

Mature Saints' Outing

Aspects of the Normal Church Life of Older Saints

Numbers 8:25-26

And from the age of fifty years they shall retire¹ from the service in the work and shall serve no more. But they may minister to their brothers in the Tent of Meeting, to keep the charge, but they themselves shall do no service. Thus you shall do with the Levites concerning their charges.

Footnote 1, on the word "retire"

The word in vv. 25-26 concerning the retiring of the Levites indicates that what they have gained in experience through the twenty-five years of their service was still needed after the age of fifty. Because God is serious about the laws governing the tabernacle, the offerings, and the Levitical work, there was the need of some experienced ones to instruct God's people, especially the young ones, so that they would not become careless and unconsciously offend God in their service. The same need exists regarding the service in the church.

November 15, 2014

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Schedule

- 8:00 – 9:00 a.m. Continental Breakfast
- 9:00 – 10:00 a.m. Sharing – Outline #1: All Ages for the Lord's Testimony
- 10:00 – 10:40 a.m. Reading #1: Tempering of the Body and Caring for the Saints
- 10:40 – 11:00 a.m. Break
- 11:00 – 11:30 a.m. Sharing – Outline #2: Arriving at the Joy of the One New Man
- 11:30 – 12:00 p.m. Reading #2: Regarding Disposition and Overcoming Disposition
- 12:00 – 12:15 p.m. Overflow
- 12:15 – 1:15 p.m. Lunch
- 1:15 – 1:45 p.m. Audio of Ron Kangas: Kansas City Conference Fall 2013 – Msg. 3
(<http://www.churchinkansascity.org/kansas-city-conference-9-2013.asp>)
- 1:45 – 2:15 p.m. Sharing – Outline #3: Come, Go, Come and Visiting the Saints
- 2:15 – 2:35 p.m. Reading #3: Fellowship concerning Blending
- 2:35 – 3:00 p.m. General Overflow and Prayer

Outline 1

All Ages for the Lord's Testimony

- I. Going on with the Lord according to our age for the building up of the church.
 - A. The age groups for service:
 - 1. Those thirty years old to fifty years old being for maintaining the Lord's testimony – Num. 4:3.
 - 2. Those twenty years old to thirty years old were the fighting ones – Num. 1:3.
 - 3. The need for a five year apprenticeship for serving in the tabernacle – Num. 8:24.
 - 4. Even the youngest ones were useful in keeping the charge of the tabernacle – Num. 3:28.
 - B. Shepherding and ministering life:
 - 1. In the service, do not organize anything. Instead, exercise your spirit to pray and to minister life to others.
 - 2. It is easy to organize, but to shepherd requires considerable exercise of spirit, patience, and love.
 - 3. Shepherding also demands that we minister life to others, even to those who are not so open

- II. The young people fighting the battle, the new ones keeping the tabernacle, and the older ones caring directly for the tent of meeting.
 - A. Caring for Christ in different aspects:
 - 1. We need a number of experienced saints to take care of Christ as the ark, as the incense altar, as the showbread table, as the lampstand, and as the brass altar.
 - 2. Those who have experienced Christ in these ways should convey these aspects of Christ to the new ones.
 - B. Serving the Lord in the spirit; the saints should pray and function according to the spirit.
 - C. We need to experience Christ in certain specific aspects and then help others to also have these experiences of Him – Num. 3:25-26.
 - D. For the sake of having a living testimony, we need many who know Christ in a rich way and in many aspects.
 - E. Some among us need to experience Christ as the sockets that are weighty and full of Christ and as the boards that form the solid structure of the tabernacle – Num. 3:36-37.

Outline 1 (continued)

All Ages for the Lord's Testimony

- III. Maintaining the testimony of the oneness of the church in Christ.
 - A. Living by Christ, expressing Him in oneness, and being like-minded concerning Christ and the church – Rom. 15:5.
 - B. The young ones need someone to teach them by feeding them through fellowship – Rom. 12:4-8.
 - C. Using our homes for the preaching of the gospel and for the fellowshiping with the saints.
 - 1. If we minister the riches of Christ to others, they will be stirred up to seek the Lord.
 - 2. In our home meetings, we all teach the same things, concerning Christ and the church – 1 Tim. 1:3.

