

WEEK 7 — OUTLINE

The Status of the Church—the Body of Christ

Scripture Reading: Eph. 1:22-23; 4:16; Rom. 12:4-5; 1 Cor. 12:12-13; 14:26

« DAY 1 »

I. Ephesians 1:22 and 23 reveal that the church is the Body of Christ:

- A. *The church is not an organization but an organic Body constituted of all the believers, who have been regenerated and have God's life, for the expression of the Head (John 3:3, 5-6, 15; 1:12-13; 1 John 5:11-12).*
- B. *The Body is the fullness of the Head, and the fullness is the expression of the Head (Eph. 1:22-23).*
- C. *Christ, as the One who fills all in all, needs the Body to be His fullness; this Body is the church to be His fullness (3:10; 1:22-23; 4:10).*
- D. *The church is the Body of Christ, and Christ is the Head of the church (Col. 1:18; 2:19); hence, the church and Christ are one Body, the mysterious, universal great man (3:10-11; Eph. 2:15; 4:24), having the same life and nature:*
 - 1. Christ is the life and content of the Body, and the Body is the organism and expression of Christ (Col. 3:4; 1:18; 2:19; Rom. 12:4-5).
 - 2. As the Body, the church receives everything from Christ; therefore, everything of Christ is expressed through the church (Eph. 1:22-23; 3:8, 10).
 - 3. The two, Christ and the church as His Body, are mingled and joined as one, with Christ being the inward content and the church being the outward expression (vv. 16-21).

II. We need to see clearly how the Body of Christ has been formed:

- A. *In Christ's resurrection the processed and consummated Triune God has been wrought into His chosen people (John 20:22; 1 Cor. 15:45b; 6:17; 1 Pet. 1:3).*
- B. *In Christ's ascension the all-inclusive, compound Spirit, as the consummation of the processed Triune God, descended upon His chosen people (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8; 2:4, 32-33).*
- C. *Within them God's chosen, redeemed, and regenerated people have Christ as the embodiment of the processed and consummated Triune God, and upon them they have the consummated Spirit (John 20:22; Luke 24:49).*
- D. *In this way the believers in Christ become the Body of Christ, an organism produced through the mingling of the processed and consummated Triune God with the transformed tripartite man (1 Cor. 12:13, 27; Eph. 5:30).*

<< DAY 2 >>

III. The reality of the Body of Christ is the Spirit of the reality of the Triune God (4:4; John 14:17; 15:26; 16:13-14; 1 John 5:6):

- A. *Reality refers to the real condition of persons and things.*
- B. *The Body of Christ is the church, and all its reality is the Spirit of the reality of the consummated Triune God (Eph. 1:22-23; 4:16; John 16:13-14):*
 - 1. *The reality of the processed Triune God is His consummated Spirit of reality (14:17; 15:26; 16:13; 1 John 5:6).*
 - 2. *The reality of all that the Triune God is, has, and can do is this Spirit of reality*

(John 16:13-14).

3. The reality of the death and resurrection through which the Triune God has passed is also in the Spirit of reality (Eph. 2:5-6).
4. The Spirit of reality makes everything of the processed Triune God a reality in the Body of Christ (1 John 5:6; Eph. 4:4).
5. All that the Triune God is, including righteousness, holiness, life, light, power, grace, and all the divine attributes, are realized by the Spirit of reality to be the real attributes of the Body of Christ (Rom. 15:16b; 14:17; Eph. 3:16-17a).
6. These attributes have been realized in the church by the Spirit in the Body of Christ; the church therefore possesses the reality of the divine attributes (4:24; Col. 3:12-15).
7. All that the Triune God in Christ experienced, including incarnation, crucifixion, and resurrection, are likewise realized by the Spirit of reality to be the real experiences of the Body of Christ (Rom. 6:3-6; Phil. 3:10).

« DAY 3 »

IV. The church as the Body of Christ is the corporate Christ (1 Cor. 12:12):

- A. *In 1 Corinthians 12:12 the Christ is not the individual Christ but the corporate Christ, the Body-Christ, composed of Christ Himself as the Head and the church as His Body, with all the believers as its members:*
 1. The Bible considers Christ and the church as one mysterious Christ; the two have been joined together to become one mysterious Christ, the Body-Christ (Eph. 5:32).
 2. All the believers of Christ are organically united with Him and constituted of His life and element to become His Body, an organism, to express Him (Rom. 12:4-5; Col. 3:4, 15).

