

Week Four

The Organic Body of Christ Building Itself Up in Love

Hymns: 914

Scripture Reading: Eph. 4:8-16

§ Day 1

- I. The intrinsic building up of the organic Body of Christ is by the giving of the gifted persons (such as apostles, prophets, evangelists, and shepherds and teachers), who are constituted in the dispensing of the Divine Trinity, by Christ as the Head in His ascension (including His resurrection), to His Body—Eph. 4:8-12; Acts 2:24, 27; 1:9:**
- A. Ephesians 4:8 says, “Having ascended to the height, He led captive those taken captive and gave gifts to men”:**
1. Height in the quotation from Psalm 68:18 refers to Mount Zion (vv. 15-16), symbolizing the third heaven, where God dwells (1 Kings 8:30).
 2. Psalm 68 implies that it was in the Ark that God ascended to Mount Zion after the Ark had won the victory (Num. 10:35); this portrays how Christ won the victory and ascended triumphantly to the heavens.
 3. Through His universal traffic and in His ascension, Christ led as captives those who had been taken captive by Satan and made them gifts to His Body—Eph. 4:8-11:

§ Day 2

- a. The redeemed saints had been taken captive by Satan before they were saved by Christ's death and resurrection—cf. Luke 4:18.
- b. In His ascension Christ led them captive; that is, He rescued them from Satan's captivity and took them to Himself—Psa. 68:18.
- c. In His ascension Christ led them to the heavens as His captives in His train of vanquished foes and made them gifts to His Body.

d. Now God is celebrating Christ's triumph over them, His vanquished foes, and leading them as His captives in a triumphal procession in His move for His ministry to build up His Body—2 Cor. 2:14.

- B. The more Christ ascends and descends within us, capturing and vanquishing us, the more He fills us with Himself to constitute us as gifts to His Body—cf. Eph. 4:9-10.**

§ Day 3

II. The intrinsic building up of the organic Body of Christ is by the gifted persons' perfecting of the saints in the divine dispensing so that all the saints may be able to do the work of the New Testament ministry, that is, to build up the Body of Christ—vv. 11-12:

- A. The Greek word for perfecting in verse 12 also means “completing,” “equipping,” “supplying the functions”; the way to be perfected is to grow in life and to become skillful in function.**
- B. The gifted persons perfect the saints by nourishing them according to the tree of life with the life supply for their growth in life—Gen. 2:9; 1 Cor. 3:2, 6.**
- C. The gifted persons perfect the saints (according to their measure) to do what they do for the direct building up of the Body of Christ—Matt. 16:18; Eph. 4:11-12; cf. 1 Tim. 1:16; 4:12:**
1. The apostles perfect the saints by visiting the churches (Acts 15:36, 40-41; 20:20, 31), by writing epistles to the churches (Col. 4:16; 1 Cor. 1:2), and by assigning their co-workers to stay in certain places to perfect the saints (1 Tim. 1:3-4; 3:15; Titus 1:5).
 2. The prophets perfect the saints by teaching them to speak the Lord into people, by speaking in the meetings to set up a model, and by helping the saints to live a prophesying life by being revived every morning and overcoming every day—Acts 13:1; 1 Cor. 14:31; Prov. 4:18.
 3. The evangelists perfect the saints by stirring them up to be burning in the gospel-preaching spirit, by teaching them with gospel truths, by training them to preach the gospel, by helping the saints to be equipped with the power of the economical Spirit, and by setting an example of loving the

sinners and praying for them—2 Tim. 4:5.

