

# Captivity of the Church

## Lesson 2: Basic Principles of the Body

### The Ekklesia of Jesus

The first thing that is necessary for us is to realize that we have nothing whatsoever to do with building the ekklesia. Jesus said that He would build *His* ekklesia.<sup>1</sup> Jesus is doing this work not us. When He ascended He gave gifts to men that were to fulfill His plan and purpose as it relates to the ekklesia.

#### Ephesians 4:11-12 NASB

- (11) And He gave some *as* apostles, and some *as* prophets, and some *as* evangelists, and some *as* pastors and teachers,
- (12) for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ;

These ascension gifts of Jesus were for two purposes: 1) for equipping the saints for service; and 2) for the building up of the Body. These men have received of the mind of the Lord concerning the ekklesia and how to build it up under His direction.

The Scriptures also identify the ekklesia of Jesus as the Body of Christ.

#### Colossians 1:18 NASB

- (18) He is also head of the body, the church [ekklesia]; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything.

#### Colossians 1:24 NASB

- (24) Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I do my share on behalf of His body, which is the church [ekklesia], in filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions.

Jesus *builds* His ekklesia by *growing* it. The Body grows because of the inherent life within it. The basic principles of the Body would also be the basic principles of the ekklesia. These come from a basis of unity that is created by the revelation of who Jesus is as discussed above. This unity continues to perfection even as Jesus prayed.

#### John 17:20-23 NASB

- (20) "I do not ask on behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word;

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<sup>1</sup> Matthew 16:18

- (21) that they may all be one; even as You, Father, *are* in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me.
- (22) "The glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, just as We are one;
- (23) I in them and You in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, so that the world may know that You sent Me, and loved them, even as You have loved Me.

The true ekklesia, the true Body, is one, has always been one, and will forever be one.

## Basic Principles of the Body

We need to understand the basic principles under which the Body functions if we are to properly grasp our place and function in His Body and our ministry in the Kingdom of God.

### 1. First principle of the Body: There is only one Body.

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#### 1 Corinthians 12:12 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.

We are not many bodies but one body. Sunday morning meetings should not and cannot separate us into many bodies. We assemble by the Spirit as one body with many members. This is a spiritual reality.

### 2. Second principle of the Body: There is only one Head.

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#### Ephesians 5:23 NASB

- (23) For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself *being* the Savior of the body.

The head *directs* the body and gives *identity* to the body.

### 3. Third principle of the Body: Placement and function are according to the desires of the Lord and not according to our preferences.

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We don't decide how we are placed in the Body nor do we decide how we are to function. That is the sole prerogative of the Lord.

#### 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 are the foot and will only find fulfillment when functioning as the foot. Of course, some who are feet have to put up with others who are hands. The hands think that everybody should be a hand, so they tell the feet that if they would just make a few adjustments then they too could be hands and have a "real" ministry!

#### **4. Fourth principle of the Body: There is a relationship of mutual need.**

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##### 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. We cannot let any quirks in other people separate us from them. We cannot be complete without them.

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.

#### **5. Fifth principle of the Body: The one who plants and the one who waters are one.**

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##### 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. We must recognize that all ministry is done by the Body under the direction of the Head. It does not matter which of the members actually is involved with performing the service.

#### **6. Sixth principle of the Body: Each member provides the same care for one another.**

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##### 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

## **7. Seventh principle of the Body: A healthy body grows.**

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A body grows up. It matures. To be healthy the Body of Christ must be fitted and held together by the supply of the joints; there must be the proper working of each individual part. When that happens, then growth occurs.

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.

While we could speak of several other principles of the Body, if we will simply appropriate and apply these seven, we will begin to experience being truly “assembled” together as one.