One Body and One Spirit

Witness Lee

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This small book is composed of messages given by Brother Witness Lee to the elders and co-workers in Atlanta, Georgia, on November 29, 1992.

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Ephesians 4:3-4 says, "Being diligent to keep the oneness of the Spirit in the uniting bond of peace: one Body and one Spirit." The expression *one Body*

and one Spirit is very crucial. We should endeavor to keep the oneness of the Spirit because there is one Body and one Spirit. The one Body and the one Spirit are all-inclusive. In order to understand them, we need to read and study the entire Bible, from its first page to its last chapter. These truths, along with nearly all the basic and intrinsic truths in the entire Bible, have been nearly lost among God's people. We have been in the Lord's recovery for many years, and what we have done through all these years is mainly to study His holy Word for His recovery.

Based on the recent turmoil among us, I have the deep sensation that it would be worthwhile for us to study the holy Word in a complete way concerning the one Body and the one Spirit.

ONE GOD—TRIUNE

The one Body is based on the one God, who is triune (Gen. 1:1; Matt. 28:19). God is triune, but He does not have three economies. He is triune, but from the beginning He did not move, act, or do things in three ways. He has always worked in one way for one economy, but He needs to be the Father, the Son, and the Spirit in order to carry out His one economy. The one God, the Triune God, is the first unique base of our belief concerning the one Body.

ONE INCARNATION—
GOD MINGLING HIMSELF WITH MAN

The one Body is also based on the one incarnation—God mingling Himself with man (John 1:1, 14). Before incarnation there was the one creation, but the creation was not God's goal, nor was it His aim. This creation, the old creation, is just the temporary means to reach the goal. One day the old creation will be over. However, the new creation came out of, and is still coming out of, the old creation. Its coming out of the old creation has not yet been consummated. According to the Bible, God will use four ages, four dispensations, to work in the old creation in order to produce the new creation. These four ages include the age before the law (from Adam to Moses—Rom. 5:14), the age after the law (from Moses to Christ's first coming—John 1:17), the age of grace (from Christ's first coming to the restoration of all things at Christ's second coming—Acts 3:20-21), and the kingdom age of one thousand years (from Christ's second coming to the end of the millennium—Rev. 11:15; 20:4, 6). The last age will be the shortest age.

God will use these four ages to work out the new creation from His old creation.

We were in the old creation, but one day God worked on us. As a result, we became a new creation (2 Cor. 5:17). God's work to produce the new creation out of the old creation is still going on. Before the incarnation God was there, but He was never in any part of the old creation. His life and nature were always kept absolutely in Himself. He never came with His divinity to enter into humanity. From Adam until the New Testament age, no one among the human race knew what God's purpose was. According to Paul's word in Ephesians 3, God's purpose was kept concealed; hence, it was a mystery (vv. 4-5, 9). His purpose was not made known to any of the sons of men, great or small. Not even Abraham, one who was close to God as God's intimate friend (James 2:23), knew the purpose of God's creation.

Genesis 18 shows that God had an intimate friendship with Abraham. He came to visit Abraham with the intention of rescuing Abraham's nephew Lot from His fiery judgment on Sodom and Gomorrah. But no one knew of this intention, so God said, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do?" (v. 17). God had to let Abraham know. Yet in the Old Testament God did not reveal His economy, not even to Abraham. The purpose for God's creation of the heavens, the earth, and billions of items and for creating man in His image and according to His likeness is not a small thing, but God never told anyone what His purpose was.

God had a good friendship not only with Abraham but also with Moses. Exodus 33:11 says that God spoke with Moses, just as a man speaks to his companion. God revealed a great deal to Moses. The five books of the Pentateuch are God's unveiling to Moses. But in all this revelation God did not tell Moses what the purpose of His creation was.

The purpose of God's creation was not touched until Matthew 1. The Gospel of Matthew opens with the genealogy of Christ, showing that Christ is the son of Abraham and the son of David (v. 1). Matthew 1 tells us that this Christ would be born of the virgin Mary (v. 16). He is the Christ, the anointed One, the centrality and universality of God's economy. Although this is revealed in Matthew 1, today most Christians do not know the real significance of incarnation.

Incarnation is God mingling Himself with man. The creation of the heavens and the earth was a great thing, but incarnation is much greater. Many scientists through the past centuries have studied the heavens and the earth. Although the creation is very great, it cannot compare with incarnation, because in incarnation God mingled Himself with man. This was a miracle. The Triune God, the One who calls not being as being (Rom. 4:17), one day entered into the womb of a young virgin and remained there for nine months. We call this a conception, but Matthew 1:20 says that it was a birth—"that which has been begotten in her is of the Holy Spirit." God was born into that virgin. Then when Christ came out of the womb, that was the second step of His birth. First, God was born into Mary's womb, and then Jesus was born out from Mary's womb to be a God-man.

