
Church in Campbell Weekly News

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LIFE-STUDY OF SECOND CORINTHIANS MESSAGE FIFTY-NINE

C. The Tempering of the Members

In verses 23 through 27 Paul speaks regarding the tempering of the members. Verses 23 and 24 say, "And those members of the body which we think to be less honorable, these we clothe with more abundant honor, and our uncomely members have more abundant comeliness; but our comely members have no need. But God has tempered the body together, giving more abundant honor to the member that lacked." The Greek word translated tempered literally means blended; hence, mixed, compounded, adjusted. God has blended all the different members of Christ together into one Body. For this we need much transformation (Rom. 12:2), from the natural life to the spiritual, by the same Spirit, for the practical Body life.

It is not easy to be blended together in the Body. It is even difficult for a husband and wife to be tempered together. In the Body we are blended, tempered, with many others. Furthermore, the Body is both local and universal. If you think you have been blended quite well with the saints in your locality, the Lord may bring someone from another part of the world to test how much you have been tempered. This is the situation of the church in Anaheim. Anaheim is a good example of a church where people of many races and nationalities meet together and experience the blending, the mixing, the compounding. To be compounded is to be adjusted. God has blended, tempered, all the different members of Christ together into one Body. Such tempering requires a great deal of transformation. For the practical Body life we need to be transformed by the Spirit from the natural life to the spiritual life.

God has tempered the Body together, giving more abundant honor to the member that lacks so "that there should be no division in the body, but that the members should have the same care for one another" (v. 25). In the Body life the same care should be given to all the different members. Difference in care causes divisions.

God cannot carry out His administration if the Body is divided. God has one way to carry out His administration in the universe. According to Ephesians 1:10, God will head up all things in Christ through the Body of Christ. First Christ must head up the church. Then God will use the Body of Christ headed up by Christ and in Christ to head up all things. The time is coming when all things will be headed up in Christ. This will be the dispensation of the fullness of times. In order for this to take place, God must head us up in Christ. This is the reason the Lord definitely needs His recovery.

In today's Christianity, the Body has been divided. Some claim that we are narrow and exclusive. Actually, the situation is the opposite. We are not exclusive, and we are not narrow. We recognize and accept all genuine believers, no matter what their background may be. As long as they are blood-washed, Spirit-regenerated believers in Christ, we receive them. We do not have any creed, any particular belief, or any special terms or conditions. We simply believe the Bible in a general way. This gives God an opportunity to gather a remnant of those who love Him and seek Him and use them to recover the proper church life. God is using the church life in the Lord's recovery as a testimony of the oneness in the midst of the divisions.

We strongly testify that we reject all divisive factors. An example of such a factor would be insisting on a certain form of baptism. Although we practice pray-reading, we do not allow pray-reading to become a factor of division. If those attending the meetings do not want to pray-read, we do not insist that they do so. The matter of tongues is not a factor of division among us. Because we reject all factors of division, the Lord has a way to gain a remnant to replace the divisions so that God can carry out His administration.

In verses 3 through 11 Paul mentions the Spirit again and again. But in verses 12 through 27 he makes no mention of the Spirit, but uses the word body eighteen times. In verse 13 we have the transition from the Spirit to the Body: "For also in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and were all given to drink one Spirit." In one Spirit we

have all been baptized into one Body. Many Pentecostal people, however, talk only of being baptized in the Spirit. But verse 13 says that in one Spirit we have been baptized into one Body to drink one Spirit. It is crucial to realize that we have been baptized into one Body to drink. Not only have we been baptized in one Spirit; we have also been baptized into one Body and with a particular purpose—to drink one Spirit. In the recovery we emphasize very strongly the matter of being in the one Body drinking one Spirit. Are you now in the Body drinking? I can declare boldly that I am in the one Body drinking the one Spirit.

To be baptized in the one Body is to experience something once for all. But to drink one Spirit is a continuing experience. We may compare baptism to a wedding, and drinking to married life. The real experience of married life does not take place at the wedding. The wedding is a procedure to acknowledge the fact of marriage. But the experience of married life continues day by day. The same is true of baptism and drinking. Many Christians have only the “wedding”—baptism; they do not have the “married life”—the daily drinking of one Spirit. In the Lord’s recovery we have both baptism and drinking, both the wedding and the daily married life. We have the procedure to receive and accept the fact, and we have the moment-by-moment experience. Now we are in the Body to drink. In one Spirit we have all been baptized. Now I am happy to say that we are in the Body drinking. How wonderful to be drinking the Spirit in the Body! Sometimes I enjoy this drinking so much that I am excited and beside myself with joy.

After making the transfer from the Spirit to the Body in verse 13, in verses 14 through 27 Paul talks about the body with the members. Here we see that Paul is centered on the Body and burdened regarding the Body. The spiritual gifts are a matter not only of the Spirit, but also a matter for the Body. These gifts are of the Spirit and by the Spirit, but they are not for us as individuals. The gifts are for the Body.

Throughout the years I have known a number of brothers and sisters who, humanly speaking, do not seem to have any gifts. But they have a strong spirit with a heart for the Body. As a result, eventually they have been much used by the Lord. I know of a certain couple who have been visited by the Lord’s mercy. They received His grace, and they began to love Him. Gradually, over the years, they have been

growing in the Body and have received a burden for the Body. The only gift they seem to have is that of loving the Body, of loving the saints. Now in their locality there is a beautiful expression of the church life.

However, those who are talented by birth, gifted by rebirth, and well educated may not be useful at all in the raising up of the proper church life. Instead, they may not use their gifts for the Body, but for themselves. But the couple I have just referred to is in the Body and cares for the Body. For this reason, the Lord has used them in the raising up of a local church. If this brother and sister continue to receive grace and be preserved in grace, their function, their gift, will be enriched, uplifted, and multiplied. However, those who are talented, gifted, educated, and eloquent may cause problems and eventually even cause divisions.

Today’s charismatic movement seems to be quite prevailing. However, it is also very divided. Furthermore, it does not help believers to grow in life. The charismatic movement is of an altogether different category from the Lord’s recovery.

Burdens for Church Prayers

- Pray for the blending and one accord among the saints.
- Pray for the English-speaking testimony and gospel preaching on West Valley College campus.
- Pray for the summer training that the Lord release His speaking to supply the Body.
- May the Lord raise up many brothers to bear the testimony together.
- Pray for the burden to raise up next generation for building up of the body of Christ.
- Pray for YP that they will be companions with one another to pursue the Lord together.
- For GOW training: Vital groups be raised up, attending prayer meeting, prophesying on Lord’s day by daily enjoying His word and pursue the truth.

Announcement

- Morning Revival: ITERO Message 8.
- Tuesday prayer meeting at Campbell meeting hall.
- GOW 6th term training registration: register with the brothers in small group to be trained by His grace and practice steadfastly unto Zion/overcomers.
- SST for YP 7/22~27, please sanctify these times. SST registration deadline is 6/24.
- Chinese scholar training in NJ, 7/27-8/3. Continuing training in Fremont 8/2-8/5.