4. The shepherd-teachers perfect the saints by shepherding—feeding and nourishing the young saints and teaching the growing saints—Acts 11:25-26; 13:1.
- D. The result of this perfecting is that we will all arrive at the oneness of the faith and of the full knowledge of the Son of God, at a full-grown man, and at the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ—Eph. 4:13; cf. John 17:23.**
- E. This perfecting will cause us to be no longer little children tossed by waves and carried about by every wind of teaching in the sleight of men, in craftiness with a view to a satanic system of error—Eph. 4:14.**

§ Day 4

- F. Shepherding and teaching are the essential functions among the gifted persons given by Christ as the ascended Head to the churches for the building up of His Body (John 21:15-17; Matt. 28:20; 1 Cor. 4:17b; 7:17b; 2 Cor. 11:28-29); in addition, Christ as the Head of the church also charged the apostles to appoint elders in all the local churches to carry out His shepherding of His flock (1 Tim. 3:1-7; 5:17a; 1 Pet. 5:2a) and to be apt to teach in order to strengthen the shepherding and carry out its goal (1 Tim. 3:2b; 5:17b).**

§ Day 5

III. The intrinsic building up of the organic Body of Christ is by the direct building by all the members—into the Head and out from the Head:

- A. In order to be built up, we must hold to truth in love, growing up into the Head, Christ, in all things—Eph. 4:15:**
1. We must hold to the divine truth of God's eternal economy, of the all-inclusive Christ, and of the church as the Body of Christ.
 2. We must be subject to the Head, Christ (1 Cor. 11:3; Eph. 5:23; 1:22, 10),

and allow His divine life to expand and increase into all our inward parts (Rom. 8:10, 6, 11; 2 Cor. 5:4).

3. The word Head in Ephesians 4:15 indicates that our growth in Christ should be a growth as members in the Body under the Head; our growth is not only in Christ but also in His Body.

B. Out from the Head, in the divine dispensing, all the Body is joined closely together through every joint of the rich supply and knit together, interwoven, through the operation in the measure of each one part—v. 16:

1. When we grow into the Head, we can produce out from the Head many functions for the building up of His Body.
2. Every member of the Body of Christ has a measure through the growth in life and can function for the growth and building up of the Body of Christ.

§ Day 6

C. The joints supplying and the parts functioning cause the growth of the Body unto the building up of the Body itself in the divine love—v. 16:

1. All the Body causes the growth of the Body—cf. 1 Cor. 14:4b, 31.
2. The growth of the Body of Christ is the increase of Christ in the church, which results in the building up of the Body by the Body itself—Eph. 3:17a:
 - a. When Christ enters into the saints and lives within them, the Christ within the saints becomes the church—Col. 3:10-11.
 - b. The Body of Christ grows by the growth of Christ within us and is built up this way—1:18; 2:19.
3. The love in which the Body builds itself up is the love that is the very element, the inner substance, of God; it is the love of God in Christ, which becomes the love of Christ in us, by which we love Christ and the fellow members of His Body—1 John 4:7-8, 11, 16, 19; Rom. 5:5; 8:39:
 - a. It is in the condition and atmosphere of such a divine love that we are saturated with God to be holy and without blemish before Him—Eph. 1:4.
 - b. It is in such a divine love, realized and experienced by us in a practical way, that we are rooted for growth and grounded for building—3:17.
 - c. It is in such a divine love that we bear one another for the oneness of the

Body—4:2-4.

- d. It is in such a divine love that we hold to truth, that is, to Christ with His Body—v. 15.
- e. It is in such a divine love that we need to walk—to live, act, and have our being—as the beloved children of God, who are God-men, born of God, possessing the life and nature of God, and belonging to the species of God, to be imitators of God—5:1-2.

D. “The direct building of the organic Body of Christ is by the Body itself. The Body is built directly by all the members of Christ functioning, each in his own measure, mainly in prophesying—speaking for the Lord...This direct building by all the members of Christ takes place through the perfecting work of all the gifted persons under the bountiful supply of the divine element of the ascended Christ in His ascension. We need to practice [this] so that we can see the reality of such an organic building on this earth” (The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1988, vol. 4, “Further Light concerning the Building Up of the Body of Christ,” pp. 388-389).

DAY 1

Morning Nourishment

Psa. 68:18 You have ascended on high; You have led captive those taken captive; You have received gifts among men, even the rebellious ones also, that Jehovah God may dwell among them.

Num. 10:35 And when the Ark set out, Moses said, Rise up, O Jehovah, and let Your enemies be scattered; and let those who hate You flee before You.

