

# Church in Regina

NEW LANGUAGE

CHRIST IS THE LORD BEFORE WHOM ELIJAH CAME TO PREPARE HIS WAY (MAL. 4:5-6).

## Loving the Lord and Loving One Another for the Organic Building Up of the Church as the Body of Christ—Week 3

### 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.**

According to the grammatical construction of verse 12, the work of the ministry is the building up of the Body of Christ. Ephesians 5:17 says, "Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is." Although it is common for Christians to say that we need to do the Lord's will, few understand what the Lord's will is. Ephesians reveals that **the Lord's unique will** is to **build up His Body.** We need to **pay our full attention to this matter.**

All the gifts—the apostles, prophets, evangelists, and shepherds and teachers—are given **not to build up an organization** but to **perfect the saints** to do the work of the ministry, which is to build up the Body of Christ. The gifts are given to perfect every member, no matter how large, small, strong, weak, old, or young. In our physical body there are parts of varying size, such as the shoulders, arms, hands, and fingers, yet **every part is a living, organic, and necessary member.** We should not think that we are too small or weak to be needed in the Body of Christ. Every believer is important and needed as a member of the Body.

We need to see **what is necessary** for us to build up the Body of Christ. Most Christians consider mainly their personal sanctification rather than the building up the Body. As a young believer, I was taught that I needed to learn to be holy. This is right. Even Ephesians says, "He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world to be holy and without blemish before Him in love" (1:4). However, the **primary matter and goal** in the Christian life is the **building up of the Body of Christ** (4:12, 16). Some Christian teachers say that the Body of Christ is only a metaphor or illustration, but this is not what the Bible says. Paul writes, "The church, which is His Body" (1:22-23). The church is the Body of Christ. Christ is the Head, and we are the members...

**To love the Lord in incorruptibility** is to **love Him in things that build up the Body of Christ...**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...[W]e 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 (*Excerpts from CWWL, 1988, vol. 1, pp. 557-558*).

### Announcements:

- ◆ Sisters' Meeting—Mar. 12 at 4pm
- ◆ Bible Distribution at University of Regina—Mar. 24
- ◆ Brothers' Meeting—April 2 at 6pm

### Church Meetings:

- ◆ Lord's Table, Lord's Day, 10:00-12:00PM
- ◆ Prayer Meeting, Tuesdays, 7:00-8:00PM
- ◆ YP & College Meetings, Fridays, 6:45-8:30PM
- ◆ Children's Meeting, Saturdays, 10:00-11:00AM
- ◆ Small Group, Fridays & Saturdays, 7:00-9:00PM

### Contact Us:

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## Prayer Burdens:

1. Lord, thank You for Your grace that enables us to live a church life that fulfills God's eternal purpose. May we be kept in a condition and atmosphere of love that we may love You in incorruptibility. We pray that we may be deeply rooted and grounded in love and know Your knowledge-surpassing love.
2. Bring us to God's inner substance so that we may enjoy God as love and enjoy His presence in the sweetness of the divine love. Save us from mere imitation. Duplicate Your love in us that we may love God, the things of God and all things that are in resurrection.
3. Renew us, Lord to love You in incorruptibility and in the new creation! Keep us from making a display of ourselves. We want to remain in the mysterious, hidden nature of the divine life. May we learn to love You in our regenerated, renewed and indwelt spirit!
4. Lord, preserve our first love for You. Strengthen us in the simplicity of enjoying Christ as our life supply. May we never leave our first love for You and lose the genuine enjoyment and our testimony.
5. Lord, we pray that we be kept in this divine love and do the work of the ministry to build up the Body of Christ. Bring us all to be perfected to function. Burden us to visit others with the gospel, shepherd the new believers, perfect the saints, and lead the saints to prophesy.
6. Lord, strengthen us into our inner man so that we may be supplied with the supporting grace. May we always exercise to turn to our spirit, and not to our soul, so that we can love You in incorruptibility. Grant us this miraculous yet normal way of church living, a life that continually overcomes.

## North America/Other Burdens

1. Pray for Sister Karen and Brother David's decision to move to Regina. Lead them and use this arrangement to pave the way for Brother David and their family to enter the church life.
2. Pray for Brother Isaac and Marie Hiebert who plan to move to Foam Lake at the beginning of April. May this move be one with the Lord's move for raising up a lampstand in that town.

## Church in Regina:

1. Lord, we pray for a regular station for a Bible distribution. Arrange a place for us where we can regularly set up a table, meet Your people, and preach the highest gospel.
2. Pray for the Bible Distribution at the University of Regina on March 24, 2023.

### Misaimings Concerning Law-Keeping

**Misaiming:** "As cars, being made as they are, only work well with gas in the tank, so we, being made as we are, only find fulfillment in a life of law-keeping. This is what we were both made for and redeemed for" (J. I. Packer, *Growing in Christ*, p. 232).

**Truth:** Such a statement is altogether contrary to God's economy (1 Tim. 1:3-7), which is focused on Christ, not on the law. Contrary to Packer's claim that we were made and redeemed for a life of law-keeping, the Bible reveals that **we were created by God as vessels to contain Christ and express Christ**. The law was not a factor in the origination of God's economy but was added because of the transgressions until the seed—Christ—should come (Gal. 3:19). The law is "our child-conductor unto Christ" (v. 24). Once we have received Christ and have been justified by faith in Him, we should be led by the Spirit (5:18) and walk by the Spirit (v. 16). The righteous requirement of the law is fulfilled not by those who practice law-keeping; on the contrary, the righteous requirement of the law is fulfilled in those who walk according to the spirit (Rom. 8:4). When we walk according to the spirit, we magnify Christ and express Christ. This is most pleasing to God the Father, whose intention is that Christ be revealed in us (Gal. 1:15-16), that Christ live in us (2:20), and that Christ be formed in us (4:19). Instead of trying in ourselves to fulfill the law, we should count all things loss for the sake of Christ, regarding them as refuse that we may gain Christ (Phil. 3:8) and be found in Him, not having our "own righteousness which is out of the law" (v. 9). Then Christ will become not only our objective righteousness for our justification but also our subjective righteousness in our daily living. In addition, we should allow Christ to make His home in our hearts through faith (Eph. 3:17) so that Christ may be "all and in all" (Col. 3:11). We were made for Christ; we were redeemed for Christ; and now we should live in Christ, for in "the economy of the fullness of the times" God will "head up all things in Christ" (Eph. 1:10). (Affirmation & Critique, *Knowing the Triune God*, Vol. I, No. 1, January 1996)

### Events, Conferences & Trainings:

#### Chinese-Speaking Conference

February 17-19, 2023, Anaheim, CA USA

#### March ITERO

March 24-26, 2023, Anaheim, CA USA

#### Memorial Day Conference

May 26-29, 2023, Chicago, IL USA

#### July Semiannual Training

July 3-8 2023, Anaheim, CA USA

#### October ITERO

October 5-7, 2023, TBD

#### Thanksgiving Conference

November 23-26, 2023, Dallas, TX USA

#### Dec. Semiannual Training

December 25-30, 2023, Anaheim CA USA