

Message Seven

The Factor of Blending for the Reality of the Body of Christ

Hymns:

Scripture Reading: Rom. 12:5; 1 Cor. 6:17;
12:24, 31b; 13:1-8a; 10:17; Lev. 2:4; Eph. 3:16-17a; 4:16

- Rom. 12:5 So we who are many are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.
- 1 Cor. 6:17 But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit.
- 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. 12:31 But earnestly desire the greater gifts. And moreover I show to you a most excellent way.
- 1 Cor. 13:1 If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels but do not have love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal.
- 1 Cor. 13:2 And if I have the gift of prophecy and know all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing.
- 1 Cor. 13:3 And if I dole out all my possessions to feed others, and if I deliver up my body that I may boast, but do not have love, I profit nothing.
- 1 Cor. 13:4 Love suffers long. Love is kind; it is not jealous. Love does not brag and is not puffed up;
- 1 Cor. 13:5 It does not behave unbecomingly and does not seek its own things; it is not provoked and does not take account of evil;
- 1 Cor. 13:6 It does not rejoice because of unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth;
- 1 Cor. 13:7 It covers all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.
- 1 Cor. 13:8 Love never falls away. But whether prophecies, they will be rendered useless; or tongues, they will cease; or knowledge, it will be rendered useless.
- 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.
- Lev. 2:4 And when you present an offering of a meal offering baked in the oven, it shall be of fine flour, unleavened cakes mingled with oil or unleavened wafers anointed with oil.
- Eph. 3:16 That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man,
- Eph. 3:17 That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love,
- 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.

I. **The highest peak in God's economy is the reality of the Body of Christ; the reality of the Body of Christ is absolutely organic—Rom. 8:2, 6, 10-11; 12:4-5:**

- Rom. 8:2 For the law of the Spirit of life has freed me in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and of death.
- Rom. 8:6 For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the spirit is life 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.

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.

A. The completing ministry of the apostle Paul is altogether focused on the Body of Christ—in particular, Romans, 1 Corinthians, Ephesians, and Colossians; the Body is the ultimate item of God's continual working, so the Body is the top point of God's entire revelation—Rom. 12:4-5; 1 Cor. 12:12-13, 18-22; Eph. 1:22-23; 2:16; 3:6; 4:4, 12, 15-16; 5:23, 30; Col. 1:18, 24; 2:19; 3:15.

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.

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. 12:18 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.

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. 2:16 And might reconcile both in one Body to God through the cross, having slain the enmity by it.

Eph. 3:6 That in Christ Jesus the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the Body and fellow partakers of the promise through the gospel,

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

Eph. 4:12 For the perfecting of the saints unto the work of the ministry, unto the building up of the Body of Christ,

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. 5:23 For a husband is head of the wife as also Christ is Head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the Body.

Eph. 5:30 Because we are members of His Body.

Col. 1:18 And He is the Head of the Body, the church; He is the beginning, the Firstborn from the dead, that He Himself might have the first place in all things;

Col. 1:24 I now rejoice in my sufferings on your behalf and fill up on my part that which is lacking of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for His Body, which is the church;

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.

