

LSM-brothers deny the Local Aspect of Christ's Body— A Prescription for a 'Two-tier Church Life'

A Rebuttal to LSM's Defense & Confirmation Project

The Body Universal & Local—A Twofold Truth

Some time ago I wrote an article entitled,¹ "The Body Universal & Local—A Twofold Truth." The central thesis was that the Body of Christ is a "twofold truth" in Scripture—having both universal and local aspects. A proof text for the Body's local aspect is Paul's word to the Corinthians—"Now you are Christ's body, and members individually" (1 Cor. 12:27.) I'm not aware of any published response by LSM's "blended brothers" to my initial publication. Recently an expanded version of my essay² was posted on the Internet.

The brothers associated with Living Stream Ministry (LSM) issued a rebuttal³ on the Internet and in print entitled, "A Local Church is Christ's Body"—A Prescription for Division in the Name of Local Oneness." In it they allege:

- I "isolate" and "divorce" 1 Cor. 12:27 from its context & develop a meaning far beyond the text.
- I "woefully distort" Watchman Nee's and Witness Lee's teaching.
- My writing is "a prescription for division in the name of local oneness."
- My interpretation is a⁴ "facade to justify neglecting the...other churches in the Body of Christ" and was invented to justify actions I and others have taken in Toronto.

Here I briefly respond to these accusations.

The LSM-brothers' Personal Attacks & False Accusations

Unfortunately the writers⁵ from LSM's Defense & Confirmation Project (DCP) seem unable to rise above the level of acrimonious personal attacks against those with whom they disagree. Instead, they denounce me a "divisive worker," a "factious person," who "exercises control in Toronto." Moreover, they question my personal integrity, accusing me of "making a pretence," a "façade" and developing a "self-serving interpretation" to⁶ "justify actions I and others have taken in Toronto." Perhaps LSM's prolonged litigation caused the DCP-writers to forget they aren't dealing with adversaries in the law courts, but their Christian brothers in the Lord's recovery!

Permit me a brief response. My recent essay elaborated on an earlier piece. That original article appeared in the *Fellowship Journal* in 2003. Significantly that year the "Phoenix Accord" (Feb. 2003) was signed by brothers from S. California and the Great Lakes area. In that pre-'One Publication,' pre-quarantine era the senior workers in the Lord's recovery were fellowshipping, trying to resolve their differences. I was hoping the differences between senior workers could be amicably resolved through fellowship, preserving the harmony in the Lord's recovery. In 2003 I had neither the fore-knowledge nor foresight to predict recent developments in the recovery. The LSM-brothers' allegation that my interpretation was invented to justify my recent actions in Toronto is manifestly false.

The Local Aspect: "*the Body in 1 Cor. 12 refers to the church at Corinth*"—W. Nee

I wrote "The Body of Christ...has two aspects: it is both universal and local." This matches W. Lee's statement that⁷ "*the Body is both local and universal.*" Where is the Body's local aspect in Scripture? The Apostle Paul makes the striking statement, "Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually" (1 Cor. 12:27). Expositors agree this reference is local, i.e., Paul is telling the Corinthian believers they are Christ's body. Robert Govett says,⁸ "*There is a sense in which each particular church...that of Corinth for instance, might be regarded as a body of Christ.*" Significantly the Greek text of 1 Cor. 12:27 contains no definite article—'the.' Paul wasn't telling the Corinthians, "You are the one, unique Body of Christ." Neither does he describe them as "part of the Body." Rather, he tells them, "You are Christ's body." Professor James D. G. Dunn comments,⁹ "*In 1 Cor. 12:27-28 in particular, it is evident that Paul had in mind the church in Corinth as such: 'You [the Corinthian believers] are Christ's body [in Corinth], and individually parts of it.'*" The Body's local aspect is found here—"You [the church in Corinth] are Christ's body." (1 Cor. 12:27). Consistent with this W. Nee writes¹⁰ "*the Body spoken of in Corinthians refers to the children of God in a certain time and at a certain place. The children of God there and then are also the Body of Christ.*" Again he writes,¹¹ "*the*

Body of Christ in 1 Corinthians 12 refers to the church at Corinth." Scripture indicates there is a local aspect to Christ's Body.¹² The LSM-brothers, however, have a problem with this.

