

Message Two

The Reality of the Body of Christ

Scripture Reading: Acts 26:19; John 16:13; Rom. 8:16;
Phil. 3:10; Eph. 4:15-16, 20-24

I. The Body of Christ is God's heart's desire and His ultimate purpose; only those who have received revelation from God will see and enter into the reality of the Body of Christ—Eph. 1:17-18a; 3:9; Acts 26:18-19:

- A. The move of God's economy is like the turning of a great wheel, and this turning wheel in God's economy has the Body of Christ as its axis; all of God's move and work today are joined to and for the Body of Christ, the organism of the Triune God—Ezek. 1:15; Eph. 1:22-23a; Col. 1:17-18; Matt. 16:18.
- B. The Body of Christ is not a doctrine but a realm; it is not a teaching but a life; only a revelation from God will usher us into the realm of the Body, and only then will the Body of Christ become our experience—Eph. 1:17-23; 3:14-19.
- C. The secret of seeing the heavenly vision of God's ultimate purpose is our willingness to pay the price for it—Matt. 5:3, 8; 6:22; Psa. 25:9, 14; Rev. 3:18.

II. The heavenly vision that Paul received at the time of his conversion is the vision of God's eternal economy and of the highest peak in God's economy—the reality of the Body of Christ—Acts 26:19; 9:1-5, 15:

- A. "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?"—v. 4:
 - 1. The Lord showed Saul, who became Paul, that he was persecuting the Head when he was persecuting the members of His Body; Paul began to see that the Lord Jesus and His believers are one great person—the wonderful "Me"—vv. 6, 17-18, 24-25; 22:14-16; 1 Cor. 12:12; Col. 3:10-11.
 - 2. Paul is the only writer of the New Testament to use the term *the Body of Christ*, because at the time of his conversion he heard a message concerning the corporate "Me," a message concerning the Body of Christ—Rom. 12:4-5; 1 Cor. 12:12-27; Eph. 1:22-23; 2:16; 4:4, 15-16.

THE BODY OF CHRIST

Message Two (continuation)

- B. “And he said, Who are You, Lord? And He said, I am Jesus, whom you persecute”—Acts 9:5:
1. Paul saw that Jesus is Jehovah the Savior and that as the One who is now in the heavens, He has passed through the process of incarnation, human living, death, resurrection, and ascension for the producing and building up of the Body of Christ.
 2. Paul saw that Jesus is the very God who has been processed and consummated to be the ascended Lord, the Head of the Body, the firstborn Son of God, and the life-giving Spirit to be dispensed into all His members—Rom. 10:12-13; Col. 1:18a; Rom. 8:29; 1 Cor. 15:45b.
- C. “This man is a chosen vessel to Me”—Acts 9:15:
1. God’s intention in saving Saul of Tarsus was to fill him with Himself and thereby make him an outstanding vessel—Col. 1:25; Eph. 3:8-9.
 2. Paul saw that man is a vessel to contain and be filled with Christ as life for the building up of the Body of Christ, which is God’s great corporate vessel to contain Him and be filled with Him for His expression—Rom. 9:21, 23; 2 Cor. 4:7; 2 Tim. 2:20-21; Eph. 3:8-11, 16-19.

III. The life of Christ indwelling us is not a “member life” but a “Body life,” a corporate life; Christ is *our* life, the life of the Body, and the mingled spirit is *our* spirit, the corporate spirit of the Body—Col. 3:4; Rom. 8:16; 12:4-5; Eph. 4:3-4a, 23; 2:22:

- A. The one who knows the Body merely as a doctrine may seek the counsel and covering of the Body, but he will do it as a matter of policy, not as a matter of life; when he thinks of it, he will do it, but he also can forget about it.
- B. The one who has seen the Body as a reality and has entered experientially into the realm of the Body has no possibility of forgetting; his acting by the Body principle is something spontaneous because it is his life.

