

**GENERAL SUBJECT:
KNOWING THE CRYSTALLIZED SIGNIFICANCE OF THE BODY OF CHRIST**

Message One

The Lord's Urgent Need of the Body of Christ

Scripture Reading: Rom. 12:4-5; 1 Cor. 12:27; Eph. 1:22-23; 4:4, 16; Col. 2:19

- I. God's economy is to produce a Body for His Son; this Body fulfills God's desire for His expression and the destruction of Satan—Rom. 12:4-5; 1 Cor. 12:12, 27; Eph. 1:22-23; 4:4, 16; Col. 1:18; 2:19; Gen. 1:26-28.**
- II. The Lord urgently needs the reality of the Body of Christ to be expressed in the local churches; unless there is a substantial expression of the Body, the Lord Jesus will not return—Rom. 12:4-5; 16:16; 1 Cor. 1:2; 12:27; Eph. 1:23; 4:16; 5:27, 30; Rev. 19:7.**
- III. The work of the Triune God in us is to produce and build up the Body of Christ—Eph. 3:16-21; Rom. 8:11; 12:4-5.**
- IV. The ministry of the new covenant is for the producing of the Body of Christ; without the new covenant ministry, there is no possibility to bring forth the Body of Christ—1 Cor. 12:12-27; 2 Cor. 3:6, 8-9; 4:1; 5:18.**
- V. The Body is the intrinsic significance of the church; without the Body, the church makes no sense and has no meaning—Rom. 12:4-5; 16:1; 1 Cor. 1:2; 12:12-13, 27.**
- VI. We need to touch the reality of the Body and realize the glorious fact that the church is the Body of Christ—Eph. 1:22-23.**
- VII. The Body is the governing law of the life and work of the children of God—4:4, 16; 1 Cor. 12:4-6, 12-13, 27.**
- VIII. Christ in Himself is the Head, and Christ in all of us is the Body—Rom. 8:10; 12:4-5; 2 Cor. 13:5; 1 Cor. 12:27; Eph. 3:17; 4:15-16; Col. 1:18, 27; 2:19.**
- IX. All the problems of the church today are due to ignorance concerning the Body of Christ—Eph. 1:17-23; 4:26; 5:30.**
 - A. The biggest problem is not knowing the Body and not caring for the Body—1 Cor. 12:12-27.**
 - B. The way we behave ourselves in the church, the ministry, and the work depends upon the degree of our seeing the Body—Acts 22:10; 26:18-19.**
- X. The Lord's recovery is for the building up of the Body of Christ; thus, to know the Body is the proper recovery of the Lord—Eph. 4:4-6, 16.**

Message Two

The Body of Christ—the Issue of the Crystallized Significance of Christ’s Incarnation, Human Living, Crucifixion, and Resurrection

Scripture Reading: John 1:14, 29; 3:14; 7:39; 12:24; 20:16, 22; Rom. 1:3-4; 12:4-5

- I. The crystallized significance of Christ’s incarnation, of God’s becoming flesh, was that God was brought into man that He might be mingled with man to be a God-man—John 1:1, 14:**
 - A. God brought Himself into man to be mingled with man as one—Matt. 1:18, 23,
 - B. The crystallized significance of Christ’s birth is that God became flesh in Christ, that is, God Himself entered into man to be mingled with man—Luke 1:35; 2:11; Matt. 1:18, 23.
- II. The crystallized significance of Christ’s human living is that He lived a human life that expressed God—John 6:57a:**
 - A. When God passed through human living in the human life, this was God living the God-man life in the flesh to live out the divine attributes in human virtues—1:1, 14.
 - B. The Lord Jesus expressed God on earth by becoming a man to live a human life in which He lived out all that God is in His divine attributes to be His human virtues—Luke 6:36; 7:11-16.
- III. The crystallized significance of Christ’s crucifixion is that He accomplished an all-inclusive death—John 1:29; 3:14; 12:24:**
 - A. On the negative side, His death terminated the old creation, including all persons and things related to the old creation: Satan, sin, the world, man’s flesh, the law of the commandments in ordinances, and everything outside of God—Rom. 6:6; 8:3; John 1:29; 12:31; Heb. 9:26, 28; 2:14; Gal. 5:24; 6:14; Eph. 2:15.
 - B. Christ’s death completely removed and thoroughly terminated all defilement and corruption in the universe brought in through Satan’s rebellion and Adam’s fall.
 - C. On the positive side, Christ’s death released the divine life in Him as a basic factor of the new creation; when Christ as a grain of wheat fell into the ground and died, the life element within Him became intensely active to release the divine life that was concealed in Him and to impart it into the many grains—John 12:24; 19:34.
- IV. The crystallized significance of Christ’s resurrection is threefold:**
 - A. The human nature of Christ was designated to be the Son of God, and thus Christ became the firstborn Son of God—Rom. 1:3-4; 8:29; Heb. 1:6.
 - B. We, the believers in Christ, were born, regenerated, with Christ as the many sons of God—1 Pet. 1:3; John 20:16; Rom. 8:29; Heb. 2:10-12.
 - C. Christ as the last Adam became the life-giving Spirit—1 Cor. 15:45b.

