

## Message Three

### Living by Grace and Knowing the Body

Scripture Reading: 1 Cor. 15:10; 2 Cor. 12:9; 13:14; Rev. 22:21; Rom. 12:4-5; 1 Cor. 12:12

#### **I. In order to live a life for the fulfillment of God's eternal purpose, we need to live by the grace of God in the economy of God—2 Cor. 12:9; 13:14:**

- A. Grace is the manifestation of the Triune God in His embodiment in three aspects—the Father, the Son, and the Spirit—v. 14; Num. 6:22-27; Psa. 36:8-9:
  - 1. Grace is the Triune God in His incarnation to be dispensed into the believers by the Father as the source, by the Son as the element, and by the Spirit as the application—2 Cor. 13:14:
    - a. The source of grace, the element of grace, and the application of grace are the three persons of the Divine Trinity to be our everything—Matt. 28:19.
    - b. In the divine dispensing, grace is called the grace of God, the grace of Christ, and the grace of which the Spirit is—1 Cor. 15:10; 2 Cor. 1:12; 8:1, 9; 9:14; 12:9; 13:14; Heb. 10:29.
  - 2. Without being processed, the Triune God could not be grace to us; God the Father is embodied in the Son, the Son is realized as the life-giving Spirit, and the Spirit enters into us as grace for our enjoyment—John 1:14; 1 Cor. 15:45b; Heb. 10:29.
  - 3. Grace is Christ coming into us to be our full enjoyment—John 1:16; Phil. 4:23.
  - 4. Grace means God is everything, God does everything, and God gives everything—1 Pet. 5:10.
  - 5. Grace is the resurrected Christ as the life-giving Spirit bringing the processed Triune God into us to be our life and life supply so that we may live in resurrection—1 Cor. 15:10.
- B. The New Testament believers' living under the grace in God's economy is a total living of experiencing the processed and consummated Triune God as grace—Gal. 6:18; Heb. 4:16; Rev. 22:21:
  - 1. A total living means that our entire living is a living of the Triune God processed to be grace in us—2 Cor. 13:14.
  - 2. The Christian living must be the living of grace, the experience of grace; our Christian life is a life of having God as our grace—1:12.
  - 3. The grace of the Lord should be with each one of us in every aspect of our daily life—Rev. 22:21.
  - 4. We need to learn to enjoy the Lord Himself as grace—2 Cor. 12:9.
- C. The consummation of the believers' experience of the grace of God in His economy is the church as the Body of Christ—Eph. 1:6-8, 22-23:
  - 1. Our experience of the grace of God in our living and in our words and actions issues in the Body of Christ—vv. 6-8, 22-23; 2:8; 3:2; 4:4, 16, 29.
  - 2. The practical life of the Body of Christ comes forth only out of the enjoyment of Christ as the grace of God—1 Cor. 12:27; 15:10; 2 Cor. 8:9; 12:9; 13:14.

3. Every part of the organic Body of Christ is an issue of our experience of the grace of God in the economy of God—John 1:16; Rom. 5:21; 12:3-8.

## **II. In order to live a life for the fulfillment of God's eternal purpose, we need to know the Body—vv. 4-5; 1 Cor. 12:12-13, 20, 27; Eph. 1:22-23:**

- A. The goal of God's economy is to produce a Body for His Son; this Body fulfills God's desire for His expression and for the destruction of Satan—Rom. 12:4-5; 1 Cor. 12:12, 27; Eph. 1:22-23; 4:4, 16; Col. 1:18; 2:19; Gen. 1:26-28.
- B. 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 Body, the Lord Jesus will not return—Rom. 12:4-5; 16:16; 1 Cor. 1:2; 12:27; Eph. 1:23; 4:16; 5:27, 30; Rev. 19:7.
- C. Christ in Himself is the Head, and Christ in all of us is the Body—Rom. 8:10; 12:4-5; 2 Cor. 13:5; 1 Cor. 12:27; Eph. 3:17; 4:15-16; Col. 1:18, 27; 2:19.
- D. The work of the Triune God in us is to produce and build up the Body of Christ—Eph. 3:16-21; Rom. 8:11; 12:4-5.
- E. The Body is the governing law of the life and work of the children of God—Eph. 4:4, 16; 1 Cor. 12:4-6, 12-13, 27.
- F. All the problems of the church today are due to ignorance concerning the Body of Christ—Eph. 1:17-23:
  1. The biggest problem is not knowing the Body and not caring for the Body—vv. 17-23.
  2. The way that we behave ourselves in the church, the ministry, and the work depends upon the degree of our seeing the Body—Acts 22:10; 26:18-19.
- G. We need to know the Body in life—1 John 5:11-12; Col. 3:4; 2:19; Rom. 8:2, 6, 10-11; 12:4-5:
  1. The Body of Christ is formed by Christ as life in us; this life mingles with us to become the Body of Christ—1 John 5:11-12; Col. 3:4; 1:18; 2:19.
  2. Knowing the Body in life is the result of our experience of life and spiritual growth—1 John 2:12-14.
  3. Knowing the Body requires that we deal with the flesh, the self, and the natural constitution; only when the flesh has been dealt with, the self has been abandoned, and the natural constitution has been broken can we touch the reality of the Body—Gal. 2:20; 5:24; Matt. 16:24; Eph. 4:4-6.
  4. Knowing the Body is a dealing with individualism; those who do not know the Body are individualistic—1 Cor. 12:14-22.
- H. We need to know the Body in practice—vv. 20, 27; 15:58:
  1. A local church is an expression of the Body of Christ in a particular locality; the one universal church—the Body of Christ—becomes the many local churches—the local expressions of the Body of Christ—1:2; 10:32b; 12:12-13, 20, 27; Rom. 12:4-5; 16:1; Rev. 1:11; 22:16a.
  2. If we know the Body, in our consideration the Body will be first and the local churches will be second—Rom. 12:4-5; 16:1, 4, 16.