

Message Four

Blending and the Reality of the Body of Christ

JL Hymns: 840, 847

Scripture Reading: 1 Cor. 1:2; 10:17a; 12:12-13, 24, 27;
John 12:24; Phil. 3:10; Eph. 4:20-21

- 1 Cor 1:2 To the church of God which is in Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, the called saints, with all those who call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place, who is theirs and ours:
- 1 Cor 10:17a Seeing that there is one bread, we who are many are one Body; ...
- 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 12:24 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 12:27 Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually.
- John 12:24 Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless the grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it abides alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.
- Phil 3:10 To know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death,
- 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,

I. “God has blended the body together”—1 Cor. 12:24:

- A. Blending is not only high and deep but also very mysterious— v. 24.
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,
- B. The word *blended* means “adjusted,” “harmonized,” “tempered,” and “mingled,” implying the losing of distinctions.
- C. Blending means that we should always stop in order to have fellowship with others—Acts 2:42; 1 Cor. 1:9; 1 John 1:3, 7.
Acts 2:42 And they continued steadfastly in the teaching and the fellowship of the apostles, in the breaking of bread and the prayers.
1 Cor 1:9 God is faithful, through whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.
1 John 1:3 That which we have seen and heard we report also to you that you also may have fellowship with us, and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.
1 John 1:7 But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from every sin.
- D. We should not do anything without fellowshiping with the other saints who are coordinating with us, because fellowship adjusts us, harmonizes us, tempers us, and mingles us—v. 7.
1 John 1:7 But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from every sin.
- E. 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—Matt. 10:38; 16:24; Gal. 3:2, 5; Eph. 4:12.
Matt 10:38 And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me.
Matt 16:24 Then Jesus said to His disciples, If anyone wants to come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me.
Gal 3:2 This only I wish to learn from you, Did you receive the Spirit out of the works of law or out of the hearing of faith?
Gal 3:5 He therefore who bountifully supplies to you the Spirit and does works of power among you, does He do it out of the works of law or out of the hearing of faith?

- Eph 4:12 For the perfecting of the saints unto the work of the ministry, unto the building up of the Body of Christ,
- F. Blending is not social but the blending of the Christ whom the individual members, the district churches, the co-workers, and the elders experience, enjoy, and partake of—cf. Rom. 16:1-16.
- 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.
- G. In order to keep the unique oneness of the universal Body of Christ, we need to be blended together—1 Cor. 12:24.
- 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,
- H. Blending is needed for the building up of the Body of Christ— Rom. 16:1-16; 1 Cor. 12:20-21, 24; Col. 4:16.
- 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.
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- 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.
- 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 12:24 But our comely members have no need. But God has blended the body together, giving more abundant honor to the member that lacked,
- Col 4:16 And when this letter is read among you, cause that it be read in the church of the Laodiceans also, and that you also read the one from Laodicea.

II. John 12:24 and 1 Corinthians 10:17a portray and reveal the necessity and the significance of blending:

- John 12:24 Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless the grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it abides alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.
- 1 Cor 10:17a Seeing that there is one bread, we who are many are one Body; ...
- A. John 12:24 speaks of a grain of wheat that fell into the ground and died and bore many grains:
 - John 12:24 Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless the grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it abides alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.
 - 1. *Grain of wheat* refers to Christ as the divine seed to produce many grains (the people who receive Him) to become His many members who constitute His organic Body— Eph. 1:22-23; 5:30.
 - 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 5:30 Because we are members of His Body.
 - 2. Christ as the grain of wheat died and brought forth many grains in resurrection— John 12:24:
 - John 12:24 Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless the grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it abides alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.
 - a. The grains are to be ground and blended into flour to make a loaf, which signifies the Body of Christ—1 Cor. 10:17a.
 - 1 Cor 10:17a Seeing that there is one bread, we who are many are one Body; ...
 - b. We should not remain as whole grains; we have to be broken and ground into fine flour so that we can be blended with others for making a loaf; this loaf is the Body of Christ—12:12-13, 27; Eph. 2:16; 1:22-23.
 - 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.
 - Eph 2:16 And might reconcile both in one Body to God through the cross, having slain the enmity by it.
 - 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.
- B. Paul's thought of the church being blended into one bread, one Body (1 Cor. 10:17a), was taken from the type of the meal offering in Leviticus 2:1-16:
 - 1 Cor 10:17a Seeing that there is one bread, we who are many are one Body; ...
 - Lev 2:1 And when anyone presents an offering of a meal offering to Jehovah, his offering shall be of fine flour; and he shall pour oil on it and put frankincense on it.
 - Lev 2:2 Then he shall bring it to Aaron's sons the priests, and he shall take from it his handful of its fine flour and of its oil with all its frankincense. And the priest shall burn it as its memorial portion on the altar, an offering by fire, a satisfying fragrance to Jehovah.
 - Lev 2:3 And what is left of the meal offering shall be Aaron's and his sons'; it is a thing most holy of Jehovah's offerings by fire.