ONE CHRIST IN HIS INCARNATION

The one Body is also based on the one Christ in His incarnation (v. 16). Matthew 1:18-20 says, "Now the origin of Jesus Christ was in this way: His mother, Mary, after she had been engaged to Joseph, before they came together, was found to be with child of the Holy Spirit. And Joseph her husband, being righteous and not willing to disgrace her openly, intended to send her away secretly. But while he pondered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your wife, for that which has been begotten in her is of the Holy Spirit." The phrase *that which has been begotten in her* indicates a birth. God was born into a virgin, and He remained in her womb for nine months. Then after nine months Christ came out, not merely as God but also as man. He was intrinsically God, yet it seemed that He was only a man-child. However, Christ was not only a man; He was God mingled with man. Merely to say that He was Emmanuel, God with us (v. 23), is inadequate. He was God mingled with man. This is incarnation. This incarnation is the strong base of the one Body. The one Body is based upon the one incarnation to bring forth the one Christ for God's unique economy.

ONE CRUCIFIXION

In the four Gospels there are many stories concerning Jesus from the time of His birth to the time of His crucifixion. He made the blind to see (John 9:1-7), and He enlivened the dead (11:25, 43-44). These deeds are great, but the most crucial thing is that one day such a God-man went to the cross. In

one sense He was arrested and put to death, but in another sense He handed Himself over to the Jewish leaders and the Roman government (18:3-8, 12-13). The Roman imperialists helped Him to be crucified. They prepared the cross, brought the nails, and provided the soldiers to put Him on the cross. The crucifixion that He accomplished was unique in the fulfillment of God's unique purpose for God's unique economy.

Terminating the Old Creation

In His crucifixion Christ terminated the old creation (Rom. 6:6), the creation created through Him (John 1:3). He terminated everything, including you and me. In God's eyes His death was also vicarious; He died for you and me. Without this aspect we would all be finished. On the one hand, He died for us to redeem us, and on the other hand, He terminated us to put us to death so that we could be germinated with His life in His resurrection. This shows that Christ's crucifixion was a great matter.

Dealing with Satan, the World, Sin, and All Negative Things

In His crucifixion Christ dealt with Satan, the world, sin, and all negative things (Heb. 2:14; John 12:31; 1:29; Eph. 2:15-16; Col. 2:14). While Christ was hanging on the cross, there was a warfare between God and the evil angels (v. 15). On the cross Christ died an all-inclusive death, crucifying at least eight negative things: sin, sins, Satan, the world, the flesh, the old man, the old creation, and the ordinances of the law. Satan with his authority of darkness was not happy to see what the cross would accomplish. Thus, as Christ was being crucified, Satan with his evil angels came in to fight. God stripped off and openly shamed the evil angelic rulers and authorities on the cross and triumphed over them in it.

Christ's crucifixion is also a part of the base of the one Body. Without the proper spiritual sight, we cannot see these things. All the divisions among Christians come from this one factor: not seeing the cross. If anyone has really seen the crucifixion, the all-inclusive death that Christ died on the cross, he will never create a division. Division surely does not belong to the new creation; division belongs to the old creation. The entire old creation, including division, was terminated by Christ in His crucifixion. All the divisive

factors were terminated there. As long as someone is in the new creation, he can never carry out a division.

ONE RESURRECTION

There is not only one God, one incarnation, and one crucifixion; there is also one resurrection.

Germinating the New Creation

If there were no resurrection, there would be no new creation. In the crucifixion all the things of the old creation were terminated, including Satan, the world, sin, and all the negative things. Now in resurrection the new creation has been germinated.

Begetting Christ in His Humanity to Be the Firstborn Son of God

In the one resurrection Christ was begotten in His humanity to be the firstborn Son of God (Acts 13:33; Rom. 8:29). Christ as the firstborn Son of God was the first item germinated in the one resurrection. In His incarnation Christ put humanity upon Himself. This humanity was not divine. Romans 8:3 indicates that when Christ came in incarnation, He came "in the likeness of the flesh of sin." At the time of His crucifixion He brought His human part, which was in the likeness of the flesh of sin, to the cross and terminated it. But that was not all. In resurrection He germinated His humanity, making His humanity divine. In this way He was born as the firstborn Son of God. Christ Himself as the firstborn Son of God was the first item that needed to be germinated in His resurrection.

