

Message Three

The Factor of the Church Being in the Triune God, the Local Churches Being Expressions of the Body of Christ, and the Believers Practicing the Church Life in the Consciousness of the Body

Hymns:

Scripture Reading: 1 Thes. 1:1; 2 Thes. 1:1;
Matt. 16:18; 18:17; 1 Cor. 1:2; 12:12-27

- 1 Thes. 1:1 Paul and Silvanus and Timothy to the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace.
- 2 Thes. 1:1 Paul and Silvanus and Timothy to the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:
- Matt. 16:18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.
- Matt. 18:17 And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to hear the church also, let him be to you just like the Gentile and the tax collector.
- 1 Cor. 1:2 To the church of God which is in Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, the called saints, with all those who call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place, who is theirs and ours:
- 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.
- 1 Cor. 12:13 For also in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and were all given to drink one Spirit.
- 1 Cor. 12:14 For the body is not one member but many.
- 1 Cor. 12:15 If the foot should say, Because I am not a hand, I am not of the body, it is not that because of this it is not of the body.
- 1 Cor. 12:16 And if the ear should say, Because I am not an eye, I am not of the body, it is not that because of this it is not of the body.
- 1 Cor. 12:17 If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole were the hearing, where would the smelling be?
- 1 Cor. 12:18 But now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body, even as He willed.
- 1 Cor. 12:19 And if all were one member, where would the body be?
- 1 Cor. 12:20 But now the members are many, but the body one.
- 1 Cor. 12:21 And the eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of you; nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you.
- 1 Cor. 12:22 But much rather the members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary.
- 1 Cor. 12:23 And those members of the body which we consider to be less honorable, these we clothe with more abundant honor; and our uncomely members come to have more abundant comeliness,
- 1 Cor. 12:24 But our comely members have no need. But God has blended the body together, giving more abundant honor to the member that lacked,

1 Cor. 12:25 That there would be no division in the body, but that the members would have the same care for one another.

1 Cor. 12:26 And whether one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or one member is glorified, all the members rejoice with it.

1 Cor. 12:27 Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually.

I. The church is in the Triune God—“the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ”—1 Thes. 1:1:

1 Thes. 1:1 Paul and Silvanus and Timothy to the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace.

A. In 1 Thessalonians 1:1 we have the revelation of the tremendous fact that the church is in the unique God and that this God is our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:

1 Thes. 1:1 Paul and Silvanus and Timothy to the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace.

1. The church is not only of God and of Christ; the church is also in God and in Christ.

2. It is important for us to see that the church in our locality is of God and in God, of Christ and in Christ.

B. The church is composed of human beings, but they, the believers, are in the Triune God—v. 1; 2 Thes. 1:1.

1 Thes. 1:1 Paul and Silvanus and Timothy to the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace.

2 Thes. 1:1 Paul and Silvanus and Timothy to the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:

C. The church is a group of human beings who have been born of God the Father with His life and nature and who have been brought into the organic union with Christ:

1. For the church to be in God, God must become our Father, and we must have a life relationship with Him—1 John 3:1a:

1 John 3:1 Behold what manner of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and we are. Because of this the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.

a. In 1 Thessalonians 1:1 the word Father indicates a relationship in life; in God the Father, we have been born again, regenerated, and now, as His children, we have a life relationship with Him—John 1:12-13.

1 Thes. 1:1 Paul and Silvanus and Timothy to the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace.

John 1:12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the authority to become children of God, to those who believe into His name,

John 1:13 Who were begotten not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

b. The church being in God the Father implies that the church is in God’s purpose, plan, selection, and predestination—Eph. 1:4-5.

Eph. 1:4 Even as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world to be holy and without blemish before Him in love,

Eph. 1:5 Predestinating us unto sonship through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,

c. The church in God the Father is the church in the One who is the unique Initiator and Originator—Rom. 11:36; 1 Cor. 8:6; Matt. 15:13.

