

**LOVING THE LORD AND LOVING ONE ANOTHER  
FOR THE ORGANIC BUILDING UP OF THE CHURCH  
AS THE BODY OF CHRIST**

(Friday—Evening Session)

Message Three

**Loving the Lord Jesus Christ in Incorruptibility**

*JL Hymns 546, 1305*

Scripture Reading: Eph. 6:24; 1:4; 2:10; 3:16-17; 4:22-24; 5:18-19; 6:10-11

Eph 6:24	Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in incorruptibility.
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 2:10	For we are His masterpiece, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand in order that we would walk in them.
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 4:22	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 5:18	And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissoluteness, but be filled in spirit,
Eph 5:19	Speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and psalming with your heart to the Lord,
Eph 6:10	Finally, be empowered in the Lord and in the might of His strength.
Eph 6:11	Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the stratagems of the devil,

**I. “Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in incorruptibility”—Eph. 6:24:**

- A. Grace is needed for us to live a church life that fulfills God’s purpose and solves God’s problem with His enemy—1:2; 3:2, 8, 10-11; 4:7, 29.
- Eph 1:2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.
- Eph 3:2 If indeed you have heard of the stewardship of the grace of God which was given to me for you,
- 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 3:10 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 3:11 According to the eternal purpose which He made in Christ Jesus our Lord,
- Eph 4:7 But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of the gift of Christ.
- Eph 4:29 Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but only that which is good for building up, according to the need, that it may give grace to those who hear.
- B. The enjoyment of the Lord as grace is with those who love Him—6:24:
- Eph 6:24 Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in incorruptibility.
1. Love in 1:4 refers to the love with which God loves His chosen ones and His chosen ones love Him:
- 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,
- a. It is in this love that God’s chosen ones become holy and without blemish before Him.
- b. God first loved us, and then this divine love inspires us to love Him in return.
- c. In such a condition and atmosphere of love, we are saturated with God to be holy

and without blemish, just as He is.

2. According to 3:17, we may be rooted and grounded in love, and according to verse 19, we can know the knowledge-surpassing love of Christ; as God's cultivated land, we need to be rooted for our growth, and as God's building, we need to be grounded for our building up—1 Cor. 3:9.

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

Eph 3:19 And to know the knowledge-surpassing love of Christ, that you may be filled unto all the fullness of God.

1 Cor 3:9 For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's cultivated land, God's building.

3. Ephesians 4:15-16 reveals that we hold to truth in love and that the Body builds itself up in love:

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.

- a. This 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, 10-12, 16, 19.

1 John 4:7 Beloved, let us love one another, because love is of God, and everyone who loves has been begotten of God and knows God.

1 John 4:8 He who does not love has not known God, because God is love.

1 John 4:10 Herein is love, not that we have loved God but that He loved us and sent His Son as a propitiation for our sins.

1 John 4:11 Beloved, if God has loved us in this way, we also ought to love one another.

1 John 4:12 No one has beheld God at any time; if we love one another, God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us.

1 John 4:16 And we know and have believed the love which God has in us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God and God abides in him.

1 John 4:19 We love because He first loved us.

- b. Love is the inner substance of God; the goal of Ephesians is to bring us into God's inner substance so that we may enjoy God as love and enjoy His presence in the sweetness of the divine love, and thereby love others as Christ did—5:2, 25.

Eph 5:2 And walk in love, even as Christ also loved us and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor.

Eph 5:25 Husbands, love your wives even as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her

- C. For the proper church life we need to love the Lord in incorruptibility—6:24:

Eph 6:24 Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in incorruptibility.

1. According to the usage of *incorruptible* in the writings of Paul, this word refers mainly to God and the things of God; everything natural is corruptible, but God, the divine life, and all things that are in resurrection are incorruptible—1 Tim. 1:17; 2 Tim. 1:10; 1 Cor. 15:42, 52-54.

1 Tim 1:17 Now to the King of the ages, incorruptible, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

2 Tim 1:10 But now has been manifested through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who nullified death and brought life and incorruption to light through the gospel,

1 Cor 15:42 So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption;

1 Cor 15:52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we will be changed.

1 Cor 15:53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

1 Cor 15:54 And when this corruptible will put on incorruption and this mortal will put on immortality, then the word which is written will come to pass, "Death has been

