

THE BODY OF CHRIST

Message Nine

**The Organic Building Up of the Body of Christ
through the Practice of the Scriptural Way
to Meet and to Serve**

Scripture Reading: Eph. 3:9; 4:11-16; 1 Cor. 14:24-26, 31

- I. **“God is doing the work of His recovery, and His recovery is to build up the Body of Christ...He is recovering the organic building up of the Body of Christ by the speaking of His ministry”** (*Elders’ Training, Book 9, The Eldership and the God-ordained Way (1)*, p. 84).
- II. **In the Lord’s recovery we practice the genuine church life, caring for the all-inclusive Christ, the consummated Spirit, the eternal life, and the divine truths and endeavoring to escape from organization, dogmatic regulations, rituals, the clerical system, and traditions so that there will be the function of all the members of Christ in the church life for the building up of the Body of Christ in God’s eternal economy—Eph. 3:9; 4:16.**
- III. **In our practice of the scriptural way to meet and to serve, we need to see that the Body is the basic principle of the church, the ministry, and the work—1:22-23; 4:1, 4, 16; 1 Cor. 12:4-6, 12-13, 27:**
 - A. The church, the ministry, and the work are all on the ground of the Body and derive their existence from, find their place in, and work for the good of the Body—Rom. 12:4-5; Col. 2:19; 3:15.
 - B. The churches are the Body expressed locally, the ministry is the Body in function, and the work is the Body seeking increase—Acts 13:1-2; 21:19.
 - C. The church is the life of the Body in miniature, the ministry is the functioning of the Body in service, and the work is the reaching out of the Body in growth—1 Cor. 1:2; 12:27; 16:10; 2 Cor. 3:6.
- IV. **In order to practice the scriptural way to meet and to serve for the building up of the Body of Christ, we need a clear vision of God’s New Testament economy—1 Tim. 1:4; Eph. 3:9:**
 - A. God’s New Testament economy is to dispense the riches of Christ into God’s chosen and redeemed people—v. 8.

CRYSTALLIZATION-STUDY OUTLINES

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- B. God's New Testament economy is to have a people to be the Body of Christ for a corporate expression of the Triune God—1:23; 3:19.
 - C. God's New Testament economy is for the heading up of all things in Christ through the church as the Body of Christ—1:10.
- V. The meetings of the believers should always be linked to God's New Testament economy—1 Tim. 1:4; 1 Cor. 14:26:**
- A. We should come to the meetings with a vision of the divine economy, and what we speak in the meetings should focus on the economy of God—Eph. 3:9.
 - B. The Christian meetings are to make God's economy in His fatherhood known to the believers for the praise of the Father; our meeting is for the magnification and glorification of the begetting Father as the source of the Divine Trinity—Heb. 2:12; Rom. 11:36; 1 Cor. 8:6a; Eph. 4:6.
 - C. Our meeting is a stewardship, a service, to carry out God's economy—3:2.
- VI. The practice of the scriptural way to meet and to serve delivers the believers from hierarchy, the papal system, and the clergy-laity system for the building up of the Body of Christ—Rev. 2:6, 15; Rom. 12:4-6:**
- A. God's intention in His economy is to have an organic Body built up for Christ—Eph. 3:9; 4:16.
 - B. The Lord's recovery is for the annulling of the clergy and laity and the developing of the gifts, functions, and capacity of all the members of the organic Body of Christ—Rev. 2:6, 15; Eph. 4:11-16.
 - C. The scriptural way to meet and to serve is the proper practice of the church life against the papal and clergy-laity systems—Matt. 20:25-28:
 - 1. The goal of the papal and clergy-laity systems is to annul the Body of Christ and to replace it with religion.
 - 2. The recovery according to the Lord's mind is to bring His believers out of the papal system and the

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clergy-laity system and to replace these systems with the scriptural way to meet and to serve for the building up of the Body of Christ—1 Cor. 14:26; Eph. 4:16.

VII. Through the practice of the scriptural way to meet and to serve, the Lord is recovering four major items:

- A. The Lord desires to recover the priesthood of the gospel in the New Testament—1 Pet. 2:5, 9.
- B. The Lord desires to recover the organic building up of the Body of Christ—Matt. 16:18; Eph. 4:12, 16; Col. 2:19.
- C. The Lord desires to recover the perfecting of the common members of the Body of Christ to make them living, active, functioning members of the Body—Eph. 4:11-16; Heb. 10:24-25.
- D. The Lord desires to recover the church meetings in mutuality with all speaking for the building up of the Body of Christ—1 Cor. 14:4b, 23a, 26, 31.

VIII. In the practice of the scriptural way to meet and to serve, we emphasize prophesying—the excelling gift for the building up of the church—vv. 1, 4b, 24-25, 31:

- A. The significance of prophesying in 1 Corinthians 14 is to speak for the Lord, to speak forth the Lord, and even to speak the Lord, to minister, to dispense, the Lord, into others; in the sense of the divine dispensing, the entire Bible consummates in all prophesying—vv. 3, 24-25, 31.
- B. Prophesying, speaking for God and speaking forth God with God as the content, ministers God to the hearers and brings them to God—v. 25.
- C. God desires that each of the believers prophesy, that is, speak for Him and speak Him forth—vv. 1b, 31; cf. Num. 11:29.
- D. The characteristic of prophesying is to minister Christ for the organic building up of the church as the Body of Christ; prophesying is the particular gift for the building up of the church—1 Cor. 14:3-5, 12, 24, 26.