The Central Issue—the LSM-brothers deny the Local Aspect of Christ's Body

Despite Witness Lee's statement, *"the Body is both local and universal,"* the LSM-brothers do not affirm the Body as a twofold truth in Scripture. Rather they first question and then deny the local aspect of Christ's Body. Under the title questioning¹³ *"A Local Church Is Christ's Body?"* they write: *"Nigel claims that 1 Corinthians 12:27 says that the church in Corinth is the Body of Christ as an entity locally. His exposition...is diametrically opposed to the plain speaking of Brother Lee."* Yet this statement is NOT a direct quotation of my writing. They are putting words into my mouth, attributing to me something I never wrote! I nowhere employed the modifying phrase, *"as an entity locally."* Both here (and elsewhere) the LSM-writers seem to be "putting their own spin" on my writing. My thesis statement was *"there is the local aspect of Christ's body. The children of God residing in a certain place are also 'Christ's body' (1 Cor. 12:27)."* Why don't the LSM-brothers quote this and state clearly whether they agree or disagree? The LSM-brothers' critique never acknowledges that the Body is a twofold truth in Scripture. Rather, they interpret every Bible passage (including 1 Cor. 12:27) with reference to the universal Body, implicitly denying the local aspect.

Concerning 1 Cor. 12:27, the LSM-brothers declare¹⁴ *"When Paul says, 'Now you are the Body of Christ, and members individually,' he is not speaking of the church in Corinth as an administrative unit."* The LSM-brothers' modifying clause *"as an administrative unit"* appears designed to cloud the issue. The church's administrative aspect includes the elders' management of business and practical affairs. Obviously when Paul told the Corinthians, *"you are Christ's Body,"* he's referring to the "organic aspect." The church's "administrative aspect" was not in the fore.¹⁵ The question is—Are the LSM-brothers asserting that¹⁶ *"When Paul says, 'Now you are the Body of Christ, and members individually,' he is **not** speaking of the church in Corinth"?* If so, they deny the local aspect of Christ's Body.

Again the LSM-brothers allege Paul¹⁴ *"is certainly not advocating that a local church is the Body of Christ as an entity unto itself."* Again they add a modifying phrase—*"as an entity unto itself."* What do they mean by this? A skeptic would see this as the LSM-brothers' attempt to redefine the issue, making it easier for them to reject! In place of this rejected interpretation, Bro. Benson Phillip's word,¹⁷ *"Not one local church is the Body; every local church is a part of the Body,"* is alleged to be *"entirely consistent with Scripture."* Yet, is it? The Apostle Paul did NOT tell the Corinthians *"you are part of the Body of Christ."* Rather, he unequivocally asserted, *"You are Christ's Body."* The absence of the definite article—"the"—in Greek is significant, supporting this interpretation. I conclude that **the LSM-brothers reject the proposition that there is a local aspect to Christ's Body** (in addition to the universal aspect.) This is the central issue. Their rejection has important implications.

*"Nigel's interpretation of 1 Corinthians 12:27 divorces Paul's words from their proper context,"*¹⁸ claim the LSM-writers. Moreover, they allege, he¹⁹ *"develops a meaning from it that is far beyond what is in the text."* The LSM-brothers offer their own exposition,²⁰ *"The Corinthians'... seemed to have no realization that they were organically related members in one Body. Neither did they exhibit any sign of caring for the other churches in the Body of Christ..."* They employ the term "the other churches" five times, emphasizing that (in their view) *"you are the Body of Christ"* means Christ's universal Body, composed of all the churches. This difference in interpretation is not mere semantics, involving splitting hairs. The question is—Did Paul intend the Corinthian believers to view themselves as Christ's body in Corinth, possessing all the various gifts locally—eyes, ears, hands, feet etc.? Or, were they to regard themselves as Christ's Body only in relation to all the other local churches worldwide? Put differently, concerning Christ's body, is it only legitimate to "think and act globally"? According to LSM's brothers the reference point is the universal Body. They say,²¹ *"For Paul to say to the saints in Corinth, 'You are the Body of Christ,' is to say that the practice of the church life in Corinth should bear all the characteristics of the universal Body of Christ."*

The LSM-brothers' interpretation, emphasizes Corinth's relationship with other local churches. They stress *"caring for the other churches in the Body of Christ..."* Yet the immediate scriptural context contains no allusion to inter-church relations. Bro. Nee underscores this, saying,²² *"We must notice that Paul did not pay attention to any problem arising between the brothers in Corinth and the brothers in Ephesus, or...the brothers in Colossae...Paul only paid attention to the divisions between*

the brothers at Corinth." It seems in W. Nee's view, Paul was telling the Corinthians to "think locally and act locally" as Christ's Body. The LSM-brothers' exposition directly contradicts Bro. Nee's!