- swallowed up unto victory."
2. To love the Lord in incorruptibility is to love Him in the new creation, not in the old creation—Eph. 2:15; 4:24; 2 Cor. 5:17.
    - Eph 2:15 Abolishing in His flesh the law of the commandments in ordinances, that He might create the two in Himself into one new man, so making peace,
    - Eph 4:24 And put on the new man, which was created according to God in righteousness and holiness of the reality.
    - 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.
  3. To love the Lord in incorruptibility is to love Him in the regenerated and renewed spirit indwelt by the Holy Spirit—John 3:6; 1 Cor. 6:17; 2 Tim. 1:7.
    - John 3:6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.
    - 1 Cor 6:17 But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit.
    - 2 Tim 1:7 For God has not given us a spirit of cowardice, but of power and of love and of sobermindedness.
  4. To love the Lord in incorruptibility means to love Him according to all the incorruptible things revealed in Ephesians:
    - a. We need to love the Lord Jesus in His being the embodiment of the Triune God (Col. 2:9); in His being the element of the Body (1 Cor. 12:12); in His being reality, grace, peace, love, and light (John 1:17; 8:12; 14:6; Eph. 2:14; 1 John 4:8); and in His being the constituent of the one new man (Eph. 2:15; Col. 3:10-11).
      - Col 2:9 For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily,
      - 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.
      - John 1:17 For the law was given through Moses; grace and reality came through Jesus Christ.
      - John 8:12 Again therefore Jesus spoke to them, saying, I am the light of the world; he who follows Me shall by no means walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.
      - John 14:6 Jesus said to him, I am the way and the reality and the life; no one comes to the Father except through Me.
      - Eph 2:14 For He Himself is our peace, He who has made both one and has broken down the middle wall of partition, the enmity,
      - 1 John 4:8 He who does not love has not known God, because God is love.
      - Eph 2:15 Abolishing in His flesh the law of the commandments in ordinances, that He might create the two in Himself into one new man, so making peace,
      - Col 3:10 And have put on the new man, which is being renewed unto full knowledge according to the image of Him who created him,
      - Col 3:11 Where there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all and in all.
    - b. All these things are related to what is revealed and taught in Ephesians, including the Triune God, Christ, and His Body, the church.
    - c. Ephesians speaks concerning the dispensing of the Triune God to produce the church (1:3-23; 3:16-21), of what Christ is and has done for the church (1:7; 2:13-18; 5:25-27, 29), and about the church being the Body of Christ, being the bride of Christ, and being one with Christ in the heavenlies (1:22-23; 5:23, 25-27; 2:6).
      - Eph 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ,
      - 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,
      - Eph 1:6 To the praise of the glory of His grace, with which He graced us in the Beloved;
      - Eph 1:7 In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of offenses, according to the riches of His grace,

