

#4 The Supply of the Body, the Members of the Body, and the Limitation of the Body

(The International Chinese-speaking Conference: Living in the Reality of the Body of Christ by Keeping the Principles of the Body) 2019/6/17-23

I . The supply of the Body is the bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, typified by the compound ointment, the holy anointing oil: Phil. 1:19 For I know that for me this will turn out to salvation through your petition and the bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ.

A. The compound Spirit is in and for the Body and for the priestly service that builds up the Body.

B. According to Psalm 133, the inestimable goodness and incalculable pleasantness of brothers dwelling together in oneness is likened to the compound precious ointment. 133:1-2 Behold, how good and how pleasant it is For brothers to dwell in unity! It is like the fine oil upon the head That ran down upon the beard, Upon Aaron's beard, That ran down upon the hem of his garments; **Mon**

C. We receive the supply of the Spirit by the intercession and fellowship of the members:

1. When we are dry and have no way to go on, we need other brothers and sisters to intercede for us before we can get through.

2. We need to pray ourselves into God to receive the life-giving Spirit as our supply to feed ourselves and all those under our care for the building up of the Body. Luke 11:2-3 And He said to them, When you pray, say, Father, Your name be sanctified; Your kingdom come. Give us each day our daily bread. 13 If you then being evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the Father who is from heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him! **Tue**

3. We cannot live without the supply of the Body; therefore, we must constantly avail ourselves of the fellowship of the Body. 1 Thes. 3:8 Because now we live if you stand firm in the Lord. **4.** As long as we live in the Body, we will receive the supply of the Body, no matter what our condition is.

5. If a man wants to see light, he has to enter the church, the sanctuary. Psa. 73:16-17 When I considered this in order to understand it, It was a troublesome task in my sight, Until I went into the sanctuary of God; Then I perceived their end.

6. The whole Body is built up through the interdependence among the members. **Wed**

II . In the Body there can be no independence or individualism for we are members, and members cannot live in detachment from the Body: Rom. 12:5 So we who are many are one Body in Christ, and individually members one of another.

A. Every believer is a member of the Body of Christ, and every member is indispensable. 1 Cor. 12:14-15 For the body is not one member but many. If the foot should say, Because I am not a hand, I am not of the body, it is not that because of this it is not of the body... 21 And the eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of you; nor again the hand to the feet, I have no need of you.

B. "If we truly see our position in the Body, it will be as though we were saved a second time".

C. Those who see that they are members of the Body will surely treasure the Body and honor the other members.

D. Wherever there is Body-revelation, there is Body-consciousness, individualistic thought and action are

ruled out:

1. If we want to know the Body, we need deliverance not only from our sinful life and our natural life but also from our individualistic life.

2. Just as the Father is versus the world, the Spirit is versus the flesh, and the Lord is versus the devil, so also the Body is versus the individual.

3. Just as we cannot be independent from the Head, we cannot be independent from the Body.

4. Individualism is hateful in the sight of God:

a. The enemy of the Body is the self, the independent "I," the independent "me".

b. If we would be built up in the Body, the self must be condemned, denied, rejected, and renounced.

c. We should be dependent not only on God but also on the Body, on the brothers and sisters.

5. What I do not know, another member of the Body will know; what I cannot see, another member of the Body will see; what I cannot do, another member of the Body will do.

6. If we refuse the help of our fellow members, we are refusing the help of Christ.

1 Cor. 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.

7. Sooner or later all individualistic Christians will dry up.

III . As members of the Body, we must allow ourselves to be limited by the other members, not going beyond our measure: **A.** A basic requirement for the growth and development of the Body is that we recognize our measure and not go beyond it. **Thu/Fri**

B. The Head sets us in our special place in the Body and points us to our special function. 1 Cor. 12:18-20 But now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body, even as He willed. And if all were one member, where would the body be? But now the members are many, but the body one.

C. When we give a testimony about our work, experience, or enjoyment of the Lord, we must testify within measure, that is, within a certain limit.

