

International Training for Elders and Responsible Ones (October 2020)

#6: Entering into the Intrinsic Significance of the Reality of the Body of Christ—the Highest Peak in God’s Economy and the Top Revelation of the Bible (1/11-17)

OL Summary:

I. The reality of the Body of Christ is the highest peak in God’s economy and the top revelation of the Bible, revealed through a spirit of wisdom and revelation: **A.** We need revelation to know the reality of the Body of Christ and to enter into the realm and intrinsic significance of the reality of the Body of Christ as God’s heart’s desire and His ultimate purpose. **B.** Only a revelation from God will usher us into the realm of the reality of the Body of Christ, and only then will the Body become our experience. **C.** The secret of seeing the heavenly vision of God’s ultimate purpose is our willingness to pay the price for it.

II. The overcomers typified by Zion are the reality of the Body of Christ and consummate the building up of the Body in the local churches to bring in the consummated holy city, New Jerusalem, the Holy of Holies as God’s dwelling place in eternity; in the new heaven and new earth, the entire New Jerusalem will become Zion, with all the believers as the overcomers: **A.** The overcomers typified by Zion as the reality of the Body of Christ are the high peak, the center, the uplifting, the strengthening, the enriching, the beauty, and the reality of the church. **B.** The characteristics, the life, the blessing, and the establishment of Jerusalem (the church) come from Zion (the overcomers): **C.** God always uses a small number of believers to pass on the flow of life to the church and to revive the church; on behalf of the church, the overcomers take the stand of Christ’s victory in the midst of sufferings. **D.** In typology the overcomers, the perfected and matured God-men, are today’s Zion within today’s Jerusalem (the church life). **E.** The Lord’s recovery is to build up Zion—the overcomers as the reality of the Body of Christ consummating in the New Jerusalem; in the church life we must endeavor to reach today’s Zion. **F.** The reality of the Body of Christ is the corporate living by the perfected God-men, the overcomers, who are genuine men not living by their life but by the life of the processed God, whose attributes have been expressed through their virtues.

III. In order to live together with other members in the reality of the Body of Christ, we all need to have the consciousness of the Body of Christ: **A.** “When Brother Nee taught about the Body, he said that with whatever we do, we have to consider how the churches would feel about it”. **B.** In the Body there can be no independence or individualism, for we are members, and members cannot live in detachment from the Body. **C.** Our living with all that we have is in the Body, through the Body, and for the Body; this is the kind of person God is looking for today; may the Lord deliver us from individualism. **D.** Those who see that they are members of the Body treasure the Body and honor the other members; in the Body of Christ everyone is a member and nothing more than a member; hence, no member can live without the other members, much less despise them. **E.** Every member has a function, and all the functions are for the Body; the function of one member is the function of the whole Body; for this reason we should not imitate other members or be covetous of other members; at the same time we should not despise other

members, thinking that we are better and more useful; every believer is a member in the Body of Christ, and every believer is indispensable. **F.** All the names mentioned by Paul in Colossians 4:7-17 indicate that with him there was a sense, a consciousness, of the Body as the one new man. **G.** It is essential for the growth and development of the Body that we each recognize our measure and not go beyond it; we should learn to be blended with other brothers and sisters. **H.** Every member should know his own capacity and not consider himself more highly than he ought; if everyone does this, there will be no jealousy, ambition, or craving to do what others can do. **I.** Wherever there is Body-revelation, there is Body-consciousness, and wherever there is Body-consciousness, individualistic thought and action are ruled out.

IV. For the reality of the Body of Christ, God has blended the Body together; the word blended means “adjusted,” “harmonized,” “tempered,” and “mingled,” implying the losing of distinctions; the purpose of the blending is to usher us all into the reality of the Body of Christ: **A.** We need to be in the local churches as the procedure to be brought into the reality of the Body of Christ as the goal. **B.** 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. **C.** Paul’s thought of the church being one bread was not his own invention; rather, it was taken from the Old Testament with the meal offering; every part of the flour of the meal offering was mingled with the oil—that is the blending. **D.** Hardly anyone speaks about blending because this is not only very high and deep but also very mysterious; it is not a physical matter; the significance of our blending is the reality of Body of Christ. **E.** In order to be blended for the reality of the Body of Christ, we have to go through the cross and be by the Spirit to dispense Christ to others for the building up of the Body of Christ. **F.** Blending means that we should always stop in order to fellowship with others; if we have the consciousness of the Body of Christ and are in the blending and reality of the Body of Christ, we will not do anything without fellowshiping with the other saints who are coordinating with us, because fellowship tempers us, fellowship adjusts us, fellowship harmonizes us, and fellowship mingles us. **G.** Before a co-worker does anything, he should fellowship with the other co-worker; an elder should fellowship with the other elders; in our coordination in the church life, in the Lord’s work, we all have to learn not to do anything without fellowship. **H.** A group of responsible brothers may meet together often without being blended; to be blended means that we are touched by others and that we are touching others by going through the cross, doing things by the Spirit, and doing everything to dispense Christ for His Body’s sake. **I.** 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. **J.** Blending is the Body, blending is the oneness, and blending is the one accord. **K.** The blending is for the building up of the universal Body of Christ to consummate the New Jerusalem as the final goal of God’s economy according to His good pleasure.

