

Message 2

The Vital Groups for the Building Up of the Body of Christ

I. The Vital Groups Are Blended Groups

1 Corinthians 12:23-25

22 But much rather the members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary.

23 And those *members* of the body which we consider to be less honorable, these we clothe with more abundant honor; and our uncomely *members come to* have more abundant comeliness,

24 But our comely *members* have no need. But God has blended the body together, giving more abundant honor to the *member* that lacked,

25 That there would be no division in the body, but *that* the members would have the same care for one another.

To accept coordination is nothing other than to accept the restriction of those who are fellow members and who are serving together with you. Coordination is a restriction; it is a total restriction by others. I cannot serve alone; I can only serve together with the brothers and sisters in the church. I can only accept the others' restriction and coordinate with them. If they are spiritual, I have to coordinate with them. If they are not spiritual, I also have to coordinate with them. If they are deep, I have to coordinate with them. If they are superficial, I also have to coordinate with them. If they are natural, I have to coordinate with them. If they are carnal, I still have to coordinate with them...At this time, we will have the genuine coordination, and at this time, such a coordination will be in oneness, and it will be knitted together firmly and fitted together properly...By this time, [we] will come into a realm; [we] will touch something and will realize the glorious fact that the church is the Body of Christ. [We] will truly touch the reality of the Body.

(The Elders' Management of the Church, p. 198)

Judges 7:13

And when Gideon came, at that moment a man was recounting a dream to his companion; and he said, I have just had a dream. There was this round loaf of barley bread tumbling through the camp of Midian. And it came to the tent and struck it, so that it fell and turned upside down. And the tent collapsed.

II. The Three Main Principles of Our Living in the Body of Christ

Ephesians 4:15-16

15 But holding to truth in love, we may grow up into Him in all things, who is the Head, Christ,

16 Out from whom all the Body, being joined together and being knit together through every joint of the rich supply and *through* the operation in the measure of each one part, causes the growth of the Body unto the building up of itself in love.

Brothers and sisters, we talk about mutual love, but this love of ours one for the other is very transient. There is only one place where love is permanent, and that is under the Head of the church. Nowhere else is there true harmony or permanent relatedness. When we are willing to be broken under His authority, something tremendous happens—a building process begins to take place. A constant acceptance of the discipline of His government makes way for the flow of His life, and so the building work goes on apace. Those brothers and sisters who have been our problems become our blessings, and it is not long before a company is built up in the life of Christ.

(The Kingdom and the Church, p. 40)

In order to serve the Lord properly and adequately, we need to be related to one another not in a general way but in a definite way. Only when we are related to the saints in a definite way will we learn the lessons regarding the dealing with the self and the breaking of the outer man. The best way for our self to be dealt with and for our outer man to be broken is for us to be related.

(“Being Related to Others for Our Service in the Body,” The Collected Works of Witness Lee (1964), vol. 1, pp. 323-327)

- The Foundation of the Home Meetings—Living in the Spirit, and Building Up Our Meeting Life in Small Groups (the 2s and 3s)

III. Our Coming Together in Small Groups (Twos and Threes) Requiring the Lord's Abundant Supply to Overcome Our Natural Man and to Crush Satan

Ephesians 1:19

And what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the operation of the might of His strength,

Romans 16:20

Now the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you.

A local church is an expression of the Body of Christ in a certain locality composed of saints who mainly meet in small groups. *(The Conclusion of the New Testament, p. 2081)*

IV. Being Released from Our Burdens and Restored in Our Capacity for Fruit-bearing

John 20:21

Jesus said to them again, Peace be to you; as the Father has sent Me, I also send you.

John 21:15

Then when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, ¹Simon, *son* of John, do you love Me more than these? He said to Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. He said to him, Feed My lambs.

15¹ Here the Lord was restoring Peter's love toward Him. Peter did have a heart to love the Lord, but he was too confident in his own strength, his natural strength. His love for the Lord was precious, but his natural strength had to be denied and dealt with. The Lord allowed Peter to fail utterly in denying the Lord to His face three times (18:17, 25, 27), so that his natural strength and his self-confidence could be dealt with. Furthermore, Peter had just taken the lead to backslide from the Lord's call. His natural confidence in his love toward the Lord also must have been dealt with by this failure; yet he might have been somewhat disappointed. The Lord therefore came to restore his love toward Him, to charge him with the shepherding of His church, and to prepare him for his martyrdom so that he would not follow Him with any confidence in his natural strength.

Galatians 6:2

Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ completely.

Brothers, if we do not learn how to bear the burdens of others, and if we do not seek out the help from others regarding our own burdens, we do not know what the Body is, nor can we have coordination in the work... When problems come, you may go desperately to the Lord alone; this is right and necessary. However, have you never once sought out the help and supply of the co-workers? If only you go to God alone, you do not know the coordination of the Body, and it will be impossible for anyone to entrust any burden to you. You will always be busy bearing your own burden, and you will not be able to bear the burden of anyone else.

(The Collected Works of Watchman Nee, vol. 51, chapter 10, pp.171-172)

Numbers 21:16-18

16 And from there they journeyed to Beer; that is the well where Jehovah said to Moses, Gather the people together, and I will give them water.

17 Then Israel sang this song: Spring up, O well! Sing to it!

18 The well, which the leaders sank, Which the nobles of the people dug, With the scepter, with their staffs. And from the wilderness they journeyed to Mattanah;

1 Corinthians 3:6

I planted, Apollos watered, but God caused the growth.