- 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.
- Lev 2:6 You shall break it in pieces and pour oil on it; it is a meal offering.
- Lev 2:7 And if your offering is a meal offering made in a pot, it shall be made of fine flour with oil.
- Lev 2:8 And you shall bring to Jehovah the meal offering that is made of these things and present it to the priest, and he shall bring it to the altar.
- Lev 2:9 And the priest shall take up from the meal offering its memorial portion and shall burn it on the altar, an offering by fire, a satisfying fragrance to Jehovah.
- Lev 2:10 And that which is left of the meal offering shall be Aaron's and his sons'; it is a thing most holy of Jehovah's offerings by fire.
- Lev 2:11 No meal offering that you present to Jehovah shall be made with leaven, for you shall not burn any leaven or any honey as an offering by fire to Jehovah.
- Lev 2:12 You may present them to Jehovah, as an offering of firstfruits, but they shall not be offered up for a satisfying fragrance on the altar.
- Lev 2:13 And every offering of your meal offering you shall season with salt, and you shall not omit the salt of the covenant of your God from your meal offering; with all your offerings you shall present salt.
- Lev 2:14 And if you present a meal offering of firstfruits to Jehovah, you shall present for the meal offering of your firstfruits new grain roasted with fire, crushed grain of the fresh ear.
- Lev 2:15 And you shall put oil on it and place frankincense on it; it is a meal offering.
- Lev 2:16 And the priest shall burn as its memorial portion some of its crushed grain and some of its oil, with all its frankincense, as an offering by fire to Jehovah.

1. Every part of the fine flour of the meal offering was mingled with oil; this is the blending—vv. 4-5.

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.

2. Christ's life and our individual Christian life issue in a totality—the church life as a corporate meal offering composed of believers who have been broken, ground, and blended— vv. 1-2, 4; 1 Cor. 12:12.

Lev 2:1 And when anyone presents an offering of a meal offering to Jehovah, his offering shall be of fine flour; and he shall pour oil on it and put frankincense on it.

Lev 2:2 Then he shall bring it to Aaron's sons the priests, and he shall take from it his handful of its fine flour and of its oil with all its frankincense. And the priest shall burn it as its memorial portion on the altar, an offering by fire, a satisfying fragrance to Jehovah.

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.

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.

III. The purpose of the blending is to usher us all into the reality of the Body of Christ—Rom. 12:5; 1 Cor. 12:12-13; Eph. 2:16; 4:12; Col. 2:19:

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.

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

- Eph 4:12 For the perfecting of the saints unto the work of the ministry, unto the building up of the Body of Christ,
- Col 2:19 And not holding the Head, out from whom all the Body, being richly supplied and knit together by means of the joints and sinews, grows with the growth of God.
- A. We need to be in the local churches as the procedure to be brought into the reality of the Body of Christ—1 Cor. 1:2; 12:27.
- 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 12:27 Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually.
- B. 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—Eph. 1:10, 22-23.
- 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 1:22 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.
- C. The local churches are not the goal of God's eternal economy; they are the procedure God takes to reach the goal of His economy—the building up of the Body of Christ—Matt. 16:18; Eph. 4:12, 16:
- Matt 16:18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.
- 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 4:16 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. The churches are the procedure to bring us into the Body of Christ—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.
2. The churches are the Body, but they may not have the reality of the Body of Christ.
- D. 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 reality of the Body, the Lord Jesus will not return—Eph. 1:22-23; 4:16; 5:27; 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.
- 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.

IV. The highest peak in God's economy is the reality of the Body of Christ—Eph. 1:22-23; 4:16:

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.
- A. The significance of our blending is the reality of the Body of Christ—1 Cor. 12:24:
- 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. This reality is a group of God's redeemed people who have been made God in life and nature but not in the Godhead— John 1:12-13; Rom. 8:16; 2 Pet. 1:4.

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

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

Rom 8:16 The Spirit Himself witnesses with our spirit that we are children of God.

2 Pet 1:4 Through which He has granted to us precious and exceedingly great promises that through these you might become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption which is in the world by lust.
 2. They live a life not by themselves but by another life—the life of the processed and consummated Triune God, who enters into them and takes them as His abode, His dwelling place— 2 Cor. 13:14; John 14:23; Eph. 2:21-22.