CRYSTALLIZATION-STUDY OUTLINES

Message Two (continuation)

IV. The reality of the Body of Christ is the reality in Jesus, the actual condition of the life of Jesus as recorded in the four Gospels, duplicated in His many members as the corporate living of the perfected God-men—4:20-21; Gal. 2:20; Phil. 1:19-21a:

- A. Jesus lived a life in which He did everything in God, with God, and for God; God was in His living, and He was one with God—this is the reality in Jesus:
 - 1. The followers of Christ were disciplined through His human living on earth (as the model of a God-man—living God by denying Himself in humanity—John 5:19, 30; 6:57a; 14:24), revolutionizing their concept concerning man.
 - 2. In the church life we are being disciplined by the Lord to be God-men, living the divine life by denying our natural life according to the model of Christ as the first God-man—Matt. 28:19; 11:29a.
- B. The living of the Body of Christ as the new man should be exactly the same as the living of Jesus; the way Jesus lived on earth is the way the Body of Christ as the new man should live today—Eph. 4:20-24.
- C. The reality of the Body of Christ is the corporate living of the perfected God-men, a living that is exactly the same as the way Jesus lived on earth; these perfected God-men live a meal-offering church life, a Spirit-filled, resurrection-saturated, cross-purifying human living as a duplication of Christ's human living—Lev. 2:1-2, 4-5; 1 Cor. 12:12, 24; 10:17.
- D. These perfected God-men are genuine men, who do not live by their life but by the fully dignified life of the processed God, whose attributes are expressed through their virtues; corporately, they are Jesus living again on the earth in His divinely enriched humanity—Phil. 1:19-21a; 3:10; 4:5-9, 11-13.
- E. To be perfected is to be matured by continually exercising to reject the self and live by another life; this is to be conformed to Christ's death by the power of His resurrection—Matt. 16:24-26; Phil. 3:10; cf. S. S. 2:8-9, 14.

THE BODY OF CHRIST

Message Two (continuation)

- F. We need to become a corporate model, the reality of the Body, a people who live the life of a God-man; such a model will be the greatest revival in the history of the church to bring the Lord back—Matt. 16:18; Rev. 19:7-8.
- V. The reality of the Body of Christ is the Spirit of reality—Eph. 4:4a; John 14:17; 16:13:**
- A. The reality of all that the Triune God is, has, and can do is this Spirit of reality; the reality of the death and resurrection which the Triune God passed through is also this Spirit of reality—Phil. 1:19; cf. Exo. 30:22-25.
 - B. This Spirit of reality makes everything of the processed Triune God a reality in the Body of Christ—John 16:13-15.
 - C. All that the processed Triune God is and has experienced is realized by the Spirit of reality to be the attributes and the experiences of the Body of Christ in reality—14:17; Eph. 3:16-19.
 - D. The Spirit of reality is the secret to all that the processed Triune God is to the Body of Christ; the Spirit of reality is the totality of all the attributes of the processed Triune God; the Spirit of reality is the effectiveness of all the processes of the processed Triune God—Phil. 1:19-21a; 4:12; cf. Gen. 17:1.
 - E. The Spirit of reality dwelling in our regenerated spirit is joined as one spirit with our spirit—Rom. 8:9-11, 16; 1 Cor. 6:17:
 - 1. We should have our whole being turned to and set on this joined spirit, living and walking according to this joined spirit—Rom. 8:4, 6.
 - 2. When we thus live in this joined spirit, we live out the reality of the Body of Christ to become the corporate expression of Christ—Eph. 1:22b-23.
 - 3. We must live and speak in the reality of the Body of Christ, that is, in the Spirit; when you are in the Spirit, you are in the oneness, because the oneness is the Spirit—Gal. 5:25; Rom. 8:4; 2 Cor. 3:6, 8; Eph. 4:3-4.
 - 4. To live in the reality of the Body of Christ is to die and be resurrected daily, which is to daily walk in and according to the Spirit—1 Cor. 15:31; 2 Cor. 4:11; 1:8-9; 2:13-14; Rom. 1:9; 8:4.

CRYSTALLIZATION-STUDY OUTLINES

Message Two (continuation)

F. The Spirit of reality in us guides us into the reality of the life of the Body of Christ, the reality of living a God-man life by the divine life—John 16:13.

VI. The reality of the Body of Christ will close this age, the age of the church, and will bring Christ back to take, possess, and rule over this earth with the perfected God-men in the kingdom age—Matt. 16:18; Rev. 19:7-8.