CP1: Lord is calling the overcomers in the last age.

To answer this call, fellowship with the Lord with Spirit and truthfulness in any time

OL1: The reality of the Body of Christ is the highest peak in God's economy and the top revelation of the Bible, revealed through a spirit of wisdom and revelation. Eph. 1:17 That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the full knowledge of Him. 22-23 And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church, which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.

Today He still requires a body to express Himself. Just as a man needs a body to express all that he is, Christ needs a body to express Himself. The function of the Body is to be the full expression of Christ. We cannot manifest our personality through any one member of our body—the ears, mouth, eyes, hands, or feet—alone. Similarly, Christ cannot manifest His personality through any one member of His Body. It takes His whole Body to manifest Him. We must see that everything of Christ is expressed through His Body. ...The Body of Christ is the extension and continuation of Christ on earth. He spent more than thirty years on earth to reveal Himself. He did this as the individual Christ. Today He is revealing Himself through the church.

OL2: The overcomers typified by Zion are the reality of the Body of Christ and consummate the building up of the Body in the local churches to bring in the consummated holy city, New Jerusalem, the Holy of Holies as God's dwelling place in eternity; in the new heaven and new earth, the entire New Jerusalem will become Zion, with all the believers as the overcomers.

OL3: Without Zion (the overcomers), Jerusalem (the church life) cannot be kept and maintained; if there are no overcomers in a local church, that church is like Jerusalem without Zion; it will become like a flat tire.

Rev. 14:1 And I saw, and behold, the Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him a hundred and forty-four thousand, having His name and the name of His Father written on their foreheads. 21:16 And the city lies square.... And he measured the city with the reed to a length of twelve thousand stadia; the length and the breadth and the height of it are equal.

There is no other way to reach this high peak except by praying. It is more than evident that Jerusalem is here as a big realm of Christians, but where is Zion, the overcomers?...The overcomers are the very Zion, where God is. This is the intrinsic reality of the spiritual revelation in the holy Word of God. We have to realize what the Lord's recovery is. The Lord's recovery is to build up Zion.

Zion is the high peak, the center, the uplifting, the strengthening, the enriching, and the reality of the church, the holy city. If there are no overcomers in a local church, that church is like Jerusalem without Zion.

Application: New ones and Youth/College students

New ones and young people should clearly see the vision that the church is the Body of Christ. The Body of Christ, as the corporate expression of Christ, is the continuation and development of the individual Christ. The individual Christ is revealed in the four Gospels as the initiation of God's New Testament economy. The Body of Christ, the development of this economy, is revealed in the 22 epistles of the New Testament. In Revelation, God's New Testament economy is finalized, and the overcomers, as the reality of the Body of Christ bring about the Lord's coming back.

You are now in the end age of God's New Testament economy. In this age, God is calling the overcomers. You should respond to this calling and take the path of becoming an overcomer. To be an overcomer is to be a normal Christian. Thinking that because you are young, it is "too difficult" for you to be an overcomer is a deceptive ploy of Satan. The ability to become an overcomer is the full supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, the indwelling Christ.

For example, you may pray formally, "Make me an overcomer," but you may not be praying seriously or with faith. When you fellowship with the Lord, you should do so in spirit and in truthfulness. If you don't really want to be in the path of becoming an overcomer right now, you can pray, "Lord, I'm not yet ready to be in the path of the Lord's recovery that produces serious overcomers. According to the Bible, this is the feeling of a slothful slave who thought, 'My master's coming will be delayed. But I don't want to remain a slothful slave either. Lord, I will come before you honestly. I open my heart to you. Please resolve this contradiction for me.'" To fellowship with the Lord is to fellowship with one living person. During fellowshiping with the Lord, He can dispense Himself, and you can understand whether you are pleasing Him or grieving Him.

