

THE BODY OF CHRIST

Message Four

**The Body of Christ in Romans**

Scripture Reading: Rom. 12:1-16; 14:1; 15:5-7; 16:1, 4-5, 16b, 20

- I. The subject of Romans is the gospel of God—to make sinners sons of God to constitute the Body of Christ, which is expressed as the local churches—3:23; 8:14, 29; 12:4-5; 16:1, 4-5, 16b.**
- II. Romans 4 lays the foundation for Romans 12—16, where we see the Body life, the kingdom life, and the practical church life; the purpose of God’s justification is to have a reproduction of Christ in millions of sons, who become the members of His Body—4:13; 8:29; 12:4-5.**
- III. In His salvation God is making sinners the sons of God to be constituted the Body of Christ for the expression of Christ—8:14; 12:4-5:**
  - A. Sons are the children of God who are in the stage of the transformation of their souls; they are growing in the divine life and also are living and walking by being led by the Spirit of God—8:14, 16; 12:2.
  - B. In order to be the members of the Body of Christ, we need to be conformed to the image of Christ as the first-born Son of God—8:29; 12:4-5.
- IV. The will of God is to obtain a Body for Christ to be His fullness, His expression—Rev. 4:11; Eph. 1:5, 9; Rom. 12:2, 4-5:**
  - A. In Romans 12 the will of God is that we whom God has chosen, redeemed, justified, sanctified, and conformed unto glorification may be members one of another to have the living of the Body of Christ—8:29-30.
  - B. To live the Body life is to “prove what the will of God is”—12:2, 4-5.
  - C. If we are proper members of the Body, acting and functioning in the church life, we will be persons in the will of God—1 Cor. 1:1-2; Eph. 1:1; 5:17.
- V. We are one Body in the organic union with Christ—Rom. 12:4-5:**
  - A. Romans 12 speaks of the Body from the angle of the organic union, from the uniting life, from the life that

## CRYSTALLIZATION-STUDY OUTLINES

### Message Four (continuation)

unites us together, not only with Christ but with all the other members of Christ—vv. 4-5.

- B. We are one Body in Christ, having an organic union with Him; this union makes us one in life with Christ and with all the other members of His Body:
  - 1. The Body is not an organization or a society but is altogether an organism produced by the union in life that we have in Christ—John 15:1.
  - 2. The Body is something that is held together in the organic union with Christ, and the actuality of the Body is the remaining in the organic union with Christ—vv. 4-5.

#### **VI. If we would live the Body life, a life in the reality of the Body of Christ, we need to live a grafted life—Rom. 6:5; 11:17:**

- A. God desires that the divine life and the human life be joined together to become one life that has one living; this union in life is a grafted life—a life in which two parties are joined and grow organically—1 Cor. 6:17.
- B. In the grafted life we no longer live by ourselves but allow the pneumatic Christ to live in us—Gal. 2:20.
- C. Through grafting we are united, mingled, and incorporated with Christ to become in Him the organic Body of Christ—John 15:1, 4-5; Rom. 12:4-5.

#### **VII. In order for the Body of Christ to be built up, we need to reign in life, that is, be under the ruling of the divine life—5:17, 21; 12:1-16:**

- A. Every aspect of the living of the Body life in Romans 12—16 requires us to be ruled by the divine life.
- B. We can live a life of the highest virtues for the Body life only by reigning in life—12:9-12, 15-16, 18.
- C. When we are reigning in life, living under the ruling of the divine life, the issue is the real and practical Body life—5:17, 21; 12:4-5.

#### **VIII. Romans begins with the designation of Jesus Christ to be the Son of God for the mass reproduction of the many sons of God as the members of the Body of Christ, and Romans ends with the practice of the**

THE BODY OF CHRIST

Message Four (continuation)

**local churches as the expression of the Body of Christ—1:3-4; 8:29; 12:4-5; 16:1, 16b:**

- A. The local churches are the practical expression of the Body of Christ—vv. 1-5a, 16b, 23.
- B. Although the churches appear in different places, they are not separate, and although they are local, they are still part of the unique universal Body of Christ—12:4-5; 16:16b:
  - 1. On the one hand, the Body of Christ is expressed in localities city by city as the local churches—Rev. 1:11.
  - 2. On the other hand, because the fellowship of this Body is universal, these local churches are still one—1 Cor. 10:16; Eph. 4:4.
- C. For the practice of the Body life, all the local churches must receive all genuine believers unconditionally, according to the way God and Christ receive them—Rom. 14:1-3; 15:5-7.
- D. Romans 16 displays the real and practical Body life; here we see that all the churches and all the saints live in the universal fellowship of the Body of Christ.
- E. In his greetings Paul unveiled some crucial indicators of the proper church life both in a particular local church and among the churches: serving the church, risking our lives for the church, having the church in our home, acknowledging that the church is the church of Christ, and extending hospitality to everyone in the church and being a host to all the churches—vv. 1-5a, 16b, 23.
- F. We must be governed by the vision of the Body of Christ and follow in the footsteps of Paul (who took the lead in the fellowship of concern among the saints and between the churches), by bringing all the saints in all the churches into the blending life of the entire Body of Christ—vv. 1-23.
- G. When we live in the fellowship of the Body of Christ and express this Body in the local churches, the result will be God's crushing Satan under our feet, our enjoying the grace of Christ and the peace of God, and the giving of glory to the only wise God—vv. 20, 27.