- IV. Shepherding the saints.
 - A. In the church life we need “mothers” and “fathers” to take care of the little ones, the weaker ones, and the uncomely ones.
 - B. Ministering life and shepherding – Prov. 11:25; Titus 2:3-5.
 - 1. Having a heart to care for those who are discouraged and not in the meetings.
 - 2. Shepherding others by teaching in the way of giving edifying and nourishing instructions – Eph. 4:11-13.
 - 3. Teaching others by what we do, for example, helping a new one to find the book of Haggai.
 - 4. Shepherding by fellowshiping to explaining the meaning of a Biblical term.
 - 5. Going to the weaker ones - this will cause the church meetings to be full of joy and glory.
 - 6. Being concerned for the lost sheep, bring them back.
 - 7. Having a heart to devote our very being to shepherding the saints.

Reading 1

Tempering of the Body and Caring for the Saints

In this message we shall consider some verses in 1 Corinthians 12. In verse 22 Paul says, “But much rather, the members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary.” We may think that the stronger ones are needed but that the weaker ones are burdensome. But this verse says that the weaker ones are necessary. They are necessary for the building up of the church. In the local church, therefore, there is the need for the weaker ones.

The Tempering of the Body

In verse 24 Paul tells us that “God has tempered the body together.” For the building up of the Body there is the need for tempering. In order for God to temper the Body, the weaker members are necessary. Paul’s word here was not only according to the revelation he had received, but also according to his experience. In his experience Paul realized that God needed the weaker members in order to build up the Body of Christ. We may think that if every member of the church in Anaheim were a Peter, a Paul, or a John, the church would be wonderful. Perhaps it would be wonderful, but it would not be tempered. It would not be balanced. The Lord does not want a church that is extreme and unbalanced.

Beautifying the Less Honorable Members

Continuing verse 22, verse 23 says, “Those members of the body which we think to be less honorable, these we clothe with more abundant honor; and our uncomely members have more abundant comeliness.” If we consider that a certain brother or sister is less honorable, then we need to clothe that one with more abundant honor. This means that we need to beautify him by clothing him. All the weaker ones are worthy of our respect because they are needed. Likewise, all the seemingly less honorable ones need to be clothed with more abundant honor. After these members are clothed with honor, they will have more abundant comeliness.

With what are we to clothe the apparently less honorable members? We must clothe them with Christ. According to the book of Exodus, the tabernacle had four layers of coverings. These coverings typify Christ. Furthermore, all the textiles related to the tent of meeting are types of Christ in different aspects. In order to clothe others with Christ, we need to experience Him in a rich way as our clothing, covering, and beautification. Then we shall be able to clothe our brothers and sisters with Him.

Suppose a certain sister is inclined to argue with her husband. Furthermore, suppose her husband, a brother in the church, has a bad temper. In your eyes this brother and sister may not be very honorable. What should you do with them? Should you give up on them or criticize them? No. If you are faithful to shepherd them, you will clothe them with Christ by ministering Christ to them. It will not help to adjust this sister by teaching her to submit to her husband. In speaking to her about her habit of arguing with her husband, you need to care for Christ. You may say, “Sister, in our daily life we should not only follow the Lord Jesus, but also live by Him as our life.

If you argue with your husband, you are not living by Christ. Our desperate need today is to live by Christ.” Perhaps such fellowship will stir up that sister to pray that she may live by Christ. In her prayer she may ask the Lord to help her to live by Him in dealing with her husband. Through this kind of shepherding the sister is clothed and beautified with Christ. Christ is ministered to her as her beautifying element. This is what it means to clothe the less honorable ones with the honorable Christ. This should take place continually in the Lord’s recovery. By being instructed how to take Christ as life and how to live by Him, we shall eventually overcome our habit of arguing or of losing our temper.