Making Christ (the Last Adam) the Life-giving Spirit

In the one resurrection Christ (the last Adam) was made the life-giving Spirit (1 Cor. 15:45b). In the one incarnation Christ as God was made a man (John 1:1, 14). As a God-man, He lived in His humanity for thirty-three and a half years. Then He went to the cross and died there for the accomplishment of God's eternal redemption. After a three-day burial He rose up from the dead. In His one resurrection as the last Adam, a man in the flesh, He became

the life-giving Spirit for the imparting of His divine life into His believers. This is marvelous and unique in the universe and in human history.

Regenerating All the Believers in Christ to Be the Many Sons of God

Before His resurrection Christ was the only begotten Son of God (3:16), but in resurrection He was born the firstborn Son of God (Acts 13:33; Rom. 8:29). This is something new. The word *firstborn* indicates that many sons will follow. The many sons were the second item Christ germinated in His resurrection. Through Christ's one resurrection all of God's chosen people were regenerated to be the many sons of God (1 Pet. 1:3; Heb. 2:10-11). The one resurrection first germinated Jesus, who was in the likeness of the flesh of sin, to be born of God as the firstborn Son of God. This one resurrection also made Christ (the last Adam) the life-giving Spirit. Accompanying the previous two things, millions of God's chosen people were regenerated to be the many sons of God in the one resurrection of Christ.

As the last Adam, Jesus was still in the old creation. Because the blood and flesh that Jesus put on in His incarnation were of the old creation, He put them on the cross. Through resurrection He became the life-giving Spirit and the firstborn Son of God. At the same time we as God's chosen people were regenerated to be the many sons of God. Now the firstborn Son of God, the life-giving Spirit, and the many sons of God are all in the new creation through the one resurrection of Christ. This is the real base of the one Body, because these regenerated sons of God are the members who compose the Body of Christ. In His incarnation Christ became the first grain of wheat. Then through His death and resurrection He produced us as the many grains (John 12:24). These many grains in His one resurrection have become the members of His one Body.

ONE CHRIST IN HIS ASCENSION

For the one Body there is also one Christ in His ascension (Acts 2:32-36). Christ became God's Anointed through His incarnation (Matt. 1:16). After His incarnation there was one man who was anointed by God to carry out God's eternal economy on the earth. Then after His resurrection and in His ascension Christ became God's Anointed in a further and more official way.

After He was incarnated, He grew up until He was thirty years of age, and then He came out to minister. At that time when He was being baptized, as He stood in the water, the Spirit was poured out upon Him (3:16). That was the anointing of Christ after His incarnation for His ministry, mainly on the earth. Later, He died, and in resurrection He became the life-giving Spirit for the purpose of being God's Anointed. When He ascended to the heavens, according to Acts 2:36, the man Jesus was made both Lord and Christ. This was a more official anointing to Him, making Him God's Christ, God's Anointed, to carry out God's commission, mainly in His heavenly ministry. This is also a crucial base of the one Body of Christ.

ONE BODY OF CHRIST

The one Body comes out of the one God, the one incarnation, the one Christ in His incarnation, the one crucifixion, the one resurrection, and the one Christ in His ascension. If we have seen this, do we dare to divide this Body, to create any division in this Body? Certainly not. Yet today some who were with us have dared to create division. A brother told one dissenting one that we cannot tolerate division. This dissenting one, who had created a division in Anaheim, then said that he would either dissolve that division or remove it out of Anaheim. When I heard this, I said to myself, "If you could move that division even to Mars, it would still be a division." Division is division. Eventually, that division was moved out of Anaheim into a nearby city where a church had already been established. This incident shows how much the dissenting ones are in darkness concerning the Body of Christ. To merely know the doctrines in black and white does not mean very much.

In the spring of 1988 some of the dissenting ones began to distribute a book by G. H. Lang entitled *The Churches of God*. In this book Lang teaches that a local church should be autonomous. Based on this book the dissenting ones began to promote the matter of autonomy among the churches. In the summer of 1988 in a conference in the San Francisco Bay Area, I spoke concerning the matter of autonomy. I told the saints that to consider the churches as altogether autonomous is wrong. The church in Ephesus was not independently autonomous. After appointing the elders in Ephesus (Acts 20:17; cf. 14:23), Paul visited the church in Ephesus and remained with the church once for three years (Acts 19; 20:31; 1 Cor. 16:8). Later, he wrote a letter to the church there (Eph. 1:1). On his way to Jerusalem he sent some to call the elders of the church in Ephesus to come to him (Acts 20:16-17). On

that visit Paul said, "You yourselves know, from the first day that I set foot in Asia, how I was with you all the time...; how I did not withhold any of those things that are profitable by not declaring them to you and by not teaching you publicly and from house to house...Therefore watch, remembering that for three years, night and day, I did not cease admonishing each one with tears" (vv. 18, 20, 31). This passage shows that the church in Ephesus was not independently autonomous but remained under the continual care of the apostle Paul and his ministry.