- V. God's firstborn Son and His many sons constitute a universal, corporate new man with the firstborn Son as the Head and the many sons as the Body—Rom. 8:29; 12:2-5; Heb. 2:10-12; Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10-11:**
- A. Corporately, the many sons of God are the church; organically, they are the Body of Christ—Rom. 12:4-5.
 - B. The Body of Christ is the church, the house of God, the kingdom of God, and the bride, the counterpart, of Christ—1 Tim. 3:15; Eph. 2:21-22; Rom. 14:17; Rev. 19:7:
 - 1. In each aspect, the church takes the Body of Christ as its organic factor.
 - 2. Without the Body of Christ as its organic factor, the church is lifeless and is a mere human organization—1 Cor. 1:2; 12:12, 27.
 - C. The Body of Christ is a constitution of the Triune God and His redeemed that the Triune God may be constituted with His redeemed as one entity—Eph. 4:4-6.
 - D. The Body of Christ is the issue of the crystallized significance of Christ's incarnation, human living, crucifixion, and resurrection—1:22-23; 4:16.

Message Three

The Crystallized Significance of the Body of Christ

(1)

One Body, One Spirit, One Hope, One Lord, One Faith, and One Baptism

Scripture Reading: Eph. 4:4-6

I. Ephesians 4:4-6 is the crystallized speaking of the apostle Paul concerning the Body of Christ; these verses show us that the Triune God and we, the redeemed, are mingled together into a constitution, and this constitution is the Body of Christ.

II. Seven things form the base of our oneness: one Body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God; these seven “ones” are of three groups—vv. 4-6:

- A. The first group, that of the one Spirit with the Body as His expression, consists of one Body, one Spirit, and one hope—v. 4:
 1. The Body of Christ takes God’s chosen and redeemed people as its framework and the Spirit as its constituting essence.
 2. The Spirit as the essence of the Triune God is the essence of the Body of Christ—Eph. 4:4:
 - a. The essence of the Body, containing the divinity of the Triune God, has the capacity to supply the divine life—Phil. 1:19.
 - b. The essence of the Body, containing the excelling humanity of Jesus, has the capacity to supply this excelling humanity—Acts 16:7.
 - c. The essence of the Body, containing the all-inclusive death of Christ, has the capacity to put to death the negative things—Rom. 8:13b.
 - d. The essence of the Body, containing the surpassing resurrection of Christ, has the surpassing capacity of resurrection—Phil. 3:10.
 3. The Spirit as the reality of the Triune God is the reality of the Body of Christ:
 - a. The reality of the processed Triune God is the consummated Spirit of reality—John 14:17; 15:26; 16:13; 1 John 5:6.
 - b. The Spirit of reality makes everything of the processed Triune God a reality in the Body of Christ—John 16:13-15.
 - c. Without the Spirit there is no Body of Christ, no church—Eph. 4:4.
 4. The oneness of the Spirit has the one hope of our calling as the goal; this goal is for the Body to be brought into the divine glory of the processed Triune God, who is mingled with the Body—v. 4; Col. 1:27; Phil. 3:21.
- B. The second three form the second group, that of the Lord with faith and baptism that we may be joined to Him—Eph. 4:5:
 1. In verse 5 the Son is referred to as the Lord, as also in Acts 2:36:
 - a. The Lord is for His exercising of authority, for His headship.
 - b. As the Son, He is our life (1 John 5:11-12); as the Lord, He is the Head exercising His authority in the Body.
 - c. Our believing in Him is related to both life and authority, for he is both our life and our Head—Col. 3:4; 1:18.
 - d. Christians are divided because they neglect the Lord, that is, they neglect the Lord’s headship and authority—Eph. 1:22-23.

2. The one faith and one baptism are the two means to accomplish this oneness—4:5:
 - a. The Body's relationship with the Lord is one of faith and baptism.
 - b. Through faith we believe into the Lord and through baptism we are baptized into Him—John 3:16; Gal. 3:27; Rom. 6:3.
 - c. Through faith and baptism we have been transferred out of Adam into Christ, thereby being joined to the Lord—1 Cor. 6:17.

