

## Message Five

### **Living in the Reality of the Body of Christ by Living in the Inward Parts of Christ Jesus**

Scripture Reading: Eph. 1:22-23; 3:16-17a, 19b; 4:16; Phil. 1:8

#### **I. If we would have the reality of the Body of Christ, we must allow Christ to make His home in our hearts—Eph. 1:22-23; 3:17a; 4:16:**

- A. The Body of Christ is built up by Christ as the Spirit entering into our spirit and spreading Himself from our spirit into our mind, emotion, and will to occupy our entire being—3:16-17a; 4:16.
- B. The reality of the Body of Christ is the inner experience of the indwelling Christ—Col. 1:27; 2:19; 3:4, 10-11, 15-16; 4:15-16.
- C. It is only by the inner experience of Christ as life that we can have the reality of the Body of Christ—1:27; 3:4, 10-11; 2:19.
- D. When Christ makes His home in our hearts, we will be filled unto all the fullness of God; this fullness is the church, the Body of Christ, as the corporate expression of the Triune God—Eph. 3:17a, 19b.
- E. The reality of the Body life is the issue of the immeasurable Christ making His home in our hearts—vv. 17-18; 4:16.
- F. The content of the church as the Body of Christ is the Christ who has been wrought into our being—Gal. 1:15-16; 2:20; 4:19; Col. 3:4, 10-11.

#### **II. If we would live in the reality of the Body of Christ, we need to live in the inward parts of Christ Jesus—Phil. 1:8; Eph. 4:16:**

- A. As a man, Christ had the human inward parts with their various functions, and Christ's experiences in His inward parts were His experiences in His mind, emotion, will, soul, heart, and spirit, including His love, desire, feeling, thought, decision, motive, and intention—Luke 2:49; John 2:17; Matt. 26:39; Isa. 53:12; 42:4; Mark 2:8.
- B. Paul was a person who continually experienced Christ in His inward parts—Phil. 2:5; 1 Cor. 2:16b; Rom. 8:6:
  - 1. Paul was one with Christ even in His inward parts—in His affection, tender mercy, and sympathy—Phil. 1:8.
  - 2. Paul did not keep his own inward parts but took Christ's inward parts as his:
    - a. Paul took not only Christ's mind but also His entire inner being.
    - b. Paul's inner being was changed, rearranged, and remodeled.
    - c. His inner being was reconstituted with the inward parts of Christ.
  - 3. What was in Christ as truthfulness—honesty, faithfulness, and trustworthiness—was also in Paul—2 Cor. 11:10.
  - 4. Paul's love for the saints was not his natural love but the love in Christ, which is Christ's love; thus, Paul loved the saints not by his natural love but by the love of Christ—1 Cor. 16:24.
- C. To live Christ requires that we remain in the inward parts of Christ Jesus—Phil. 1:21a, 8:
  - 1. Paul experienced the inward parts of Christ; he was one with Christ in His inward parts in longing after the saints—v. 8.

2. Paul did not live a life in his natural inner being; he lived a life in the inward parts of Christ—Col. 3:12.
  3. If we would be those who are in Christ, we must be in His inward parts, in His tender and delicate feelings—John 15:4a.
  4. To live Christ is to abide in His inward parts and there to enjoy Him as grace—Phil. 1:7; 4:23.
- D. In the book of Philemon we have a picture of the Body life lived in the inward parts of Christ Jesus—vv. 7, 12, 20.
- E. Paul lived in the reality of the Body of Christ by taking Christ's feeling as his own feeling; Christ's feeling for the Body became his feeling for the Body—Phil. 1:8:
1. Paul took the inward parts of Christ Jesus as his own inward parts in caring for the Body of Christ—v. 8.
  2. Like Paul, we should take the feeling of the Head as our own feeling; this is most necessary for our living in the reality of the Body of Christ—Col. 3:12.
- F. If we as members have the feeling of the Head in everything, we will consider the Body and care for the Body—1 Cor. 12:12-27.

**III. The more we live in the inward parts of Christ Jesus, the greater will be our consciousness of the Body of Christ and the stronger will be our feeling for the Body of Christ—vv. 26-27; Rom. 12:15:**

- A. As members of the Body of Christ, we need to have the consciousness of the Body and a feeling for the Body; the Body is universal, and the consciousness of the Body and a feeling for the Body are also universal—1 Cor. 12:26-27; Phil. 1:8.
- B. In order to live in the reality of the Body of Christ, we need to be conscious of the Body of Christ—Rom. 12:4-5, 15.
- C. The consciousness of the Body of Christ is the sense of Christ's life within us—Col. 3:4, 15; Rom. 8:2, 6, 10-11; 12:4-5:
1. If we exercise this sense, it will cause us to be conscious of matters related to the Body—v. 15.
  2. If we cultivate this sense, it will enable us to detect problems in the Body.
  3. If we exercise this sense often and if we love the Lord and care for the church, this sense will become the sense, the consciousness, of the Body—2 Cor. 11:28-29.
- D. When others suffer or are blessed, we will identify with them and feel the same hardship or blessing if we have the consciousness of the Body—1 Cor. 12:26-27.
- E. We cultivate the consciousness of the Body of Christ by living in the inward parts of Christ—Phil. 1:8; Col. 3:10-12, 15; Philem. 7, 12, 20:
1. Since we are members of the Body of Christ, we need to have the consciousness of the Body and have a feeling for the Body by living in the inward parts of Christ Jesus—1 Cor. 12:26-27.
  2. By living in the inward parts of Christ Jesus, taking His feeling and view as our feeling and view, we will practice the church life in the reality of the Body of Christ—Phil. 1:8.