The one Body comes out of one God, one incarnation, one Christ in His incarnation, one crucifixion, one resurrection, and one Christ in His ascension. These six items are the base of the one Body. With these six items as the base, no one has any reason or any standing to make any division in the Body of Christ.

The Fullness, the Expression, of the One Who Fills All in All

The one Body of Christ is the one fullness as the unique expression of the unique One who fills all in all (Eph. 1:23), leaving no ground for anyone to make any kind of division under any kind of excuse (Rom. 16:17).

The Organism of the Processed and Consummated Triune God, Constituted with All the Members of Christ

The one Body of Christ is also the organism of the processed and consummated Triune God (Eph. 3:17-19), constituted with all the members of Christ (Rom. 12:5; 1 Cor. 10:17).

ONE NEW MAN

The one Body of Christ is the one new man (Eph. 2:15; Col. 3:10-11). There is no possibility of division within the one new man. Actually, within the one Body you cannot make any division. To make the churches autonomous is like making the members of your body into different autonomies. Could any part of Christ's Body be autonomous? Even the fifty states of the United States are not altogether autonomous. There is still one federal government, one

constitution, one diplomacy, one currency, one defense, one postal system, and one highway system. How foolish it would be to make the states autonomous in any of these matters. The concept of autonomy is awful because it makes the churches separate and some even divided from one another. We should not forget that all the believers are the one new man, and this one new man includes all the local churches.

Christ Being All the Members of This One New Man

Christ is all the members of the one new man. Christ is you, and Christ is me. Christ is every member of the one new man. Because of this Paul asks, "Is Christ divided?" (1 Cor. 1:13). Since Christ cannot be divided, how could the Body of Christ as the one new man be divided?

Christ Being in All the Members of This One New Man

Christ not only is all the members of the one new man but also is in all the members of the one new man for the accomplishment of God's eternal economy (Eph. 3:8-10). The Body is for Christ's satisfaction, and the one new man is for the accomplishment of God's eternal economy. This could never be consummated in the way of divisions.

ONE CHURCH OF GOD

The one Body is the one church of God (1:22; 1 Cor. 10:32b), manifested in many localities (Rev. 1:11) as many local churches (v. 4).

THE LOCAL CHURCHES

The local churches are many in existence but are still one Body universally in element (Eph. 4:4). In existence the churches are many. For example, there is a church in Taipei, a church in London, and a church in Atlanta. However, in element all the churches are one. We are one church, one Body, one new man. In element we are not divided, and we cannot be autonomous.

THE SECRET IN PRACTICALITY

The One Accord in the Local Churches

The secret in practicality to the one Body is the one accord in the local churches (Phil. 1:27b; 2:2). Although many have said that the crucial point in Acts is the outpouring of the Spirit, the outpouring of the Spirit came out of the one accord. Without the one accord, the Spirit would not have been poured out. Before His crucifixion when the Lord Jesus was on earth, the twelve disciples were not in one accord. Quite often they were in discord. They fought among themselves as to who was the greatest (Luke 9:46; 22:24). But after the resurrection, and even more after the ascension, the one hundred twenty from the despised region of Galilee remained in one accord in Jerusalem under the threatening of the Judaizers. They prayed in one accord for ten days (Acts 1:14), both males and females, and this brought in the outpouring of the Spirit (2:1-4), which led to three thousand being saved on the day of Pentecost (v. 41). The reason for the increase was the one accord. The church in that place could not have increased in such a way without the one accord. Among us the rate of increase has been very low. The reason for this is that we are short of the one accord.

The Oneness in the Universal Body

The secret of the practice of the church life is, first, the one accord in the local churches. Second, the secret of the practice of the church life is the oneness in the universal Body (Eph. 4:3; John 17:11, 21-23). Some insist to say, "We are local churches. Every local church has its own jurisdiction. Don't touch our affairs. If you touch our affairs, you touch our local administration." To say such a word is to make all the local churches separate from one another. This is separation; this is not oneness. Oneness should be among the local churches, and one accord should be in every local church. Then we will have the blessing.