Even when you are grieving the Lord, He always loves you and thinks of you. Paul said, "... it is Christ who lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me. (Galatians 2:20) " Likewise, the Lord loved you and died for you. He died on the cross to spare you from perishing, hoping that you can live in God's Economy, and you would become an overcomer. Here is love. Never consider the Lord in the heavenlies just an objective God. May the love of Christ constrain you from all sides! The indwelling Christ living in you will supply all your needs to make you an overcomer. Prayer: "Oh Lord Jesus, in the end age of God's New Testament economy, God is calling overcomers. I come before the Lord and pray with my honest feelings about this calling. If I open to the Lord, He will dispense Himself to me. Even when I am grieving Him, He is always thinking of me and loving me. Let Your love constrain me more. I believe that the indwelling Christ will supply all my needs to make me an overcomer."

CP2: Serve with ABCs (Available, Burden, Capable) in the Body, with the Body, for the Body

OL1: The Lord urgently needs the overcomers with their God-man living as 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.

For thirty-three and a half years, this God-man, Jesus, was a genuine man, but He lived not by man's life but by God's life. To live such a life He had to be crucified. The crucifixion mentioned in the New Testament transpired on the wooden cross on Mount Calvary. But you have to realize that before Christ was there in the physical crucifixion, He was being crucified every day for thirty-three and a half years. Was not Jesus a human being, a genuine man? Yes. But He did not live by that genuine man. Instead, He kept that genuine man on the cross. Then, in the sense of resurrection, He lived God's life. God's life with all its attributes was lived within this God-man Jesus and expressed as this God-man's virtues.

Such a life was there originally just in an individual man, Jesus Christ. But this life has now been repeated, reproduced, in many men who have been redeemed and regenerated and who now possess the divine life within them. All of them have been nourished, sanctified, transformed, and perfected not just to be matured Christians but to be God-men. The reality of the Body of Christ is the corporate living by the perfected God-men.

OL2: In order to live together with other members in the reality of the Body of Christ, we all need to have the consciousness of the Body of Christ. 1Cor. 12:26-27 And whether one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or one member is glorified, all the members rejoice with it. Now you are the Body of Christ, and members individually.

In the Bible there are many terms with opposite meanings, such as purity and uncleanness, holiness and commonness, victory and defeat, the Spirit and the flesh, Christ and Satan, the kingdom and the world, and glory and shame.... Just as the Father is versus the world, the Spirit is versus the flesh, and the Lord is versus the devil, so also is the Body of Christ, he is free from individualism. He will no longer live for himself but for the Body. Once I am delivered from individualism, I am spontaneously in the Body.

First Corinthians 12:14~27 speaks of two erroneous concepts that members may have: ① "Because I am not...I am not of the body" (v.15). This is to despise oneself and covet the work of others. ② "I have no need of you" (v.21). This is to be proud of oneself, thinking that one man can be all-inclusive and despising others. Both concepts are harmful to the Body. We should not imitate other members or be covetous of other members. In this way we will not become discouraged and give up when we find that we cannot be like others. At the same time, we should not despise other members, thinking that we are better and more useful.

Application to the serving ones:

Brother Andrew, who was in charge of Living Stream Ministry, shared with us the ABCs of qualifications for a servant: Available, Burdened, and Capable. These ABCs are also consistent with the life and service of the Body as revealed in Romans 12. In the life of the Body, you must first give of your body and time to be available in a practical way. You should be available whenever there is a need for the church. Then you will be blessed.

The order of God's dispensing is spirit → soul → body, but in the practice of the Body life, the order is body → soul → spirit.

Rom. 12:1 I exhort you therefore, brothers, through the compassions of God to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, well pleasing to God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And do not be fashioned according to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of the mind that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and well pleasing and perfect. 3 For I say, through the grace given to me, to every one 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. 4 For just as in one body we have many members, and all the members do not have the same function, 5 So we who are many are one Body in Christ, and individually members one of another....11 Do not be slothful in zeal, but be burning in spirit, serving the Lord.

Whether you can do the service of "in the Body, with the Body, for the Body, with ABCs" will determine your usefulness. Therefore, it is critically important for you to learn the service of the Body. You should not think too highly of yourself, nor should you think too lowly of yourself. Fulfill your function in the Body.

In the service of the Body, do not let one or a few people be very active. Rather, be very active in the perfecting work so that others can function. All the members of the Body of Christ should function, just as all the members function in our physical bodies. All of them to function is the principle for the Holy Spirit to flow. Therefore, the work of perfecting the saints is very important.

In the church, all the generation should function according to their measures, from children, young students, young working saints, mature adults, and elders.

