life within us.
- C. Since God gives the growth in this way, we need to take time to absorb Him:
 - 1. Our contact with the Lord should not be rushed; every morning we need to take an adequate amount of time to absorb the Lord; it is best to spend thirty minutes to enjoy Him at the start of each new day.
 - 2. We need to forget our situation, our condition, our failures, and our weaknesses and simply take time to enjoy and absorb the Lord; we need to spend more time in our spirit to adore the Lord, to praise Him, to offer thanks to Him, and to speak to Him freely.
 - 3. As we fellowship with Him in this way, we will absorb His riches, and He will add more of Himself into us so that we may grow with the growth of God.

VII. We grow up into the Head by allowing Christ to increase and to grow in all the inward parts of our being—Eph. 4:15-16:

- A. In order to grow in life, we must know, we must use, and we must exercise our mingled spirit—1 Tim. 4:7; 2 Tim. 1:6-7; 4:22.
- B. In order to grow in life, we must feed on the milk and food of the holy Word as the embodiment of Christ, the living Word of God—1 Pet. 2:2; Heb. 5:13-14.

VIII. As we grow up into the Head in life, our function will come out from the Head for the building up of the Body—Eph. 4:16:

- A. When we allow Christ to be the Head in everything and when we grow up into Him in all things, we will be supplied with the riches of His life, receiving something from Him to transfuse into other members of the Body—2 Cor. 3:6, 8; John 7:37-39.
- B. All the Body causes the growth of the Body of Christ—Eph. 4:16:
 - 1. This growth is through every joint of the rich supply—all the particular gifts in the Body of Christ—vv. 11-12.
 - 2. This growth is through the operation in the measure of each one part—every member in the Body of Christ—vv. 7-8.
- C. The building up of the Body of Christ is in love and by love—1 Cor. 8:1b:
 - 1. Love is the most excellent way to be anything and to do anything for the building up of the Body of Christ—12:31b—13:13.
 - 2. The goal of the book of Ephesians is to bring us into love as God's inner substance (1 John 4:8, 16) so that we may enjoy God as love and enjoy His presence in the sweetness of the divine love, and thereby we may love others as Christ did—Eph. 5:25; 6:24; 1:4; 3:17; 4:2, 15-16; 5:2.