Eph 1:8 Which He caused to abound to us in all wisdom and prudence,  
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;  
Eph 1:11 In whom also we were designated as an inheritance, having been  
predestinated according to the purpose of the One who works all things  
according to the counsel of His will,  
Eph 1:12 That we would be to the praise of His glory who have first hoped in Christ,  
Eph 1:13 In whom you also, having heard the word of the truth, the gospel of your salvation,  
in Him also believing, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of the promise,  
Eph 1:14 Who is the pledge of our inheritance unto the redemption of the acquired  
possession, to the praise of His glory.  
Eph 1:15 Therefore I also, having heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus which is  
among you and your love to all the saints,  
Eph 1:16 Do not cease giving thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers,  
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 1:18 The eyes of your heart having been enlightened, that you may know what  
is the hope of His calling, and what are the riches of the glory of His  
inheritance in the saints,  
Eph 1:19 And what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe,  
according to the operation of the might of His strength,  
Eph 1:20 Which He caused to operate in Christ in raising Him from the dead and  
seating Him at His right hand in the heavenlies,  
Eph 1:21 Far above all rule and authority and power and lordship and every name  
that is named not only in this age but also in that which is to come;  
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 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 3:18 May be full of strength to apprehend with all the saints what the breadth  
and length and height and depth are  
Eph 3:19 And to know the knowledge-surpassing love of Christ, that you may be  
filled unto all the fullness of God.  
Eph 3:20 But to Him who is able to do superabundantly above all that we ask or  
think, according to the power which operates in us,  
Eph 3:21 To Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all the  
generations forever and ever. Amen.  
Eph 2:13 But now in Christ Jesus you who were once far off have become near in  
the blood of Christ.  
Eph 2:14 For He Himself is our peace, He who has made both one and has broken  
down the middle wall of partition, the enmity,  
Eph 2:15 Abolishing in His flesh the law of the commandments in ordinances, that  
He might create the two in Himself into one new man, so making peace,  
Eph 2:16 And might reconcile both in one Body to God through the cross, having  
slain the enmity by it.  
Eph 2:17 And coming, He announced peace as the gospel to you who were far off,  
and peace to those who were near,  
Eph 2:18 For through Him we both have access in one Spirit unto the Father.  
Eph 5:25 Husbands, love your wives even as Christ also loved the church and gave  
Himself up for her  
Eph 5:26 That He might sanctify her, cleansing her by the washing of the water in  
the word,  
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 5:29 For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, even as Christ also the church,
- 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 2:6 And raised us up together with Him and seated us together with Him in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus,
- d. All these matters are incorruptible, and if we love the Lord Jesus in all these things, our love toward Him will be incorruptible (6:24); such a love is not a natural love; it is a love in resurrection, the love that God Himself is in His divine essence (1 John 4:16).
- Eph 6:24 Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in incorruptibility.
- 1 John 4:16 And we know and have believed the love which God has in us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God and God abides in him.
5. In the Lord's recovery we need to love our Lord Jesus Christ in all the divine, spiritual, heavenly, and incorruptible things revealed in Ephesians concerning the Triune God, the divine life, what Christ is to us, what He has done, and the church—1:3-23; 2:5-6, 13-18; 3:16-21; 4:4-6; 5:23, 25-27.
- Eph 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ,
- 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,
- Eph 1:6 To the praise of the glory of His grace, with which He graced us in the Beloved;
- Eph 1:7 In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of offenses, according to the riches of His grace,
- Eph 1:8 Which He caused to abound to us in all wisdom and prudence,
- 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;
- Eph 1:11 In whom also we were designated as an inheritance, having been predestinated according to the purpose of the One who works all things according to the counsel of His will,
- Eph 1:12 That we would be to the praise of His glory who have first hoped in Christ,
- Eph 1:13 In whom you also, having heard the word of the truth, the gospel of your salvation, in Him also believing, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of the promise,
- Eph 1:14 Who is the pledge of our inheritance unto the redemption of the acquired possession, to the praise of His glory.
- Eph 1:15 Therefore I also, having heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus which is among you and your love to all the saints,
- Eph 1:16 Do not cease giving thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers,
- 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 1:18 The eyes of your heart having been enlightened, that you may know what is the hope of His calling, and what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,
- Eph 1:19 And what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the operation of the might of His strength,
- Eph 1:20 Which He caused to operate in Christ in raising Him from the dead and seating Him at His right hand in the heavenlies,
- Eph 1:21 Far above all rule and authority and power and lordship and every name that is named not only in this age but also in that which is to come;
- 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 2:5 Even when we were dead in offenses, made us alive together with Christ (by

grace you have been saved)  
 Eph 2:6 And raised us up together with Him and seated us together with Him in the  
 heavenlies in Christ Jesus,  
 Eph 2:13 But now in Christ Jesus you who were once far off have become near in the  
 blood of Christ.  
 Eph 2:14 For He Himself is our peace, He who has made both one and has broken down  
 the middle wall of partition, the enmity,  
 Eph 2:15 Abolishing in His flesh the law of the commandments in ordinances, that He  
 might create the two in Himself into one new man, so making peace,  
 Eph 2:16 And might reconcile both in one Body to God through the cross, having slain the  
 enmity by it.  
 Eph 2:17 And coming, He announced peace as the gospel to you who were far off, and  
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 Eph 2:18 For through Him we both have access in one Spirit unto the Father.  
 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,  
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 rooted and grounded in love,  
 Eph 3:18 May be full of strength to apprehend with all the saints what the breadth and  
 length and height and depth are  
 Eph 3:19 And to know the knowledge-surpassing love of Christ, that you may be filled unto  
 all the fullness of God.  
 Eph 3:20 But to Him who is able to do superabundantly above all that we ask or think,  
 according to the power which operates in us,  
 Eph 3:21 To Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all the generations  
 forever and ever. Amen.  
 Eph 4:4 One Body and one Spirit, even as also you were called in one hope of your calling;  
 Eph 4:5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism;  
 Eph 4:6 One God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.  
 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 5:25 Husbands, love your wives even as Christ also loved the church and gave  
 Himself up for her  
 Eph 5:26 That He might sanctify her, cleansing her by the washing of the water in the word,  
 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.