B. As a vine includes not only the stalk but also the branches, so the corporate Christ, the Body-Christ, includes not only Christ Himself but also the members of Christ's Body, who are the members of Christ, parts of Christ (John 15:1, 4-5; Eph. 5:30; 1 Cor. 12:27; Rom. 12:5):

1. Christ is the element, the factor, that makes us parts of Him (Col. 3:10-11).
2. In order to be parts of Christ, members of His Body, we must have Christ wrought into our being (Gal. 1:15-16; 2:20; 4:19; Eph. 3:16-17).
3. The church can be the Body of Christ, the corporate Christ, only as the members are constituted of Christ, possessing His life and nature (Col. 3:4, 10-11).

C. The baptism into the one Body has positioned us all to drink of the one Spirit, and by drinking of the Spirit, we are constituted to be the Body, the corporate Christ (1 Cor. 12:13):

1. By drinking the Spirit, we experience the dispensing of the Divine Trinity into our being and are constituted to be the Body.
2. The more we drink the one Spirit, the more the divine element becomes our constituent to make us the one Body, the Body-Christ (vv. 12-13).

« DAY 4 »

V. For the building up of the Body of Christ, we need to practice the scriptural way to meet and to serve (14:26; Heb. 10:24-25):

A. Without the biblical way for us to meet and to serve, the way that is shown in the New Testament, the Lord's words concerning the building up of the church cannot be fulfilled (Matt. 24:35; 16:18; Eph. 4:11-16).

B. If 1 Corinthians 14:26 and Hebrews 10:24-25 are not fulfilled,

there is no way for the building up of the church as the Body of Christ.

C. The scriptural way to meet and to serve, with all the saints functioning as living members of the Body of Christ, is versus the traditional way, the natural way, to meet and to serve, which is in the principle of the clergy-laity system (Rev. 2:6, 15):

1. The traditional way fits man's natural and fallen condition, is religious, and accommodates the dead man's taste (cf. Matt. 25:23-30).

« DAY 5 »

2. The traditional way binds and annuls the organic function of the living members of Christ and chokes and kills the members of Christ (Rev. 2:6).
3. The scriptural way is spiritual, fits the taste of the living and spiritual man, and requires us to be living and in the spirit (John 4:23-24; Acts 13:52; Gal. 5:16; Rom. 8:4; 2 Tim. 1:6-7).

« DAY 6 »

4. The scriptural way is able to develop the organic ability and function of the members of Christ and able to build up the Body of Christ (Eph. 4:12-16).

D. The Lord desires to recover the organic building up of the Body of Christ:

1. The organic building up of the Body of Christ is the increase of the Triune God in the believers for their growth in Christ (Col. 2:19; Eph. 4:15-16).
2. The Lord desires to recover the church meetings in mutuality with all prophesying (speaking for the Lord) for the building up of the church; prophesying is the excelling way to dispense the riches of Christ into God's people for the organic building up of the Body of Christ (1 Cor. 14:4b, 12, 31; cf. Matt. 16:18).

« HYMN »

« WEEK 7 — DAY 1 »

Morning Nourishment

Eph. 1:22-23 And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church, which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.

Ephesians 1:22 and 23 reveal that the church is the Body of Christ....The church is not an organization but an organic Body constituted of all the believers, who have been regenerated and have God's life, for the expression of the Head. The Body is the fullness of the Head, and the fullness is the expression of the Head. Christ, as the One who fills all in all, needs the Body to be His fullness. This Body is His church to be His expression. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, p. 2245)

Today's Reading

The church is the Body of Christ, and Christ is the Head of the church (Col. 1:18). Hence, the church and Christ are one Body, the mysterious, universal great man, having the same life and nature. Christ is the life and content of the Body, and the Body is the organism and expression of Christ. As the Body, the church receives everything from Christ; everything of Christ, therefore, is expressed through the church. The two, Christ and the church, are mingled and joined as one, with Christ being the inward content and the church, the outward expression.