In Ephesians 4:8-10 we see that Christ is the One who descended into the lower parts of the earth, ascended far above all the heavens to fill all things, and led captive those taken captive. Verse 8 says, “The Scripture says, ‘Having ascended to the height, He led captive those taken captive and gave gifts to men.’” Height in the quotation from Psalm 68:18 refers to Mount Zion (vv. 15-16), which symbolizes the third heaven, where God dwells (1 Kings 8:30). Psalm 68 implies that it was in the Ark that God ascended to Mount Zion after the Ark had won the victory. Verse 1 of Psalm 68 is taken from Numbers 10:35. This indicates that the background of Psalm 68 is God’s move in the tabernacle with the Ark as its center. Wherever the Ark, a type of Christ, went, the victory was won. Eventually, this Ark ascended triumphantly to the top of Mount Zion. This portrays how Christ won the victory and ascended triumphantly to the heavens. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, p. 3412)

Today's Reading

Christ has traveled from the heavens to the earth, from the earth to Hades, from Hades back to earth, and from the earth to the third heaven. It is by this universal traffic that the gifts have been given by Christ to the Body.

Consider the apostle Paul as an example. How could a sinful, devilish persecutor of the church such as Saul of Tarsus become a gift to the Body of

Christ? Only by the traveling of Christ throughout the universe. Christ traveled from the heavens to the earth. He was born in a manger in Bethlehem, and He lived for about thirty years in the little town of Nazareth. After He was crucified on the cross, He went down into Hades and took a tour of that region for three days. Then He came out of Hades on the day of His resurrection. Between His resurrection and ascension, He appeared to His disciples over a period of forty days. At the end of those forty days, He ascended into the heavens. If we had Ephesians 4 without Psalm 68, we probably would not realize that when Christ ascended to the heavens, He led a train of captives. He entered into the heavens as a conqueror with a train of captives. He presented these captives to His Father, who in turn gave them back to Him as gifts. Then Christ gave all these captives as gifts to men. One of these gifts was Saul of Tarsus. This is the way Christ gave gifts to men.

By His universal traveling, Christ not only gathered up many sinners, but He also defeated Satan, the one who had captured them. At one time, we all were captives, those who had been captured by Satan, sin, and death. By traveling from heaven to earth, from earth to Hades, from Hades back to earth, and from earth back to heaven, on the one hand, Christ gained all of us and, on the other hand, He conquered Satan, who had usurped us and held us under his power of death. Having been released from Satan, sin, and death, we are now Christ's captives. All the angels know that when Christ ascended to the third heaven, He was leading a train of captives and that these captives were presented to the Father. What a victorious celebration this procession must have been!

As those who have been captured by Him, we have no way to escape. Although we have never seen the Lord Jesus, we have no choice but to believe in Him because we have been captured by Him. Now that we are in His train, we cannot get away from Him. Not only have we been captured by Christ, but He has also presented us to the Father. After beholding us with great appreciation, the Father returned us to the Son as gifts. In this way we all were made gifts to the Body through Christ's universal traveling. (Life-study of Ephesians, pp. 324-326)

Further Reading: Life-study of Ephesians, msg. 38, 41

DAY 2

Morning Nourishment

Eph. 4:8-10 Therefore the Scripture says, “Having ascended to the height, He led captive those taken captive and gave gifts to men.” (Now this, “He ascended,” what is it except that He also descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended, He is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens that He might fill all things.)

Those in Ephesians 4:8 refers to the redeemed saints, who were taken captive by Satan before being saved by Christ’s death and resurrection. In His ascension Christ led them captive; that is, He rescued them from Satan’s captivity and took them to Himself. This indicates that He conquered and overcame Satan, who had captured them by sin and death.

The Amplified New Testament renders “He led captive those taken captive” as “He led a train of vanquished foes.” Vanquished foes may refer to Satan, to his angels, and to us the sinners, again indicating Christ’s victory over Satan, sin, and death... Now Christ is celebrating His triumph over His vanquished foes and leading them as His captives in a triumphal procession in His move for His ministry to build up His Body. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, pp. 3412-3413)

Today’s Reading

Gifts in Ephesians 4:8 does not refer to the abilities or capacities for various services but to the gifted persons in verse 11—apostles, prophets, evangelists, and shepherds and teachers. After conquering Satan and death and rescuing the sinners from Satan and death through His death and resurrection, Christ in His ascension made the rescued sinners themselves such gifts by means of His resurrection life and gave them to His Body for its building up.