"The Body of Christ in 1 Cor. 12 refers to the church at Corinth"—W. Nee

The LSM-brothers say I "woefully distort"²³ the teaching of Watchman Nee and Witness Lee. However, Bro. Nee's exposition of this Scripture was the catalyst for my writing. In fact, W. Nee explicitly recognized the "twofold truth" concerning Christ's Body. He contrasts Paul's treatment of "the Body" in Ephesians and Corinthians: He says,²⁴ *"The Body spoken of in Ephesians refers to all the children of God, but the Body spoken of in Corinthians refers to the children of God in a certain time and at a certain place. The children of God there and then are also the Body of Christ."* Again he writes,²⁵ *"The Body of Christ spoken of in 1 Corinthians is different from that...in EphesiansThe Body of Christ in Ephesians refers to the universal church. This is not a problem to most Bible students. But the Body of Christ in 1 Corinthians 12 refers to the church at Corinth."* Far from "woefully distorting" Bro. Nee's teaching (as alleged) my presentation mirrors his.

W. Nee specifically targeted the "spiritual oneness," which claims to be "one with the Body" extra-locally, while tolerating division within a locality. He said,²⁶ *"The minimum requirement of unity in the Bible is the unity of locality. God's children must have spiritual unity in each locality. This is the basic demand of the Bible."* Based on this, I wrote, "The experience of the Body starts at home; in their own localities, believers can experience being Christ's body." However, the LSM-brothers criticise this saying, Nigel²⁷ *"argues that oneness begins at the local church level. This is contrary to the truth."* However, Bro. Nee says the same as I,²⁸ *"...the oneness among the children of God must at least start from the locality."*

'A Local Church is Christ's Body'—Prescription for Division or its Antidote?

The LSM-brothers allege that affirming the Body's local aspect is a "prescription for division." It's ironic that Watchman Nee concluded exactly the opposite—**seeing the local aspect of Christ's Body is the antidote to division!** The Apostle Paul told the Corinthians that the Church in Corinth is Christ's Body (12:27) and there should be no division in the Body (12:25). Hence, W. Nee says,²⁹ *"Paul showed them that having divisions in Corinth was the same as having divisions in the Body of Christ...If I live at Corinth, at a minimum I must be one with the children of God in the locality of Corinth."* Hence, in Bro. Nee's view, seeing "a local church is Christ's Body" is the antidote to local division. The opposing view—denying the local aspect and emphasizing only the universal aspect—has serious consequences. A believer may see himself as a member of the universal Body; He fellowships with saints around the globe. He "practices the Body life," yet he may ignore, reject, or divide from his fellow-believers meeting as the church in his own city. He is "one with the Body," yet he can be divisive in his own locality. Don't we see this scenario being played out in local churches today? Saints who are "one with the (extra-local) Body" justify dividing from brothers in their local church, because (in their concept) the local church is not the Body.

The LSM-Blended Brothers' Two-Tier System—the local church & the Body

The LSM-brothers' rejection of the local aspect of Christ's body leads them to focus exclusively on the universal aspect. This creates a dichotomy between the local church and 'the Body.' A natural corollary is an emphasis on extra-local activities—e.g. "blending" and LSM's "7 feasts"—in the name of "the Body." This two-tier system has been enunciated by the "blended brothers." Bro. Ron Kangas is on record saying,³⁰ *"We must learn to have the church life on two levels simultaneously—the level of following the Lord's leading in our locality to take care of the local situation and the level of following the Lord's leading in the Body universally. The seven times a year that we come together are for the universal Body..."* These "two levels" imply a two-tier system. On one hand saints participate in the church-life locally. On the other hand there is the "extra-local Body life." The local church-life is indeed recognized. Yet, significantly, in Bro. Ron's speaking here, the local church-life is not identified with "the Body." It is merely the local church-life. This erroneous dichotomy between the local church and the Body may be reinforced by statements like,³¹ *"It is possible to be in the church but not in the Body."* Brother Ron equates the experience of "the Body" with extra-local activities like attending LSM's "seven feasts." A similar rationale is used to justify "blending." LSM-President Benson Phillips asks,³² *"Do you appreciate your local church or do you appreciate the Body? The Body should be first, and we must fellowship in this Body. We must be*

blended in this Body....We should be faithful in our local church, but we should not consider that number one... Instead, the entire Body of Christ is first." Clearly in the "Blended Brothers'" two-tier system, "the Body" occupies the first-tier and the local church the second (lower) tier. Yet, doesn't this doctrine reinforce the concept that "the Body" is extra-local"? Doesn't this teaching assume an unscriptural, false dichotomy between the local church and "the Body"? However, if "*the Body is both local and universal*" (W. Lee) **participating in the local church is experiencing Christ's Body. There are not two-tiers. In the New Testament we don't see this kind of extra-local Body-life.**

Global Sectarian Oneness & the Blending of an 'LSM Body'?