As the embodiment of the processed Triune God becoming the life-giving Spirit, the Lord breathed the Spirit into His disciples essentially. Then He ascended to the heavens and passed through a process involving the Father with the Spirit, a process that involved the mystery of the Triune God. Having received from the Father the promise of the Spirit, He poured out this Spirit upon His believers. Actually, what He poured out was Himself as the embodiment of the Triune God consummated into the all-inclusive compound Spirit as the totality of the processed Triune God. Now the embodiment of the processed Triune God becoming the life-giving Spirit is within the disciples, and the consummated, all-inclusive Spirit is upon them. This is a mingling of the processed Triune God with

His chosen, called, redeemed, regenerated, and transformed tripartite people to become one entity—the Body of Christ.

Now we can see clearly how the Body of Christ was formed. First, in resurrection the processed Triune God has been wrought into His chosen people. Then, in Christ's ascension, the all-inclusive, compound Spirit as the consummation of the processed Triune God descended upon His chosen people. As a result, within them they have the embodiment of the processed Triune God, and upon them they have the consummated Spirit. In this way they become the Body of Christ, an entity produced through the mingling of the processed Triune God with the transformed tripartite man. This is the church.

We all need to see that the Body of Christ is the totality of the processed Triune God mingled with transformed, tripartite man. This mingling, which will consummate in the New Jerusalem, is completed in three stages. The first stage extends from God's incarnation to Christ's breathing Himself in resurrection as the processed Triune God into God's chosen people to make them intrinsically the constituent for the formation of the Body. This was completed on the day of the Lord's resurrection. After this, the Lord ascended to the heavens. In the heavens there was a transaction between the Father and the Son concerning the Spirit. This is the reason we are told clearly that the ascended Christ received of the Father the promise of the Spirit. Hence, in ascension the Son received of the Father the promised Spirit. Then the Lord poured Himself out as the consummated, all-inclusive, compound Spirit upon the believers. This was the completion of the second stage. Now a third stage is needed for the increase of the Body unto all the fullness of God, unto the fullness of the One who fills all in all. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, pp. 2245-2246, 2251-2252)

Further Reading: The Conclusion of the New Testament, msgs. 210-211

« WEEK 7 — DAY 2 »

Morning Nourishment

John 14:17 Even the Spirit of reality, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not behold Him or know Him; but you know Him, because He abides with you and shall be in you.

Eph. 4:4 One Body and one Spirit, even as also you were called in one hope of your calling.

The reality of the Body of Christ [is] the Spirit of the reality of the Triune God....Reality refers to the real condition of persons and things. The Body of Christ is the church today, and all of its reality is the Spirit of the reality of the consummated Triune God. The reality of the processed Triune God is His consummated Spirit of reality (John 14:17; 15:26; 16:13; 1 John 5:6). The reality of all that the Triune God is, has, and can do is simply this Spirit of reality. The reality of the death and resurrection which the Triune God passed through is also this Spirit of reality. (A Thorough View of the Body of Christ, p. 31)

Today's Reading

Furthermore, this Spirit of reality makes everything of the processed Triune God a reality in the Body of Christ (John 16:13-15). It is this same Spirit of reality who makes all the riches of the Triune God, which are just His reality, possible and real in the Body of Christ. All that the processed Triune God is, including righteousness, holiness, life, light, power, grace, and all the divine attributes, are realized by this Spirit of reality to be the real attributes of the Body of Christ (Rom. 15:16b; 14:17; Eph. 3:16). Originally, such righteousness, holiness, life, light, power, and grace were merely God's attributes; now these attributes have been realized in the church by the Spirit in the Body of Christ. The church therefore possesses the reality of the divine attributes, such as righteousness, holiness, life, light, power, and grace.