The Comely and the Uncomely

In verse 24 Paul goes on to say, “Our comely members have no need.” Those who are comely have no need and therefore do not require any particular care. In a sense, we may forget about them. Both the comely and uncomely ones are necessary. The difference here is that the comely ones have no need because they are already comely. The uncomely ones, on the contrary, need to be clothed with honor in order to have more abundant comeliness.

These verses speak of three kinds of members: the weaker ones, the less honorable or uncomely ones, and the comely ones. Which kind are you? Actually, we are not able to say whether we are a weaker one, a less honorable one, or a comely one. We should have no confidence in our estimation. I simply do not know what kind of a member I am. However, I can discern when a particular brother is lacking in honor or comeliness. How can I be at peace as long as my brother has such a lack? I should not be at peace until I clothe him with Christ. If we all practice this, how different the church life would be!

Consoling the Little-Souled

First Thessalonians 5:14 also speaks of the fainthearted or little-souled (Gk.). Because some were born with a small soul, they are easily offended, disappointed, or discouraged. Others, on the contrary, were born with a large soul and can withstand a great deal of ill treatment. Those with a small soul can bear hardly anything. Sooner or later in the church life, you will meet some brothers and sisters who have little souls. If there were not this kind of person in the church, the Bible would not speak of consoling or comforting the little-souled ones. What will you do with them? You cannot neglect them. If you try to avoid them, the Lord will add many more like them. The little-souled ones are needed by the stronger ones.

Because the little-souled brothers and sisters cannot withstand hardship, we need to comfort them. We need to speak to them in a very kind way to keep from offending them. If a brother comes to you troubled because his wife is upset, do not say much to him and do not argue with him. Rather, tell him that you will pray for him. Instead of reasoning with the little-souled ones, you should comfort them.

Reasoning will only hurt them. Our ability to comfort such a one depends altogether on how much we have experienced of Christ. If you have experienced Christ as the incense altar, you will be able to tell a little-souled brother that today Christ, our High Priest, is interceding for him and his problems. In this way, you minister Christ to him. Do not try to comfort the little-souled with mere human words, but comfort him with the Christ you have experienced in various aspects. When a little-souled one is nourished with Christ, he will be comforted. Let us learn to comfort the little-souled ones with Christ.

Upholding the Weak

In 1 Thessalonians 5:14 Paul also tells us to “uphold the weak.” In order to uphold the weak, or the infirm, we need to experience Christ as the boards, the pillars, and the sockets in the tabernacle. Because the weak ones are not steady, they need Christ to be their board, pillar, or socket. Such a Christ will make them strong in standing.

Longsuffering with All

Finally, in this verse Paul tells us to be longsuffering with all men. Admonishing the disorderly, comforting the little-souled, and upholding the weak require patience. The disorderly, the little-souled, and the weak exhaust our natural patience. Therefore, to shepherd such saints we need Christ as our patience.

All Ages for the Lord's Testimony, Witness Lee, pp. 41-43, 46-48

Outline 2

Arriving at the Joy of the One New Man

- I. Four levels of the joy.
 - A. Level One – The joy of our initial salvation.
 - 1. All humans are thirsty and need a source to quench their thirst – John 7:37b.
 - 2. The Lord Jesus is the satisfying thirst-quenching drink – John 4:14.
 - 3. Our initial salvation results in the first level of joy.
 - B. Level Two – The joy of finding the church.
 - 1. All saved ones have a deeper need – the need for fellowship – John 15:4-5.
 - 2. In the church we have a rich and satisfying fellowship – 1 Cor. 1:9; 1 John 1:3; 2 Cor. 13:14.
 - 3. Our finding the church results in the second level of joy – a deeper joy than that of our initial salvation.
 - C. Level Three – The joy of being a member in the body of Christ.
 - 1. The church is not only an assembly of saved ones but it is the Body of Christ – 1 Cor. 12:27.
 - 2. As members in the body we are built up in love and supplied by the Lord’s grace to function in the way of mutuality and enable the Lord to carry out His work through us – Eph. 4:7, 13, 15-16.
 - 3. When we function as members of the Body of Christ we are filled with an even deeper joy.
 - D. Level Four – The joy of realizing the person of Christ in our participation in the one new man.
 - 1. Eventually we need to learn to live by the person of Christ – Phil. 1:8
 - 2. We need to be saved from “our own things” and genuinely express the care of Christ for the saints in the church – Phil 2:20-21.
 - 3. In the new man, we can rejoice in the Lord, having learned to “think the same thing” – Phil. 4:4, 2-3.
- II. The importance of our hearts to be encouraged and comforted.
 - A. The Lord Jesus exhorted the disciples “do not let your heart be troubled” – John 14:1.
 - B. Paul expressed his burden for the hearts of the saints to be comforted – Col. 2:1-2.

