

THE INTRINSIC AND ORGANIC BUILDING UP OF THE CHURCH AS THE BODY OF CHRIST, Week 1

The Intrinsic Essence of the Church for Its Organic Existence

Scripture Reading: 1 John 1:2; John 1:12-13; 3:29-30; 12:24; Gen. 2:21-23; 1 Cor. 12:12, 28

- 1 John 1:2 (And the life was manifested, and we have seen and testify and report to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us);
- 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.
- John 3:29 He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices with joy because of the bridegroom's voice. This joy of mine therefore is made full.
- John 3:30 He must increase, but I must decrease.
- 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.**
- Genesis 2:21 And Jehovah God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh in its place.
- Genesis 2:22 And Jehovah God built the rib, which He had taken from the man, into a woman and brought her to the man.
- Genesis 2:23 And the man said, This time this is bone of my bones / And flesh of my flesh; / This one shall be called Woman / Because out of Man this one was taken.
- 1 Corinthians 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 Corinthians 12:28 And God has placed some in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers; then works of power, then gifts of healing, helps, administrations, various kinds of tongues.

We need to see that the **church is one**. It is the **only church of the unique God**. This church is the unique Body of Christ, and Christ is the Head of this Body. In John 17 the Lord prayed that we all might be one, but if we look at Christian history throughout the past nineteen centuries, we will find that the Christians have been fighting one another. The strange thing is that if we Christians had never come together, we would have no fighting. If there had been no marriage, there would be no divorce. Every divorce had its beginning with a dear, sweet, precious marriage.

There are four intrinsic matters of the church. The first of these is the **essence of the church**. Then the **growth of the church** is also intrinsic. If a tree grows, it grows in its intrinsic part. Following the growth is the **building up of the church**. The fourth intrinsic element of the church is its **fellowship**. The essence, the growth, the building up, and the fellowship are all very intrinsic. If every Christian remained in these four intrinsic matters, we would have no problems. Whenever we turn from the intrinsic matters to something that we can touch outwardly and that we can see outwardly, we are on the way to "divorce." This is because all the outward, physical things are dividing factors.

If we learn this lesson and receive the grace of the Lord, we will say, "Lord, save me! Rescue me, and turn me from the outward to the intrinsic." Then immediately we will be one. This is why I am so burdened to fellowship about these four crucial things: the intrinsic essence, the intrinsic growth, the intrinsic building up, and the intrinsic fellowship. (*The Organic Building Up of the Church as the Body of Christ to be the Organism of the Processed and Dispensing Triune God, chapter 1*)

Day 1

- 1 John 1:2** (And the life was manifested, and we have seen and testify and report to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us);
- 1 John 5:1** Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been begotten of God, and everyone who loves Him who has begotten loves him also who has been begotten of Him.

I. The intrinsic essence of the church is the [divine life](#), which generates the church— 1 John 1:2; 5:1:

- A. The intrinsic essence of the church is the divine life, the indestructible life, which the processed Triune God has dispensed into us and is [now dispensing into us](#); this divine life is actually the [processed and now-dispensing Triune God](#)—John 14:6; 10:10b; 1 Cor. 15:45b; Rom. 8:2, 10, 6, 11; 2 Cor. 5:4:
1. The divine life [generates](#) us by the regeneration of the Spirit in our spirit; the divine Spirit begets the human spirit, and these two spirits are mingled as one—John 3:3, 5-6; Rom. 8:16; 1 Cor. 6:17.

Day 2

- Genesis 2:22** And Jehovah God built the rib, which He had taken from the man, into a woman and brought her to the man.
- 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 3:29-30** He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices with joy because of the bridegroom's voice. This joy of mine therefore is made full. He must increase, but I must decrease.

2. When we are regenerated, we are made the children of God [as the bride of Christ](#), who is the Bridegroom, for His increase, as typified by Eve as the counterpart to Adam— John 1:12-13; 3:29-30; Gen. 2:21-23:
 - a. Before Eve came into existence, she was a rib of Adam, a part of Adam; according to this revelation, we can say that [before the church came into existence, she was a part of Christ](#); just as the members of our physical body are parts of us, the members of Christ are parts of Christ—vv. 21-23; Eph. 1:3-6; 1 Cor. 12:12; Rom. 12:5; cf. Acts 9:5.
 - b. Just as Adam's rib imparted life into Eve to make her Adam's counterpart, so Christ's eternal, divine, indestructible life imparts life into us [to make us His counterpart](#)—Gen. 2:22; Heb. 7:16; 1 Cor. 15:45b; Rom. 8:2.
- B. Christ became the intrinsic essence of the church [through the release of His divine life](#) as the one grain of wheat falling into the ground and dying there for His multiplication—John 12:24; Luke 12:49-50.
- C. Christ became the intrinsic essence of the church [through the impartation of His divine life](#) as the firstborn Son of God in His resurrection, that God may have [many sons](#) as the [many brothers of Christ](#)—1 Pet. 1:3; Rom. 8:29; Heb. 2:11-12.

