

# PRESENT TRUTH

A Teaching Newsletter of Lifestream Teaching Ministries

Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth. (2 Peter 1:12 KJV)

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## Body Parts

Art Nelson

One of the saddest commentaries on the modern Church is its fragmentation. One of the greatest testimonies of the early Church was its unity. There are a number of references in the book of Acts to the fact that the people of God were “in one accord” or “of the same mind”. Invariably, when we find a reference to unity, the scriptures that follow speak of the working of the Lord on their behalf.

Paul told us in Ephesians 4:3 that we should be “diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” There is no division in the Spirit; He is one and when He comes He brings unity. We are the ones that have the problem. We are not diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit; instead we will divide and fragment for the slightest differences. We give lip service to Jesus as Head of His Body, yet in practice we don’t acknowledge His Body, only our little portion of it. Possibly that is the reason that we have so much illness in the modern Church. Paul said,

1 Corinthians 11:27-30 NASB

- (27) Therefore whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord.
- (28) But a man must examine himself, and in so doing he is to eat of the bread and drink of the cup.
- (29) For he who eats and drinks, eats and drinks judgment to himself if he does not judge the body rightly.
- (30) For this reason many among you are weak and sick, and a number sleep.

Most of the time we read this as applying to the individual examining himself for sins; however, in the context of the chapter, it is concerning the unity of the Body and who is a part of it and who is not. When we partake of the Lord’s Supper we are acknowledging the Body of the Lord in terms of our place in it and in terms of our relationship to all others who are a part of His Body. It is One Loaf, which is broken into many individuals. If there are those who are a part of the Body, but which we don’t acknowledge as part, then we are guilty of the “body and blood of

the Lord.” The result is a people that are “weak and sick, and a number sleep.” Sounds like the modern Church, doesn’t it?

The picture of what has happened to God’s people is given to us in Ezekiel 37 with the Vision of the Valley of Dry Bones. What is represented is the condition of His people (it includes us because it is the “whole” house of Israel) and the process of restoration that God intends.

Ezekiel 37:1-3 NASB

- (1) The hand of the LORD was upon me, and He brought me out by the Spirit of the LORD and set me down in the middle of the valley; and it was full of bones.
- (2) He caused me to pass among them round about, and behold, *there were* very many on the surface of the valley; and lo, *they were* very dry.
- (3) He said to me, "Son of man, can these bones live?" And I answered, "O Lord GOD, You know."

The valley is filled with very dry bones. However, they are the bones of an army (later in the chapter we are told that they stood up an exceeding great army). What is interesting is that there are no enemy bones in the valley. If this was an army and there was a battle, where are the enemy bones? Since there are none, we have to conclude that an enemy was not involved; that there was no battle with an opposing force. How did the bones get there then? We have to conclude that the army turned upon itself and killed each other, thus becoming dry bones in the valley.

This is what the Church has done. One small group turns on another and proceeds to slaughter them with division, slander, hate, and prejudice, becoming elitist and separatist in the process.

However, the Lord has a plan and a process to remedy the situation.

Ezekiel 37:4-8 NASB

- (4) Again He said to me, "Prophesy over these bones and say to them, 'O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD.'
- (5) "Thus says the Lord GOD to these bones, 'Behold, I will cause breath to enter you that you may come to life.
- (6) 'I will put sinews on you, make flesh grow back on you, cover you with skin and put breath in you that you may come alive; and you will know that I am the LORD.'"
- (7) So I prophesied as I was commanded; and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold, a rattling; and the bones came together, bone to its bone.
- (8) And I looked, and behold, sinews were on them, and flesh grew and skin covered them; but there was no breath in them.

The first part of God’s plan requires speaking to the “bones” with the word of the Lord of the promise of restoration. When the word is spoken it produces a lot of commotion, bones rattling, shaking, clacking, as each bone connects to its bone. As the bones come together in the proper order, they are bound together with sinews and then fleshed out.

I believe that this is where we are today. Since the late sixties and the sweep of the Charismatic Movement, there has been a stirring of the bones, a call to come together. Various attempts have been made to find the proper order and connection of the bones. The most infamous attempt was

the Disciplining or Shepherding movement, which was an attempt to accomplish in the strength of the flesh what was seen in the Spirit—bone connecting to its bone. Just because there were abuses done in the flesh doesn't mean that we should throw the "baby out with the bathwater". The inherent truth that gave rise to the Shepherding groups is still a truth of the Spirit that needs to be implemented by the Spirit. Each of us does have a place where we "fit" in the Body and we can't properly "function" in the Body until we become connected to the bones where we fit. Then, we have to be held in place by ligaments, which are the sinews. Under the New Covenant, these include unity, love, and peace.

The second part of God's plan requires speaking to the breath (literally, Spirit). As this is done, life comes upon the completed bodies of the valley.

Ezekiel 37:9-10 NASB

(9) Then He said to me, "Prophecy to the breath, prophecy, son of man, and say to the breath, 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe on these slain, that they come to life.'"

(10) So I prophesied as He commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they came to life and stood on their feet, an exceedingly great army.

When they stood on their feet, they were an exceedingly great army. However, as the Church, we are one Body with many members. I would have expected that when they stood up they would have been One New Man—the summing up that Paul expresses in Ephesians instead, they are an army.

Then, I realized that the Church is the people of God in a locality. The bible makes it clear that God doesn't recognize any smaller division of His Body than a city or locality. That's why the scriptures refer to the Church at Ephesus, the Church at Corinth, etc. We are the ones that have made illegal divisions with our denominations and other man made structures. One locality, one city equals one church. Each body, which stood up as part of "an exceedingly great army", is the people of God in a locality or city. As each City Church stands up with the life of the Spirit, we have the end time Army of God.

The Church has become divided in our cities. We have dismembered the Body of Christ. As a result, we have Body Parts scattered throughout the city (gruesome picture isn't it?) rather than a Body full of life. As the divisions have occurred, the body parts, which at first seemed alive, began to wither and decompose until all that is left is dry bones—very dry bones.

The Word of the Lord has gone forth—the first word of restoration—come together! It is the time of bones coming together each to its own bone. We are one in the Spirit and we must be diligent to preserve unity. We don't have to be in agreement on doctrine to be in unity in the Spirit. We just need to come together and let the Lord put us in place.

We are about to enter a season of the Spirit when the Lord will begin to withdraw His blessing from all things that separate and build walls between His people and He will begin to abundantly bless all things that reconcile, break down walls, and bring people together toward unity.

Unity is not uniformity. Our God is a God of diversity. He builds with stones not bricks. No

body part can say to another body part, “you have to be like me or you are not a part of the body”.

It is imperative that we begin to recognize the Body in all of its glorious diversity so that the weakness that we have received from divisions can be eliminated and we can receive the fullness of the strength of the Lord.

Help us Lord!

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For comments or questions contact Art Nelson at this address:

[artnelson@lifestreamteaching.com](mailto:artnelson@lifestreamteaching.com)

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