In the eighteenth century Count Zinzendorf had an estate in Saxony, which he used as a refuge for those fleeing the persecution of the Roman Catholic Church and the state churches. The brothers who were gathered there began to disagree over their doctrinal and practical differences. One day Zinzendorf called them together and advised them to drop their differences. They all agreed. Soon after this, they experienced the outpouring of the Spirit upon them, and they were increased and spread. If we would all be in the oneness universally and in the one accord locally, the meeting halls of all the churches

would be filled. I began to work in Taipei, Taiwan, in 1949. When we started the work, there were about five hundred saints in the recovery on the entire island. Within five years the number increased to forty thousand. The reason for this increase was the one accord on the whole island.

The church is one man, one Body. Just as a man cannot be divided into pieces, the church as the new man cannot be divided into pieces. Our physical body cannot be divided into separate, autonomous pieces. We cannot say that our shoulder, head, and hands are autonomies. All the local churches should be one, and every local church should be in one accord with no opinion.

THE UNIQUE RELATIONSHIP, FELLOWSHIP, AND BLENDING OF ALL THE LOCAL CHURCHES

The unique relationship, fellowship, and blending of all the local churches should be as much as practicality allows, without boundaries of states, provinces, or nations. If we are divided by any kind of boundary, the church becomes no longer a Body; rather, it becomes a corpse. A divided body is a corpse. We have been unaware of the fact that in the past five years the testimony of the recovery has been very much weakened. This is why we have lost our impact. In nearly every locality the number is too small with a low rate of increase. We all love the Lord, and we are in the recovery. We all keep the truth and teach the truth. Nevertheless, there is very little increase among us.

We need to reconsider our way (Hag. 1:5, 7). We are rich in truth, and we are pure in following the Lord, yet our increase is too low. Nearly everywhere it is the same. Based on this one fact of the low rate of increase among us, we should all humble ourselves before the Lord. The rate of increase measures where we are.

Are the churches in every area willing to be blended together as one? There may be fifteen churches in a particular region, but the question is whether or not they would be willing to be blended together. We may like to be independent under the cloak of being local. I am not teaching that all the local churches should be united in a federation, like the federation of the fifty states

of the United States. I am showing you that the Bible reveals to us that all the saints and all the local churches are one Body. No one can deny this.

All the local churches on the globe today should be one. Today, unlike in Paul's time, travel and communication to nearly anywhere on the earth are very convenient. Because of this the churches today should be blended much more than they were in Paul's time. Not only according to the revelation of the Bible but also according to the modern conveniences, we should be one, and we should be blended together as much as practicality allows.

THE CLUSTERING AND THE MOVING TOGETHER OF NEIGHBORING CHURCHES

The clustering and the moving together of neighboring churches should be as much as possible, without the abolishing of the local administrations in business affairs. Our blending together should not be in name only; we must take some action. The local administration still exists, but in the spiritual element all the churches should be blended together as one.

In Southern California we have forty-nine churches. Some are very small with not more than fifteen saints; others have twenty-five, thirty, or fifty. Of course, some are over one hundred, two hundred, even three hundred. These churches are very close to one another, that is, in the same "neighborhood" with one another. If they would be blended together, they could do many things. They could still meet in their own locality during the week, but on the Lord's Day they should come together to a central place. Spontaneously, that meeting would be strengthened. If a number of these small churches would come together, they could have one hundred fifty in the meeting, and this would bring in some impact. They could also have a gathering for the reaping of the new ones.

Because some like their independence, they might not agree with this. They may say, "We are the church in this city, and you are the church in that city." In a geographical area of not more than twenty miles, there may be ten saints meeting here, another fifteen meeting there, and twenty meeting at another place. There may be several small churches meeting like this. Why would you not be blended together? We have to be blended into one practically.

We still should keep the local administration in business affairs, but we have to learn to be blended with other churches. There may be only fifteen saints in a certain locality, and they can have a group meeting there. They even have the freedom to declare that they are the church in that locality, but they must also learn to be blended together with the neighboring churches. When we are blended together as one church, we will have the impact.

With the unbelievers and with those who do not meet with us, we need the impact. A new one may come to our meeting and be fully disappointed because our number is small or because our meeting place is a garage. After he comes one time, he may never come back. If we have a proper meeting facility set up that can accommodate three hundred people, fifteen small groups of saints in the surrounding neighborhoods could all come together for a meeting. Then when people ask where you meet, you can give them the street location and a description of the building. When they come to the meeting, they can see that you look like a church. This will give people the proper impression. We must have a revolutionized mentality, and we have to reconsider our way.