Day 3

- John 15:1** I am the true vine, and My Father is the husbandman.
- John 15:4-5** Abide in Me and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me. 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.

- D. The many brothers of Christ are His [many branches grafted into Him](#), the true vine in the universe, [to bear much fruit](#) for His enlargement in His spreading so that they might express the Triune God as His organism; when the branches of the vine receive a sufficient supply of the life-giving Spirit as the life-juice of Christ, they bear fruit as the overflow of the inner life supply—John 15:1, 4-5, 16, 8; Rom. 11:17, 24.
- E. This [organism of the Triune God](#) is the [organic Body of Christ](#), constituted with His many brothers as the many members of His organic Body—Eph. 1:22-23; Rom. 12:5.

Through the Impartation of the Divine Life by Christ as the Firstborn Son of God in His Resurrection So That God May Have Many Sons as the Many Brothers of Christ

We were made the children of God as the bride of Christ through the impartation of the [divine life by Christ](#), as the firstborn Son of God in His resurrection so that God may have many sons as the many brothers of Christ. The release of the divine life is one thing, but the impartation of the divine life is another. The divine life was released out of Christ's human shell. Now this released divine life has been [imparted into us](#), the believers of Christ. This took place at the time Christ was resurrected. His resurrection included us. We all were resurrected in Him, with Him, and by Him. Before we were born, we had already been resurrected nearly two thousand years ago. The church is a resurrected item. Before resurrection God had only one Son, His only begotten Son. In His resurrection He became the firstborn Son with many brothers. Now He is our big Brother, and we are the many sons of God. [The divine life imparted into us in Christ's resurrection is the intrinsic essence of the church](#), the organic Body of Christ. (*The Organic Building Up of the Church as the Body of Christ to be the Organism of the Processed and Dispensing Triune God, chapter 1*)

II. We need to see and experience the [organic existence](#) of the church—Eph. 1:17:

- A. The church exists in the universe as the [one universal church](#) of God for His universal expression, the fullness of God—1 Cor. 10:32; 12:28; Eph. 3:19b.
- B. The church is [spreading in many localities](#) on the earth [as the many local churches to be His local expressions](#)—Rev. 1:4, 11:

Day 4

1 Corinthians 12:28 And God has placed some in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers; then works of power, then gifts of healing, helps, administrations, various kinds of tongues.

Ephesians 4:3-6 Being diligent to keep the oneness of the Spirit in the uniting bond of peace: One Body and one Spirit, even as also you were called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism; One God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

1. In 1 Corinthians 12:28 Paul puts apostles (who are universal), prophets and teachers (who are both universal and local), and deacons and elders (who are local) all together; this means that the word church in this verse implies the [universal church and all the local churches](#).
 2. In the eyes of God the universal church and all the local churches are just "[the church](#)"; the processed and now-dispensing Triune God is one, and He is the very essence of the church; therefore, this church, in both its universal and local aspects, is [one church](#).
- C. When we come back to the intrinsic essence of the church for its organic existence, we will not talk wrongly about the erroneous teaching that the local churches could be different from one another; [all the churches are the unique, one organism of the processed and dispensing Triune God](#).
- D. According to the Scriptures, the practical, sevenfold oneness is for us to be (1) one in [teaching](#) (1 Cor. 4:17; 7:17; 16:1; Acts 2:42; Rom. 16:17; 1 Tim. 1:3-4; 6:3; Eph. 4:13-14), (2) one in [practice](#) (1 Cor. 11:16; 14:33b-34), (3) one in [thinking](#) (Phil. 2:2, 5-8; 4:2; 1 Cor. 1:10), (4) one in [speaking](#) (Rom. 15:6; 1 Cor. 1:10), and (5, 6, & 7) one in [essence, appearance, and expression](#) (Rev. 1:11-12).

