

# BLENDING IN THE VITAL GROUPS—THE REALITY OF THE BODY OF CHRIST

## Message 1

### The Lord Jesus Blending the First Vital Group Together

(1) *I asked of the Lord:*

*After my illness,  
What my ministry should stress?*

(2) *It seems that the Lord would burden me with:*

- 1. The Body of Christ and the Life of the Body.*
- 2. The reality of the life of the Body of Christ.*

(3) *May the Lord have mercy upon me that He would  
grace me to live the two stresses listed above and  
minister them to the Lord's recovery accordingly.*

9:40 AM

—5/9/94

*Witness Lee*

### The Reality of the Body of Christ, Blending, and Vital Groups

The economy of God is for the Body of Christ. After seeing this, I checked with myself, “Where is the Body of Christ? You have opened the Bible book by book to the saints, and there are more than sixteen hundred local churches raised up on this earth, but where is the Body? You have the churches, but where can you see the Body?” Because of this, I became burdened. I said, “Lord, I must confess to You and admit that although I saw the Body of Christ and I preached and taught the Body of Christ for years, even I myself am not very much in the reality of the Body of Christ.” I was confessing my dullness and shortcomings to the Lord concerning this matter. Thus, the present burden has come to me. You should not pay so much attention to the spreading of the recovery, to the increase of the churches, and to the good meetings of the churches. You must realize that there is a great lack, a shortage, that is, the reality of the Body of Christ. It is for this reason that there is a need for the blending....

In the New Testament the overcomers are likened to Zion. In Revelation 14:1 the 144,000 overcomers are not just in Jerusalem; they are on the peak of Zion. The overcomers, the vital groups, are today's Zion. My burden today is to help you reach the peak of the vital groups, that is, the overcomers' Zion. Although we may have a good church life, among us there is almost no realization, no practicality, no actuality, and no reality of the Body life. This is the need in the recovery today.

*The Practical Points Concerning Blending, May 1994, chapter 2, pp. 16-17*

Without the blending, the Lord has no way to go on with us. Blending is the Body, blending is the oneness, and blending is the one accord—it is all these things. But we prefer to remain untouched and unknown by others. Because we do not like people to know us, we have become very sensitive, and our being sensitive causes us to be very touchy. Such a condition has forced us to be very cautious in our speaking, for fear of offending one another. Among us there is a great need for a breakthrough to allow the Lord to carry out the grouping.

*Fellowship Concerning the Urgent Need of the Vital Groups, chapter 10, p. 88*

We must do everything we can to strengthen the vital groups. We should spend every drop of our blood, every bit of our strength, and every minute of our time to strengthen the vital groups, making the vital groups so beautiful, so high, and so attractive. This is the only thing we should stress to get people. A number of things can attract people, but not so effectively as the vital groups.

*Fellowship Concerning the Urgent Need of the Vital Groups, chapter 24, p. 236*

## I. Blending the twelve as a group

From the first day that the Lord Jesus began to call the disciples, He started the grouping. The Lord was like a big magnet, drawing the disciples to Himself to become a group. In the four Gospels, we can see that the disciples were quarreling and competing with one another. At times they were in rivalry with one another (Matt. 20:20-28; Luke 22:24). The Lord Jesus dealt with each one of them. All those dealings were for one thing—to group them together....The Lord gained only one group,....He brought them together and grouped them together. He never let them go. In a sense, they all were “jobless” for three and a half years. They gave up their jobs to follow the Lord Jesus and be with Him. Wherever the Lord Jesus went, they went. The Lord did not need them mainly to help Him to work, but He wanted them to be dealt with. The Lord did not give them a program or a schedule to follow. He just wanted them to be with Him (cf. Mark 3:14).