THE PRACTICES OF THE LORD AND THE APOSTLE

The Lord's Blending the Seven Churches in Asia into One by Sending Them One Total Epistle Respectively and Collectively with the Whole Book of Revelation

The Lord blended the seven churches in Asia into one by sending them one total epistle respectively and collectively with the whole book of Revelation (1:4, 11; 2:1—3:22). On the one hand, the Lord wrote each church an epistle, and on the other hand, He put all seven epistles together as one total epistle and sent it to each one of the seven churches. Eventually, all seven churches received the same thing. The book of Revelation shows that there should be only one church in one city. It also reveals that all the churches collectively should also be one. This should give us a clear view that in the eyes of the Lord the churches are one. The Lord has only one Body. In order for the churches to exist on the globe, we have to be scattered, but our being scattered should not be a basic factor that causes us to be separated and

divided. If it were possible, it would be better for us all to come together and not be scattered.

In the past some saints among us traveled from locality to locality, from church to church, trying to find a church that would match their preference and taste. This kind of attitude is offensive. It offends the Body of Christ. We should not put any demands on the church where we are. We have to humble ourselves and submit ourselves to the church where we are. Furthermore, we must try our best to avoid any discord. A little leaven leavens the whole lump (1 Cor. 5:6-7). We must therefore be on the alert. Locally, we must be in one accord, without any opinion, and we must also keep the oneness in the universal Body.

The Apostle Paul's Blending the Two Churches in Colossae and Laodicea as One by Sending Them Epistles in Common

The apostle Paul blended the two churches in Colossae and Laodicea together as one by sending them epistles in common (Col. 4:16). He wrote a letter to the church in Colossae and charged them to let the church in Laodicea read it. He also wrote a letter to Laodicea and asked Laodicea to let Colossae read it. Instead of having this practice, we may like to keep things secret in our locality, but Paul practiced differently. He wanted his letter to the church in Colossae to be read by the church in Laodicea and his letter to the church in Laodicea to be read by the church in Colossae.

The Apostle Paul's Practice of the Fellowship of the Body among the Churches in His Greetings

The apostle Paul practiced the fellowship of the Body among the churches in his greetings (Rom. 16:1-16, 20-24). Romans 16 is a sweet chapter, consisting mostly of recommendations and greetings. It speaks not only of the concern among the saints but also of the fellowship among the churches (vv. 1, 4-5, 16, 23). Without Paul's greetings, we would not know of the church in Cenchrea, or of Sister Phoebe, who was a patroness of many and a deaconess of the church there. Because of Paul's greetings, we are able to know so much more about the churches. Romans 16 shows us Paul's fellowship of the Body

among the churches and the practical living of the Body of Christ in different localities.

ALL THE LOCAL CHURCHES ON THE ENTIRE GLOBE NEEDING TO BE ABSOLUTELY ONE

By Being in the Oneness of the Spirit and in the One Accord of Our Spirit, Soul, and Mind

All the local churches on the entire globe should be absolutely one by being in the oneness of the Spirit and in the one accord of our spirit, soul, and mind.

In the Realm of Five Crucial Things

All the local churches should be absolutely one in the realm of five crucial things: (1) the growth of life for the testimony of Jesus Christ; (2) the preaching of the gospel; (3) the spreading of the Lord's recovery; (4) the building up of the Body of Christ; and (5) the accomplishment of God's eternal economy. We should be one in all these things.

We do not need to be one in certain things concerning the administration of the church. Whether the church in a certain locality should buy a piece of land in order to build a hall or not is a local affair. But in the growth of life for the testimony of the Lord, in the preaching of the gospel, in the spreading of the Lord's recovery, in the building up of the Body of Christ, and in the accomplishment of God's eternal economy, we have to be one universally.

THE NEED TO BE BODY-CONSCIOUS IN ONE ACCORD AND BODY-CENTERED IN ONENESS

For the Lord's move in His recovery both locally and universally, we all need to be Body-conscious in one accord and Body-centered in oneness. In one accord we should be Body-conscious. In oneness we should be Body-centered. In our consideration the Body should be first and the local churches should be second. The United States became the top country on this earth, not because of the autonomy of its states but because of the unity of all

the states. What a shame it is for any local church to declare its autonomy! To teach that the local churches are absolutely autonomous is to divide the Body of Christ. All the local churches are and should be one Body universally, doctrinally, and practically. Otherwise, where is the unique church of God and the unique one new man for the fulfilling of God's economy?

CHAPTER TWO

ONE SPIRIT

Scripture Reading: Eph. 4:3-4a; 1 Cor. 12:13

OUTLINE

I. The Spirit of God in God's creation—Gen. 1:2.

II. The Spirit of Jehovah in God's relationship with man—Num. 11:29; Judg. 3:10.

III. The Spirit of holiness in the life of God's people in the Old Testament—Psa. 51:11; Isa. 63:10-11.

IV. The Holy Spirit—Luke 1:35; Matt. 1:18:

- A. From Christ's incarnation and onward.
- B. Making man as holy as God.
- C. For man to be joined to God as one.