Rom. 11:36 Because out from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen.

1 Cor. 8:6 Yet to us there is one God, the Father, out from whom are all things, and we are unto Him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and we are through Him.

Matt. 15:13 And He answered and said, Every plant which My heavenly Father has not planted shall be rooted up.

2. To be in the Lord Jesus Christ is to be united with Christ organically in all that He is and has done—1 Thes. 1:1; 1 Cor. 1:30:

1 Thes. 1:1 Paul and Silvanus and Timothy to the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace.

1 Cor. 1:30 But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became wisdom to us from God: both righteousness and sanctification and redemption,

a. In the Lord Jesus Christ we have the termination of everything of the old creation, for to be in Christ is to be in His death, the death that terminates all negative things—Rom. 6:4.

Rom. 6:4 We have been buried therefore with Him through baptism into His death, in order that just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so also we might walk in newness of life.

b. The title Christ in 1 Thessalonians 1:1 denotes all the riches of resurrection; thus, to be in Christ is to be in resurrection—Rom. 8:10-11.

1 Thes. 1:1 Paul and Silvanus and Timothy to the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace.

Rom. 8:10 But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the spirit is life because of righteousness.

Rom. 8:11 And if the Spirit of the One who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who indwells you.

D. The church is in the processed Triune God—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—the One who has become the life-giving Spirit with the Father and the Son—1 Cor. 15:45b; John 14:17, 23.

1 Cor. 15:45 So also it is written, "The first man, Adam, became a living soul"; the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit.

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.

John 14:23 Jesus answered and said to him, If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word, and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make an abode with him.

II. A local church is an expression of the Body of Christ in a certain locality—1 Cor. 1:2; 10:32b, 17; 12:12-13, 20, 27:

1 Cor. 1:2 To the church of God which is in Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, the called saints, with all those who call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place, who is theirs and ours:

1 Cor. 10:32 Do not become a stumbling block, both to Jews and to Greeks and to the church of God;

1 Cor. 10:17 Seeing that there is one bread, we who are many are one Body; for we all partake of the one bread.

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.

1 Cor. 12:13 For also in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and were all given to drink one Spirit.

1 Cor. 12:20 But now the members are many, but the body one.

1 Cor. 12:27 Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually.

A. The unique Body of Christ is expressed in many local churches in the divine oneness as it is with the Triune God and in the divine nature, element, essence, expression, function, and testimony; there are many churches, yet 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—Rev. 1:11; John 17:11, 21, 23.

Rev. 1:11 Saying, What you see write in a scroll and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamos and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea.

John 17:11 And I am no longer in the world; yet they are in the world, and I am coming to You. Holy Father, keep them in Your name, which You have given to Me, that they may be one even as We are.

John 17:21 That they all may be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us; that the world may believe that You have sent Me.

John 17:23 I in them, and You in Me, that they may be perfected into one, that the world may know that You have sent Me and have loved them even as You have loved Me.

B. The church revealed in Matthew 16:18 is the universal church, the unique Body of Christ, whereas the church revealed in 18:17 is the local church, the expression of the unique Body of Christ in a certain locality.

Matt. 16:18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.

Matt. 18:17 And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to hear the church also, let him be to you just like the Gentile and the tax collector.

C. The one universal church—the Body of Christ—becomes the many local churches—local expressions of the Body of Christ—Rom. 12:4-5; 16:16.

Rom. 12:4 For just as in one body we have many members, and all the members do not have the same function,

Rom. 12:5 So we who are many are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.

Rom. 16:16 Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ greet you.

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

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

Rev. 1:4 John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is coming, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne,

Rev. 1:11 Saying, What you see write in a scroll and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamos and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea.