*Fellowship Concerning the Urgent Need of the Vital Groups*, chapter 11, pp. 93-94

When the Lord was ministering in the four Gospels, He went about contacting people. Surely He was vital. Surely He was absolute and desperate for God’s increase. He contacted some young ones and they were drawn to Him. They lived together, ate together, and did everything together. They had a wonderful, intimate, and thorough fellowship with one another day after day, and the Lord was speaking to them. He was blending them together. As He spoke, there was the training. Even in His silence, He was training them.

*1993 Blending Conference Messages concerning the Lord’s Recovery and Our Present Need*, chapter 7, p. 147

### Mark 3:13-15

13 And He went up to the mountain and called to *Him* those whom He Himself wanted, and they went to Him.

14 And He appointed twelve, whom He also named apostles, so that they might be with Him and that He might send them to preach

15 And to have the authority to cast out the demons.

### Mark 8:32-33

32 And He spoke this word openly. And Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him.

33 But turning around and looking at His disciples, He rebuked Peter and said, Get behind Me, Satan! For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of men.

### John 13:14-15

14 If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet.

15 For I have given you an example so that you also may do even as I have done to you.

### John 18:1-2

1 When Jesus had said these things, He went forth with His disciples across the brook Kedron, where there was a garden, into which He entered as well as His disciples.

2 And Judas also, who was betraying Him, knew the place, for Jesus often gathered there with His disciples.

## II. Blending the group of twelve by twos and threes

Among us there is a great need for a breakthrough to allow the Lord to carry out the grouping. From the very beginning in the four Gospels, when the Lord Jesus sent out His disciples, He did not send them one by one; rather, He always sent them two by two, grouping them together. From the time the recovery came to the United States the Lord has not been able to carry out the grouping among us. A number of saints came into the recovery in a very strong way and remained with us, but at a certain point they left. That indicated that they were not willing to be grouped together in the recovery. We who have remained in the recovery all have the problems of our disposition and character that keep us separate from one another. Although by the Lord’s mercy we are still together, among us there has been very little grouping. Because of this, we do not have the impact. The impact is with the one accord, and the one accord actually is the blending.

*Fellowship Concerning the Urgent Need of the Vital Groups*, chapter 10, p. 88

### Mark 1:29-31

29 And immediately, going out of the synagogue, they came into the house of Simon and Andrew with James and John.

30 And Simon’s mother-in-law was lying down with a fever, and immediately they told Him about her.

31 And He came to *her* and raised her up, holding her hand, and the fever left her, and she served them.

### Mark 6:7

And He called the twelve to *Him* and began to send them out two by two and gave them authority over the unclean spirits;

### III. Blending His disciples in the consummation of the Gospels (John 21)

#### A. Peter's pride and self-confidence

Mark 14:29-31

29 But Peter said to Him, Even if all will be stumbled, yet I will not!

30 And Jesus said to him, Truly I say to you that today in this night, before a rooster crows twice, you will deny Me three times.

31 But he went on speaking more intensely, *Even* if I must die with You, I will by no means deny You! And they all said similarly.

#### B. Peter's prominence—leading the group astray

John 21:1-3

1 After these things Jesus manifested Himself again to the disciples at the Sea of Tiberias. And He manifested *Himself* in this way:

2 Simon Peter and Thomas, called Didymus, and Nathanael from Cana of Galilee and the *sons* of Zebedee and two others of His disciples were *there* together.

3 Simon Peter said to them, I am going fishing. They said to him, We also are coming with you. They went forth and got into the boat, and that night they caught nothing.

#### C. Jesus' shepherding

John 21:4-6

4 Now as soon as the morning broke, Jesus stood on the shore; however the disciples did not know that it was Jesus.

5 Then Jesus said to them, Little children, you do not have any *fish* to eat, do you? They answered Him, No.

6 And He said to them, Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and you will find *some*. They cast therefore, and they were no longer able to haul it *in* because of the abundance of fish.

#### D. Peter's acting impulsively—leaving the group

John 21:7-8

7 Then that disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, It is the Lord! Therefore when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put his outer garment around himself, for he was naked; and he threw himself into the sea.

8 But the other disciples came in the little boat, for they were not far from the land, but about two hundred cubits away, dragging the net of fish.

