

## DAILY READING

### WEEK 12 THE TRUTH AND PRACTICE OF THE CHURCH

#### WEEK 12 — DAY 3

#### Scripture Reading

Eph. 4:15-16 But holding to truth in love, we may grow up into Him in all things, who is the Head, Christ, out from whom all the Body, being joined together and being knit together through every joint of the rich supply and through the operation in the measure of each one part, causes the growth of the Body unto the building up of itself in love.

#### Building Up the Body of Christ by the Growth in Life

The church as the Body of Christ is absolutely a matter of life.... The Body of Christ is not a doctrine; it is a realm. It is not a teaching, but a life.<sup>122</sup> This life is the divine life, the life of the Triune God.... The building up of the Body of Christ altogether depends upon our growth in this wonderful life.

The growth of the Body of Christ is through the members growing into the Head, Christ, in all things by holding to truth in love (Eph. 4:15). The word truth in verse 15 denotes that which is real. In this universe the real things, the true things, are Christ and the church. Only by speaking concerning Christ with the church do we actually handle the truth. This means that although we may refrain from telling lies, we still may not be speaking the truth.... Anything apart from Christ with the church is a vanity and a falsehood.... The book of Ecclesiastes says that all is vanity (1:2).... Day by day, we may talk about many things. But if we do not speak concerning Christ and the church, we are handling vanity; we are not handling the truth. In God's sight, whenever we speak something that is not necessary, whether it is good or bad, that is gossiping. The biblical term for gossip is idle words (Matt. 12:36). Idle words are words that we do not need to speak. An idle word is a non-working word, an inoperative word, having no positive function, useless, unprofitable, unfruitful, and barren. [In Ephesians 4:15] Paul tells us that we must grow up into the Head in all things.... According to my experience, the most difficult matter in which to grow up into Christ, the Head, is in our talking. Psalm 141:3 says, "Set a watch, O Jehovah, before my mouth; / Keep the door of my lips." Because it is so hard for us to control our speaking, we should make this our prayer also. We should speak those things that bring us into contact with Christ and that build us up as the Body of Christ.

We do not need to conduct ourselves in a certain way because we are forced to do so by outward regulations. We need to grow to the extent that we are in Christ. Some of the sisters spend a great deal of time to style their hair, and yet they say that they do not have time for morning revival. This shows that they need to grow up into Christ in combing their hair. We need to grow until we reach the level of being in Christ in all things—in shopping, in buying a pair of shoes, in spending our money, and even in choosing a pair of eyeglasses.

First, all the saints have to grow up into the Head in all things. [Then] out from the Head in whom we have grown we have nourishment, as indicated by the word supply [Eph. 4:16]. Through the supply which comes out from the Head, the Body grows and builds itself up in

love.<sup>133</sup> Paul emphasized our need to grow. If we do not grow, there can be no building. [Furthermore], this growth is caused by the Body being joined together through the rich supply of the joints and being knit together through the operation of each part. The joints are the specially gifted members of the Body, such as the apostles, prophets, evangelists, and shepherds and teachers (v. 11). The parts are all the members of the Body. Through these two kinds of members the entire Body is joined together and knit together for the building. For the joining of the joints and for the knitting of each one part, we need to minister, to dispense, the rich supply to all the joints and to each one part. By this rich supply of Christ, all the members of the Body will get the nourishment with which they will grow in life [issuing in the building up of the Body].