1. The Body of Christ is the source of the local churches—Eph. 1:22-23; 2:21-22.

- Eph. 1:22 And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church,
- Eph. 1:23 Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.
- Eph. 2:21 In whom all the building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord;
- Eph. 2:22 In whom you also are being built together into a dwelling place of God in spirit.
2. The universal Body is like the father to all the churches, and all the churches are like the children to the father—Rom. 12:4-5; 16:4.
- Rom. 12:4 For just as in one body we have many members, and all the members do not have the same function,
- Rom. 12:5 So we who are many are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.
- Rom. 16:4 Who risked their own necks for my life, to whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles;
- E. Every local church is a part of the unique, universal Body of Christ, a local expression of this Body—Eph. 4:4; 1 Cor. 1:2; 12:27:
- Eph. 4:4 One Body and one Spirit, even as also you were called in one hope of your calling;
- 1 Cor. 1:2 To the church of God which is in Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, the called saints, with all those who call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place, who is theirs and ours:
- 1 Cor. 12:27 Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually.
1. 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.
2. The universal Christ has a part of Himself in every local church; every local church is a part of Christ, and all these parts constitute the Body—Eph. 1:23; 2:22.
- Eph. 1:23 Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.
- Eph. 2:22 In whom you also are being built together into a dwelling place of God in spirit.
- F. The local ground of the church is basically the unique oneness of the Body of Christ practiced in the local churches—4:4; 1 Thes. 1:1:
- Eph. 4:4 One Body and one Spirit, even as also you were called in one hope of your calling;
- 1 Thes. 1:1 Paul and Silvanus and Timothy to the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace.
1. Both the universal Body of Christ and the local churches are uniquely one.
2. There is one unique Body in the whole universe, and there is one unique local church in each locality respectively.
3. This unique oneness is the basic element in the church life—Acts 1:14; 2:46; 1 Cor. 1:10; Phil. 1:27; 2:1-2.
- Acts 1:14 These all continued steadfastly with one accord in prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.
- Acts 2:46 And day by day, continuing steadfastly with one accord in the temple and breaking bread from house to house, they partook of their food with exultation and simplicity of heart,
- 1 Cor. 1:10 Now I beseech you, brothers, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be attuned in the same mind and in the same opinion.

- Phil. 1:27 Only, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, that whether coming and seeing you or being absent, I may hear of the things concerning you, that you stand firm in one spirit, with one soul striving together along with the faith of the gospel,
- Phil. 2:1 If there is therefore any encouragement in Christ, if any consolation of love, if any fellowship of spirit, if any tenderheartedness and compassions,
- Phil. 2:2 Make my joy full, that you think the same thing, having the same love, joined in soul, thinking the one thing,
- G. The churches in different localities are for the universal expression of Christ—Eph. 1:23; Rev. 1:4, 11; 22:16a:
- Eph. 1:23 Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.
- Rev. 1:4 John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is coming, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne,
- Rev. 1:11 Saying, What you see write in a scroll and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamos and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea.
- Rev. 22:16 I Jesus have sent My angel to testify to you these things for the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the bright morning star.
1. A local church that makes everything local and that expresses only its locality has become a local sect, a local division.
 2. All the basic things for the Body are not local—the Spirit, Christ, God, the Bible, the apostles' teaching, and the apostles' fellowship.
- H. In our consideration the Body should be first and the local churches should be second—Matt. 16:18; 18:17; Eph. 4:4, 16; 2:21-22; 1 Cor. 12:12; 1:2:
- Matt. 16:18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.
- Matt. 18:17 And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to hear the church also, let him be to you just like the Gentile and the tax collector.
- Eph. 4:4 One Body and one Spirit, even as also you were called in one hope of your calling;
- Eph. 4:16 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.
- Eph. 2:21 In whom all the building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord;
- Eph. 2:22 In whom you also are being built together into a dwelling place of God in spirit.
- 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.
- 1 Cor. 1:2 To the church of God which is in Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, the called saints, with all those who call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place, who is theirs and ours:
1. Local churches are the procedure God takes to reach the goal of His economy—the Body of Christ—Rom. 16:1, 4, 16; 12:4-5.
- Rom. 16:1 I commend to you Phoebe our sister, who is a deaconess of the church which is in Cenchrea,
- Rom. 16:4 Who risked their own necks for my life, to whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles;
- Rom. 16:16 Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ greet you.