D. Although we expect the work to spread, we must learn how to be under God's restriction; we should not expect a spread that is without measure: **1.** If we spread the work according to the Spirit, there will always be a certain limit.

2. Inwardly, we shall have the consciousness that the Lord intends to spread the work only to a certain extent; inwardly, we do not have the peace to spread the work beyond a certain point.

3. Outwardly, in the environment, the Lord may cause certain matters to restrict the spread of the work; the environment does not allow us to go beyond a particular boundary line.

4. Like Paul we should move and act according to how much God has measured to us, staying within the limits of God's ruling, God's measuring. **5.** In the church service we need to realize that God has measured out only so much to us, and we should not overstretch ourselves. Rom. 12:4 For just as in one body we have many members, and all the members do not have the same function. **Sat**

Crucial Point①: Participate in the supply of the Body in the life of the Body and shepherd the 6 kinds of new ones

OL1: The supply of the Body is the bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, typified by the compound ointment, the holy anointing oil. **OL2:** The compound Spirit is in and for the Body and for the priestly service that builds up the Body. **OL3:** When we are dry and have no way to go on, we need other brothers and sisters to intercede for us before we can get through. **OL4:** We need to pray ourselves into God to receive the life-giving Spirit as our supply to feed ourselves and all those under our care for the building up of the Body. Phil. 1:19 For I know that for me this will turn out to salvation through your petition and the bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,

In Philippians 1:19 the phrase your petition indicates the supply of the Body. Apparently Paul was in prison; actually he was in the Body. Imprisonment did not isolate him from the Body or cut him off from the supply of the Body.

We may often ask a brother to pray for us. But even if he prays for us and we pray for him, this prayer may have little effect. The reason for this lack of effectiveness is that in praying we may stand apart from the Body.

According to the picture in Psalm 133, the ointment is upon the head. Then it spreads to the beard and goes down to the hem of the garment. This indicates that if we are individualistic, we cannot experience the ointment.

Psa. 133:1-2 For I know that for me this will turn out to salvation through your petition and the bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, It is like the fine oil upon the head That ran down upon the beard, Upon Aaron's beard, That ran down upon the hem of his garments;

Once I was sick for one hundred seventy-six days. I prayed for my own sickness every day, but it did not work. When I became exhausted, I asked a brother whom I did not think too highly of to pray for me. Amazingly, I received help from his intercession, and my condition became better within a short period of time....The supply of the Body of Christ is a reality. You cannot get through in many things no matter how much you struggle. But once you give the matter to the Body, the problem is solved. This is the supply of the Body of Christ.

When the disciples saw the Lord praying, they wanted Him to teach them to pray. Then the Lord went on to say, "When you pray, say, Father, Your name be sanctified; Your kingdom come. Give us each day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone indebted to us. And do not bring us into temptation" (vv. 2-4)....If we would pray this way again and again, the result will be that we shall pray ourselves into God.... What shall we do now that we are in God? We shall simply receive Him with His riches into us....We need to pray ourselves into God and then, as those in Him, receive Him and His riches.

The life supply is indicated in verses 11 through 13 in Luke 11: But what father among you whose son shall ask for a fish will instead of a fish hand him a snake? Or if he shall also ask for an egg will hand him a scorpion? If you then being evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the Father who is from heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him! Here the life supply is indicated by the fish, the egg, and the Holy Spirit. ...When we pray ourselves into God, we receive His riches as our supply.

Application to young working saints/ graduate students

The goal of God's economy is the Body of Christ. You can only be blessed and supplied in the life of the Body. You need to open to the brothers and sisters and ask them to pray for the practical needs in your business life and research life. For example, you may have difficulty falling asleep and due to the lack of sleep, feel so tired. If you know the reason of your insomnia, you should not feel embarrassed but let it be known and ask them to pray for it. Since the supply of the Body is real, you can break through the things you could not solve by the supply from the Body.