The LSM-brothers allege that I propose a sectarian, local oneness, different from the oneness of Christ's Body. They say,³³ "*The local oneness Nigel proposes is a sectarian oneness separate from the common fellowship of all the churches...This oneness is not the oneness of the Body of Christ.*" I believe this appraisal rests (in part) upon a misapplication of such terms as, "the Body" and "the common fellowship of all the churches." Once this misapplication is removed this critique is exposed as baseless.

According to Scripture, "the Body" includes millions of believers worldwide throughout the age of grace.³⁴ But, is this what the LSM-brothers mean by 'the Body'? Apparently not; the "blended Brothers" are on record saying³⁵ "*for us the Body today is just the Lord's recovery...In Brother Lee's understanding, the Body equals the recovery.*" Moreover, the LSM-brothers refer to me as³⁶ "*a worker who has himself been quarantined by the Body.*" They also talk about³⁶ "*the quarantine exercised by the churches as the Body towards*" myself and Brother Titus Chu. But, what do they mean by "the Body"? Evidently the LSM-brothers' definition amounts to the "blended brothers" and their followers. In this context 'the Body' means LSM's "blended brothers" and those local churches endorsing their actions. But that is NOT the inclusive Scriptural definition; that's an exclusive "LSM Body." The "oneness" of such an "LSM Body" differs from the universal oneness of Christ's Body. We do affirm that (as the LSM-brothers' state)³⁷ "there is one unique fellowship common to all believers in every place." However, this "one unique fellowship" includes all genuine believers universally (2 Cor. 13:14; 1 John 1:3.) It is not restricted to the local churches within the Lord's recovery. It's not the fellowship of an "LSM Body." We reject as unscriptural the assumption that the fellowship of God's Son (1 Cor. 1:9) is the exclusive possession of those local churches closely following the leading of LSM's "blended brothers." The LSM-brothers use biblical terms, yet they invest them with non-scriptural meanings. In the LSM-brothers' hands, "the Body" is in actuality a global LSM sect led by the "blended brothers." The "oneness" and "fellowship" to which they refer are (in fact) the oneness and fellowship of this global LSM sect. Moreover "blending" conducted exclusively within the sphere of LSM-affiliated churches is a global sectarian blending.³⁸

The LSM-brothers conclude by saying, Nigel³⁹ "*does not affirm the oneness of all the local churches as the practical expressions of the Body of Christ on the earth today.*" I agree with this. The current situation in the Lord's recovery is that the oneness has been fractured. How then can I affirm its oneness? In my view the chief causal factor of this fracturing is the LSM's "blended brothers'" insistence on non-essential and/or extra-biblical items like, 'One Publication,' one Minister of the Age, one global company of workers, etc. The "blended co-workers" have surely fulfilled Bro. Benson Phillip's prophetic word:⁴⁰ "*If we are special and insist on anything other than the common faith, the oneness will surely be damaged, and divisions will occur.*" Given the division precipitated by the "Blended co-workers'" teachings and actions, *the oneness has surely been damaged.* It is impossible for me to affirm a practical oneness which has ceased to exist! The "oneness" practiced by the "blended brothers" has become the oneness of an LSM global sect. It is not "*the oneness of all the [genuine] local churches as...expressions of the Body of Christ.*"

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NOTES:

