

PRESENT TRUTH

A 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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Some Assembly Required

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We have all probably seen those dreaded words “some assembly required”, especially when we have purchased various kit types of furniture or Christmas presents for the kids. This usually leads to a time of frustration as you try to interpret arcane instructions written by some foreigner. The first step is to lay out all of the pieces, parts, and fasteners. Then, you count them to make sure that everything is there that is supposed to be there. Nothing is more frustrating than getting almost finished and find that a part or a particular type of fastener is missing.

After or during the process of determining the type and quantity of parts, you probably look at the assembly diagram for an idea of how everything is supposed to fit together. Of course, if you are like me, you might glance at the picture but you feel like you know how the thing is supposed to go together and immediately get to work. It is only when you are half finished that you realize that for some strange reason the designers have some steps reversed from what seems logical and now you have to take off a piece or two in order to get the other pieces to fit properly and then re-assemble them in a different order than what you thought. You would have saved this time and effort if you had simply followed the step-by-step instructions.

The Body of Christ is the same way—some assembly required. And we are doing it the same way—ignoring the instructions and proceeding on our own until we get into trouble. We need to see and understand the diagram for the finished product—in this case a living temple built from living stones for the dwelling of the Spirit.

What does it mean to be “assembled”? We use the word to mean, “gathered together”, but is that correct? A bag of parts are “gathered together” but they certainly are not “assembled”. The verse of scripture, which we use for meeting together regularly, is in Hebrews.

[Hebrews 10:24-25 NASB](#)

(24) and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds,

(25) not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging *one another*; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.

Let's look at the Greek word for "assembling"--episunagōgē (Strong's # G1997). This is the only occasion that it is used in connection with the translation "assemble" (there are other Greek words that are normally used for "meeting"). It comes from episunagō (Strong's #G1996) and means "a complete collection". Its root is in two other Greek words—Strong's numbers G1909 and G4863, which mean "to collect upon the same place; gather". Putting all of this together, we get "to collect upon the same place to complete collection (assemble)." Based on this, it appears evident that the way we have been using "assemble" falls far short of its true meaning. To assemble together is more that meeting together. The parts of the Body are collected together upon the same place to complete the assembly.

Again, with anything that is being assembled, there is already an executed design, which was developed by the designer. There is a collection of parts that were also designed to be fitted together in a pre-determined place and a pre-determined order. The same is true of the Body of Christ. God has designed His Temple according to His own desires. He has pre-determined (chosen) the parts (living stones) and has a pre-determined placement and function for each one.

We have been told many times that the Sunday morning meeting is the assembling together and that if we don't attend then we are "forsaking the assembling together". This is simply not true. First, I have attended many Sunday mornings and that gathering is far short of the meaning of "assembly". Second, no "assembling" is going on—it is just a bag full of parts jiggled together.

The biggest problem with the Sunday morning meeting is that each denomination thinks it's meeting is the whole body when, in actuality, it is not. If "assembly" were to occur, there would either be parts missing or parts left over because they are in another meeting somewhere else.

We have not properly discerned the meaning of Hebrews 10: 25. It says that we are not to forsake the assembly. The assembly has already occurred in God's plan (in Eternity). We are not to forsake it. We must realize that we are being built together as a whole Body and that every part is necessary and has a place and a function.

1 Peter 2:5 NASB

(5) you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

While in Eternity the Body is complete, in time, being built together or "assembled" is an ongoing process that is being worked out. This process is definitive and necessary as we are assembled.

Ephesians 4:15-16 NASB

(15) but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all *aspects* into Him who is the head, *even* Christ,

(16) from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.

Each part is necessary and supplies something to the whole body for growth and building up.

1 Corinthians 12:12-14 NASB

- (12) For even as the body is one and *yet* has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ.
- (13) For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.
- (14) For the body is not one member, but many.

First principle of the Body

- There is only one Body.

We are not many bodies but one body. Sunday morning meetings should not and cannot separate us into many bodies. We assemble as one body with many members.

Second principle of the Body

- We function according to the desires of the Lord and not according to our preferences.

1 Corinthians 12:15 NASB

- (15) If the foot says, "Because I am not a hand, I am not a part of the body," it is not for this reason any the less *a part* of the body.

God designed each part according to His purpose and has placed each part according to the proper fit and expects each part to function according to its placement. It doesn't matter how much you would prefer to be the hand, if you are the foot then you and the foot and will only find fulfillment when functioning as the foot.

Third principle of the Body

- There is a relationship of mutual need.

1 Corinthians 12:21 NASB

- (21) And the eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you"; or again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you."

Each member needs every other member. There are no extraneous parts. It is also important to recognize that the head needs the members. Jesus, as the Head of His Body, has need for the "feet" and all other members in order to manifest Himself through His Body to the heavens and the earth.

Fourth principle of the Body

- The one who plants and the one who waters are one.

1 Corinthians 3:7-8 NASB

(7) So then neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but God who causes the growth.

(8) Now he who plants and he who waters are one; but each will receive his own reward according to his own labor.

Each member must function according to God's call and also must make room for the function of others. The one who plants must make room for the one who waters. To act differently is not to be one.

Fifth principle of the Body

- Each member provides the same care for one another.

1 Corinthians 12:25 NASB

(25) so that there may be no division in the body, but *that* the members may have the same care for one another.

Our care for one another is from the love of the Lord and has no room for any prejudice or favoritism of any kind.

James 2:1 NASB

(1) My brethren, do not hold your faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ with *an attitude of* personal favoritism.

James 2:9 NASB

(9) But if you show partiality, you are committing sin *and* are convicted by the law as transgressors

While we could speak of several other principles of the Body, if we will simply appropriate and apply these five, we will begin to experience being truly "assembled" together.

Help us Lord to be your Body in reality and not just in theory!

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