**II. Paul's blessing at the end of his Epistle to the Ephesians foreshadows a problem that would arise: the love in the church in Ephesus would fade, as indicated by the Lord's rebuke in Revelation 2:2-5:**

- Rev 2:2 I know your works and your labor and your endurance and that you cannot bear evil men; and  
 you have tried those who call themselves apostles and are not, and have found them to be false;  
 Rev 2:3 And you have endurance and have borne all things because of My name and have not grown  
 weary.  
 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.
- A. The concluding word of Ephesians 6:24 adds a condition to the presence of grace: loving the Lord in incorruptibility; this seems to imply that if the Ephesians did not love the Lord in such a way, the grace of the Lord would no longer be with them.  
 Eph 6:24 Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in incorruptibility.
- B. Ephesians emphasizes the relationship between grace and love (1:2, 4; 3:17; 4:2, 15-16; 5:2; 6:23-24); this indicates that if we want to receive and enjoy grace continually, we need to fulfill one condition—love.  
 Eph 1:2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.  
 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 3:17 That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love,
- Eph 4:2 With all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, bearing one another in love,
- 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 5:2 And walk in love, even as Christ also loved us and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor.
- Eph 6:23 Peace to the brothers and love with faith from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.
- Eph 6:24 Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in incorruptibility.
- C. The church in Ephesus failed in the matter of loving the Lord; such a failure became the main reason for the failure of the church throughout the ages—Matt. 24:12; Mark 12:30-31; cf. Dan. 7:25:
- Matt 24:12 And because lawlessness will be multiplied, the love of the many will grow cold.
- Mark 12:30 And you shall love the Lord your God from your whole heart and from your whole soul and from your whole mind and from your whole strength."
- Mark 12:31 The second is this: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." There is no other commandment greater than these.
- Dan 7:25 And he will speak things against the Most High and wear out the saints of the Most High; and his intention will be to change the times and the law; and they will be given into his hand for a time and times and half a time.
1. The genuine ministry of the New Testament always stirs us up to love the Lord Jesus with the first love, strengthening us in the simplicity of enjoying Christ as our life supply—2 Cor. 11:2-3; 3:3-6.
 

2 Cor 11:2 For I am jealous over you with a jealousy of God; for I betrothed you to one husband to present you as a pure virgin to Christ.

2 Cor 11:3 But I fear lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your thoughts would be corrupted from the simplicity and the purity toward Christ.

2 Cor 3:3 Since you are being manifested that you are a letter of Christ ministered by us, inscribed not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tablets of stone but in tablets of hearts of flesh.

2 Cor 3:4 And such confidence we have through Christ toward God,

2 Cor 3:5 Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to account anything as from ourselves; but our sufficiency is from God,

2 Cor 3:6 Who has also made us sufficient as ministers of a new covenant, ministers not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.
  2. The churches in Asia, including the church in Ephesus, turned away from the apostle Paul's betrothing ministry (2 Tim. 1:15; 2 Cor. 11:2-3); approximately twenty-six years later, when the apostle John wrote the epistle to the church in Ephesus, they had left their first love and lost the genuine enjoyment of Christ, resulting in the loss of the testimony of the Lord (Rev. 2:4-5, 7).
 

2 Tim 1:15 This you know, that all who are in Asia turned away from me, of whom are Phygelus and Hermogenes.

2 Cor 11:2 For I am jealous over you with a jealousy of God; for I betrothed you to one husband to present you as a pure virgin to Christ.

2 Cor 11:3 But I fear lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your thoughts would be corrupted from the simplicity and the purity toward Christ.

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.

### III. The revelation of the church in the Epistle to the Ephesians has two main

**aspects: the first aspect is the work of the ministry to build up the Body of Christ, and the second aspect is our spiritual life, which comprises many spiritual experiences that enable us to live a life that matches the church life:**

A. We need to love the Lord in incorruptibility by doing the work of the ministry to build up the Body of Christ:

1. What is needed today is an organic building of the Body not directly by Christ as the Head or by the gifted persons but by all the members being perfected to function as the gifted persons do—4:11-16.

Eph 4:11 And He Himself gave some as apostles and some as prophets and some as evangelists and some as shepherds and teachers,

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 4:13 Until we all arrive at the oneness of the faith and of the full knowledge of the Son of God, at a full-grown man, at the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ,

Eph 4:14 That we may 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 system of error,

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.

2. The building up of the Body of Christ comprises the following categories of work, which are eternal and glorious:

a. We need to visit others with the gospel to bring them into the Triune God (Matt. 28:19; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:47; John 15:5; cf. 2 Tim. 1:10), offering them as sacrifices to God (Rom. 15:16).

Matt 28:19 Go therefore and disciple all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

Mark 16:15 And He said to them, Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to all the creation.

Luke 24:47 And that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem.

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.