Furthermore, all that the Triune God experienced, including incarnation, crucifixion, and resurrection, are likewise realized by this Spirit of reality to be

the real experiences of the Body of Christ. Originally, it was the Triune God who was incarnated, crucified, and resurrected. But when the Spirit of reality came, He made these experiences of the Triune God real in us as our real experiences. Because of this we can live a normal human life on the earth today. We can deal with the negative matters which befall us by the capacity of the death of Christ. We do not lose our temper, nor do we blame or rebuke others, because the death of Christ is realized in us through the Spirit of reality. Moreover, the Spirit with the resurrection of Christ works in us to enable us to love and forgive others. These are all examples of how the experiences of the Triune God Himself have been realized in the church by the Spirit of reality to be the real experiences of the church. This is the Spirit of the reality of the Triune God becoming the reality of the Body of Christ.

Finally, we need to see conclusively that both the essence and the reality of the Body of Christ are altogether matters of the Spirit of the processed and consummated Triune God. Whether essence or reality, it is all a matter of this Spirit. The Spirit is the reality of the essence as well as the essence to which the reality belongs. Essence emphasizes the inward substance, while reality emphasizes the outward realization. Because the Spirit is the inward substance of the Body of Christ, He is also its outward realization. Both the inward essence and substance and the outward reality and realization are of the Spirit. This Spirit is the secret to all that the Triune God is to the Body of Christ. For instance, the secret to God's loving the Body of Christ, sanctifying it, and strengthening it, is with the Spirit of reality. It is the Spirit of reality who makes God's love real in the Body of Christ, so that it may be sanctified and strengthened. This Spirit of reality is the processed Triune God Himself as well as the totality of all the attributes of the processed Triune God. If we have this Spirit, we have all the attributes of the processed Triune God, such as love, light, mercy, righteousness, holiness, life, power, and grace. (A Thorough View of the Body of Christ, pp. 31-33)

Further Reading: A Thorough View of the Body of Christ, chs. 1-2

« WEEK 7 — DAY 3 »

Morning Nourishment

1 Cor. 12:12 For even as the body is one and has many members, yet all the members of the body, being many, are one body, so also is the Christ.

Eph. 5:32 This mystery is great, but I speak with regard to Christ and the church.

In the Bible Christ sometimes refers to the individual Christ, the personal Christ, and sometimes to the corporate Christ, to Christ and the church (1 Cor. 12:12)...Christ is the Head of this mysterious Christ, and the church is the Body of this mysterious Christ. The two have been joined together to become the one mysterious Christ, a universal great man. All the saved ones in all times and in all space added together become the Body of this mysterious Christ. Individually speaking, we, the saved ones, are particular members of the Body (1 Cor. 12:27). Corporately speaking, we are the mystical Body of Christ. Every saved one is a part of the Body of Christ. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, p. 2267)

Today's Reading

[In 1 Corinthians 12:12] Christ...is not the individual Christ but the corporate Christ, the Body-Christ. In Greek "Christ" in this verse is "the Christ," referring to the corporate Christ, composed of Christ Himself as the Head and the church as His Body with all the believers as its members. All the believers of Christ are organically united with Him and constituted of His life and element to become His Body, an organism, to express Him. Hence, He is not only the Head but also the Body. As our physical body has many members, yet is one, so is this Christ.

As a vine includes not only the stalk but also the branches, so the corporate Christ, the Body-Christ, includes not only Christ Himself but also the members of Christ's Body, who are the members of Christ, parts of Christ. According to our natural constitution, we cannot be members of Christ's Body. Christ Himself is the element, the factor, that makes us parts of Him. Therefore, in order to be parts of Christ, as members of His Body, we must have Christ wrought into our being.

In order to become the corporate Christ, the Body-Christ, Christ had to pass through the steps of a process. First He, the very God, became flesh for our redemption. Then in resurrection He became the life-giving Spirit to come into us and work within us. In this way He becomes the Body-Christ. Now in the church life we enjoy not only God, the Redeemer, and the life-giving Spirit but also the Christ who is the Body.

The church can be the Body of Christ only as the members are constituted of Christ, possessing His life and nature. If we consider our physical body, we shall realize that anything that does not have our life and nature cannot be part of our body. Just as our body is part of us, so Christ's Body, the church, is part of Him. As members of the Body, we are parts of Christ, constituted of Him.