Not only the universal church but also the local churches are one. They are [intrinsically one in the processed and dispensing Triune God](#). To solve our problems today, we must come back to the intrinsic essence of the church. If today we all limit ourselves to the one intrinsic essence of the church, every problem will be solved. To talk about whether all the churches are one or separate is to talk in darkness. This is talk without a vision of the intrinsic essence of the church. This chapter should be used by the Lord to "open the window" for us to look into and see the very intrinsic essence of the church and all the churches. In the eyes of God, the universal church and all the local churches are just "the church." [The processed and now-dispensing Triune God is one, and He is the very essence of the church](#). Therefore, this church, in both its universal and local aspects, is one church. When we come back to the intrinsic essence of the church, we will not talk wrongly about the differences of the churches. All the churches are the unique, one organism of the processed and dispensing Triune God. (*The Organic Building Up of the Church as the Body of Christ to be the Organism of the Processed and Dispensing Triune God, chapter 4*)

Day 5

2 Corinthians 11:2-3 For if I cause you sorrow, who then is the one who makes me glad, except the one who is made sorrowful by me? And I wrote this very thing to you that when I come I would not have sorrow from those who ought to make me rejoice, having confidence in you all that my joy is the joy of you all.

III. We must continuously exercise our spirit (1 Tim. 4:7) and turn our heart to the Lord (2 Cor. 3:16-18) in order to stay on the way of life in the reality of the intrinsic essence of the church for its organic existence:

- A. We must **walk in the way of life** to **live by the tree of life** according to the spirit, not in the way of death to live by the tree of the knowledge of right and wrong according to the self—Gen. 2:9; Rom. 8:4, 6; 2 Cor. 2:13; Matt. 16:24.
- B. We stay on the way of life **by loving the Lord to the uttermost**; to believe in the Lord is to receive Him as life; to love the Lord is to **enjoy Him as life**—Mark 12:30; S. S. 1:4a.
- C. The love between us and the Lord depends on our **thoughts**:
 1. In 2 Corinthians 11:2 Paul says that he betrothed us to one husband to present us as a pure virgin to Christ with a **proper love** toward Him in order to enjoy Him; then in verse 3 Paul tells us that it is possible for our **thoughts** to be corrupted from the simplicity and the purity toward Christ.

Day 6

2 Corinthians 10:4-5 For the weapons of our warfare are not fleshly but powerful before God for the overthrowing of strongholds, As we overthrow reasonings and every high thing rising up against the knowledge of God, and take captive every thought unto the obedience of Christ.

2. The following symptoms of problems with man's thoughts are all **hindrances** to the enjoyment of Christ as life:
 - a. The first symptom of problems with man's thoughts is having **hardened thoughts**— 3:14.
 - b. The second symptom of problems with man's thoughts is being **blinded by Satan**— 4:4.
 - c. The third symptom of problems with man's thoughts is **rebellion**—10:4-5.
 - d. The fourth symptom of problems with man's thoughts is **corruption**—11:3.
3. We should pray, "O Lord, **search** my thoughts, and **rescue** my thoughts so that they can focus solely and entirely on You"—Rom. 8:6; Psa. 139:23-24.
4. To enjoy Christ as the intrinsic essence of the church, we must have a **burning love** toward Him by **giving Him the first place in all things**—Rev. 2:4-5, 7; Col. 1:18b; Rom. 12:11; 2 Tim. 1:6-7.
- D. May we **continuously receive the merciful compassions of our God** (Heb. 4:16; Luke 1:78-79) so that we may **remain on the way of life**, the line of life, and in the maintenance of life by enjoying Christ as the tree of life in the flow of life for God's building in life by our growth in life; this is for us to remain in the intrinsic essence of the church for its organic existence (Gen. 2:9; Rev. 22:1-2; Rom. 8:6; Eph. 4:15-16; Col. 2:19; John 6:57, 63; 7:38-39; 20:22).

OUR SPIRIT BEING LIFE

Romans 8:10 says, "If Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is life because of righteousness." That the spirit in this verse is not the Holy Spirit is proved by the fact that here Paul contrasts the body with the spirit. Paul says that the body is dead but that the **spirit is life**. We would expect him to say that the spirit is living. Instead, he says that the spirit is life, or zoe. When we call on the name of the Lord Jesus, this **zoe gets into our spirit and causes our spirit to become zoe**. Now not only the Triune God is life, but our spirit is also life. If we see this, we shall have the boldness to declare to the whole universe and especially to Satan that our spirit is life. We shall proclaim that at least one part of our being, our spirit, is zoe. Oh, how we all need this revelation! May we see not only that we are saved and regenerated, but also that **the innermost part of our being has become life**. (*Life-Study of Romans, chapter 62*)