

Week 11: Ecclesiology I

The Church as the Body

1. Overview of the Topic

1) Key Concept:

The church is not merely an institution or a building but a spiritual community—the Body of Christ, united in the Holy Spirit.

2) Core Passages:

1 Corinthians 12:12–27, Ephesians 4:1–16, Romans 12:4–8

2. The Essence of the Church: The Body of Christ

1) Definition of the Church

- (1) Greek *ekklesia* (ἐκκλησία): "those who are called out"
- (2) In the New Testament, it refers not to a generic assembly, but to the community of God's people

2) The Metaphor of the Body

- (1) Christ is the Head, we are the members (Eph 1:22–23)
 - (2) Various members function together as one organic body (1 Cor 12)
 - (3) Each member is interdependent and necessary for the body
-

3. Unity in the Holy Spirit

- 1) We are baptized by one Spirit into one body (1 Cor 12:13)
 - 2) All believers—Jew or Greek, slave or free are united as one community
 - 3) Gifts (*charismata*) are diverse, but their purpose is the edification of the whole (Eph 4:11–13)
-

4. The Mission and Function of the Church

- 1) Worshiping Community: Glorifies God
- 2) Fellowshiping Community: Loves and cares for one another (Heb 10:24–25)
- 3) Training Community: Grows through the Word and discipleship
- 4) Evangelizing Community: Proclaims the gospel to the world
- 5) Serving Community: Cares for the suffering and the poor

5. Diversity and Unity in the Church

- 1) Though members differ, the body operates in harmonious unity
- 2) Conflict and division are like illnesses in the body (1 Cor 12:25)
- 3) True unity is not human-made but empowered by the Holy Spirit

6. Application and Reflection

- 1) What kind of member am I in the body of Christ? How do I serve?
- 2) How do I understand and accept others in the community?
- 3) Are my spiritual gifts being used for the benefit of the whole?

Key Bible Passages

- 1) 1 Corinthians 12:12–27– One body, many members / weaker members are indispensable
- 2) Ephesians 4:1–16– Unity in the Spirit/growing to the fullness of Christ
- 3) Romans 12:4–8– Different gifts among members for service