When Christ ascended up on high, to the third heaven, that was not the

end of His traveling. After He ascended, He descended into our spirit. Therefore, Christ is the One who descends, ascends, travels, and comes to us in gracious visitations. Today Christ is still traveling; that is, He is still ascending and descending. However, now His traveling takes place mainly within us. In our experience we may be up or down. When we are down, Christ comes down to where we are and brings us up to God. Many times during the course of a day we may be brought by Christ into the heavens. From our experience we can testify that within us Christ descends and ascends; He goes up and down... It is difficult to say where Christ is. Is He in heaven or on earth? If we say that He is on earth, we may have the sense that He is in heaven. But if we say that He is in heaven, we may soon realize that He is on earth. Actually, Christ is everywhere. According to verses 9 and 10, He descended and ascended in order to fill all things. Do you think that Christ will fill all things in the universe without also filling you? Through His descending and ascending, Christ will fill us with Himself.

It is by His descending and ascending that Christ constitutes us gifts to the Body. The more He descends and ascends within us, the more we become gifts... As Christ descends and ascends within [the believers], He captures them, vanquishes them, and constitutes them into gifts to His Body. As a result of Christ's traveling, they become useful gifts.

In order for us to function as a gift to the Body, we must be conquered and subdued by Christ. It is not until we become willing to be captured by Christ that He has the ground and standing to make us gifts to the Body. We must pray to the Lord from the depth of our being, "I surrender to You. I am defeated by You. I am captured by You." We all need to be thoroughly defeated, captured, gained, and taken over by Christ. When we are willing to be subdued and captured by Christ, we will give Christ the ground to establish us as gifts to His Body. The more Christ ascends and descends within us, capturing and vanquishing us, the more He fills us with Himself to constitute us as gifts to His Body. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, pp. 3413-3414, 3416-3417)

Further Reading: The Conclusion of the New Testament, msg. 340

DAY 3

Morning Nourishment

Eph. 4:11-12 And He Himself gave some as apostles and some as prophets and some as evangelists and some as shepherds and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints unto the work of the ministry, unto the building up of the Body of Christ.

Ephesians 4:12 tells us that the gifted ones were given to the Body...The many gifted persons in the preceding verse have only one ministry, that is, to minister Christ for the building up of the Body of Christ, the church. This is the unique ministry in the New Testament economy (2 Cor. 4:1; 1 Tim. 1:12). According to the grammatical construction, the phrase unto the building up of the Body of Christ is in apposition to the phrase unto the work of the ministry. This indicates that both phrases refer to the same thing; hence, the work of the ministry is the building up of the Body. The apostles, prophets, evangelists, and shepherds and teachers perfect the saints unto the work of the ministry...The perfecting of the saints is for the purpose of building up the Body of Christ. Whatever the gifted persons in Ephesians 4:11 do as the work of the ministry must be for the building up of the Body of Christ. However, this building up is not accomplished directly by the gifted ones but by the saints who have been perfected by the gifted ones.

The unique work of building up the Body of Christ is the responsibility not mainly of the gifted ones but of all the saints. Both the gifted ones, including the leading apostles, and all the believers, including even the smallest member, work together to build up the Body. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, pp. 3420-3421)