1. Published in *Fellowship Journal* (vol. 2, No. 5) in 2003
2. Posted Feb. 7, 2007 http://www.concernedbrothers.com/BODY/TwoFoldTruthTheBodyUniversal_Local.pdf
3. The Internet version was posted on A Faithful Word.org (AFW.org) May 21, 2007 The printed version appears in LSM's 28-book "Attack Pack" issued by the LSM-affiliate, DCP. The volume title is, The Local Church Life for the Body of Christ pp. 15-25 (page references are to this version.) LSM-President Benson Phillips declared in LSM's St. Paul, MN Memorial Weekend Conference May 2007) that this 28-Book "Attack Pack" was part of LSM's "One Publication," having been reviewed by LSM's editors. Hence, we refer to the authors of this LSM-endorsed publication as "LSM-brothers."
4. The quote in context reads, "Nigel Tomes' emphasis on local oneness over the oneness of the Body is a façade to justify neglecting the feeling of and fellowship with other local churches in the Body of Christ." Preface to "The Local Church Life for the Body of Christ" p. 5 and the Preface to the other 6 volumes.
5. The AFW.org website says that unless indicated otherwise the authors are Bill Buntain with Dan Sady & Dan Towle.
6. The LSM-brothers allege that "His interpretation is biased in order to justify the actions he and others have taken to separate The Church of the Torontonians from the common fellowship of the churches in the universal Body of Christ." (p. 15) These "actions" refer to the business affairs of The Church of the Torontonians [the Church in Toronto's business corporation] in 2007. Note that this article was first published four years earlier, in 2003.
7. Witness Lee, Life-Study of First Corinthians p. 527
8. Robert Govett, The Church of Old, p. 44
9. James D. G. Dunn, The Theology of Paul the Apostle, p. 541
10. W. Nee, The Collected Works of W. Nee, Vol. 56, p. 363,
11. W. Nee, The Collected Works of W. Nee, Vol. 56, p. 364.
12. A further supporting verse is 1 Cor. 10:17 which says, "*Seeing that there is one bread, we who are many are one Body; for we all partake of the one bread.*" This "one bread" is the bread on the table at Corinth. (W. Nee Further Talks, p. 112.) Concerning this Watchman Nee says, "*The Bible says that 'we [the saints in the same locality] who are many are...one bread' (1 Cor. 10:17).*" [W. Nee, Collected Works, vol. 56, p. 374.] The plural pronoun, 'we' in 1 Cor. 10:17 includes the writer, Paul who identifies himself with the believers in Corinth. (Perhaps this can be viewed as the writer's way of transforming the statement, 'You who are many...' into a cohortative exhortation.) Since the saints in the locality of Corinth are "one bread," they are also "one Body," represented by the "one bread." Here again is the local aspect of Christ's Body.
13. "The Local Church Life for the Body of Christ" p. 16
14. "The Local Church Life for the Body of Christ" p. 19 Note that I in my articles I never employed the phrase "*as an administrative unit.*" This extraneous qualifier has been introduced by the LSM-brothers.
15. 1 Cor. 12:27 covers the "organic aspect" and the following verse (v. 28) the administrative aspect. 1 Cor. 12:28 says, "And God has placed some in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers..." W. Lee makes this distinction clear. Yet the LSM-brothers confuse these two aspects! Concerning v. 28 W. Lee says, "The church here [v. 28] refers to the church in both its universal and local aspects. In vv. 12-27... the Body is an organism for Christ as the believers' life to grow and express Himself. The church is an assembly for God to operate His administration." (footnote 1 on v. 28)
16. This is exactly the LSM-brothers' statement without the extraneous qualifier, "*as an administrative unit.*"
17. The quote is from The Ministry magazine, Vol. 9, No. 2, p. 113. Quoted on p. 17 of DCP's "The Local Church Life for the Body of Christ" There the LSM-brothers assert, "*In fact, Benson's fellowship...is entirely consistent with Scripture.*" (p. 17)
18. "The Local Church Life for the Body of Christ" p. 19. In a similar statement, the LSM-brothers assert, "*He isolates 1 Corinthians 12:27 from its context...*" (p. 15)
19. The LSM-brothers say, "*He isolates 1 Corinthians 12:27 from its context and in so doing develops a meaning from it that is far beyond what is in the text.*" "The Local Church Life for the Body of Christ" p. 15
20. The LSM-brothers' exposition in context reads, "*The Corinthians' practice of the Lord's table (1 Cor. 11:17-22) and of tongue-speaking (1 Cor. 14:4) was self-centered and demonstrated a lack of mutual care. They seemed to have no realization that they were organically related members in one Body. Neither did they exhibit any sign of caring for **the other churches in the Body of Christ** in the way they conducted their church life. Paul repeatedly corrected the church in Corinth for deviating from the common teaching and practice of **all the local churches** in the matters of following the apostles (1 Cor. 4:16-17), remaining in the status of one's calling (7:17), headship and head covering (11:4-6, 16),*

women teaching in the church (14:33b-35), and collecting financial supply and giving in coordination with **the other local churches** (16:1). They seemed to have no realization that they were not an independent entity but **should follow the churches** (1 Thes. 2:14) and be the **same as the other churches** in one testimony (Rev. 1:9, 20).” “The Local Church Life for the Body of Christ” p. 19 (emphasis added) Note the five-fold occurrence of the phrase “the other churches” (or “the churches”).