2 Tim 1:10 But now has been manifested through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who nullified death and brought life and incorruption to light through the gospel,

Rom 15:16 That I might be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles, a laboring priest of the gospel of God, in order that the offering of the Gentiles might be acceptable, having been sanctified in the Holy Spirit.

b. We need to shepherd the new believers in home meetings (John 15:16; 21:15-17), nourishing them and helping them to grow so that they can offer themselves as living sacrifices to God (1 Pet. 2:2; Rom. 12:1).

John 15:16 You did not choose Me, but I chose you, and I set you that you should go forth and bear fruit and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name, He may give you.

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 Pet 2:2 As newborn babes, long for the guileless milk of the word in order that by it you may grow unto salvation,
- 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.
- c. We need to perfect the saints in group meetings that they may do the work of the ministry unto the organic building up of the Body of Christ—Eph. 4:11-16; Heb. 10:24-25.
- Eph 4:11 And He Himself gave some as apostles and some as prophets and some as evangelists and some as shepherds and teachers,
- 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 4:13 Until we all arrive at the oneness of the faith and of the full knowledge of the Son of God, at a full-grown man, at the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ,
- Eph 4:14 That we may 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 system of error,
- 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.
- Heb 10:24 And let us consider one another so as to incite one another to love and good works,
- Heb 10:25 Not abandoning our own assembling together, as the custom with some is, but exhorting one another; and so much the more as you see the day drawing near.
- d. We need to lead the saints to prophesy, to speak for God, one by one in the church meetings for the organic building up of the church—1 Cor. 14:3, 4b, 12, 26, 31.
- 1 Cor 14:3 But he who prophesies speaks building up and encouragement and consolation to men.
- 1 Cor 14:4b ... but he who prophesies builds up the church.
- 1 Cor 14:12 So also you, since you are zealous of spirits, seek that you may excel for the building up of the church.
- 1 Cor 14:26 What then, brothers? Whenever you come together, each one has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up.
- 1 Cor 14:31 For you can all prophesy one by one that all may learn and all may be encouraged.
3. This is the organic service of the Body of Christ, which is also the organic service of the New Testament priesthood of the gospel (1 Pet. 2:5, 9), in which we have to be like the apostle Paul, who labored and struggled in all wisdom to present every man full-grown in Christ to God (Col. 1:28-29).
- 1 Pet 2:5 You yourselves also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house into a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.
- 1 Pet 2:9 But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people acquired for a possession, so that you may tell out the virtues of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;
- Col 1:28 Whom we announce, admonishing every man and teaching every man in all wisdom that we may present every man full-grown in Christ;
- Col 1:29 For which also I labor, struggling according to His operation which operates in me in power.

B. We need to love the Lord in incorruptibility in the spiritual experiences that match the church life as unveiled in each chapter of Ephesians:

1. Chapter 1 unveils our being chosen in Christ to be holy and without blemish before God in love (v. 4); chapter 2 unveils our being God's masterpiece, created in Christ Jesus for good works (v. 10); chapter 3 unveils the unsearchable riches of Christ becoming our enjoyment, Christ making His home in our hearts, and our being filled unto all the fullness of God (vv. 8,14-19); chapter 4 unveils our putting off the old man and putting on the new man (vv. 22-24); chapter 5 unveils our being filled in spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and psalming with our heart to the Lord (vv. 18-19); and chapter 6 unveils our being empowered in the Lord and putting on the whole armor of God (vv. 10-11).

Eph 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 be omitted.

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 2:10 For we are His masterpiece, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand in order that we would walk in them.

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 3:14 For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father,

Eph 3:15 Of whom every family in the heavens and on earth is named,

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 3:18 May be full of strength to apprehend with all the saints what the breadth and length and height and depth are

Eph 3:19 And to know the knowledge-surpassing love of Christ, that you may be filled unto all the fullness of God.

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 5:18 And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissoluteness, but be filled in spirit,

Eph 5:19 Speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and psalming with your heart to the Lord,

Eph 6:10 Finally, be empowered in the Lord and in the might of His strength.

Eph 6:11 Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the stratagems of the devil,

2. The key to all the spiritual experiences in Ephesians is to be strengthened into the inner man (3:16) in order to be supplied with the supporting grace (vv. 2, 8; 6:24).

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 3:2 If indeed you have heard of the stewardship of the grace of God which was given to me for you,

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 6:24 Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in incorruptibility.

3. This is the miraculous yet normal way to live the church life, a revived life, a life that continually overcomes, and a life that loves the Lord in incorruptibility.