- Col. 3:15 And let the peace of Christ arbitrate in your hearts, to which also you were called in one Body; and be thankful.
- B. Romans 12 speaks of the Body from the angle of the organic union; verse 5 says, "We who are many are one Body in Christ":
- Rom. 12:1 I exhort you therefore, brothers, through the compassions of God to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, well pleasing to God, which is your reasonable service.
 - Rom. 12:2 And do not be fashioned according to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of the mind that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and well pleasing and perfect.
 - Rom. 12:3 For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think, but to think so as to be sober-minded, as God has apportioned to each a measure of faith.
 - 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. 12:6 And having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith;
 - Rom. 12:7 Or service, let us be faithful in that service; or he who teaches, in that teaching;
 - Rom. 12:8 Or he who exhorts, in that exhortation; he who gives, in simplicity; he who leads, in diligence; he who shows mercy, in cheerfulness.
 - Rom. 12:9 Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil; cling to what is good.
 - Rom. 12:10 Love one another warmly in brotherly love; take the lead in showing honor one to another.
 - Rom. 12:11 Do not be slothful in zeal, but be burning in spirit, serving the Lord.
 - Rom. 12:12 Rejoice in hope; endure in tribulation; persevere in prayer.
 - Rom. 12:13 Contribute to the needs of the saints; pursue hospitality.
 - Rom. 12:14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.
 - Rom. 12:15 Rejoice with those who rejoice; weep with those who weep.
 - Rom. 12:16 Be of the same mind toward one another, not setting your mind on the high things but going along with the lowly; do not be wise in yourselves.
 - Rom. 12:17 Repay no one evil for evil; take forethought for things honorable in the sight of all men.
 - Rom. 12:18 If possible, as far as it depends on you, live in peace with all men.
 - Rom. 12:19 Do not avenge yourselves, beloved, but give place to the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay, says the Lord."
 - Rom. 12:20 But "if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in doing this you will heap coals of fire upon his head."
 - Rom. 12:21 Do not be conquered by evil, but conquer evil with good.

1. Two words from this verse indicate the organic union—in Christ; "in Christ" is a matter of the organic union—cf. John 3:16; Rom. 6:3-6; 11:17, 19; 16:7-10; 1 Cor. 1:30; 2 Cor. 2:17; 5:17; 12:2; Gal. 3:27.

- John 3:16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that everyone who believes into Him would not perish, but would have eternal life.
- Rom. 6:3 Or are you ignorant that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death?
- 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.
- Rom. 6:5 For if we have grown together with Him in the likeness of His death, indeed we will also be in the likeness of His resurrection,

- Rom. 6:6 Knowing this, that our old man has been crucified with Him in order that the body of sin might be annulled, that we should no longer serve sin as slaves;
- Rom. 11:17 But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them and became a fellow partaker of the root of fatness of the olive tree,
- Rom. 11:19 You will say then, Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in.
- 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.
- 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,
- 2 Cor. 2:17 For we are not like the many, adulterating the word of God for profit; but as out of sincerity, but as out of God, before God we speak in Christ.
- 2 Cor. 5:17 So then if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old things have passed away; behold, they have become new.
- 2 Cor. 12:2 I know a man in Christ, fourteen years ago (whether in the body I do not know, or outside the body I do not know; God knows) such a one was caught away to the third heaven.
- Gal. 3:27 For as many as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

2. We are one Body in Christ, having an organic union with Him; this union makes us one in life with Him and with all the other members of His Body; when we remain in this organic union, we are actually living in the Body of Christ—Rom. 8:16; 1 Cor. 6:17; 2 Tim. 4:22; Rom. 8:4-6.

- Rom. 8:16 The Spirit Himself witnesses with our spirit that we are children of God.
- 1 Cor. 6:17 But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit.
- 2 Tim. 4:22 The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you.
- Rom. 8:4 That the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the spirit.
- Rom. 8:5 For those who are according to the flesh mind the things of the flesh; but those who are according to the spirit, the things of the Spirit.
- Rom. 8:6 For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the spirit is life and peace.

3. The actuality of the Body of Christ is in our remaining in the organic union with Christ; John 15:1-11 reveals that Christ is the true vine and that we are His branches; as the branches of Christ, we must abide in Him, which simply means to remain in our organic union with Christ—vv. 4-5; cf. 8:31; 15:7.

- John 15:1 I am the true vine, and My Father is the husbandman.
- John 15:2 Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes it away; and every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it that it may bear more fruit.
- John 15:3 You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.
- John 15:4 Abide in Me and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me.
- John 15:5 I am the vine; you are the branches. He who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing.
- John 15:6 If one does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is dried up; and they gather them and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.
- John 15:7 If you abide in Me and My words abide in you, ask whatever you will, and it shall be done for you.

- John 15:8 In this is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit and so you will become My disciples.
- John 15:9 As the Father has loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love.
- John 15:10 If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; even as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love.
- John 15:11 These things I have spoken to you that My joy may be in you and that your joy may be made full.
- John 8:31 Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, If you abide in My word, you are truly My disciples;

II. 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—1 Cor. 12:27; Eph. 4:16; Col. 3:15:

- 1 Cor. 12:27 Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually.
- 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. 3:15 And let the peace of Christ arbitrate in your hearts, to which also you were called in one Body; and be thankful.