#### E. Jesus' care

John 21:9

Then when they got out onto the land, they saw a fire of coals laid *there*, and fish lying on *it* and bread.

#### F. Peter's individualism—working by himself

John 21:10-11

10 Jesus said to them, Bring *some* of the fish that you have just now caught.

11 Simon Peter therefore went up and hauled the net to the land full of large fish, a hundred and fifty-three; and though there were so many, the net was not torn.

#### G. Jesus' feeding

John 21:12-14

12 Jesus said to them, Come *and* have breakfast. But none of the disciples dared to inquire of Him, Who are you? knowing that it was the Lord.

13 Jesus came and took the bread and gave *it* to them, and the fish likewise.

14 This was now the third time that Jesus was manifested to the disciples after He had been raised from the dead.

#### H. Peter's being reduced and restored for blending

John 21:15-17

15 Then when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, *son* of John, do you love Me more than these? He said to Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. He said to him, Feed My lambs.

16 He said to him again a second time, Simon, *son* of John, do you love Me? He said to Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. He said to him, Shepherd My sheep.

17 He said to him the third time, Simon, *son* of John, do you love Me? Peter was grieved that He said to him the third time, Do you love Me? And he said to Him, Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You. Jesus said to him, Feed My sheep.

1. In his vital group
2. Disappointed in himself (grieving)
3. In an ongoing process
4. For feeding and shepherding others

## I. Peter's being prepared for death

### John 21:18-23

**18** Truly, truly, I say to you, When you were younger, you girded yourself and walked where you wished; but when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will gird you and carry *you* where you do not wish *to go*.

**19** Now this He said, signifying by what kind of death he would glorify God. And when He had said this, He said to him, Follow Me.

**20** Peter, turning around, saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following, who also reclined on His breast at the supper, and said, Lord, who is the one betraying You?

**21** Peter therefore, seeing him, said to Jesus, Lord, and what about this man?

**22** Jesus said to him, If I want him to remain until I come, what *is that* to you? You follow Me.

**23** This word therefore went out among the brothers, that that disciple would not die, yet Jesus did not say to him that he would not die, but, If I want him to remain until I come, what *is that* to you?

## IV. The blending in the vital groups preparing us to feed and shepherd others

### A. An example of not being blended—Barnabas

#### Acts 9:27

But Barnabas took hold of him and led *him* to the apostles, and he related to them how *Saul* had seen the Lord on the road, and that He had spoken to him, and how in Damascus he had spoken boldly in the name of Jesus.

#### Acts 15:39

And there was a sharp contention, so that they separated from each other; and Barnabas, taking Mark along, sailed away to Cyprus.

### B. An example of being blended—Peter

#### Luke 22:31-32

**31** Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has asked to have you *all* to sift *you* as wheat.

**32** But I have made petition concerning you that your faith would not fail; and you, once you have turned again, establish your brothers.

#### Acts 2:14

But Peter, standing with the eleven, lifted up his voice and spoke forth to them: Men of Judea, and all who are dwelling in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and give ear to my words.

#### 1 Peter 5:2-10

**2** Shepherd the flock of God among you, overseeing not under compulsion but willingly, according to God; not by seeking gain through base means but eagerly;

**3** Nor as lording it over your allotments but by becoming patterns of the flock.

**4** And when the Chief Shepherd is manifested, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.

**5** In like manner, younger men, be subject to elders; and all of you gird yourselves with humility toward one another, because God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble.

**6** Therefore be humbled under the mighty hand of God that He may exalt you in due time,

**7** Casting all your anxiety on Him because it matters to Him concerning you.

**8** Be sober; watch. Your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, walks about, seeking someone to devour.

**9** Him withstand, being firm in your faith, knowing that the same sufferings are being accomplished among your brotherhood in the world.

**10** But the God of all grace, He who has called you into His eternal glory in Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a little while, will Himself perfect, establish, strengthen, *and* ground *you*.