

HWMR - THE GENUINE CHURCH LIFE, Week 05

The Scriptural Way to Meet and to Serve for the Building Up of the Body of Christ

Scripture Reading: Rom. 15:16; Heb. 10:24-25; Eph. 4:11-16; 1 Cor. 14:4b, 31; 2 Cor. 4:16; John 21:15-17

- Romans 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.
- Hebrews 10:24-25 And let us **consider** one another so as to **incite** one another to love and good works, 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
- Ephesians 4:11-16 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, 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, 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, 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.
- 1 Cor. 14:4,31 ... but he who **prophesies** builds up the church. For **you can all prophesy one by one** that all may **learn** and all may **be encouraged**.
- 1 Co. 4:16 Therefore we do not lose heart; but though our outer man is decaying, yet **our inner man** is being **renewed day by day**.
- John:15-17 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**. 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**. 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 ball things; You know that I love You. Jesus said to him, **Feed My sheep**.

I. We must see and practice the crucial points concerning the light and revelation we have received from the Lord regarding the scriptural way to meet and to serve for the building up of the Body of Christ:

- A. We must **function** as priests of the gospel, **preaching** the gospel and saving people by visitation—Rom. 15:16; Luke 10:1-6.
- B. We must **meet** in the new believers' homes, **nourishing** and cherishing them, so that our fruit may remain—Acts 5:42; John 15:16.
- C. We must **teach** and **perfect** the saints through the vital group meetings unto the New Testament work of the ministry, unto the building up of the Body of Christ—Heb. 10:24-25; Eph. 4:11-12:
 1. In the vital group meetings the believers need to have **mutual fellowship** and **intercession**, mutual **care** and **shepherding**, mutual **teaching** and **studying** of the truth, and mutual **instruction** in the pursuit of the growth in the spiritual life, for the promotion of the preaching of the gospel, the care for the new ones, the conducting of the group meetings, and all other kinds of service in the church life.
 2. The vital group meetings are the main part of the life and service of the church.
- D. We must **lead** the saints to pursue and desire **prophesying** in the church meetings, speaking for the Lord, speaking forth the Lord, supplying the Lord to others, and speaking and listening to one another in mutuality for the building up of the saints and the church—1 Cor. 14:1, 3-5:
 1. This kind of prophesying is what **every believer can and should do**—vv. 31, 24.
 2. This kind of prophesying for the building up of the church is the **most excelling** of all gifts and is highly recommended by the apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 14—vv. 12, 39.
- E. The church is an **organism** as a mingling of God and man produced by the processed Triune God in His Divine Trinity—Eph. 1:3-14, 19-23:
 1. This organism is **constituted organically** rather than organizationally—v. 23.
 2. This organism is built up **through the growth of the life of God** rather than by works in the hands of man—4:16.
 3. This organism is **one in the life of God** and does not permit any distinction or separation—v. 4a.
 4. All movements of this organism are **led and promoted by the life** that operates within it— v. 30.
- F. The revelation in **Ephesians 4:11-16** must be recovered:

1. The **gifts perfect** all the saints so that the latter may do the work of the New Testament ministry for the building up of the Body of Christ—v. 12.
 2. The gifts are **the joints of supply** in the Body of Christ, and the perfected saints are “*each one part*,” operating in their **own measure** in the Body of Christ—v. 16a.
 3. The **gifts as the supplying ones** form the connecting structure of the Body of Christ, and every functioning member becomes the compacting constituent in the Body; the two added together cause the Body to be fitted, knit, and built up together—v. 16b.
- G. The revelation of **1 Corinthians 14** must also be recovered following the recovery of Ephesians 4:11-16:
1. The saints who are perfected by the gifts should **pursue and desire prophesying**, speaking for the Lord, speaking forth the Lord, and supplying others with the Lord, that the church may be built—1 Cor. 14:1, 3-5.
 2. This kind of prophesying that is for the building up of the church and that excels over all other gifts is a matter of **speaking** and **listening in mutuality**—vv. 12, 24, 31.
 3. This kind of prophesying that is full of speaking and listening in mutuality stirs up the spiritual organic **function of the members** of the Body of Christ; it edifies and builds up the church—v. 4b; cf. Matt. 16:18.
- H. We must be one with the Lord and cooperate with Him to recover the New Testament **priesthood** of the gospel—Rom. 15:16:
1. All the saved believers of God in the New Testament are **priests**; together they become the universal priesthood—Rev. 1:5b-6; 5:9-10; 1 Pet. 2:5, 9.
 2. The **main duty** of the New Testament priests is to **preach the gospel** to lead sinners to be saved and to offer them up as spiritual sacrifices; this is why they are called the priests of the gospel—vv. 9, 5; Rom. 15:16.
 3. Whether it be in the vital group meeting, in the prophesying in the church meetings, in the preaching of the gospel by visiting people, or in the care for the new ones, the principle is the same—**we must make all the saints the members of the Body of Christ, with everyone working, everyone functioning according to his measure, for the building up of the organic Body of Christ.**

II. In order to practice the scriptural way to meet and to serve for the building up of the Body of Christ, we need a **revived living** and a **labor in shepherding** that flow out from our love of the Lord:

- A. The revival that we are speaking about is the **renewing** described in 2 Corinthians 4:16; every day we need a renewal, and this renewal has to **be refreshed day by day**:
1. **Every morning** we should allow the Lord Jesus, our Sun, to rise up in us so that we can **be renewed**—Luke 1:78-79; Mal. 4:2; Judges. 5:31.
 2. In order to achieve this, all of us should **rise up early in the morning to fellowship with the Lord**; we should **pray to the Lord**, “Thank You, Lord, for a new beginning; may this day be a memorable day in my life”; this is what we call a morning-by-morning revival.
 3. **Every morning** we should **offer up Christ** as our burnt offering and peace offering based upon His being our sin offering so that we may have a new beginning; not only must we do this **every day**, but we must also do it **with sweetness and depth**—Lev. 6:12-13.
 4. To have a revival that is **renewed daily** is to have a transformation that is fresh daily; if we remain in this transformation our whole life, we will grow in the life of the Lord until we are matured—Rom. 12:2; 2 Cor. 3:18.
- B. We need to live an **overcoming life** by **consecrating everything** that we have to the Lord out of our love for Him and to strive to **redeem every bit of time** to contact people for shepherding and perfecting them—John 21:15-17; 1 Pet. 5:1-4:
1. As soon as we hear of anyone sick or of anyone encountering problems, we must be concerned for him, pray for him, and go to visit him; the impact that this little bit of concern, prayer, and visiting affords is far more powerful than ten messages.
 2. If we have a heart for the Lord, from now on **we should have a revival every day to live the overcoming life, to consecrate everything for the Lord, and to strive to redeem every bit of time to care for people one by one.**
 3. Another important thing to do in our shepherding is to contact people before and after the meetings.
- C. Only by this will the **organic building up** of the Body of Christ in Ephesians 4:11-16 and the meetings of mutuality in 1 Corinthians 14:26 be realized and practiced among us; for this **we need a daily revival and a daily overcoming as the base; we also need a life and a work (a revived living and a labor in shepherding) that flow out from our love of the Lord in order to maintain our victory.**