A. The church takes the Body of Christ as its organic factor; without the Body of Christ, the church is lifeless and is a mere human organization—1 Cor. 1:2; 12:12-13, 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. 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. 12:27 Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually.

B. 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, 4, 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. 16:1 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.

C. Love covers and builds up, so love is the most excellent way for us to be anything and to do anything for the building up of the Body of Christ—1 Cor. 8:1b; 12:31b; 13:1-8a, 13.

- 1 Cor. 8:1 Now concerning things sacrificed to idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up.
- 1 Cor. 12:31 But earnestly desire the greater gifts. And moreover I show to you a most excellent way.
- 1 Cor. 13:1 If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels but do not have love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal.
- 1 Cor. 13:2 And if I have the gift of prophecy and know all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing.

- 1 Cor. 13:3 And if I dole out all my possessions to feed others, and if I deliver up my body that I may boast, but do not have love, I profit nothing.
- 1 Cor. 13:4 Love suffers long. Love is kind; it is not jealous. Love does not brag and is not puffed up;
- 1 Cor. 13:5 It does not behave unbecomingly and does not seek its own things; it is not provoked and does not take account of evil;
- 1 Cor. 13:6 It does not rejoice because of unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth;
- 1 Cor. 13:7 It covers all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.
- 1 Cor. 13:8 Love never falls away. But whether prophecies, they will be rendered useless; or tongues, they will cease; or knowledge, it will be rendered useless.
- 1 Cor. 13:13 Now there abide faith, hope, love, these three; and the greatest of these is love.
- D. The elders should shepherd one another and love one another to be a model of the Body life; the elders need to love one another, their wives need to love one another, and they need to love one another's children—John 21:15-17; 1 Cor. 13:4-8a.
- John 21:15 Then when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these? He said to Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. He said to him, Feed My lambs.
- John 21:16 He said to him again a second time, Simon, son of John, do you love Me? He said to Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. He said to him, Shepherd My sheep.
- John 21:17 He said to him the third time, Simon, son of John, do you love Me? Peter was grieved that He said to him the third time, Do you love Me? And he said to Him, Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You. Jesus said to him, Feed My sheep.
- 1 Cor. 13:4 Love suffers long. Love is kind; it is not jealous. Love does not brag and is not puffed up;
- 1 Cor. 13:5 It does not behave unbecomingly and does not seek its own things; it is not provoked and does not take account of evil;
- 1 Cor. 13:6 It does not rejoice because of unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth;
- 1 Cor. 13:7 It covers all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.
- 1 Cor. 13:8 Love never falls away. But whether prophecies, they will be rendered useless; or tongues, they will cease; or knowledge, it will be rendered useless.
- E. If we would have the reality of the Body of Christ, we must allow Christ to make His home in our hearts; the reality of the Body is the inner experience of the indwelling Christ—Eph. 3:16-17a; 4:16; Col. 1:27; 3:4, 15.
- Eph. 3:16 That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man,
- Eph. 3:17 That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love,
- 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. 1:27 To whom God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory,
- Col. 3:4 When Christ our life is manifested, then you also will be manifested with Him in glory.
- Col. 3:15 And let the peace of Christ arbitrate in your hearts, to which also you were called in one Body; and be thankful.
- F. 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—Eph. 1:22-23; 4:16; 5:27, 30; Rev. 19:7.