V. The Spirit for the believers of Christ in God's New Testament economy:

- A. Was not yet before Jesus was glorified—John 7:39.
- B. The last Adam (Jesus Christ) became the Spirit through His resurrection—1 Cor. 15:45b.

VI. The all-inclusive Spirit:

- A. The compound Spirit (cf. Exo. 30:23-28), compounded with:
  1. Christ's divinity.
  2. Christ's humanity.
  3. The effectiveness of Christ's death—Rom. 8:13b.
  4. The power of Christ's resurrection—Phil. 3:10.
- B. The anointing Spirit—2 Cor. 1:21-22; 1 John 2:20, 27.
- C. The indwelling Spirit—Rom. 8:11.
- D. The life-giving Spirit—1 Cor. 15:45b; 2 Cor. 3:6b.
- E. The Spirit of life—Rom. 8:2.
- F. The Spirit of power—Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8.
- G. The Spirit of Jesus in His humanity with His suffering—16:7.
- H. The Spirit of Christ in His divinity with His resurrection—Rom. 8:9b.
- I. The Spirit of Jesus Christ in both His suffering and resurrection—Phil. 1:19b.
- J. The Spirit of the Lord—2 Cor. 3:17-18:

1. The Lord Spirit.
2. In the transformation of the believers of Christ.

K. The consummated Spirit—the third of the consummated Triune God—Rev. 22:17; Matt. 28:19.

L. The Spirit as the consummation of the processed and consummated Triune God—John 7:39; Rev. 22:17.

VII. In this one Spirit—1 Cor. 12:13:

A. The believers in Christ were all baptized into one Body.

B. They were all given to drink one Spirit.

VIII. The Spirit of the Body—Eph. 4:4-6, 11-16:

A. As the essence of the Body.

B. With the Lord as the element of the Body.

C. With God the Father as the source of the Body.

D. For the organic building up of the Body.

IX. With one Bible as the one divine revelation.

X. In one teaching:

A. The teaching of the apostles concerning God's economy—Acts 2:42; 1 Tim. 1:3-4.

B. According to the entire New Testament—Rev. 22:18-19.

C. With the base of the Old Testament—2 Tim. 3:16-17.

XI. Through one ministry—2 Cor. 4:1:

A. The New Testament ministry of all the New Testament ministers—3:8-9, 6; 1 Tim. 1:12.

B. For the building up of the Body of Christ—Eph. 4:12, 16.

Ephesians 4:4 says that there is one Body and one Spirit. The one Spirit is the reality of the one Body.

THE SPIRIT OF GOD

The one Spirit is the Spirit of God in God's creation (Gen. 1:2).

THE SPIRIT OF JEHOVAH

In God's relationship with man, the Spirit is the Spirit of Jehovah (Num. 11:29; Judg. 3:10).

THE SPIRIT OF HOLINESS

The Spirit is also the Spirit of holiness in the life of God's people in the Old Testament (Psa. 51:11; Isa. 63:10-11). The Spirit in the Old Testament was not the Holy Spirit but the Spirit of holiness. This title is used only three times in the Old Testament, as referred to above.

THE HOLY SPIRIT

The title *Holy Spirit* is used in the New Testament from Christ's incarnation and onward (Luke 1:35; Matt. 1:18). God is holy, and His Spirit is holy to make us as holy as God is. By this Holy Spirit, we are joined to God as one (1 Cor. 6:17).

THE SPIRIT FOR THE BELIEVERS OF CHRIST IN GOD'S NEW TESTAMENT ECONOMY

The one Spirit is also the Spirit for the believers of Christ in God's New Testament economy. The Spirit was not yet before Jesus was glorified (John 7:39). The Spirit of God was there from the beginning (Gen. 1:1-2), but before the Lord Jesus was glorified in His resurrection (Luke 24:26), the Spirit as the Spirit of Christ (Rom. 8:9), the Spirit of Jesus Christ (Phil. 1:19), was not yet. Jesus was glorified in His resurrection, and through His resurrection He as the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit (1 Cor. 15:45b), that is, the Spirit. Today the Spirit is the all-inclusive Spirit of Jesus Christ as the living water for us to receive (John 7:38-39).