- Rom. 12:4 For just as in one body we have many members, and all the members do not have the same function,
 Rom. 12:5 So we who are many are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.

2. We should consider our local church as a part of the Body of Christ—1 Cor. 1:2; 10:16-17; 12:12-13, 20, 27.

- 1 Cor. 1:2 To the church of God which is in Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, the called saints, with all those who call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place, who are theirs and ours:
 1 Cor. 10:16 The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the fellowship of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the fellowship of the body of Christ?
 1 Cor. 10:17 Seeing that there is one bread, we who are many are one Body; for we all partake of the one bread.
 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.
 1 Cor. 12:13 For also in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and were all given to drink one Spirit.
 1 Cor. 12:20 But now the members are many, but the body one.
 1 Cor. 12:27 Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually.

III. In practicing the church life, we need to have the consciousness of the Body—vv. 12-27:

- 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.
 1 Cor. 12:13 For also in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and were all given to drink one Spirit.
 1 Cor. 12:14 For the body is not one member but many.
 1 Cor. 12:15 If the foot should say, Because I am not a hand, I am not of the body, it is not that because of this it is not of the body.
 1 Cor. 12:16 And if the ear should say, Because I am not an eye, I am not of the body, it is not that because of this it is not of the body.
 1 Cor. 12:17 If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole were the hearing, where would the smelling be?
 1 Cor. 12:18 But now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body, even as He willed.
 1 Cor. 12:19 And if all were one member, where would the body be?
 1 Cor. 12:20 But now the members are many, but the body one.
 1 Cor. 12:21 And the eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of you; nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you.
 1 Cor. 12:22 But much rather the members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary.
 1 Cor. 12:23 And those members of the body which we consider to be less honorable, these we clothe with more abundant honor; and our uncomely members come to have more abundant comeliness,
 1 Cor. 12:24 But our comely members have no need. But God has blended the body together, giving more abundant honor to the member that lacked,
 1 Cor. 12:25 That there would be no division in the body, but that the members would have the same care for one another.
 1 Cor. 12:26 And whether one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or one member is glorified, all the members rejoice with it.
 1 Cor. 12:27 Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually.

A. In order to have the Body life, we must be full of feeling for the Body, taking the feeling of the Head as our own feeling—Rom. 12:15; 1 Cor. 12:26-27; Acts 9:4-5:

Rom. 12:15 Rejoice with those who rejoice; weep with those who weep.

1 Cor. 12:26 And whether one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or one member is glorified, all the members rejoice with it.

1 Cor. 12:27 Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually.

Acts 9:4 And he fell on the ground and heard a voice saying to him, Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?

Acts 9:5 And he said, Who are You, Lord? And He said, I am Jesus, whom you persecute.

1. If we as members have the feeling of the Head in everything and care for the Body, we will take the Body as the rule in our mind, thoughts, words, and actions—Eph. 4:15-16; Col. 2:19.

Eph. 4:15 But holding to truth in love, we may grow up into Him in all things, who is the Head, Christ,

Eph. 4:16 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.

Col. 2:19 And not holding the Head, out from whom all the Body, being richly supplied and knit together by means of the joints and sinews, grows with the growth of God.

2. 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); if we do this, the life we live will be the Body life, and the Lord will gain the expression of the Body—Eph. 4:15-16; 1:22-23.

Matt. 16:24 Then Jesus said to His disciples, If anyone wants to come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me.

Rom. 12:4 For just as in one body we have many members, and all the members do not have the same function,

Rom. 12:5 So we who are many are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.

Rom. 12:15 Rejoice with those who rejoice; weep with those who weep.