Because the reality of Christ is the Spirit, the way to be constituted of Christ to be His Body is to drink the Spirit. The Body has been formed by the baptism in the one Spirit. In one Spirit we have all been baptized into one Body (1 Cor. 12:13). The baptism into the one Body has positioned us all to drink, and by drinking of the Spirit, we are constituted to be the Body. By drinking the Spirit, we experience the dispensing of the Divine Trinity into our being and are constituted to be the Body.

The building up of the Body of Christ is altogether a matter of constitution. The Body is an organic entity constituted of the divine element of the processed Triune God. It is through such a constitution that we become the Body of Christ. Therefore, what the Body of Christ needs is not organization but a unique constitution, a constitution which consists of the divine element wrought into our inner being through our drinking of the one Spirit. The more we drink the one Spirit, the more the divine element becomes our constituent to make us the one Body, the corporate Christ. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, pp. 2267-2269)

Further Reading: The Conclusion of the New Testament, msg. 212; CWWL, 1973-1974, vol. 1, "The Enjoyment of Christ for the Body in 1 Corinthians," chs. 3-4

« WEEK 7 — DAY 4 »

Morning Nourishment

1 Cor. 14:26 What then, brothers? Whenever you come together, each one has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up.

Heb. 10:25 Not abandoning our own assembling together, as the custom with some is, but exhorting one another; and so much the more as you see the day drawing near.

Many Christians today would say that they care only for Christ and not for the church. If we care only for Christ and not for the church, we can gain only a limited portion of Christ. We can gain much more of the riches of Christ when we care for both Christ and the church....We should pray, “Lord Jesus, I know that today You are no longer only the individual Christ but also the corporate Christ, the Head with the Body. You are the Body-Christ. Therefore, Lord Jesus, I receive You as well as Your Body. I receive the Body-Christ, and I desire to walk in this Christ.”

Many of us in the Lord’s recovery can testify that since the day we came into the church and began to care for the church, there has been a great difference in our spiritual life. We have the inner sense that we are rich. Everyone in the church is a spiritual billionaire; we are all rich. (CWWL, 1973-1974, vol. 1, “The Vision and Experience of the Corporate Christ,” pp. 496-497)

Today’s Reading

The Lord’s word concerning the building up of the church as the dwelling place of God and the Body of Christ must be fulfilled before His coming back. The Lord Jesus said in Matthew 24:35, “Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words shall by no means pass away.” Without the biblical way for us to meet and to serve, the way that is illustrated, shown, and signified in the New Testament, the Lord’s words concerning the building up of the church cannot be fulfilled. The traditional way to meet and to serve surely cannot fulfill the Lord’s words concerning the building up of His church.

If 1 Corinthians 14:26 and Hebrews 10:25 are not fulfilled, there is no way for the building up of the house of God and of the Body of Christ. If we do not endeavor to take the scriptural way, this will delay the Lord's coming back. Heaven and earth will pass away at the time of the Lord's coming back, and His words will be fulfilled. Sooner or later verses like 1 Corinthians 14:26 and Hebrews 10:25 will be fulfilled. When Christians have a proper way to meet and to serve, that will afford the Lord the possibility to build up the church as the dwelling place of God and as the Body of Christ. I have the assurance that right now the Lord is doing something to bring His people back to the God-ordained way to meet and to serve that He may accomplish all He has prophesied and promised concerning the building up of His church.

Several points concerning the traditional way to meet and serve...include the following: the traditional way adopts the way of human society for religion—"in the customs of the nations" (2 Kings 17:8, NASB); the traditional way is natural, fitting man's natural and fallen condition; the traditional way does not require man to be living and in the spirit; and the traditional way is religious....We shall [also] consider some other points concerning the traditional way.

The traditional way of meeting accommodates the dead man's taste. Many of us who were in the traditional way in Christianity for a number of years can recall what we saw there. I attended Christianity services from my youth. I saw many people who were dead spiritually. The so-called church service just accommodated these dead people. Many of them were happy because they had a kind of social life, which they called the church. Week after week, Sunday after Sunday, a certain portion was read from the Bible as a subject, yet year-round there was no change in the people. They simply attended services every Sunday. (CWWL, 1987, vol. 3, "The Scriptural Way to Meet and to Serve for the Building Up of the Body of Christ," pp. 498-499, 319)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1973-1974, vol. 1, "The Vision and Experience of the Corporate Christ," chs. 3-4

« WEEK 7 — DAY 5 »

Morning Nourishment

2 Tim. 1:6-7 For which cause I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For God has not given us a spirit of cowardice, but of power and of love and of sobermindedness.