Reading 2

Regarding Disposition and Overcoming Disposition

Our Disposition, Our Growth in Life, and Our Usefulness in Service

According to my observation over many years, the real enemy of our growth in the divine life is our disposition. Our disposition is also the factor that spoils our usefulness in the hand of the Lord. Shortly after I was saved, I received the vision of the Lord's recovery through the writings of Brother Nee, and I left the denomination with which I was meeting. In 1932 the Lord raised up a church in my locality, and in 1934 I began to work with Brother Nee. Since that time, as one caring for the church and the work, I have had contact with many people and have come to know them.

I have learned that many saints eventually stopped growing in the divine life and could make no further progress. For the first few years of their Christian life they grew in the divine life very quickly. Eventually, however, their growth stopped due to a particular, peculiar aspect of their disposition. They had given up the world and had sacrificed many things for the Lord. They also listened to the messages and loved them. However, a particular, peculiar aspect remained in their being. That part of their makeup became a stronghold that held them back from making progress in the growth in life. There is little possibility for such saints to progress. Some saints have not grown in life for fifty years.

I have also seen some very promising saints who loved the Lord, sacrificed for Him in many ways, received a high education, and had much experience in sufferings and in the human life. As a rule, such ones are very useful to the Lord. However, because of a particular, peculiar aspect of their makeup, their usefulness was annulled. They did not insist on holding onto this aspect of their being; it simply remained in them and spoiled and stopped their usefulness.

Our particular traits can be compared to the grain in a piece of wood. A carpenter prefers to use wood that has an even grain. If the carpenter finds a piece of wood with an irregular grain, he will not use it. A piece of wood may be of good quality, but if it has a knot or a burl, it cannot be sawed easily; it is not useful. The Christians who do not have any peculiarity, any peculiar traits, are the ones who grow the most and the fastest. Likewise, the brothers and sisters who are the most useful are the ones who do not have any peculiar traits. In the service, the ones who are the most useful are the ones who always reject and deny what they are.

I have been observing the situation in the church for many years. When I was with Brother Nee, I saw a number of cases of rebellion, and in Taiwan and the United States I have seen several such cases. If we would diagnose these cases of rebellion, we could see that the source of the rebellion was the disposition of the persons involved. With almost no exceptions, the cause of each person's involvement in rebellion was their peculiar traits.

On the one hand, many of the dear saints who have been involved in a rebellion were very useful. On the other hand, there was a "burl" within them, causing something negative to grow and accumulate. The "burl" eventually annulled their usefulness and led to rebellion. Many other dear saints, however, have not rebelled, but they were more useful in former years than they are today. They have remained in the church, but their usefulness has been annulled by their disposition. In the Christian life and in the work, disposition is a great negative factor.

Our Disposition and Our Human Life

If we look back at our life, we can realize that many of our sufferings were caused by the peculiar traits in our disposition. Because of his disposition, a student may be frustrated from studying, and his professors may not care for him personally. As a result, he will not be able to make good grades. If that person's disposition could be changed, he would be able to make better grades. In a law court, a judge may be negatively influenced by a person's peculiar traits, causing that person not to receive a favorable judgment. Even in a family, one child may suffer more than the other children because of his disposition.

An employer may realize that an employee has a peculiar trait, but because the company needs him, they will keep him on. However, when the company begins to lay off its workers, he may be the first one to go. We may also suffer in our own neighborhood because of our peculiar traits. We may love people and love to help people, but because of our peculiar traits, none of our neighbors may care for us.