1 Cor. 1:2 To the church of God which is in Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, the called saints, with all those who call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place, who is theirs and ours:

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.

1 Cor. 12:13 For also in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and were all given to drink one Spirit.

1 Cor. 12:14 For the body is not one member but many.

1 Cor. 12:15 If the foot should say, Because I am not a hand, I am not of the body, it is not that because of this it is not of the body.

1 Cor. 12:16 And if the ear should say, Because I am not an eye, I am not of the body, it is not that because of this it is not of the body.

1 Cor. 12:17 If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole were the hearing, where would the smelling be?

1 Cor. 12:18 But now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body, even as He willed.

1 Cor. 12:19 And if all were one member, where would the body be?

1 Cor. 12:20 But now the members are many, but the body one.

1 Cor. 12:21 And the eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of you; nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you.

- 1 Cor. 12:22 But much rather the members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary.
- 1 Cor. 12:23 And those members of the body which we consider to be less honorable, these we clothe with more abundant honor; and our uncomely members come to have more abundant comeliness,
- 1 Cor. 12:24 But our comely members have no need. But God has blended the body together, giving more abundant honor to the member that lacked,
- 1 Cor. 12:25 That there would be no division in the body, but that the members would have the same care for one another.
- 1 Cor. 12:26 And whether one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or one member is glorified, all the members rejoice with it.
- 1 Cor. 12:27 Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually.
- Eph. 4:15 But holding to truth in love, we may grow up into Him in all things, who is the Head, Christ,
- Eph. 4:16 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.
- Eph. 1:22 And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church,
- Eph. 1:23 Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.

3. Our enjoyment of Christ causes us to become conscious of the Body of Christ—Col. 2:16-17, 19.

- Col. 2:16 Let no one therefore judge you in eating and in drinking or in respect of a feast or of a new moon or of the Sabbath,
- Col. 2:17 Which are a shadow of the things to come, but the body is of Christ.
- Col. 2:19 And not holding the Head, out from whom all the Body, being richly supplied and knit together by means of the joints and sinews, grows with the growth of God.

B. 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:

- 2 Cor. 8:21 For we exercise foresight for what is honorable not only in the sight of the Lord but also in the sight of men.
- Eph. 4:16 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.

1. We should not do anything without taking care of the Body—1 Cor. 12:12-27.

- 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.
- 1 Cor. 12:13 For also in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and were all given to drink one Spirit.
- 1 Cor. 12:14 For the body is not one member but many.
- 1 Cor. 12:15 If the foot should say, Because I am not a hand, I am not of the body, it is not that because of this it is not of the body.
- 1 Cor. 12:16 And if the ear should say, Because I am not an eye, I am not of the body, it is not that because of this it is not of the body.
- 1 Cor. 12:17 If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole were the hearing, where would the smelling be?
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- 1 Cor. 12:20 But now the members are many, but the body one.
- 1 Cor. 12:21 And the eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of you; nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you.
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- 1 Cor. 12:25 That there would be no division in the body, but that the members would have the same care for one another.
- 1 Cor. 12:26 And whether one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or one member is glorified, all the members rejoice with it.
- 1 Cor. 12:27 Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually.
2. We need to consider how the Body would feel about what we are doing and how the Body, the recovery, will react.
 3. How we behave ourselves depends upon the degree of our seeing the Body.
 4. If we are in one accord only in our local church and do not care for the other churches, this kind of one accord is a sect, a division—Acts 1:14; 15:25.

Acts 1:14 These all continued steadfastly with one accord in prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.

Acts 15:25 It seemed good to us, having become of one accord, to choose men to send to you together with our beloved Barnabas and Paul,
 5. If we take care of the Body and are concerned for the Body, there will be no problems—Eph. 4:4, 16.