- 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. 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. 5:27 That He might present the church to Himself glorious, not having spot or wrinkle or any such things, but that she would be holy and without blemish.
- Eph. 5:30 Because we are members of His Body.
- Rev. 19:7 Let us rejoice and exult, and let us give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.
- G. The Lord needs the overcomers to carry out the economy of God to have the Body of Christ and to destroy His enemy; without the overcomers the Body of Christ cannot be built up, and unless the Body of Christ is built up, Christ cannot come back for His bride—Eph. 1:10; 3:10; Rev. 12:11; 19:7-9.
- Eph. 1:10 Unto the economy of the fullness of the times, to head up all things in Christ, the things in the heavens and the things on the earth, in Him;
- Eph. 3:10 In order that now to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenlies the multifarious wisdom of God might be made known through the church,
- Rev. 12:11 And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they loved not their soul-life even unto death.
- Rev. 19:7 Let us rejoice and exult, and let us give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.
- Rev. 19:8 And it was given to her that she should be clothed in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteousnesses of the saints.
- Rev. 19:9 And he said to me, Write, Blessed are they who are called to the marriage dinner of the Lamb. And he said to me, These are the true words of God.

III. The Lord's recovery is to build up Zion—the overcomers as the reality of the Body of Christ consummating in the New Jerusalem; in the church life we must endeavor to reach today's Zion—Eph. 1:22-23; 4:16; 1 Cor. 1:2; 12:27; Rev. 14:1; 21:2:

- 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. 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 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.
- Rev. 14:1 And I saw, and behold, the Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him a hundred and forty-four thousand, having His name and the name of His Father written on their foreheads.
- Rev. 21:2 And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

- A. As the highlight and beauty of the holy city, Jerusalem, Zion typifies the overcomers as the high peak, the center, the uplifting, the strengthening, the enriching, the beauty, and the

reality of the church—Psa. 48:2, 11-12; 50:2; 20:2; 53:6a; 87:2.

- Psa. 48:2 Beautiful in elevation, / The joy of the whole earth, / Is Mount Zion, the sides of the north, / The city of the great King.
Psa. 48:11 Let Mount Zion rejoice; / Let the daughters of Judah exult / Because of Your judgments.
Psa. 48:12 Walk about Zion, and go around her; / Count her towers.
Psa. 50:2 Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, / God shines forth.
Psa. 20:2 May He send you help from the sanctuary / And support you from Zion.
Psa. 53:6 Oh that the salvation of Israel might come forth from Zion! / When God turns the captivity of His people, / Jacob will exult, Israel will rejoice.
Psa. 87:2 Jehovah loves the gates of Zion / More than all the dwellings of Jacob.

- B. Jerusalem typifies the whole body of the church, while Zion typifies the overcomers of the church; every time the Old Testament speaks of the relationship between Zion and Jerusalem, it shows us that the characteristics, the life, the blessing, and the establishment of Jerusalem come from Zion—1 Kings 8:1; Psa. 51:18; 102:21; 128:5; 135:21; Isa. 41:27; Joel 3:17.

- 1 Kings 8:1 Then Solomon assembled the elders of Israel and all the heads of the tribes, the leaders of the fathers' houses of the children of Israel, before King Solomon in Jerusalem in order to bring up the Ark of the Covenant of Jehovah from the city of David, which is Zion.
Psa. 51:18 Do good in Your good pleasure unto Zion; / Build the walls of Jerusalem.
Psa. 102:21 That the name of Jehovah may be declared in Zion, / And His praise, in Jerusalem,
Psa. 128:5 Jehovah bless you from Zion; / And may you see the prosperity of Jerusalem / All the days of your life.
Psa. 135:21 Blessed be Jehovah from Zion, / Who dwells in Jerusalem. / Hallelujah.
Isa. 41:27 Formerly I said to Zion, Here, here they are; / And to Jerusalem, I will give someone who preaches glad tidings.
Joel. 3:17 Thus you will know that I am Jehovah your God, / Dwelling in Zion, My holy mountain. / And Jerusalem will be holy, / And strangers will pass through her no longer.

- C. The New Jerusalem is the totality of the overcomers; a remnant of the Lord's believers, the earlier overcomers, will be the bride of Christ for one thousand years (Rev. 19:7-9; 20:4-6); then they will join the rest of the Lord's believers, the later overcomers, to be the wife of Christ for eternity (21:2-3, 7):

- Rev. 19:7 Let us rejoice and exult, and let us give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.
Rev. 19:8 And it was given to her that she should be clothed in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteousnesses of the saints.
Rev. 19:9 And he said to me, Write, Blessed are they who are called to the marriage dinner of the Lamb. And he said to me, These are the true words of God.
Rev. 20:4 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given to them. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of the testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and of those who had not worshipped the beast nor his image, and had not received the mark on their forehead and on their hand; and they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.
Rev. 20:5 The rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were completed. This is the first resurrection.
Rev. 20:6 Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no authority, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years.
Rev. 21:2 And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

Rev. 21:3 And I heard a loud voice out of the throne, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will tabernacle with them, and they will be His peoples, and God Himself will be with them and be their God.