## Excerpts from the Ministry:

### TO LOVE THE LORD IN INCORRUPTIBILITY

Ephesians 6:24 says, "Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in incorruptibility."

We all must ask ourselves what it means to love the Lord in incorruptibility. In 1 Timothy 1:17 Paul says that God is incorruptible, and in 2 Timothy 1:10 he says that the Lord “nullified death and brought life and incorruption to light through the gospel.” First Corinthians 15 tells us that in resurrection the corruptible things will become incorruptible (vv. 50-53). To love the Lord in incorruptibility means to love Him in the new creation. All the things of the old creation are corruptible. This is proved by Romans 8 where we see that the whole creation is groaning under the slavery of corruption (vv. 21-22). Everything of the old creation is corrupting. Only the new creation is not.

Ephesians 6:24 is a total conclusion of the entire book of Ephesians. In the six chapters of Ephesians Paul surely reveals to us the incorruptible things. Christ is incorruptible, the church is incorruptible, and all the positive items related to Christ and the church in chapters 1 through 6 are incorruptible items. We must love the Lord in these incorruptible things. This means we must love the Lord in the new creation and not in the old creation. We have to love the Lord according to the Father’s predestination unto sonship. We have to love the Lord according to the Son’s redemption. We have to love the Lord according to the sealing and the pledging of the Spirit. We have to love the Lord according to the hope of God’s calling, according to the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and according to the surpassing greatness of His power, which made Christ the Head of all things to the church. We have to love the Lord according to Christ’s resurrection, which made us alive, resurrected us, and seated us in the heavens. We have to love the Lord according to all the incorruptible things revealed in the six chapters of Ephesians. We must love the Lord in incorruptibility.

Many times we love the Lord in the way of corruption. We should not love the Lord in a natural way, in the way of the old creation, but in the new creation. When some Christian groups wanted to raise money, they put out a list of those who gave, with the ones giving the most at the top of the list. This is to love the Lord in corruption. What is it to love the Lord in incorruptibility in giving? Do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing (Matt. 6:3). To give in the way of making a show is in the old creation. As the kingdom people, our righteous deeds should be kept secret as much as possible (vv. 4, 6, 18). What we do in our spirit, under the heavenly rule to please solely our Father, must not be interfered with by our flesh lusting for man’s glory. The kingdom people’s living is by the Father’s divine life according to their spirit. Thus, they are required to do good things in secret, not in public. Any public exhibition does not correspond with the mysterious, hidden nature of the divine life. In Matthew 6:4 the Lord says that our alms should be in secret, and our Father who sees in secret shall repay us.

To do things in the way of not making a display or a show of oneself is in the new creation. Sometimes when a brother testifies, he testifies because he likes to make a show or a display. When his testifying gets many Amens, he feels glorious. This is to function in corruption because it is in the old creation. When you are testifying, you must remain on the cross. When you are giving a testimony, try your best not to make a show. The Lord Jesus told us that the Pharisees always liked to make a show. Whatever they did, they did to be seen by men (23:5a). The Lord also told us that whenever we fast, “do not be like the sullen-faced hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so that they may appear to men to be fasting. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full. But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, so that you may not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will repay you” (6:16-18). This shows us that we should not make a show in anything we do. If we do, we are serving in corruptibility.

To love the Lord in incorruptibility is to love Him in the regenerated, renewed, and indwelt spirit. If you do anything in your flesh, that is in corruption. I believe that when Paul was writing the book of Ephesians and was giving a conclusion to his writing, he was filled with the feeling that whatever he taught in the preceding six chapters was all incorruptible. Then he concluded that we have to love the Lord in incorruptibility.

Many Christians love the Lord concerning the church in corruption. The organization and some of the practices of the denominations are corruptible things, since they are something of the old creation. If one loves the Lord and yet serves the Lord in the denominational way, this is in corruption.

To love the Lord in incorruptibility, we have to love the Lord according to everything revealed in Ephesians. At the end of Ephesians 1 is the church which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all. This surely does not refer to any religious organization. The church is incorruptible, but the religious organizations are corruptible. To stand on the proper ground is something incorruptible. To take any other ground other than that of the unique oneness of the Body of Christ kept and expressed in each local church at its locality (Rev. 1:11) is to take the ground of corruption. We should not love the Lord in corruption; we should love Him in a pure way, in the way of incorruptibility that could stand forever.