The negative factor in our marriage life and family life is our disposition. Seemingly, the problems between parents and children are due to certain mistakes. However, mistakes are easy to deal with. Mistakes are like dust on a desk top that can be wiped away. The real cause of the problems between parents and children are the peculiar traits in their makeup. If either the parents' or the children's disposition would change, there would not be such problems. However, even the parents are not able to change themselves. Eventually, the problems accumulate.

Year after year there is an accumulation of problems. This accumulation may be compared to the cause of earthquakes. An earthquake is caused by the gradual accumulation of pressure underneath the earth which finally breaks forth. Even though the parents and children love each other and live for each other for many years, the accumulation eventually may lead to a big problem.

Our peculiar traits also cause us to suffer in our marriage life. A husband and a wife may love each other, but after being married for several months, the wife may discover a "burl" in her husband. The real problem between husbands and wives is the particular and peculiar part of their makeup, their disposition. This is the factor that can make the husband and wife unhappy. A pleasant husband and a pleasant wife are those who have no peculiar traits.

A wife's beauty does not make her pleasant for long. A brother may be charmed by a sister's beauty while they are dating and on their wedding day, but after they live together for a short time, he may realize that he married a beautiful sister who is very hard to deal with. From that time on, the peculiar traits will cause trouble between them. The husband and wife may love and appreciate each other, but the accumulation of problems produced by their peculiar traits may eventually lead to divorce. In the church life, the accumulation of problems over many years may lead to rebellion.

Dealing with Our Disposition

In the four Gospels, Peter's most difficult dealing before the Lord was related to his disposition. Even by the time of Galatians 2:11-21, Peter's disposition had not yet been thoroughly dealt with. Something troubling still remained within him. According to the record of the whole New Testament, however, Peter eventually broke through. In Galatians 2 Paul rebuked Peter to his face because Peter still lived in his disposition to some degree, but in 2 Peter 3:15-16 Peter highly commended Paul. If Peter had been still living in his disposition, he would not have made such a strong commendation of the one who rebuked him. Rebuking offends people, but Peter was not offended. This may indicate that the "burl," the troublemaking factor, had been removed from him.

By man's hand there is no way to remove the factor of the disposition, but in the Lord's hand there is a way. In Matthew 19:25 the disciples asked the Lord, "Who then can be saved?" The Lord replied, "With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible" (Matt. 19:26). This word must have been fulfilled in Peter. In 2 Peter 1:5-11 Peter wrote concerning the development of what the Lord has given us by the growth in life unto the rich entrance into the eternal kingdom. Peter was able to write such a word because he had learned the spiritual lessons. The Lord broke through in him. It is impossible for us to break through the problem of our disposition, but it is possible for the Lord to do it.

In the first few years of our spiritual life, we may have grown quickly. However, our growth may have slowed down or even come to a standstill because of our disposition. We should be warned concerning our disposition. We must learn to take care of the "burl" in our makeup, our disposition. If we deal with the "burl," we will grow quickly and have a free way in our spiritual life without any hindrances to our growth in life. We will also become more useful to the Lord.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Question: Why does our disposition not frustrate our growth in life at the beginning of our spiritual life?

Answer: At the beginning of our spiritual life, our disposition was buried by our worldliness, weaknesses, and sins. We grew quickly by dealing with the world, our weak points, and our sins. After we dealt with these superficial, negative things, we reached a deeper problem. The deeper problem was what we are. In our being, there was a “burl.” Our free way was cut off. We could not go on and became blocked in our spiritual life. Our disposition has become our problem. It hinders us from growing in life and from being used by the Lord, and it has made trouble for us, causing us to suffer.