Rev. 21:7 He who overcomes will inherit these things, and I will be God to him, and he will be a son to Me.

1. The earlier overcomers, as the reality of Zion within Jerusalem, the reality of the Body of Christ within the church, have highways to Zion in their heart; they take the way of the church internally by being incorporated into God as their dwelling place through the crucified Christ, typified by the bronze altar as their nest for their refuge, and through the resurrected Christ in ascension, typified by the incense altar as their home for their rest—Psa. 48:2; 84:3-5; cf. Prov. 27:8.

Psa. 48:2 Beautiful in elevation, / The joy of the whole earth, / Is Mount Zion, the sides of the north, / The city of the great King.

Psa. 84:3 At Your two altars even the sparrow has found a home; / And the swallow, a nest for herself, / Where she may lay her young, / O Jehovah of hosts, my King and my God.

Psa. 84:4 Blessed are those who dwell in Your house; / They will yet be praising You. Selah.

Psa. 84:5 Blessed is the man whose strength is in You, / In whose heart are the highways to Zion.

Prov. 27:8 Like a bird that wanders from her nest, / So is a man who wanders from his place.

2. To overcome means that we love the Lord more than our self, more than our soul-life; an overcomer knows and loves only Christ for the reality of the Body of Christ—Phil. 3:10; 4:12; Rev. 2:4-5, 7; 12:11.

Phil. 3:10 To know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death,

Phil. 4:12 I know also how to be abased, and I know how to abound; in everything and in all things I have learned the secret both to be filled and to hunger, both to abound and to lack.

Rev. 2:4 But I have one thing against you, that you have left your first love.

Rev. 2:5 Remember therefore where you have fallen from and repent and do the first works; but if not, I am coming to you and will remove your lampstand out of its place, unless you repent.

Rev. 2:7 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, to him I will give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God.

Rev. 12:11 And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they loved not their soul-life even unto death.

3. The Lord is waiting for a group of overcomers to live out the reality of the Body of Christ in resurrection to become the bride of Christ to bring Him back and to usher in His kingdom age; for this we need to pray, “Lord, may I receive Your mercy and grace to be one of Your overcomers.”

IV. God has blended the Body together (1 Cor. 12:24); the word blended means “adjusted,” “harmonized,” “tempered,” and “mingled,” implying the losing of distinctions:

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,

- A. In order to be blended for the reality of the Body of Christ, we have to go through the cross and be by the Spirit to dispense Christ to others for the building up of the Body of Christ.
- B. Blending means that we should always stop in order to fellowship with others; we should not do anything without fellowshipping with the other saints who are coordinating with us, because fellowship adjusts us, harmonizes us, tempers us, and mingles us—cf. Ezek. 1:12 and footnote 1.

Ezek. 1:12 And each went ¹straight forward; wherever the Spirit was to go, they went; they did not turn as they went.

Footnote 1 Lit., in the direction of their faces. The move of the living creatures is not individual but corporate. They move as one entity in coordination. Each of the living creatures faces one direction. As they face these four directions, two of their wings spread out and touch the adjacent creatures' wings, forming a square. When the living creatures move, they do not need to turn; one moves straight forward while the opposite creature moves backward and the other two move sideways (v. 9). This is a beautiful picture of the coordination in the church as the Body of Christ, in which each member has his particular position and function, or ministry (Rom. 12:4-8; 1 Cor. 12:14-30; Eph. 4:7-16). When one member functions, he moves “straight forward” to fulfill his function, and the other members accommodate him by moving in the same direction, some moving “backward” and others moving “sideways.”