Today's Reading

The gifted persons perfect the saints in the divine dispensing in order that all the saints may be able to do the work of the New Testament ministry, that is, to build up the Body of Christ. The gifted persons perfect

the saints by nourishing them according to the tree of life with the life supply for their growth in life (Gen. 2:9; 1 Cor. 3:2, 6). The gifted persons perfect the saints to do what they do for the direct building up of the Body of Christ. The apostles perfect the saints by visiting the churches (Acts 15:36, 40-41; 20:20, 31), by writing epistles to the churches (Col. 4:16; 1 Cor. 1:2), and by assigning their co-workers to stay in certain places to perfect the saints (1 Tim. 1:3-4; 3:15; Titus 1:5). The prophets perfect the saints by teaching them to speak the Lord into people, by speaking in the meetings to set up a model, and by helping the saints to live a prophesying life by being revived every morning and overcoming every day (Acts 13:1; 1 Cor. 14:31; Prov. 4:18). The evangelists perfect the saints by stirring them up to be burning in the gospel-preaching spirit, by teaching them with gospel truths, by training them to preach the gospel, by helping the saints to be equipped with the power of the economical Spirit, and by setting an example of loving the sinners and praying for them (2 Tim. 4:5). The shepherd-teachers perfect the saints by shepherding—feeding and nourishing the young saints and teaching the growing saints (Acts 11:25-26; 13:1). The result of this perfecting is that we will all arrive at the oneness of the faith and of the full knowledge of the Son of God, at a full-grown man, and at the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ (Eph. 4:13; cf. John 17:23). This perfecting will cause us to be no longer little children tossed by waves and carried about by every wind of teaching in the sleight of men, in craftiness with a view to a satanic system of error (Eph. 4:14).

The way to be perfected is to grow in life and to become skillful in function. The Greek word rendered “perfecting” in verse 12 also means “completing, equipping, and furnishing.” To perfect a saint is to complete him, to equip him, and to furnish him. Only by growing in life can we be completed. Not until we become mature will we be completed...The saints need to be fed so that they may grow in the divine life, and they need to be trained so that they may function with the proper skill. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, pp. 3421-3422)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1988, vol. 4, “The Perfecting of the Saints and the Building Up of the Body of Christ,” chs. 1-3

DAY 4

Morning Nourishment

1 Pet. 5:2-3 Shepherd the flock of God among you, overseeing...willingly, according to God;...eagerly;...by becoming patterns of the flock.

1 Tim. 3:1-2 ...If anyone aspires to the overseership, he desires a good work. The overseer then must be without reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, of a sober mind, orderly, hospitable, apt to teach.

All the saints should be building members...First, the apostles, prophets, evangelists, and shepherds and teachers perfect the saints. This means that they build up the saints. Then the perfected saints become the building members. The expression every joint [in Ephesians 4:16] refers to the specially gifted persons, such as those mentioned in verse 11, and the rich supply must be the particular supply, the supply of Christ. Further, the expression 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. The growth of the Body is the increase of Christ in the church, which results in the building up of the Body itself in love. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, pp. 3422-3423)

Today's Reading

Shepherding and teaching are the essential functions in the gifts (among the gifted persons) given by Christ the ascended Head to the churches for the building up of His Body. Among the four kinds of gifted persons, the ministry of the first three, that is, of the apostles, prophets, and evangelists, depends upon shepherding. This is confirmed by the Lord's charge to Peter in John 21:15-17...Without shepherding, the apostles, prophets, and evangelists cannot function. John 21:15 says, "Jesus said to

Simon Peter, Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these?"... Peter said, "Lord, You know," because he had denied the Lord three times... In restoring Peter's love toward Him, the Lord charged him to shepherd and feed His sheep.

Peter speaks of Christ being the Shepherd and Overseer of our soul, our inner being and real person (1 Pet. 2:25). Then in 5:1-2 he tells the elders that their obligation is to shepherd God's flock according to God. According to God means that we must live God...We have God in our understanding, in our theology, and in our teaching, but we may not live God when we are shepherding people. When we are one with God, we become God. Then we have God and are God in our shepherding of others.

In addition to the shepherding by the main function of the gifted persons, Christ as the Head of the church also charged the apostles to appoint elders (overseers) in all the local churches to carry out His shepherding of His flock (1 Tim. 3:1-7; 5:17a). The Head of the church gave many gifted persons to function in shepherding for the building up of His Body, but the Body is manifested in the local churches. The Body is universal and abstract, but the churches are located and substantial... The local shepherds are more practical. Christ as the Head of the church charged the apostles, the universal shepherds, to appoint some local elders to take care of the located churches.