Paul concluded his Epistle according to its contents because whatever is revealed in his Epistle to the Ephesians is incorruptible. At the conclusion he charged his recipients to love the Lord in incorruptibility, which means to love the Lord according to what he revealed in the entire book. Paul does not conclude his Epistle by only saying, "Grace be with everyone." The condition for receiving the grace is that we love the Lord in incorruptibility. For the proper church life we need to love the Lord in incorruptibility, that is, in a condition which is incorruptible. For the church our love toward the Lord must be incorruptible, immortal, and imperishable. (*The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1985, vol. 3, "Elders' Training, Book 6: The Crucial Points of the Truth in Paul's Epistles,"* pp. 517-519)

### **LOVING THE LORD IN INCORRUPTIBILITY BY BUILDING UP THE BODY OF CHRIST**

#### **The Gifts Perfecting the Saints to Function as They Do for the Building Up of the Body of Christ**

Ephesians 4:11-12 says, "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." The ascended Christ as the Head of the Body in resurrection gave apostles, prophets, evangelists, and shepherds and teachers to His Body, which is the church (vv. 8-11). The purpose for which Christ gave these gifted persons to the church was not merely so that they could preach and teach. According to verse 12, the purpose of Christ's giving the apostles, prophets, evangelists, and shepherds and teachers was to perfect the saints. We all need this perfecting.

The perfecting of the saints is unto the work of the ministry. *The work of the ministry* is a deep expression, which few Christians understand. Among Christian workers today there are many different opinions and even disputes concerning the ministry. Most think that the ministry is only the business of professional preachers and pastors and that it has nothing to do with ordinary Christians. However, in verse 12 Paul says that the gifts given by Christ to His Body are to perfect the saints to do the work of the ministry. This is not a small thing.

What is needed today is an organic building of the Body not directly by Christ as the Head or by the gifted persons but by all the members. In Matthew 16:18 the Lord told Peter, "I will build My church." If we read only this verse, we may think that only Christ builds. Some even teach that we cannot build up the church because only Christ can. However, the Epistles, especially Ephesians, reveal that Christ as the Head does not build up the church directly. What He has done is to constitute particular believers as useful gifts. Some of these gifted persons, such as Peter and John, began as lowly fishermen, but through Christ's work on them, they were constituted into apostles. Christ constituted these gifts and gave them to the church, but even these ones do not build up the church directly. Instead, they build indirectly by perfecting all the saints so that the perfected members can function to build the Body of Christ directly. The real need today, especially in the Lord's recovery, is that all the members of the Body of Christ would function according to their measure in order to build up the Body (Eph. 4:16).

We first need to go out to contact others with the gospel in order to gain new believers. After baptizing new believers, we need to continue to take care of them. It is impossible for only the elders, co-workers, and full-time serving ones to do this. Because of the great number of new ones who need care, every member must function in this way. Every healthy young woman can bear and deliver a child,

and every young mother can and must learn how to care for her child. Similarly, in the church life we should all preach the gospel to save sinners and learn to take care of the new ones. We cannot excuse ourselves by saying that we do not know how to do this, because someone in the church life knows and can perfect us by helping us to learn how to do it. There is a promising situation ahead of us. I believe the day will soon come when all the saints will be able to take care of the new ones in home meetings. However, this cannot occur simply by assigning the saints to visit certain homes. Instead, there is the need of perfecting.

### **Building Up the Body of Christ by Preaching the Gospel, Caring for the New Believers, and Speaking in the Meetings**

To love the Lord in incorruptibility is to love Him in things that build up the Body of Christ. According to my observation and experiences, the building up of the Body of Christ requires three things. First, we need to gain new believers by preaching the gospel. Following this, we need to visit new believers weekly for at least a year to keep them remaining in grace, living in the Lord's salvation, and growing in Christ. In addition to preaching the gospel and caring for the new believers, we also need to attend and speak in the church meetings. These three things are necessary for the building up of the Body of Christ.

Since we are all busy, whether or not we can do these three things depends on how we budget and manage our time. The Bible charges us to redeem the time (Eph. 5:16). I have encouraged the young people to redeem the time by reading a few chapters in the Bible every day. We can redeem much time by refraining from unnecessary talk, reading newspapers and magazines, and watching television. Because living a proper church life requires time, we must budget and manage our time. We can all budget enough time to attend at least two church meetings weekly. Everyone can live a proper church life. If the saints are faithful to the Lord in this, they will soon be perfected to do the three things that are necessary to build up the Body.

We need to regularly go out to visit others in order to preach the gospel. Two hours once a month is sufficient. Everyone can redeem time for this purpose. Within two hours, we can knock on twenty doors. It is wonderful if early on we contact one who is open to the gospel, and we should not worry about going on to other doors but should spend time with the one who is open. If we go out monthly, we will lead at least two or three persons a year to be saved and baptized.