THE ALL-INCLUSIVE SPIRIT

The one Spirit is now the all-inclusive Spirit, the compound Spirit (cf. Exo. 30:23-28), compounded with Christ's divinity, Christ's humanity, the effectiveness of Christ's death (Rom. 8:13b), and the power of Christ's resurrection (Phil. 3:10). The compound Spirit is also the anointing ointment to anoint us (2 Cor. 1:21-22; 1 John 2:20, 27) and the indwelling Spirit (Rom. 8:11). In the Old Testament the Spirit of God never dwelt within anyone, but today He indwells every believer of Christ.

This all-inclusive Spirit is the life-giving Spirit (1 Cor. 15:45b; 2 Cor. 3:6b), the Spirit of life (Rom. 8:2), the Spirit of power (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8), the

Spirit of Jesus in His humanity with His suffering (16:7), the Spirit of Christ in His divinity with His resurrection (Rom. 8:9b), the Spirit of Jesus Christ in both His suffering and resurrection (Phil. 1:19b), and the Spirit of the Lord (2 Cor. 3:17-18) as the Lord Spirit in the transformation of the believers of Christ. Furthermore, the all-inclusive Spirit is the consummated Spirit—the third of the consummated Triune God (Rev. 22:17; Matt. 28:19)—and the consummation of the processed and consummated Triune God (John 7:39; Rev. 22:17). Eventually, the all-inclusive Spirit is the totality of the processed and consummated Triune God. We need to study all these points. We must learn to know the Spirit.

IN THIS ONE SPIRIT THE BELIEVERS BEING BAPTIZED INTO ONE BODY AND BEING GIVEN TO DRINK ONE SPIRIT

In this one Spirit, the all-inclusive Spirit, the believers in Christ were all baptized into one Body and were also given to drink one Spirit (1 Cor. 12:13). We all were baptized in one Spirit to drink one Spirit. Now we have the one Spirit outwardly and inwardly. To be baptized in the Spirit is to get into the Spirit and to be lost in Him; to drink the Spirit is to take the Spirit in and to have our being saturated with Him.

THE SPIRIT OF THE BODY

This one Spirit is the Spirit of the Body (Eph. 4:4-6, 11-16) as the essence of the Body. The essence is more intrinsic than the element. Every substance has some element, and within the element there is the essence. The Spirit is the essence of the Body, the Lord is the element of the Body, and God the Father is the source of the Body. All three are in the one Body for the organic building up of the Body.

WITH ONE BIBLE AS THE ONE DIVINE REVELATION

The one Spirit is with one Bible as the one divine revelation.

IN ONE TEACHING

The one teaching in the New Testament is the teaching of the apostles concerning God's economy (Acts 2:42; 1 Tim. 1:3-4) according to the entire New Testament (Rev. 22:18-19) with the base of the Old Testament (2 Tim. 3:16-17). In 1 Timothy Paul charged Timothy to stay in Ephesus in order to charge certain ones not to teach different things (1:3) but to teach God's economy (v. 4). I can testify strongly that over the past seventy years both Brother Nee and I have never taught different things. We have given thousands of messages, but all the messages are one teaching, the teaching concerning God's eternal economy, which includes Christ as the mystery of God (Col. 2:2) and the church as the mystery of Christ (Eph. 3:4). We have taught only the things according to the apostles' teaching, which is the New Testament teaching. This one teaching is with the base of the Old Testament. The Old Testament is the base of our New Testament teaching.

THROUGH ONE MINISTRY

The New Testament Ministry of All the New Testament Ministers

The New Testament ministry is of all the New Testament ministers (2 Cor. 3:8-9, 6; 1 Tim. 1:12). The New Testament ministry is one. Second Corinthians 4:1 says, "Therefore having this ministry as we [the apostles] have been shown mercy, we do not lose heart." The ministry in this verse refers to the New Testament ministry, and here it is being compared to the Old Testament ministry in the preceding chapter. The Old Testament ministry was a ministry of condemnation (3:7, 9a); the New Testament ministry is of the Spirit and of righteousness (vv. 8, 9b). The Old Testament ministry was a ministry of death (v. 7); the New Testament ministry is a ministry of life (v. 6). This unique ministry is common to all the apostles of Christ. Although they are many, they have only one ministry—the ministry of the new covenant for the accomplishing of God's New Testament economy.

For the Building Up of the Body of Christ

All the New Testament ministers are of the New Testament ministry, the one ministry in the New Testament, for the building up of the Body of Christ (Eph. 4:12, 16). Because there is only one ministry, if you consider that you have a ministry, you must be a minister of the New Testament who teaches

the teaching of the New Testament ministry. This unique ministry is the ministering of Christ to people for the building up of His Body.

If you study the Scripture references, the outlines, and the fellowship in this small book, you will see the full scope of the one Body and the one Spirit in the Bible.