A brother's testimony: At the fellowship with a coworker from Taiwan, I heard that "the principle of Lord's healing people is that the person's faith". I had been suffering with strong migraine every Saturday but I had no idea of applying this fellowship to my situation. But when I was on my way to the office, I learnt that one of the reasons of migraine was the sudden release from the strain. (I was reading a academic book because I was working at a pharmaceutical company.) Then, the healing by faith which I heard from the coworker and my situation of being strain during my work got connected for the first time. I could not apply the supply of the Body from the coworker brother immediately, but few weeks later by the Lord's mercy I could apply it to my migraine on the way to my office. I prayed shortly within a minute like this, "Oh, Lord Jesus, I became clear of the reason of migraine that I have been too much in strain during my work. I do not want to admit that, but actually it is true. Forgive my sin of relying on my self and not experiencing Christ during my work. Forgive my unbelief and dullness (my not applying the supply of the Body to my actual living). You can heal my migraine. Lord, heal migraine". Surprisingly from that weekend until today, 24 years, I haven't suffered from migraine at all. Hallelujah, Lord had healed my migraine through the supply of the Body.

And you also need to pray yourself into God to supply the six kinds of new ones. If you pray read the prayer in Luke 11:2-3 again and again, you can pray yourself into God and be filled with the supply of life. Then you can supply the new ones with rich life.

Crucial Point②: Dealing with the individualism and rely on each other as the members of the Body

OL1: In the Body there can be no independence or individualism for we are members, and members cannot live in detachment from the Body. **OL2:** If we truly see our position in the Body, it will be as though we were saved a second time". **OL3:** Those who see that they are members of the Body will surely treasure the Body and honor the other members. **OL4:** Individualism is hateful in the sight of God. The enemy of the Body is the self, the independent "I," the independent "me". If we would be built up in the Body, the self must be condemned, denied, rejected, and renounced.

If we realize that a Christian is nothing more than a member, we will no longer be proud. Everything depends on our seeing. Those who see that they are members will surely treasure the Body and honor the other members. They will not see just their own virtues; they will readily see others as being better than themselves. Consider our human body. No member of our body can act independently.

The Body of Christ is a reality. The church life is also a reality.

The Word of God does not say the church is like the Body of Christ; it says the church is the Body of Christ. Nothing external can become part of our physical bodies. We may clothe our bodies, but the clothes do not become part of our bodies. Nothing that is of us can ever become part of the Body of Christ, because "Christ is all and in all" in the Body (Col. 3:11). Anything in us that is not a part of Christ frustrates our inward knowledge of the Body of Christ. Sin hinders us from seeing Christ, and the natural life hinders us from seeing the Body.

Seeing the vision of the self has much to do with the Body. Today we are in the Lord's recovery, and the recovery will eventually come to this crucial matter—the building up of the Body. The enemy of the Body is the self. The greatest problem, the greatest frustration and opposition, to the Body is also the self. When we have the self, we do not have the Body. When we have the Body, we do not have the self. In order for the Body to be built up, the self, the independent soul, must be dealt with. The self is the independent "I," "the independent "me." When we are independent, we are in the self, the Body is gone, and we do not have peace.

Because the self is something independent, the self is the greatest problem to the building up of the Body. We should be dependent not only on God but also on the Body, on the brothers and sisters. Whenever we are independent of the brothers and sisters, we are in the self, in the independent soul. For us today, being independent of the Body is equal to being independent of God....If you check with your experience, you will realize that when you were independent of [or isolated from] the brothers and sisters, you had the sense that you were also independent of [or isolated from] God.