2 Cor 13:14 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

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

Eph 2:21 In whom all the building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord;

Eph 2:22 In whom you also are being built together into a dwelling place of God in spirit.
- B. 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 and consummated Triune God, whose attributes have been expressed through their virtues—2 Cor. 13:9, 11; Eph. 4:12; 1 Pet. 5:10; 1 John 4:12, 17-18:
- 2 Cor 13:9 For we rejoice whenever we are weak and you are powerful; this also we pray for, your perfecting.
- 2 Cor 13:11 Finally, brothers, rejoice, be perfected, be comforted, think the same thing, be at peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you.
- Eph 4:12 For the perfecting of the saints unto the work of the ministry, unto the building up of the Body of Christ,
- 1 Pet 5:10 But the God of all grace, He who has called you into His eternal glory in Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a little while, will Himself perfect, establish, strengthen, and ground you.
- 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 4:17 In this has love been perfected with us, that we have boldness in the day of the judgment because even as He is, so also are we in this world.
- 1 John 4:18 There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear because fear has punishment, and he who fears has not been perfected in love.
1. God's life with all its attributes was lived within the God- man Jesus and expressed as this God-man's virtues—Eph. 4:20-21.

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,
 2. Originally, this life was only in Jesus; now this life is being reproduced in believers who have been redeemed and regenerated and possess the divine life within them— 1:7; John 3:6; Col. 3:4.

Eph 1:7 In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of offenses, according to the riches of His grace,

- John 3:6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.
- Col 3:4 When Christ our life is manifested, then you also will be manifested with Him in glory.
3. Perfected God-men are those who have been matured by continually exercising to reject the self and live by another life—the resurrection life of Christ— John 11:25.
John 11:25 Jesus said to her, I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes into Me, even if he should die, shall live;
- C. The reality of the Body of Christ is the mingling living in the eternal union of the regenerated, transformed, conformed, and glorified tripartite God-men with the Triune God in the resurrection of Christ—cf. Judg. 9:9; Psa. 92:10:
Judg 9:9 But the olive tree said to them, Shall I leave my fatness, because of which God and men are honored by me, and go to wave over the trees?
Psa 92:10 But You have exalted my horn like that of a wild ox; / I am anointed with fresh oil.
1. This mingling is a corporate living of the conformity to the death of Christ in the power of the resurrection of Christ— Phil. 3:10.
Phil 3:10 To know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death,
2. Such a mingling living is in the resurrection of Christ, and the reality of the resurrection is the Spirit; this resurrection imparts the consummated Triune God and releases the death- overcoming life into the believers— John 11:25.
John 11:25 Jesus said to her, I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes into Me, even if he should die, shall live;
3. 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. 21:1-2, 9-11.
Rev 21:1 And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and the sea is no more.
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 21:9 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.
4. The corporate living of the perfected God-men as the reality of the Body of Christ will close this age, the age of the church, and bring Christ back to take, possess, and rule over the earth with these God-men in the kingdom age—Psa. 24:1-2, 7-10; 72:1-8, 11; Rev. 1:7; 14:14; 20:4.
Psa 24:1 The earth is Jehovah's, and its fullness, / The habitable land and those who dwell in it.
Psa 24:2 For it is He who founded it upon the seas / And established it upon the streams.
Psa 24:7 Lift up your heads, O gates; / And be lifted up, O long enduring doors; / And the King of glory will come in.
Psa 24:8 Who is the King of glory? / Jehovah strong and mighty! / Jehovah mighty in battle!
Psa 24:9 Lift up your heads, O gates; / And lift up, O long enduring doors; / And the King of glory will come in.
Psa 24:10 Who is this King of glory? / Jehovah of hosts
Psa 72:1 O God, give Your judgments to the king, / And Your righteousness to the son of the king.
Psa 72:2 He will judge Your people in righteousness, / And Your poor with justice.
Psa 72:3 The mountains will bear peace to the people, / And the hills, in righteousness.

Psa 72:4 He will judge the poor of the people; / He will save the children of the needy /
And crush the oppressor.

Psa 72:5 They will fear You as long as the sun endures / And as long as the moon
endures / Throughout the generations.

Psa 72:6 He will drop like rain upon mown grass, / Like abundant showers dripping on
the earth.

Psa 72:7 In His days the righteous will flourish, / And there will be an abundance of
peace / Until the moon is no more.

Psa 72:8 And He will have dominion from sea to sea / And from the River unto the ends
of the earth.

Psa 72:11 And all the kings will bow down before Him; / All the nations will serve Him.

Rev 1:7 Behold, He comes with the clouds, and every eye will see Him, even those who
pierced Him; and all the tribes of the land will mourn over Him. Yes, amen.

Rev 14:14 And I saw, and behold, there was a white cloud, and on the cloud One like the
Son of Man sitting, having a golden crown on His head and a sharp sickle in
His hand.

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.