The scriptural way to meet and to serve surely is against the religious and social way of meeting and service....This way is spiritual. It fits the taste of the living and spiritual man and requires man to be living and in the spirit. To take this way, we need to be revived, to live a victorious life, and to walk by and according to the spirit. For this way to be prevailing in our meeting and in our service, we also need to have an uninterrupted fellowship with the Lord daily and hourly. We need to contact the Lord from the beginning of each day by calling on His name and pray-reading His Word that we may enjoy Him and be supplied with His riches. We need to speak Him to people all day long whether in season or out of season. To live such a life for the scriptural way to meet and to serve surely requires us always to pay a price....It is...against the religious life and social customs. For this we need to pray much and receive grace from the Lord. (The Scriptural Way to Meet and to Serve for the Building Up of the Body of Christ, p. 328)

Today's Reading

The traditional way has bound and annulled the organic function of the members of the Body of Christ for many centuries....Some would say that we need to have a meeting not only to help the sinners get saved by preaching the gospel to them but also to help the new ones get fed and edified. This sounds very good, and everyone would say that this is needed, but the subtlety of the evil one is present here.

The denominations have millions of members, but very few of these members are useful. On the one hand, the clerical class, the professionals, may help their so-called churches to be increased. But on the other hand, they annul the function

of the members of the Body of Christ...With this kind of situation, where is the possibility for the saints to be built up in an organic way—where their spirit has been regenerated, their soul is being transformed, and they are growing in spirit by the transformation in their soul together with other fellow members? Where are the saints experiencing the all-inclusive Christ and growing with Him, having the freedom and opportunity for their spiritual, organic function to be developed, and being built up together in the spirit so that not only a local church but also the whole Body of Christ can be built up as the full expression of God?

The traditional way has not only bound and annulled the spiritual function of the members of Christ but also has choked and even killed the living members of Christ for all the time in the past history of the church. On the one hand, the traditional way feeds people, but on the other hand, because of the clerical class, in many aspects it frustrates the believers from growing in life and even chokes them to death. Hence, most of the believers are spiritually dead in their church services. Although we have left organized Christianity, its traditional way to meet and to serve still influences us to quite an extent, and we are even under its bondage, without any awareness of its damage to the Body of Christ, which we are endeavoring to build up by all its members functioning in each one's measure (Eph. 4:16).

[In verse 16] out from whom means from Christ, the Head. All the Body includes all the members of the Body, not just the gifted ones. The operation in the measure of each one part means that each member has a measure for God's operation. Each one part refers to every member of the Body. Every member of the Body of Christ has its own measure, which works for the growth of the Body. In the traditional way, can we see the building up of the Body of Christ mentioned in verse 12 or particularly in verse 16? (CWWL, 1987, vol. 3, "The Scriptural Way to Meet and to Serve for the Building Up of the Body of Christ," pp. 321-323)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1987, vol. 3, "The Scriptural Way to Meet and to Serve for the Building Up of the Body of Christ," chs. 1-5

« WEEK 7 — DAY 6 »

Morning Nourishment

Eph. 4:15-16 But holding to truth in love, we may grow up into Him in all things, who is the Head, Christ, out from whom all the Body, being joined together and being knit together through every joint of the rich supply and through the operation in the measure of each one part, causes the growth of the Body unto the building up of itself in love.