After we baptize new believers, we should not leave immediately but should take time to teach them some basic truths. Then we need to return weekly to teach them more. Every saint can visit new believers regularly in order to take care of them as a nursing mother. I have the assurance that every saint can afford to go out for two hours weekly to take care of the new ones in their homes.

All the saints can also speak in the meetings, because we can be daily revived and live a victorious life. If we daily enjoy the Lord in the Word, we will accumulate the truth in our being and will store up many experiences of Christ as life. As a result, whenever we come to the meetings, we will have something to speak. Because the saints were not perfected in this way in the past, many do not think that they can speak in the meetings. Therefore, we need to change our way by perfecting the saints to do this.

### **Loving the Lord in Incorruptibility by Preaching the Gospel, Caring for New Believers, and Speaking in the Meetings**

We need to love the Lord in incorruptibility (Eph. 6:24). We can do this in the three practices mentioned above. First, we can set aside two hours a month to go out to visit others in order to gain new believers. Second, after baptizing them, we need to visit them weekly for at least a year to keep them living in God's grace. The Lord will be happy to see a situation of many home meetings, in which the saints are caring for new believers. Third, in every meeting, regardless of the size or location, we need to speak. There is always an opportunity. We can even speak to the other saints as we are entering the meeting room. In this way the meetings will be living. To practice these three things is to love the Lord

according to His good pleasure and heart's desire. This is to love Him in incorruptibility, for whatever is according to His heart will remain forever. It is possible to love the Lord yet do things that grieve His heart, things that are subject to corruption. Therefore, we need to receive this word and try our best to redeem the time to practice these three things.

There are many unbelievers around us in our communities. If we so desire, it is possible for us to gain a few for the Lord. If we gain some new believers and return regularly to take care of them, we will be welcomed by them into the kingdom. The Lord said, "Make friends for yourselves by means of the mammon of unrighteousness, so that when it fails, they may receive you into the eternal tabernacles" (Luke 16:9). We can make friends by preaching the gospel so that when the kingdom comes, many will welcome us into it. The apostle Paul referred to the believers whom he cared for as "my joy and crown" (Phil. 4:1). When the Lord returns, we will be welcomed by those whom we have led to salvation as well as by others who were saved through them. According to the Bible, we need to visit others to bring them the gospel. Therefore, we need to change our way. (*The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1988, vol. 1, pp. 557-564*)

### **THE ORGANIC SERVICE OF THE BODY OF CHRIST**

Next we look at...the corporate, organic service of the Body of Christ (Rom. 12:4-8). Our living is corporate, and our service is also corporate. It is like our human body—there is nothing in it that is not corporate. Whether it speaks or moves, it does so corporately. The same is true with service in the Body of Christ. Hence, in this service every member is necessary (1 Cor. 12:14-22). Moreover, every member functions organically according to his measure (Eph. 4:16b). Since we are members in the Body of Christ, we are all necessary, and we all have our function. Once we fulfill our function in the Body, we have the corporate, organic service.

Furthermore, this service of the organism is the organic service of the New Testament priesthood of the gospel (1 Pet. 2:5, 9). This service involves the preaching of the gospel for the saving of sinners, offering them up as sacrifices to God (Rom. 15:16). Following that, there is the nourishing of the believers and helping them to grow so that they can offer themselves up as living sacrifices to God (John 21:15; 1 Pet. 2:2; Rom. 12:1). In addition, there is the perfecting of the saints that they may do the work of the ministry unto the organic building up of the Body of Christ (Eph. 4:11-16). Finally, we have to lead the saints to prophesy, to speak for God, for the organic building up of the church (1 Cor. 14:1, 3-5, 12, 24, 31). These are the four steps in the practice of the new way: the preaching of the gospel, the nourishing of others, the perfecting of the saints, and the prophesying for the Lord. Hence, we all have to be like the apostle Paul, who labored and struggled in all wisdom to present every man full-grown in Christ to God (Col. 1:28-29). This is the organic service of the Body of Christ. It is for everyone, and it is in a priesthood. Everyone preaches the gospel to save sinners, everyone nourishes the believers, everyone perfects the saints, and everyone prophesies. In this way all of us will arrive at a full-grown stage, and the Body of Christ will be built up. By this the great work of the organic service in the Body of Christ will be accomplished. (*The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1990, vol. 2, "The Mysteries in God's New Testament Economy," pp. 217-218*)