The obligation of the elders in the churches is to shepherd (1 Pet. 5:2a), as Christ did and as the gifted persons do. The elders are also obligated to teach to strengthen the shepherding and carry out its goal (1 Tim. 3:2b; 5:17b) according to what Christ taught in the four Gospels and what the gifted persons taught in the Epistles. First Timothy 3:2 says that the elders must be apt to teach. This means that teaching is their habit. Some elders have a quiet disposition. These ones especially must deny themselves to be apt to teach, and to be apt to teach is to be apt to talk. This is to talk not about vain things but about the truths of God's economy. (CWWL, 1994-1997, vol. 5, "The Vital Groups," pp. 113-114, 116-117)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1994-1997, vol. 5, "The Vital Groups," ch. 7

DAY 5

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.

“Holding to truth” [in Ephesians 4:15] is in contrast to the sleight of men and the craftiness in verse 14. To be carried about by every wind of teaching in the sleight of men and to be led into a system of error is to fail to hold to truth in love. Truth here refers to things that are true. The first item of these is God’s New Testament economy, which is God’s eternal plan. God has an eternal plan in the universe, which is His economy. It is to dispense Himself in Christ into His chosen people that He may have a corporate expression. The second item is the all-inclusive Christ. The third item is the church as the Body of Christ for expressing Him. These three things are the true things. We should hold to these true things in love that we may grow up into Christ. All teachings and speakings that separate and isolate us from these three things should be rejected. (CWWL, 1988, vol. 4, “The Perfecting of the Saints and the Building Up of the Body of Christ,” p. 97)

Today’s Reading

When we hold to truth in the love of God, we will grow up into Him in all things, who is the Head, Christ (Eph. 4:15). This shows that our growth in life with Christ should be the growth of the members in the Body under the Head. In everything big or small, such as the way we dress, the way we comb our hair, the way we shop, and the way we speak, we should take Christ as the Head, submitting under His headship. In this way we will grow

into Him and will allow Him to occupy all our inward parts, that is, our mind, emotion, and will. In this way He will gradually increase and grow within us.

When we allow Him to be the Head in everything and when we grow up into Him in all things, we, being supplied with the riches of His life, will receive something from Him to transfuse into other members of the Body. Our growth in life is a growth into Him, but our function in the Body of Christ is out from the Head. First, we grow into the Head; then we have something out from the Head for the building up of His Body. (CWWL, 1988, vol. 4, "The Perfecting of the Saints and the Building Up of the Body of Christ," pp. 97-98)

All of us members have to hold to truth in love that we may grow up into the Head, Christ, in all things (Eph. 4:15). Through the love of Christ within us, we love Christ and the members of His Body. In this love we hold to the reality, which is to hold to Christ with His Body. In this way we will have Christ increase in us in all things, and we will grow into the Head, Christ. The word Head here indicates that our growth in Christ should be a growth as members in the Body under the Head. Hence, our growth is not only in Christ but also in His Body.

When we grow into the Head in this way, we can produce out from the Head many functions for the building up of His Body. Verse 16 tells us that out from the Head the whole Body is being joined together through every joint of the rich supply and is being knit together through the operation in the measure of each one part to grow together and to build up itself in love so that Christ may have a full expression. Every one of us as members of the Body of Christ has a measure through the growth in life and can function for the growth and building up of the Body of Christ. (CWWL, 1990, vol. 2, "The Oneness and the One Accord according to the Lord's Aspiration and the Body Life and Service according to His Pleasure," pp. 84-85)

Further Reading: Life-study of Ephesians, msg. 45; CWWL, 1990, vol. 2, "The Oneness and the One Accord according to the Lord's Aspiration and the Body Life and Service according to His Pleasure," ch. 2

DAY 6

Morning Nourishment

Eph. 3:17 That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love.

4:15-16 But holding to truth in love, we may grow up into Him..., who is the Head, Christ, out from whom all the Body...causes the growth of the Body unto the building up of itself in love.