Message Four

The Crystallized Significance of the Body of Christ

(2)

One God and Father of All

Scripture Reading: Eph. 4:6; 1 Thes. 1:1; 2 Thes. 1:1; John 20:17

I. God is the Originator of all things, and the Father is the source of life for the Body of Christ—Eph. 4:6.

II. The church is in God the Father—1 Thes. 1:1; 2 Thes. 1:1:

- A. For the church to be in God the Father, God must become the Father to us, and we need to have a life relationship with Him—John 20:17:
 - 1. In a way that is organic and full of life, God the Father has made it possible for the church to be in Him—1 John 5:11.
 - 2. In the New Testament, especially in the Gospel of John, the Father denotes the source of life—John 5:26.
 - 3. The title *God* refers to creation; the title *Father* refers to the impartation of life and indicates a relationship of life—John 20:17:
 - a. The Father, the source of life, is for the propagation and multiplication of life—1 John 3:1.
 - b. God is no longer merely our Creator; He is also our Father, our Begetter, for He has begotten us with His life—John 1:12-13.
 - c. We call God our Father because we have been born of Him, and now, as His children, we have a life relationship with Him—Rom. 8:15-16.
 - 4. Through His life-releasing death and life-imparting resurrection, the Lord has made us, His believers, one with Him; thus, His Father is now our Father—John 20:17.
 - 5. By His death and resurrection, the Lord Jesus has brought us into Himself; since He is in the Father, we are in the Father by being in Him—14:20.
- B. The church in God the Father is a composition of the sons of God—Heb. 2:10-12:
 - 1. The New Testament reveals that God wants many sons and that He has predestinated us unto sonship—Eph. 1:5; Gal. 3:26; 4:4-6.
 - 2. God's good pleasure, the desire of His heart, is to have many sons for the expression of His Son—Matt. 15:5; Gal 1:15-16; Heb. 2:10.
- C. For the church to be in God the Father means that the church is in the One who is the unique source, originator, and initiator—1 Cor 8:6:
 - 1. This implies that the church is in God's purpose, plan, selection, and predestination—Eph. 1:5, 9, 11; 3:11.
 - 2. To know God as the Father is to know that everything originates from Him and that everything proceeds from Him—Matt. 15:13; Rom. 11:36.
 - 3. In the church life the Father should be the unique source, and we all should be in His unique purpose and plan—2 Tim. 1:9; Rom. 8:28.
- D. In the church life, we need to have the loving, receiving, and forgiving heart of our Father God—Luke 15:11-32.

Message Five

Oneness and the Cross

Scripture Reading: Eph. 4:1-4; Rom. 6:6; 8:13; 12:4-8

I. The Lord's recovery is the recovery of the oneness of the Body of Christ; the Body can exist and survive only in oneness—Rom. 12:4-5; 1 Cor. 12:12-13; Eph. 4:3; 2:16:

- A. The genuine oneness of the Body is the processed and consummated Triune God, who mingles Himself with the believers—4:4-6.
- B. The organic oneness of the Body of Christ is the oneness of the Spirit—v. 3.
- C. The keeping of the oneness is the primary virtue of our Christian walk—vv. 1-3.
- D. The oneness of the Spirit must be kept diligently by all the believers in Christ with the transformed human virtues strengthened and enriched by and with the divine attributes —vv. 2-3:
 - 1. The oneness of the Spirit is the Spirit Himself who is in our spirit—v. 3:
 - a. If we act apart from the Spirit, we are divisive and lose the oneness—
cf. 1 Cor. 1:10; 2:14-15; 3:1.
 - b. If we stay in the life-giving Spirit, we keep the oneness of the Spirit—cf. John 4:24; 1 Cor. 6:17.
 - 2. The keeping of the oneness of the Spirit, the oneness in actuality, is the one accord—Acts 1:14; 2:46; 4:24; Rom. 15:6.

II. The Body is versus the self; the enemy of the Body is the self—Col. 2:18-19, 23; 3:15:

- A. The self is the soul being independent of God; the self is the independent "I."
- B. The self is the soul plus the satanic mind, the satanic thought; thus, the self is the embodiment of Satan—Matt. 16:23-24.
- C. The hindrance to seeing the vision of the Body and to practicing the Body is the self—Col. 2:18-19, 23:
- D. When we have the self, we do not have the Body; when we have the Body, we do not have the self—vv. 18, 24.

III. We need to see a vision of the cross and understand the significance of the cross—Matt. 27:33-56; Col. 1:20-22; 2:11-15; Gal. 2:20; 3:1; 6:14:

- A. The cross is the center of God's government and His way to accomplish His economy—Col. 1:20; 2:14-15.
- B. In the New Testament the primary meaning of the cross is not to suffer but to be terminated—Rom. 6:6; 2 Cor. 5:14; Gal. 2:20; 6:14.
- C. In order to progress spiritually and have the proper church life, we need to experience the cross—Matt. 10:38; 16:24; Luke 14:27; Col. 3:12-15.
- D. The cross leads us to the Body, consummates with the Body, and operates within the sphere of the Body—Eph. 2:15; 4:16; 1 Cor. 1:18; 12:12-13, 27:
 - 1. The Body of Christ is the realm within which the cross works—Col. 1:20; 3:15.
 - 2. All of God's dealings with us have been with a view to prepare us for the Body; all of His work in us is a process of elimination so that we can become functioning members of the Body—Rom. 6:6; 8:13; 12:4-8.