Application to young people/ college students

You need to see "the vision of the Body of Christ" and "the vision that the self is the greatest hindrance to the building of the Body". Self doesn't rely on God nor Body and is independent from God and the Body. So you need to learn to deny your self. Please pray read the outline of chapter 19 "**The Denial of the Self**" of "**the Basic Lessons on Service**". (1) The difference between the self and the flesh: **a)** The flesh being the corrupted and transmuted body **b)** The self being the fallen and rebellious soul (2) When the flesh dominates the self, the self becomes an evil person (3) When the self subdues the flesh, the self becomes a "good" person (4) The self being independent of God (5) The self being the embodiment of the soulish life, one with Satan, and expressed through the mind—opinionated thoughts (6) The self being the hidden, damaging factor of our service in the church (7) The self needing to be crossed out. **Matt. 16:21** If you then being evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the Father who is from heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him! **22** And Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, God be merciful to You, Lord! This shall by no means happen to You! **23** But He turned and said to Peter, Get behind Me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to Me, for you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of men. **24** Then Jesus said to His disciples, If anyone wants to come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me. **25** For whoever wants to save his soul-life shall lose it; but whoever loses his soul-life for My sake shall find it.]

Peter rebuked the Lord with his self of the good person.

Then the Lord said to Peter "Get behind Me, Satan". The self, whether it is an evil person or a good person, doesn't mind the things of God and is independent from God and the Body and it is the soul that is one with Satan.

The individualism is the self which is independent from God and the Body. The matter of privacy which has developed in the western industrial countries apparently includes good things. But the self, the individualism is hiding in it. And also there is one concept in Japanese culture that "we should not bother people" and the self, the individualism is hiding in there also. The problem is not whether it is good or bad, but it is independent from God and the Body.

"The home training" for one on one shepherding in the four great constructions (prayer life, gospel farm, one on one shepherding, everyone functioning) is the practice that makes us to commit to one contract with 6 kinds of new ones and contacting them every day by LINE etc. and meet every week or once in two weeks for face to face home meeting. To perfect them with the cherishment of humanity and the divine nourishing, the leading leaders and sub leaders need to touch the bottom cause of their life and stumbling. To pluck the new ones out from individualism and cultural background to lead them into the church life where they enjoy Christ richly, the leaders need to be saved from the individualism, self and culture and enjoy the riches of Christ in the corporate church life, the living which we depend on each other as members. May many new ones be perfected through home trainings and produce the duplication of Christ!

Crucial Point (3): Realizing the limits in the Body and functioning in the limits, for the growth and development of the Body

OL1: A basic requirement for the growth and development of the Body is that we recognize our measure and not go beyond it. **OL2:** The Head sets us in our special place in the Body and points us to our special function. **OL3:** When we give a testimony about our work, experience, or enjoyment of the Lord, we must testify within measure, that is, within a certain limit. **OL4:** Outwardly, in the environment, the Lord may cause certain matters to restrict the spread of the work; the environment does not allow us to go beyond a particular boundary line. **OL5:** In the church service we need to realize that God has measured out only so much to us, and we should not overstretch ourselves.

We supply the Body with the life that we have received from Christ the Head. Yet when we function, we have to be proper and in order. Order in the Body is essential to growth and ministry.... In the meeting...you have to speak according to your measure of faith and according to the leading of the Spirit. You have to know whether there is any overstepping in your speaking, and you have to know whether your speaking is too long....When we truly come under the authority of the Head, He sets us in our special place in the Body and appoints us to our special function.

The Lord is especially interested in restricting the young people. If the young ones do not have a heart to serve the Lord, He will stir them up to serve Him. But once they have been stirred up, He will limit them. Human nature does not like this kind of limitation....God's way, however, is first to speed us up and then to slow us down, first to raise us up and then to lower us down. When we are down, He will lift us up. But when we get too far up, He will lower us down....Many

young people cannot tolerate God's ups and downs. After a few of these ups and downs, they want to quit....God does not want us to be always up or to be always down. Even in nature the alternating of day and night testifies of this.

God has many ways to bring us down. Some young people have been brought down by their married life. Before a particular brother was married, he may have been like an eagle soaring in the air. He could easily talk about the wonderful, glorious church life. But not long after his wedding, it seems that the church life is no longer glorious. God is using his marriage to calm down such an excited brother. In some cases, such a brother may stay down for a long period of time after his marriage. But eventually he is up again, although not in the same excited way as before. This is a sign of improvement. In the church service we need to realize that God has only measured out so much to us, and we should not overstretch ourselves. We need to know our limitation, our jurisdiction, and not go beyond it into others' territory.