To experience Christ we need faith and love (1 Tim. 1:14). Faith enables us to apprehend Christ, and love enables us to enjoy Him. Neither faith nor love are ours; they are His. His faith becomes our faith, by which we believe in Him, and His love becomes our love, by which we love Him. When we are rooted and grounded in His love, we grow and are built up in His life. (Eph. 3:17, footnote 4)

[Love in Ephesians 4:15 is] the love of God in Christ, which becomes the love of Christ in us, by which we love Christ and the fellow members of His Body. It is in such a love that we hold to truth, that is, to Christ with His Body, and are kept from being influenced by the winds of teaching and from bringing in elements that are foreign to the Body. (Eph. 4:15, footnote 2)

Today's Reading

In the Body some are joints, like the apostles, prophets, evangelists, and shepherds and teachers. Others are parts, who operate according to their measure. Through these two categories of members, the Body grows, and this growth is unto the building up of itself in love. If we are not a joint, we must be a part...We should not think that only the joints are useful. Every part in the Body is also useful...No member of the Body of Christ should despise himself. We all should praise the Lord that we are either joints or parts in the organic Body of Christ...Through the joints supplying and the parts operating, all the Body causes the growth of the Body, and the

growth of the Body results in the building up of itself in love.

In the organic Body of Christ there are organic functions (Rom. 12:4-8). Because we are in this organic Body, we should be organic... Instead of functioning organically in the church life, we may do things mechanically. We must function either as joints of supply or as parts operating. We must have something with which to supply others, or we should operate in our measure. We must function organically for the building up of the organic Body. When the entire Body is operating, the Body causes the growth of itself, resulting in its being built up in love. (CWWL, 1989, vol. 4, "The Organic Building Up of the Church as the Body of Christ to Be the Organism of the Processed and Dispensing Triune God," p. 302)

The direct building of the organic Body of Christ is by the Body itself. The Body is built directly by all the members of Christ functioning, each in his own measure, mainly in prophesying—speaking for the Lord. All of us have a measure, and we can function in our measure...Without my little finger, it would be hard for me to take care of the itching within my ear. My little finger really functions in its measure to comfort me. In like manner, all the members of the Body of Christ can function in their own measure. We all function mainly in prophesying, in speaking for the Lord.

I am expecting to see meetings all over the earth in which everyone is speaking Christ, speaking forth Christ, and speaking Christ into others in the way of dispensing Christ into others. Then an organism will come into existence that can be seen not only by God but also by all His lovers. This direct building by all the members of Christ takes place through the perfecting work of all the gifted persons under the bountiful supply of the divine element of the ascended Christ in His ascension. We need to practice the fellowship in this book so that we can see the reality of such an organic building on this earth. (CWWL, 1988, vol. 4, "Further Light concerning the Building Up of the Body of Christ," pp. 388-389)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1988, vol. 4, "Further Light concerning the Building Up of the Body of Christ," chs. 2-4

<< **WEEK 4 — HYMN** >>

Hymns, #914 For the Church should be our service

Service — For the Church

- 1 For the Church should be our service,
 'Tis the perfect will of God;
 'Tis the only way of working
 Which the Lord's apostles trod.

Chorus

- For the Church should be our service,
 Not our aims to satisfy;
 This, the perfect will of God is,
 And with it we must comply.
- 2 For 'tis God's eternal purpose
 That the Church His vessel be;
 He intends that all our service
 Build His Church continually.
- 3 All the gifted persons given
 To the Body by the Head
 Are to aid the Church's building,
 That to fulness she be led.
- 4 All the gifts and all the functions,
 All the spirit's power shown,
 All the ministries are given
 For the Church and that alone.
- 5 All the preaching of the Gospel,
 All the teaching ministry,
 Every other kind of service
 For the church alone should be.
- 6 Ministry is for the Churches,
 Not the Church for ministry;
 All the lampstands are the Churches,
 Not a form of ministry.
- 7 This will keep the Church's oneness,
 Saving us from every sect;
 This will ever test our motives,

And our aim will thus correct.

- 8 Lord, deliver us from our work,
From the work of any sect;
For Thy Church alone we'd labor
And its building up effect.