According to the vision of the four living creatures, the coordination of the believers as members of the Body of Christ results in the corporate expression of God in Christ, in the move of God on the earth, and in the administration of God on the throne, thus affording God a way to manifest His glory and accomplish His eternal purpose and plan. In order to participate in such a coordination, we need to have the spiritual experiences and the practical living symbolized by the details in vv. 4-12.

- C. A group of responsible brothers may meet together often without being blended; to be blended means that we are touched by others and that we are touching others by going through the cross, doing things by the Spirit, and doing everything to dispense Christ for His Body's sake.
- D. Such a blending is not social but the blending of the very Christ whom the individual members, the district churches, the co-workers, and the elders enjoy, experience, and partake of—cf. 1 Cor. 1:9.

1 Cor. 1:9 God is faithful, through whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

- E. We need to follow in the apostle's footsteps to bring all the saints into the blending life of the entire Body of Christ; the apostle brought us into the blending life of the entire Body of Christ by recommendations and greetings in order that the God of peace may crush Satan under our feet, and we may enjoy the rich grace of Christ—Rom. 16:1-16, 21-23, 20:

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. 16:21 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.
- Rom. 16:20 Now the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you.

1. The purpose of the blending is to usher us all into the reality of the Body of Christ; we need to be in the local churches as the procedure to be brought into the reality of the Body of Christ as the goal.
2. The highest peak of the Lord's recovery that can really, practically, and actually carry out God's economy is for God to produce not many local churches in a physical way but an organic Body to be His organism.
3. Paul's thought of the church being one bread (1 Cor. 10:17) was not his own invention; rather, it was taken from the Old Testament with the meal offering (Lev. 2:4); every part of the flour of the meal offering was mingled with the oil—that is the blending.

- 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.
- Lev. 2:4 And when you present an offering of a meal offering baked in the oven, it shall be of fine flour, unleavened cakes mingled with oil or unleavened wafers anointed with oil.
4. Hardly anyone speaks about blending because this is not only very high and deep but also very mysterious; it is not a physical matter; the significance of our blending is the reality of the Body of Christ.
 5. The blending is for the building up of the universal Body of Christ (Eph. 1:23) to consummate the New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:2) as the final goal of God's economy according to His good pleasure (Eph. 3:8-10; 1:9-10).

- Eph. 1:23 Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.
- Rev. 21:2 And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.
- Eph. 3:8 To me, less than the least of all saints, was this grace given to announce to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ as the gospel
- Eph. 3:9 And to enlighten all that they may see what the economy of the mystery is, which throughout the ages has been hidden in God, who created all things,

- Eph. 3:10 In order that now to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenlies the multifarious wisdom of God might be made known through the church,
- Eph. 1:9 Making known to us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Himself,
- Eph. 1:10 Unto the economy of the fullness of the times, to head up all things in Christ, the things in the heavens and the things on the earth, in Him;

V. The desire of God's heart is that the reality in Jesus, the God-man living of Jesus as recorded in the four Gospels, would be duplicated in the many members of Christ's Body by the Spirit of reality to become the reality of the Body of Christ, the highest peak in God's economy—Eph. 4:20-24, 3-4:

- Eph. 4:20 But you did not so learn Christ,
- Eph. 4:21 If indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him as the reality is in Jesus,
- Eph. 4:22 That you put off, as regards your former manner of life, the old man, which is being corrupted according to the lusts of the deceit,
- Eph. 4:23 And that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind
- Eph. 4:24 And put on the new man, which was created according to God in righteousness and holiness of the reality.
- 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;
- A. The reality of the Body of Christ is the Spirit of reality, who is the Spirit of Jesus, mingled with our spirit; the Spirit of Jesus includes the reality in Jesus, the God-man living of Jesus—John 16:13; Acts 16:7; Rom. 8:16; 1 Cor. 6:17; Phil. 1:19-21a.
 - John 16:13 But when He, the Spirit of reality, comes, He will guide you into all the reality; for He will not speak from Himself, but what He hears He will speak; and He will declare to you the things that are coming.
 - Acts 16:7 And when they had come to Mysia, they tried to go into Bithynia, yet the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them.
 - Rom. 8:16 The Spirit Himself witnesses with our spirit that we are children of God.
 - 1 Cor. 6:17 But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit.
 - Phil. 1:19 For I know that for me this will turn out to salvation through your petition and the bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,
 - Phil. 1:20 According to my earnest expectation and hope that in nothing I will be put to shame, but with all boldness, as always, even now Christ will be magnified in my body, whether through life or through death.
 - Phil. 1:21 For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.
- B. When we live in the mingled spirit, we are learning Christ according to the reality in Jesus by the Spirit of reality according to His model in the four Gospels so that His biography becomes our history; the living of the Body of Christ as the new man should be exactly the same as the living of Jesus revealed in the four Gospels—Eph. 1:17; 2:22; 3:5, 16; 4:23; 5:18; 6:18; Gal. 6:17-18; Rom. 1:1, 9; Phil. 2:5.
 - Eph. 1:17 That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the full knowledge of Him,
 - Eph. 2:22 In whom you also are being built together into a dwelling place of God in spirit.
 - Eph. 3:5 Which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in spirit,
 - Eph. 3:16 That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man,
 - Eph. 4:23 And that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind
 - Eph. 5:18 And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissoluteness, but be filled in spirit,

- Eph. 6:18 By means of all prayer and petition, praying at every time in spirit and watching unto this in all perseverance and petition concerning all the saints,
Gal. 6:17 Henceforth let no one trouble me, for I bear in my body the brands of Jesus.
Gal. 6:18 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers. Amen.
Rom. 1:1 Paul, a slave of Christ Jesus, a called apostle, separated unto the gospel of God,
Rom. 1:9 For God is my witness, whom I serve in my spirit in the gospel of His Son, how unceasingly I make mention of you always in my prayers,
Phil. 2:5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus,
- C. The reality of the Body of Christ is the corporate living by the perfected God-men, who are genuine men but are not living by their life but by the life of the processed God, whose attributes have been expressed through their virtues—4:5-9.
- Phil. 4:5 Let your forbearance be known to all men. The Lord is near.
Phil. 4:6 In nothing be anxious, but in everything, by prayer and petition with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;
Phil. 4:7 And the peace of God, which surpasses every man's understanding, will guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus.
Phil. 4:8 Finally, brothers, what things are true, what things are dignified, what things are righteous, what things are pure, what things are lovely, what things are well spoken of, if there is any virtue and if any praise, take account of these things.
Phil. 4:9 The things which you have also learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things; and the God of peace will be with you.
- D. The reality of the Body of Christ is the mingling living in the eternal union of the regenerated, transformed, and glorified tripartite God-men with the Triune God in the resurrection of Christ—Lev. 2:4-5; Psa. 92:10; 1 Cor. 12:12; 10:17:
- Lev. 2:4 And when you present an offering of a meal offering baked in the oven, it shall be of fine flour, unleavened cakes mingled with oil or unleavened wafers anointed with oil.
Lev. 2:5 And if your offering is a meal offering baked on a flat plate, it shall be of fine flour mingled with oil, unleavened.
Psa. 92:10 But You have exalted my horn like that of a wild ox; / I am anointed with fresh oil.
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. 10:17 Seeing that there is one bread, we who are many are one Body; for we all partake of the one bread.
1. We use the word mingling because this living is still going on.
 2. Such a mingling living is in the resurrection of Christ, and the reality of this resurrection is the Spirit; this resurrection imparts the consummated God and releases the death-overcoming life into the believers.
- E. This corporate and mingling living by the perfected God-men consummates ultimately in the New Jerusalem in the new heaven and new earth as God's increase and expression for eternity—Rev. 21:2-3, 9b-11, 22.
- Rev. 21:2 And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.
Rev. 21:3 And I heard a loud voice out of the throne, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will tabernacle with them, and they will be His peoples, and God Himself will be with them and be their God.
Rev. 21:9 And one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and spoke with me, saying, Come here; I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.

- Rev. 21:10 And he carried me away in spirit onto a great and high mountain and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,
- Rev. 21:11 Having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, as clear as crystal.
- Rev. 21:22 And I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.