Living Stream Ministry, The Experience and Growth in Life, Chapter 24

How the Lord Deals with our Disposition

How does the Lord deal with our disposition? One way that the Lord deals with our disposition is by using our environment. The trials, sufferings, and failures that we pass through empty us out of everything that preoccupies us. As it was with Jacob, everything that preoccupies us in our inner being is being emptied out of us so that we can have an increased capacity to be filled with God. The Lord sovereignly allows us to pass through sufferings and even failures. We need to pray that by His mercy we would pass through all these trials, sufferings, and failures without remaining the same. It would be a tragedy if we were to pass through all these things but remain the same. We need to pray, “Lord, save me from remaining the same in Your recovery. Lord, renew me day by day. Bring me through the process of maturity.” On the positive side, in order to reject and deny what we are, we need to exercise our spirit. We always have to exercise our spirit to deny and reject what we are.

Another way in which the Lord deals with our disposition is through sanctification by the word. Ephesians 5:26 says, “That He might sanctify her, cleansing her by the washing of the water in the word.” Sanctification in this verse is dispositional sanctification, which is to be sanctified in our disposition. We are dispositionally sanctified by the washing of the water in the word. If we open to the rhema word, the living word applied to us, such as we have been receiving in these messages, we can experience dispositional sanctification.

The third way that the Lord deals with our disposition is by blending. Praise the Lord for blending! Blending saves us from what we are. It saves us and helps us to reject and deny what we are. The intrinsic meaning of blending is that we do everything through the cross and by the Spirit to dispense Christ into one another for the sake of the Body. Blending harmonizes us, adjusts us, and takes away all our distinctions. The distinctions created by our disposition are dealt with by genuine blending. I am so glad to be part of a group of brothers who, I feel, are in the process of being blended. I believe that through this blending process our distinctions are being eliminated from our being.

I hope that this word concerning dealing with disposition will be a help to us. I hope that we would be desperate before the Lord and allow Him to deal with our disposition so that we could grow in life, be transformed in life, and be brought on to maturity in life in order to have the overflow of life, the blessing, to the Lord’s recovery. (The Ministry of the Word, Vol. 18, No. 6 – July 2014, Crystallization–Study of Genesis 3 pp. 282-283.)

Outline 3

Come, Go, Come and Visiting the Saints

John 7:37; Matt. 11:28-29; Heb. 4:16; Acts 20:34-35; Col. 1:28-29; 3:10-11; Gal. 4:19

- I. The line of “Come, Go, Come” in the New Testament.
- II. Coming and going are a Christian’s breathing, living and fellowship.
- III. Experiencing “Come and Go”, having the work of gold, silver and precious stones, not wood, grass and stubble.
- IV. “Going” for different aspects of the need in the Lord’s recovery.
 - A. “Going” to younger saints.
 - B. “Going” to smaller and weaker churches.
 - C. “Going” to support campus work with students on major campuses.
 - D. “Going” to be with and support the job-dropping full-timers.
- V. Personal testimony regarding “going” to shepherd and care for the saints.

Reading 3

Fellowship concerning Blending

All the Local Churches Being the One Body of Christ

The Lord's recovery is a matter of the local churches. For us to experience the Lord's recovery, we must be in the local churches. However, a single local church, a single lampstand, in a single city is not adequate to express the testimony of Christ, nor is it adequate for the fellowship. The testimony and fellowship of the church are something of the Body. These matters need all the churches. For this the churches need to be able to come together; they need to be clustered.

The churches should be clustered, and the saints should be blended together. In the blending there is a great spiritual benefit and a mutual building up. This is something that belongs to the Body, to all the churches. The clustering of the churches also stirs up our mutuality. All the churches should be the same in fellowship, in the Lord's testimony, and in the building up.

The local churches should not be independent or isolated. They should be blended. They should come together. We should not think that it is good enough merely to be in the local church in our city. We need to be in the churches, that is, in the Body. The local churches individually do not express the Body of Christ. But when the local churches come together to be coordinated and knit together, there is the expression of the Body; there is the expression of the one new man on the earth. We are not merely for our locality. We are not individual Christians, and we are not even individual churches; we are the Body of Christ. We are the one new man.