Prayer: "Lord Jesus, the Lord needs a corporate Body to express Christ on earth. I need to have a sense of the Body of Christ through the cross in order to live in the reality of the Body of Christ. In the life and service of the Body, the ABC's of Available, Burdened, and Capable are important. First, give the body, be refreshed in the mind, be burned in the spirit, and serve in the Body, with the Body, and for the Body with the ABCs!

CP3: See the vision of the Body of Christ and be saved from individualism. Break through difficulties under the supply of the Body

OL1: Seeing Christ results in deliverance from sin; seeing the Body results in deliverance from individualism; we cannot enter into the realm of the Body by anything other than seeing.

Col. 4:15-16 Greet the brothers in Laodicea, as well as Nymphas and the church, which is in his house. And when this letter is read among you, cause that it be read in the church of the Laodiceans also, and that you also read the one from Laodicea.

If you are a member of the Body, then you must allow yourself to be limited by the other members. Here we find the necessity of the cross.

The Body of Christ is not only a protection to the members but a limitation to all the members....We should not allow ourselves to go our own way; rather, we should learn to be blended with other brothers and sisters. Individual dispositions and peculiarities have no place in the church. Every member should honor the talents of others and be faithful to his own. Moreover, every member should know his own capacity and not consider himself more highly than he should. If everyone does this, there will be no jealousy, ambition, or craving to do what others can do.... Many people have not seen their own capacity. As a result they overstep their boundaries.... If members behave this way in the church, some will begin to monopolize while others will withdraw, and the result will be a loss to the church. We should not behave in this way. We should turn back and take our place in the Body and be limited by the Body.

Many of us have the experience that 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.

OL2: For the reality of the Body of Christ, God has blended the Body together; the word blended means "adjusted," "harmonized," "tempered," and "mingled," implying the losing of distinctions; the purpose of the blending is to usher us all into the reality of the Body of Christ. **1 Cor. 12:24** ...Our comely members have no need. But God has blended the body together, giving more abundant honor to the member that lacked. **10:17** Seeing that there is one bread, we who are many are one Body; for we all partake of the one bread.

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.

Application to business person/graduate students

Saints who are businesspersons and researchers, recognize that you are the members of the Body, and learn to place yourself in the Body and receive the supply of the

Body. When there is environment that you cannot break through, open to the Body and fellowship. When you pray the intercessory prayer of the Body, you can break through.

Testimony of a brother: Many times when I encountered problems at work that I couldn't break through, I was able to do so by opening to the Body and asking for prayer. Some time ago, I was strongly encouraged to transfer to the Tokyo headquarters to take on more important work. In fact, this recommendation was the second time, so I wondered, "I refused it before, why am I being asked again?" I was even more confused when I found out that the recommendation came from the No. 3 Executive VP at the US headquarters. However, when I thought about the church, I could not leave Kobe. I was severely scolded by my boss for not accepting this proposal, and my position in the company became worse, so I asked the saints to pray for my job. And through the prayers of the saints, I found that my faith was being tested through trials. I clearly understood that it was the limitation of the Body that prevented me from leaving Kobe because of the church life. After that, under the guidance of the Lord, I changed jobs to another company in Kansai. The treatment and wide range of authority at my new job was much better than what I could get at my previous company. After changing jobs, I realized that the above difficulties were the environment for me to leave the previous company and move on to the next. What I have learned is that in any environment, I need to be open to the saints and have them pray for intercession. Without the prayer of the Body, there would have been no renewal of my inner vision, no guidance of Holy Spirit from within and without. **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,

You have to deal with individualism when you try to place yourself in the Body and when you try to serve in the Body. No member of the Body can function for itself. There can be no individualism in the Body. When there is individualism, you cannot open to the Body, so you cannot benefit from the Body.

For example, you try to decide whether or not to participate in a service after you have seen whether or not someone you are comfortable with is participating in that service. This is a form of individualism. You also try to determine if you will be well accepted and will be able to play an active role. This is another form of individualism. The principles are the same in a company.

In addition, you should participate in a variety of blending activities. Blending allows us to participate in the reality of the Body of Christ.

Prayer: "Oh Lord Jesus, I stay in the Body as a member of the Body of Christ. At that time, I am not only protected by the Body, but also restricted by it. Individualism, in particular, is unacceptable in the Body. Save me from individualism. When I hit the wall, if I open up to the saints, the members of the Body, and ask them to intercede for me, I can receive the supply from the Body and break through. Hallelujah, I am victorious in the Body of Christ!"