

Message Four

**Practicing the Church Life  
in the Kingdom of the Son of God's Love**

Scripture Reading: Col. 1:2; 4:15-16; 2:19; 3:10-11

**I. In the kingdom of the Son of God's love, we have the practice of the local church life—1:2; 4:15-16:**

- A. The believers live in churches that are in their localities respectively—Acts 8:1; 1 Cor. 1:2; 1 Thes. 1:1.
- B. The church has two aspects—the universal and the local—Matt. 16:18; 18:17:
  - 1. The universal aspect refers to the constitution, nature, and content of the church; the local aspect refers to the expression and practicality of the church—16:18; 18:17:
    - a. The church revealed in Matthew 16:18 is the universal church, the unique Body of Christ.
    - b. The church revealed in Matthew 18:17 is the local church, the expression of the unique Body of Christ in a certain locality.
  - 2. Without the universal aspect, the church has no content; without the local aspect, it is impossible for the church to have any expression and practice.
  - 3. Matthew 16 and 18 both indicate that the church represents the kingdom of the heavens, having the authority to bind and to loose.

**II. In the kingdom of the Son of God's love, we have the reality and practicality of the organic Body of Christ—Col. 2:19:**

- A. We are one Body in Christ, where we are members one of another—Rom. 12:4-5:
  - 1. *In Christ* implies the fact that we are organically one with Christ, that we have a life union with Him.
  - 2. The Body of Christ is altogether a matter of life that keeps us in an organic union with Him—v. 4:
    - a. In Christ we have an organic union with the Body of Christ, and we are organic parts of the Body of Christ—v. 5.
    - b. The actuality of the Body is in the organic union with Christ; if we remain in the organic union, we are in the Body, but if we do not remain in this union, we are out of the Body.
    - c. The divine life unites us together not only with Christ but also with all the members of the Body of Christ—vv. 4-5.
- B. As we hold Christ as the Head, the Body grows with the growth of God—Col. 2:19:
  - 1. God's economy is to head up all things in Christ through His Body, the church, making Christ the center of all things—Eph. 1:10.
  - 2. The Body grows out from the Head, for all the supply comes from the Head—Col. 2:19; Eph. 4:15-16.
  - 3. The growth of the Body depends on the growth of God, the increase of God's element, in the Body—Col. 2:19.

**III. In the kingdom of the Son of God's love, we have the reality and practicality of the universal one new man—Eph. 2:15; 4:24; Col. 3:10-11:**

- A. The church, the Body of Christ, is the one new man to accomplish God's eternal purpose, expressing God and representing Him—Eph. 3:9; Gen. 1:26.
- B. As the Body of Christ, the church needs Christ as its life; as the one new man, the church needs Christ as its person.
- C. For the new man we all need to take Christ as our person; when we live by taking Christ as our person, especially in making decisions, our living will be the living of the new man—Eph. 3:17a.
- D. In the one new man, Christ is all; there is no room for any natural person—Col. 3:10-11:
  - 1. In the one new man there is only one person—the all-inclusive Christ—2:17; 3:4, 11.
  - 2. In the one new man, Christ is all the members and in all the members—vv. 10-11.
- E. We need to practice the church life in the consciousness of the universal one new man—4:7-17.