The local churches are separated by the localities of their existence, but they express the same one Body. Collectively, corporately, the churches express the Body of Christ. In each locality there is some expression of the Body, but each local church, respectively, is still only a part of the Body. God desires to have the whole Body expressed. For this we need to come together to be blended together, to be knit together, and to be coordinated so that God can have His unique expression. When God has His expression, both He and we are satisfied.

1993 Blending Conference Messages concerning the Lord's Recovery and Our Present Need (Ch. 2)

The Blending of the Universal Body of Christ

God has blended the Body together (1 Cor. 12:24). The word blended also means adjusted, harmonized, tempered, and mingled. God has blended the Body, adjusted the Body, harmonized the Body, tempered the Body, and mingled the Body. The Greek word for blended implies the losing of distinctions.

In order to be harmonized, blended, adjusted, and tempered in the Body life, we have to go through the cross and be by the Spirit, dispensing Christ to others for the sake of the Body of Christ. Whatever we do should not be for our interest and according to our taste but for the church. As long as we practice these points, we will have the blending.

Among us we should have the blending of all the individual members of the Body of Christ, the blending of all the churches in certain districts, the blending of all the co-workers, and the blending of all the elders. Blending means that we should always stop to fellowship with others. Then we will receive many benefits. If we isolate and seclude ourselves, we will lose much spiritual profit.

Learn to fellowship. Learn to be blended. From now on, the churches should come together frequently to be blended. We may not be used to it, but after we begin to practice blending a few times, we will acquire the taste for it. This is the most helpful thing in the keeping of the oneness of the universal Body of Christ. Today it is very convenient for us to blend with one another because of this modern age with its modern conveniences.

We may come together without much blending because everyone stays in themselves. They are afraid to offend others and make mistakes, so they keep quiet. This is the manner of man according to the flesh. When we come together, we should experience the terminating of the cross. Then we should learn how to follow the Spirit, how to dispense Christ, and how to say and do something for the benefit of the Body.

Such a blending is not social but the blending of the very Christ whom the individual members, the district churches, the co-workers, and the elders enjoy, experience, and partake of.

The Divine and Mystical Realm (Ch. 6)

Reaching the High Peak of Zion

Although the recovery has been in the United States for more than thirty-two years, it has been only in these recent years that we have felt the need to enter into the reality of the Body of Christ. This is the purpose of the blending. Even among us who are in the recovery, not many have the realization that we need the blending, and we need it desperately. The heavy burden in the ministry that is on my heart and in my spirit is the matter of blending.

The highest peak of the Lord's recovery that can really, practically, and actually carry out God's economy is for God to produce not many local churches in a physical way but an organic Body to be His organism. We all have a physical body, but our body actually is not the reality of our being. My body is me, but it is not the reality of my being. Likewise, the churches set up around the globe are a physical frame, but among the churches there may be no reality of the Body of Christ.

The one church is expressed in the local churches because of physical reasons. We believers are scattered on this earth, so we cannot be in one location. We have to be in many locations, so in a sense, we have to be separated by localities. But we cannot forget that the churches are the Body of Christ. Ephesians 4 says that there is one Body (v. 4). Paul said that though we are many, we are still one bread and one Body (1 Cor. 10:17).

Therefore, we must pay much more attention to the Body of Christ than to the local churches. This does not mean that I annul the teaching of the local churches. We still need it. As a person we have a physical frame. That is our body. But a body by itself is a carcass. A physical body needs an inner life. Today the church is the same. On the one hand, it does have a frame, a body, but this frame is not the nature, the essence, or the element of the church. Ephesians 4 tells us the church is the Body.

Practical Points Concerning Blending (Ch. 2 & 3)

HYMNS

Hymn 473

No mortal tongue can e'er describe
The freedom of the soul,
When passed beyond all earthly bribe
To God's complete control.
All things are his, yes, life, and death,
Things present or to come;
In Christ he draws in peace each breath,
In Christ he finds his home.

When such as we the King can choose,
To share with Him His throne,
Tis passing strange that we refuse
To be our Lord's alone.
O never speak of sacrifice!
A privilege untold
Is to be His at any price,
In Calv'ry's hosts enrolled.