21. “The Local Church Life for the Body of Christ” p. 20
22. W. Nee, Collected Works, vol. 56, p. 362
23. The LSM-brothers say “*Nigel carefully selects passages from the ministry of Watchman Nee and Witness Lee to support his arguments, while ignoring those that directly contradict them. He tries to carefully choose his words to avoid the appearance of deviating from the ministry of Brother Nee and Brother Lee, but in fact he woefully distorts their teaching.*” The Local Church Life for the Body of Christ p. 15. In what follows we discuss only W. Nee’s writings, leaving W. Lee’s for another occasion.
24. W. Nee, The Collected Works of W. Nee, Vol. 56, p. 363,
25. W. Nee, The Collected Works of W. Nee, Vol. 56, p. 364
26. W. Nee, The Collected Works of W. Nee vol. 56, p. 364
27. The Local Church Life for the Body of Christ p. 15 The LSM-brothers declare Nigel “*argues that oneness begins at the local church level. This is contrary to the truth.*” They then launch into a theological discourse, “*The oneness of the Church as the Body of Christ is the enlarged oneness of the triune God and proceeds through His dispensing Himself as the life-giving Spirit into His believers to produce the Body of Christ...*” In my writing I was not addressing oneness from the point of view of God’s accomplishment, but rather from the side of practice and application. I’m saying the practical application (the practice) of oneness begins at the local church level.
28. W. Nee, Further Talks on the Church Life, p. 115
29. W. Nee Collected Works, vol. 56, p. 364
30. RK, The Ministry, Vol. 7, No. 9, p. 169, Quoted in The Practicality of the Body, DCP, p. 27
31. RK., The Ministry, vol. 10, no. 4 July 2006, p. 104 Ron Kangas explains, “*We can physically come to a church meeting, sing, pray, and speak, but **we may not be in the Body**. To be in the Body, we have to be in Christ, in the organic union with Him.*” Yet if the saints’ meet, “sing, pray, and speak” (but not in the organic union) they are not only not in the Body, but also not in the local church, in terms of its spiritual reality.
32. BP, The Ministry, vol. 9, No. 2 (Feb. 2005) p. 113
33. The Local Church Life for the Body of Christ p. 24
34. Watchman Nee clearly states that the Body “*includes all the saved ones throughout the whole world, in all nations and at all times both past and present, not only space-wise, but also time-wise.*” [W. Nee Further Talks on the Church-Life p. 107] Moreover, because of the Body’s time dimension, “**the church on the earth is not the Body of Christ**. Even if all the children of God are gathered together, they still are not sufficient to become the Body of Christ. Space-wise it is correct, but time-wise it is wrong.” [W. Nee, Further Talks, p. 108]
35. MC., The Ministry, vol. 7, no. 6, Aug. 2003, p. 196
36. The Local Church Life for the Body of Christ p. 24
37. The Local Church Life for the Body of Christ p. 20
38. The Scriptural truth of the universal Body means we should “*learn to be one with all God’s children on the whole earth today.*”(W. Nee in The Resumption of W. Nee’s Ministry. Vol. 2, p. 593). Based upon this Scriptural view, may we ask: Why should our “blending” be restricted within the sphere of the genuine local churches? Why do local church saints travel the globe to “blend” with other distant local churches with whom they’re virtually identical? The Apostle Paul talked of the blending of the more honourable members with the less (1 Cor. 12:23-24.) Why do the local church saints neglect the “less honourable” believers in their own locality (those not currently meeting in the local church) when they practice “blending”?
39. The Local Church Life for the Body of Christ p. 25
40. Benson Phillips, Preface to W. Lee, Speciality, Generality & Practicality of the Church-Life by W. Lee. Benson Phillips’ word echoes W. Lee’s own speaking, “*We all have to learn that to keep the oneness of the Body we must practice this generality. **If we are special, if we are definite and specific in anything other than our faith, surely the oneness will be damaged**. The oneness will be hurt and **then we will be divided**. The main cause for the divisions among Christians is the neglect of caring for the generality of the church life.*” (W. Lee, Speciality, Generality & Practicality of the Church-Life, Chp. 4)