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

Eph. 4:16 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.
- C. Among all the churches that compose the one universal Body of Christ, there is no organization, but there is the fellowship of the Body of Christ—Acts 2:42; 1 John 1:3; 1 Cor. 1:9; 10:16-17; 11:29:
- Acts 2:42 And they continued steadfastly in the teaching and the fellowship of the apostles, in the breaking of bread and the prayers.
- 1 John 1:3 That which we have seen and heard we report also to you that you also may have fellowship with us, and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.
- 1 Cor. 1:9 God is faithful, through whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.
- 1 Cor. 10:16 The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the fellowship of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the fellowship of the body of Christ?
- 1 Cor. 10:17 Seeing that there is one bread, we who are many are one Body; for we all partake of the one bread.
- 1 Cor. 11:29 For he who eats and drinks, eats and drinks judgment to himself if he does not discern the body.
1. All the churches on earth are one Body, and within this one Body there is the circulation of

the divine life—the fellowship of the Body—1 John 1:3.

1 John 1:3 That which we have seen and heard we report also to you that you also may have fellowship with us, and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.

2. Fellowship is related to oneness; the circulation of the divine life in the Body brings all the members of the Body into oneness—Eph. 4:3-4; Rom. 16:1-23.

Eph. 4:3 Being diligent to keep the oneness of the Spirit in the uniting bond of peace:

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

Rom. 16:1 I commend to you Phoebe our sister, who is a deaconess of the church which is in Cenchrea,

Rom. 16:2 That you receive her in the Lord in a manner worthy of the saints and assist her in whatever matter she may have need of you; for she herself has also been the patroness of many, of myself as well.

Rom. 16:3 Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus,

Rom. 16:4 Who risked their own necks for my life, to whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles;

Rom. 16:5 And greet the church, which is in their house. Greet Epaenetus, my beloved, who is the firstfruits of Asia unto Christ.

Rom. 16:6 Greet Mary, one who has labored much for you.

Rom. 16:7 Greet Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen and my fellow prisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me.

Rom. 16:8 Greet Ampliatus, my beloved in the Lord.

Rom. 16:9 Greet Urbanus, our fellow worker in Christ, and Stachys, my beloved.

Rom. 16:10 Greet Apelles, approved in Christ. Greet those of the household of Aristobulus.

Rom. 16:11 Greet Herodion, my kinsman. Greet those of the household of Narcissus who are in the Lord.

Rom. 16:12 Greet Tryphaena and Tryphosa, who labor in the Lord. Greet Persis, the beloved sister, one who has labored much in the Lord.

Rom. 16:13 Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord, and his mother as well as mine.

Rom. 16:14 Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, and the brothers with them.

Rom. 16:15 Greet Philologus and Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints with them.

Rom. 16:16 Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ greet you.

Rom. 16:17 Now I exhort you, brothers, to mark those who make divisions and causes of stumbling contrary to the teaching which you have learned, and turn away from them.

Rom. 16:18 For such men do not serve our Lord Christ, but their own stomach, and through smooth words and flattering speech deceive the hearts of the simple.

Rom. 16:19 For the report of your obedience has reached to all; therefore I rejoice over you, but I want you to be wise as to what is good and guileless as to what is evil.

Rom. 16:20 Now the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you.

Rom. 16:21 Timothy, my fellow worker, greets you, as well as Lucius and Jason and Sosipater, my kinsmen.

Rom. 16:22 I, Tertius, who write this epistle, greet you in the Lord.

Rom. 16:23 Gaius, my host and host of the whole church, greets you. Erastus, the city treasurer, greets you, and Quartus the brother.

3. The local churches should fellowship with all the genuine local churches on the whole earth to keep the universal fellowship of the Body of Christ.

4. Although the administration of the church is local (Acts 14:23), the fellowship of the church is universal (2:42); there are churches in many cities, but there is one fellowship in the entire universe.

Acts 14:23 And when they had appointed elders for them in every church and had prayed with fastings, they committed them to the Lord into whom they had believed.

Acts 2:42 And they continued steadfastly in the teaching and the fellowship of the apostles, in the breaking of bread and the prayers.