Arise! the holy bargain strike,
The fragment for the whole,
All men and all events alike
Must serve the ransomed soul.
All things are yours when you are His,
And He and you are one;
A boundless life in Him there is,
And kingdom yet to come.

Hymn 671

Deep down into the depths of this Thy Name,
My God, I sink and dwell in calm delight;
Thou art enough however long the day,
Thou are enough however dark the night.

Thou are my God – the All Sufficient One,
Thou canst create for me whate'er I lack;
Thy mighty hand has strewn the lonely track
With miracles of love and tender care.

For me Thy trusting one. My God I dare
One more to fling myself upon Thy breast,
And there adore Thy ways in faith's deep rest,
And there adore Thy ways in faith's deep rest.

Hymn 839

Lord, Thou art a potter skilled
And a glorious builder too,
Molding for Thy vessel great,
Building with Thy house in view.
I am both a man of clay
And a new-made living stone,
That Thy vessel I may be
And the temple Thou wouldst own.

Though of clay Thou madest us,
Thou wouldst have us be transformed;
With Thy life as purest gold,
Unto precious stones conformed.
We shall, through Thy building work,
Then become Thy loving Bride,
In one Body joined to Thee,
That Thy heart be satisfied.

What Thy heart desires and loves
Are not precious stones alone,
But together these to build
For Thy glory, for Thy home.
Thou, the all-inclusive Christ,
Dost a builded Church require,
That Thy glorious riches may
Radiate their light entire.

Not the person spiritual
In an individual way,
But the corporate life expressed
Will Thy heart's desire display.
Members separate and detached
Ne'er express Thee perfectly,
But Thy Body tempered, built,
Ever shall Thy fulness be.

Build me, Lord, with other saints,
Independence ne'er allow,
But according to Thy plan
Fitly frame and join me now.
In experience not my boast,
Nor in gifts would be my pride;
For Thy building I give all,
That Thou may be glorified.

Hymn 854

All the saints of Christ are
Members every one;
All coordinating
Into oneness come.

Though the gifts are many,
Yet the Spirit one;
Many too the functions,
But one Lord, the Son.

Each, the others needing,
Must impartial be;
Each his place possesses
And utility.

By our grace are measured
Gifts both large and small;
Each with sober judgment
Takes his place with all.

Each fulfills his duty,
Shows his usefulness,
Fervent in the spirit,
Girt with faithfulness.

Knitting and supplying,
Bearing much in grace;
Not a trace of discord,
Christ is giv'n His place.

We, the Church, His Body,
He, the Head, the Son;
By the Spirit's flowing,
We are joined in one.

Hymn 867

As members of the Body
Christ we would manifest,
Each learning how to function
His fulness to express;
We would not be spectators
But each as members move,
None bringing death or damage
But each our profit prove.

As in a team we'd never
Act independently,
But in coordination,
Each would dependent be;
Not acting by our choosing
But following the flow,
Distraction never bringing,
The Spirit's way we'd know.

On Christ we here would focus,
No other center make;
With Christ in sweet communion
His riches to partake.
He is our Head and content,
His Body we express;
Whate'er we do while meeting
Himself must manifest.

Built up in love together,
Not one would criticize;
To perfect one another,
We all would exercise.
Each one from self delivered,
The natural life forsakes;
In grace each trained in spirit
The Body-life partakes.

Hymn 1278

In the church of Jesus there is love for you
Love most pure and tender, love most deep and true;
Why should you be lonely, why for friendship sigh,
When the church of Jesus has a full supply?

In the church of Jesus there is life for you,
Warm as summer sunshine, sweet as morning dew;
Why should you be fearful, why take anxious thought,
Since the church of Jesus cares for those He bought?

In the church of Jesus there is work for you;
Such as even angels might rejoice to do;
Why stand idly sighing for some life work grand,
While the church of Jesus seeks your reaping hand?

In the church of Jesus there's a place for you;
Glorious, bright, and joyous, right and peaceful too;
Why then like a wand'rer, roam with weary pace,
If the church of Jesus holds for you a place.