Application to Serving saints

Only within the limitation, you can grow up normally. For example, in the Lord's day meeting, we limit each prophecy in 3 minutes for each one of us can prophesy. This is because when everyone functions, the Holy Spirit works, and the church will be built up. Both speaking the bird's eye view at the beginning of the meeting and the conclusion at the last of the meeting, need to be limited within eight minutes. If two share the time, one needs to speak within four minutes. Even if the responsible brother is going to speak with a certain burden, his speaking needs to be controlled within fifteen minutes. 1Cor.14:31 For you can all prophesy one by one that all may learn and all may be encouraged.

Brothers and sisters, you should follow the leading by responsible/serving ones for the church or each district and serve in the order in the Body. Especially young people or new believers need to learn to go forward in the limitation. Do not behave selfishly but learn to function properly in the limitation under leading by elders. This will eventually be protection and blessing for you. Each of you should see your measure allotted, not overreach yourself but function within that measure to build up the Body of Christ. 1Cor.12:18 But now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body, even as He willed. Rom.12:3 For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think, but to think so as to be sober-minded, as God has apportioned to each a measure of faith.

The High Gospel Topic 12 The Loving Father

Luke 15:20 And he rose up and came to his own father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was moved with compassion, and he ran and fell on his neck and kissed him affectionately. 21 And the son said to him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son. 22 But the father said to his slaves, Bring out quickly the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet. 23 And bring the fattened calf; slaughter it, and let us eat and be merry, 24 Because this son of mine was dead and lives again; he was lost and has been found. And they began to be merry.

MAN NOT REALIZING THE HEART OF GOD

Although the younger son had a humble heart in feeling

unworthy to be a son and in wanting to be a servant, he did not realize the heart of his father. In his father's heart was the longing for his son. Many sinners may have such a humble heart, but they do not realize the heart of God. God's heart is not that repenting sinners would work for Him, but that they would be His sons. While a hired servant must earn what he gets and must work for what he receives, a son receives everything from his father freely.

GOD RECEIVING MAN

As the younger son was returning to his father, it was far from his realization that his father would be waiting to receive him. He was expecting that he would have to knock many times, and that his father would eventually send someone else to open the door. Yet even while the son was returning and was still afar off, his father saw him coming and ran out to meet him. While the son thought it was a matter of his returning to his father, even the more it was a matter of his father's waiting to receive him. Many people think that they must pray to God for a long time before they can hear God's answer, but they don't know the truth is that God has been there waiting long to accept repentant sinners.

When he saw the son, the father was moved with compassion. Because his heart was moved, it caused him to run and fall on his son's neck, and to kiss him. This running shortened the time and the distance between them. Running involves the feet; falling on the son's neck involves the hands; kissing involves the mouth, which is able to express emotion. So we can see that the father's whole being was moved for his son. This signifies that when God in heaven sees a sinner repenting. He is moved with compassion, and runs to meet him. With His whole heart He embraces the repenting sinner. Before repenting, many think that God is terrible and fearful, but after repenting they discover that God is so dear and so near.

Hymn 1052 Gospel—Coming to the Lord

1. I've wandered far away from God, Now I'm coming home;
The paths of sin too long I've trod, Lord, I'm coming home.
(C) Coming home, coming home, Nevermore to roam;
Open wide Thine arms of love; Lord, I'm coming home.
2. I've wasted many precious years, Now I'm coming home;
I now repent with bitter tears, Lord, I'm coming home.
3. I'm tired of sin and straying, Lord, Now I'm coming home;
I'll trust Thy love, believe Thy word; Lord, I'm coming home.
4. My soul is sick, my heart is sore, Now I'm coming home;
My strength renew, my hope restore: Lord, I'm coming home.