The scriptural way to meet and to serve is able to develop the organic function and ability of the members of Christ and is able to build up the Body of Christ (Eph. 4:12, 16). Ephesians 4:12 tells us that the gifted persons do their work to perfect the saints that the saints may carry out the work of the ministry for the building up of the Body of Christ. Verse 16 follows to tell us in detail how the perfected saints build up the Body directly...Every joint of the rich supply refers to the specially gifted persons, and each one part refers to every member of the Body. After we are perfected by the gifted persons, we have to function. One who is a joint, a gifted person, has to render the supply to the Body. Furthermore, as long as you are one part among the many parts of the Body of Christ, you also have a measure of ability, a measure of function. (CWWL, 1987, vol. 3, "The Scriptural Way to Meet and to Serve for the Building Up of the Body of Christ," pp. 342-343)

Today's Reading

The building up of the Body must be organic. It is altogether a matter of life. Without life, there is no genuine building up of the church. There is very little of the element of life in today's Christianity. What we see built up among most of today's Christians is mostly inorganic. According to the New Testament, however, the building up of the church should be altogether in life. The Body of Christ is like our physical body. In our physical body no part is lifeless.

The organic building up of the Body of Christ is the increase of the Triune God in the believers for their growth in Christ...[In Colossians 2:19] grows with the growth of God may also be translated "grows with the increase of God." God is increasing in us in essence essentially. It is by this essential increase of God in

us that the church as the Body of Christ grows. The church as the Body of Christ grows with some element, with some essence. A person grows with the essence of the food that he takes in. (CWWL, 1989, vol. 4, “The Advance of the Lord’s Recovery Today,” pp. 61, 41)

The Lord desires to recover the church meetings in mutuality with all speaking for building up (1 Cor. 14:23a, 26, 31). (Prophesying in the Church Meetings for the Organic Building Up of the Church as the Body of Christ (Outlines), p. 10)

God’s administration is a family matter. In ancient times the administration among large families was mainly for distributing the food, the necessities, to all the members of the family. Our God has the biggest family in the universe. God has a family plan to distribute all His rich provision to His children. His rich provision is altogether embodied in a person, the second of the Trinity, Christ. All the riches of the Godhead and the fullness of the Godhead are embodied in Christ. God’s family plan, God’s family administration, is to distribute, to dispense, all the divine riches in Christ into His saved ones for their nourishment and feeding, resulting in the building up of the Body of Christ. Today we are under God’s economy to enjoy His rich distribution.

We are now under God’s dispensing, and this dispensing is by prophesying. Prophesying is the unique way, the best way, the excelling way, to dispense all the riches of Christ into God’s people for the building up of the organic Body of Christ. The dispensing of the riches of Christ by prophesying can be illustrated by the dispensing of food by a mother. Day by day a mother distributes, or dispenses, food to her little baby until he becomes a strong and husky boy...To prophesy is to distribute, to dispense, the Triune God as the rich food, the nourishing element, into others. (CWWL, 1988, vol. 4, “The Present Advance of the Lord’s Recovery,” p. 571)

Further Reading: The Scriptural Way to Meet and to Serve for the Building Up of the Body of Christ, chs. 6-8, 16-17

« WEEK 7 — HYMN

Lord, to know Thee as the Body

The Church — As Christ's Body

1225

The musical score is written in 3/4 time with a key signature of one flat (Bb). It consists of four staves of music. The lyrics are written below the notes. Chord symbols are placed above the notes: F, C7/G, C, C7, F, F/A, Bb, F/A, Bb, C, C7, F, D7/F#, Gm, C, C7, F, F7, Bb, Gm, F/C, C7, F.

1. Lord, to know Thee as the Bod - y, Is my des - perate need to -
4 day, Oh, to see Thee in Thy mem - bers, 'Tis for this I long and
8 pray. No more just to know Thy head - ship In an in - div - i - dual
12 way, But to see Thee in - car - nat - ed, As the Bod - y--Christ, I pray.

2. Through the years, Thy saints have sought Thee,
Longing for reality;
Gazing upward, searching inward,
Thirsting for the sight of Thee.
Now reveal that Christ in heaven,
Is the Body manifest;
And the Christ who dwells within us
As the Body is expressed.

3. Prone to be misled, I know it,
By my lofty thoughts of Thee,
Easy 'tis for self to seek Thee,
Yet not touch reality,
Oh, how much I need to find Thee,
In Thy members here below.
God eternal dwells among us,
Manifest in flesh to know.

4. Limit, Lord, my independence,
Let me to Thy Body turn;
Not just seeking light from heaven,
But the church's sense to learn.
May we be the stones for building
Not the formless, useless clay,
Gain in us Thy heart's desire
Corporately Thyself display.

