

THE BODY OF CHRIST

Message Three

**The Body of Christ—
the Intrinsic Significance of the Church**

Scripture Reading: Eph. 1:22-23; 2:21-22; 4:4, 16;
1 Cor. 1:2; 12:27

- I. The economy of God is for the Body of Christ—1 Tim. 1:4; Eph. 3:9-11; 4:16:**
 - A. The eternal economy of God is to produce an organic Body to be an organism to God for His increase and expression by God becoming man that man might become God in life and nature but not in the Godhead—Rom. 8:3; 1:3-4; 12:4-5.
 - B. We are here to carry out God's eternal economy with the purpose of gaining the Body for His Son, Christ, and this Body has to be consolidated into the local churches—Eph. 1:22-23; Rom. 12:4-5; 16:1; 1 Cor. 1:2; 12:27.
- II. The Body of Christ is the organism of the unseen God; we need to receive a trance and be transferred into another realm to have an intrinsic view of the Body of Christ—Acts 10:9-10; 22:17; Eph. 1:17-18, 22-23.**
- III. All the problems of the church today are due to ignorance concerning the Body of Christ; we need a spirit of wisdom and revelation with the enlightening of the eyes of our heart to see the Body—Rom. 12:4-5; 1 Cor. 12:24b-27; Eph. 1:17-23.**
- IV. The church as the house of God, the kingdom of God, and the bride of Christ takes the Body of Christ as its intrinsic factor; the Body is the church, the house of God, the kingdom of God, and the counterpart of Christ—1 Tim. 3:15; Rom. 14:17; Rev. 19:7.**
- V. The Body is the intrinsic significance of the church—1 Cor. 12:27; 1:2:**
 - A. Without the Body of Christ, the church is lifeless and is a mere human organization—Rom. 12:4-5; 16:1, 16b.
 - B. The church without the Body means nothing; if there were no Body, the church would have no meaning.
- VI. The highest peak of the Lord's recovery that can really, practically, and actually carry out God's economy is for God to produce not many local churches in a**

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physical way but an organic Body to be His organism— Gal. 1:2; Eph. 4:4, 16:

- A. The local churches are mainly physical, but they should be for something spiritual, and this spiritual thing is the Body of Christ—Rom. 16:4, 16; 12:4-5.
- B. The local churches are not the goal of God's economy but a procedure to reach God's goal—the universal Body of Christ—1 Cor. 14:33b; Col. 2:19.
- C. Eventually, the local churches will be over, and only the Body of Christ will remain forever as the unique tabernacle of God and the unique bride of the Lamb—Rev. 21:2-3, 9.

VII. If we see the Body, we will know that there are laws in the Body and that we need to act according to these laws—1 Cor. 12:14-27; 2 Cor. 10:13:

- A. God has laws not only on the physical side but also on the spiritual side.
- B. Christ's Body is an organic entity, and no part of His Body can be autonomous.

VIII. The unique Body of Christ is expressed in many localities as the local churches—Eph. 4:4; Rev. 1:4, 11:

- A. A local church is an expression of the Body of Christ in a certain locality—Matt. 16:18; 18:17; 1 Cor. 1:2; 10:32b; 12:12-13, 20, 27.
- B. The one universal church—the Body of Christ—becomes the many local churches—local expressions of the Body of Christ—Rom. 12:4-5; 16:16b:
 1. Every local church is part of the unique, universal Body of Christ, a local expression of this Body—1 Cor. 1:2; 12:27.
 2. Universally, all the local churches are one Body, and locally, every local church is a local expression of the universal Body; therefore, a local church is not the Body but only a part of the Body, an expression of the Body.
 3. A local church that makes everything local and that expresses only its locality has become a local sect, a local division.

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4. The local churches are many in existence but are still one Body universally in element—Gal. 1:2; Eph. 4:4.
 5. In the eyes of the Lord, all the churches are one, for Christ has only one Body—Matt. 16:18; Eph. 1:22-23.
- C. The unique Body of Christ is expressed in many local churches (Rev. 1:11-12, 20) in the divine oneness (as it is with the Triune God—John 17:11, 21, 23) and in the divine nature, element, essence, expression, function, and testimony; there are many churches, but they have one divine nature, one divine element, one divine essence, one divine expression, one divine function, and one divine testimony because they are one Body.

IX. We need to practice the church life in the consciousness of the Body of Christ—1 Cor. 1:2, 9; 10:16-17; 12:12-27:

- A. In order to have the Body life, we must care for our fellow members and be full of feeling for the Body—Rom. 12:15; 1 Cor. 12:20-27; Phil. 1:8.
- B. 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.
- C. Wherever there is Body revelation, there is Body consciousness, and wherever there is Body consciousness, individual thought and action are ruled out.
- D. 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.
- E. In our consideration the Body should be first and the local churches should be second; we must pay more attention to the Body of Christ than to the local churches—Matt. 16:18; Eph. 4:4, 16; 2:21-22; 1 Cor. 12:12; 1:2.

X. The Lord's recovery is based upon the truth that Christ has only one Body—Eph. 1:23; 4:4:

- A. The one Body is the one church, manifested in many localities as many local churches—1 Cor. 10:32b; Rev. 1:4, 11.

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- B. The Lord desires to recover the Body of Christ and the oneness of the Body of Christ—Eph. 4:4.
- C. The recovery is for the Body; to know the Body is the proper recovery of the Lord—1:22-23; 4:4, 16.