

## THE BODY OF CHRIST

### Message One

#### **The Body of Christ— the Goal of the Divine Economy**

Scripture Reading: 1 Tim. 1:4; Eph. 1:10, 22-23; 4:4-6

- I. God's economy is that God became man so that man may become God in life and nature but not in the Godhead to produce the organism of the Triune God, the Body of Christ, which consummates the New Jerusalem—Rom. 8:3; 1:3-4; 12:4-5; Rev. 21:2:**
  - A. The center of God's economy is Christ, and the goal of God's economy is the Body of Christ—Col. 1:15-19; 2:9, 19.
  - B. The divine economy is God's eternal plan to dispense Christ into His chosen people to produce, constitute, and build up the organic Body of Christ—Eph. 1:10; 3:8-10; 1 Tim. 1:4.
  - C. God's aim in His economy is to have a group of human beings who have His life and nature inwardly and His image and likeness outwardly; they are a corporate entity, the Body of Christ, to be one with Him and live Him for His corporate expression—Gen. 1:26; John 3:14; 2 Pet. 1:4; Eph. 4:16.
  - D. The main contents of the New Testament are that the Triune God has an eternal economy according to His good pleasure to dispense Himself into His chosen and redeemed people to make them the same as He is in life and nature and to make them His duplication that they may express Him—3:9-11, 14-21.
  - E. The divine economy is God and man becoming one entity, one who is God yet man and man yet God—1 Cor. 6:17; 12:12.
  - F. The issue of God becoming man and man becoming God is an organism; this organism is the mingling of God and man—the Body of Christ.
- II. The consummation of the believers' experience of the grace of God in His economy is the church as the Body of Christ—Eph. 1:6-8, 22-23:**
  - A. Grace is the manifestation of the Triune God in His embodiment in three aspects—the Father (the source), the Son (the element), and the Spirit (the application)—1 Cor. 15:10; 2 Cor. 8:9; Heb. 10:29.

## CRYSTALLIZATION-STUDY OUTLINES

### Message One (continuation)

- B. Grace denotes the contents of God's eternal economy for the producing of the Body of Christ to consummate the New Jerusalem—2 Cor. 13:14; Eph. 4:4-6; Rev. 21:2.
- C. What God wants today is that we experience the grace in His economy so that the Divine Trinity may have an organism—John 1:16; 15:1.
- D. Every part of the organic Body of Christ is an issue of the grace of God in the economy of God—Rom. 5:21; 12:3-8.

### **III. The Body of Christ, the church, is four-in-one: the Father, the Son, the Spirit, and the Body—Eph. 4:4-6:**

- A. Ephesians 4:4-6 reveals four persons—one Body, one Spirit, one Lord, and one God and Father—mingled together as one entity to be the organic Body of Christ:
  - 1. With the Body of Christ, the Father is the origin, the Son is the element, and the Spirit is the essence; these three are mingled with the Body.
  - 2. The Father is embodied in the Son, the Son is realized as the Spirit, and They are all in us; therefore, we are a divine-human constitution—3:16-20.
  - 3. Because the Father, the Son, and the Spirit are all one with the Body of Christ, the Triune God and the Body are now four-in-one.
- B. The four-in-one organic entity in Ephesians 4:4-6 corresponds with the golden lampstands in Revelation 1:20:
  - 1. In figure, the golden lampstand signifies the church as the embodiment of the Triune God—the Father, the Son, and the Spirit:
    - a. The lampstand is of pure gold, signifying the divine, eternal, incorruptible nature of God the Father—Exo. 25:31; 2 Pet. 1:4.
    - b. The solid form, the shape, of the lampstand signifies God the Son as the embodiment of God the Father—Exo. 25:31.
    - c. The seven lamps signify God the Spirit being the seven Spirits—v. 37; Rev. 4:5.
  - 2. The church is the Triune God completely mingled with His redeemed people to become the lampstands to express God—1:20.

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#### **IV. The Body of Christ is the fullness of the all-inclusive Christ, the One who fills all in all—Eph. 1:22-23:**

- A. The church is the Body, and the Body is the fullness; these two levels of “is” are in succession rather than in parallel.
- B. The Body is the fullness of the Head, and the fullness is the expression of the Head.
- C. The fullness of Christ issues from the enjoyment of the riches of Christ; the fullness of Christ is Christ experienced by us, assimilated by us, and constituted into our being to become our element—3:8.
- D. Christ, as the One who fills all in all, needs the Body to be His fullness; this Body is His church to be His expression—1:23:
  - 1. Christ, who is the infinite God without any limitation, is so great that He fills all things in all things.
  - 2. Such a great Christ needs the church, His Body, to be His fullness for His complete expression.

#### **V. We need to be universal Christians with a universal view of the universal Body of Christ—vv. 17-23; Acts 10:9-11; Rev. 21:10:**

- A. “What God is doing today is to obtain the Body of Christ, not merely you as an individual, nor merely the church in a locality, nor merely the church in a country. He wants to obtain the church in the entire universe” (*Words of Training for the New Way*, vol. 1, p. 57).
- B. “It is my desire that you see the light, broaden your view, and realize that we are in God’s eternal economy, that you would allow God to have the Body of Christ on the earth” (p. 58).
- C. “It is not enough for us merely to have a local view, nor is it enough to have an international view. We must have a universal view. We need to see that Christ is after a Body, and God will prepare a Body for Christ” (p. 58).