

Paul now presents a fuller revelation of the truth of the One Body. He alluded to it earlier in the epistle (chapter 10:16-17) in connection with the breaking of bread at the Lord's Table. The bread not only speaks of the Lord's sinless, human, physical, body given for us, it speaks of the One Body of believers on earth. First, in 12:12 he describes the composition and **unity** of the Body. Then in 12:13 he describes the creation of the Body. Then he describes the **diversity** of the body. All is determined by the initiative, control, and power of God **by the Holy Spirit.**

The human body, yours and mine, is used to illustrate the make up and functioning of what? "So also is the church?" "So also is the Body of Christ?" No! He says **"so also is Christ!"** We, all together, are so personally identified with Him we are known by His Name and Title, Christ. Just as when you see me walking toward you, you may say "Here comes Ron." You wouldn't normally say "Here comes Ron's body." You and I are each whole persons, with body and head. We are usually recognized by our faces and names. So also is Christ. A somewhat related example might be seen in Adam and Eve. _____

Genesis 5:3 And [He] called their name Adam.

The relationship between Christ in glory and His people on earth is so intimate He views us and Him as **one**. And with one name.

One's human body is, simply put, one body. So also is Christ. As our human bodies have many members, external and internal, so also is Christ. As our ordinary human bodies have many different members, so also is Christ. In this we each are fully, personally individuals, members, but known together (collectively) as "Christ."

How and when did this come to be? We are told this in 12:13.

For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether [we be] Jews or Gentiles, whether [we be] bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

The best translations have this in the past tense, **"we all were** baptized into one body." It is an accomplished thing. This baptism does not refer to baptism in water. It refers to baptism into one body by one Spirit. And it is "we all" not "we each." This event occurred on the day of Pentecost as recorded in Acts chapter 2. In God's marvelous plan He created something entirely new that day. And He did it once and for all, including all believers composing the Body of Christ. He did it then for the apostles and disciples that were incorporated by the Spirit into the **ONE BODY** formed at

that time. And it includes all those that would be saved down through the ages, including us today, and until the rapture.

When we each were saved we were sealed by the Holy Spirit, and He indwelt us immediately. Scripture does not tell us to seek for the baptism of the Holy Spirit because that was done at Pentecost. Upon being saved we are automatically made part of Christ, His body the Assembly (church).

This is true whether we realize it at first or not. The disciples in the early days hadn't been told much about this new thing. They reached out to the Jews and witnessed to the nation through various signs and wonders. Israel defiantly refused God's gracious offer of national salvation if they would but repent and receive Jesus Christ. But once the Jews stoned Stephen, the Lord moved to reveal His gracious plan to include all believers in one new thing, the Body of Christ. He included both Jews or Gentiles, bond or free. The Lord used Philip the evangelist to reach out first to Samaria, and next to the Ethiopian eunuch, a proselyte. Then He used Peter to include the first Gentiles, Acts 10 and 11. After that the unparalleled grace of God gave to Paul the charge to reveal the truth of the Assembly fully. Now neither nationality or social status stand in the way of becoming a member of the Body of Christ. See also Galatians 3:28; Ephesians 2:14-16; and Colossians 3:11.

John the Baptist makes the contrast between water baptism and the baptism of the Spirit. Water baptism is not baptism of the Spirit. One is an act of men, upon persons newly saved. The other was completed of God on Pentecost and included all that are saved since then.

Matthew 3:11 I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and [with] fire:

The term "baptism" means to bathe by immersion. We are said to be baptized (immersed) by the Spirit into one body. Not merely linked up or connected somehow but totally immersed together into one body. We can't get any closer than that, and this closeness and unity is bought about and maintained by the Spirit, not any human arrangement or organization.. We also have been given to drink of one Spirit, the same Holy Spirit. He is inside! Inside and outside! All through us and all around us. And He remains with us in this relationship forever.

John 14:16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;

Revelation 22:17. 17 And the Spirit and the bride

say, *Come*.

I am me! Personally a member. Personally answerable to the Lord. And “we” are we together! Many members of one body. Collectively (together) answerable to the Head.

Now the obvious. **Diversity**. The one body has many members each with specific functions and abilities. All are interdependent. All are needed. All are important. All are to be dependent upon the Head. All must do their job to accomplish the purposes of the Head. None exists solely for his or her own benefit or glory. All are dependent upon others for help, support, encouragement. Each is to avoid interference with the work if they aren’t needed to be part of it. One could say “If you can’t help at least stay out of the way”. However we each can help, if in nothing else, by faithful prayer, and by standing guard, watching and warning of danger. Even the tiny hairs on my arm warn me of an approaching mosquito.

We have an intriguing example set before us in the biology of the human body. It is composed of obvious members such as the limbs, the internal organs, the nervous system, the circulatory system, etc. Less obvious are the cells that comprise the body. There are all kinds of cells, each with a specific function in the body. These cells are marvelously developed, and specialized, all from just one cell after conception. Now recent scientific studies (last 50 years) have discovered the mechanism that facilitates the wonderful diversity yet unity of each human body. DNA is a rather common item in the news because it enables tracing even a few cells of a being back to the person or animal they came from. Hair, spit, blood, skin of a given person all have that person’s DNA code in their

cells. This is true despite the specialized nature of the particular sample of cells tested. Men use now this fact to solve crimes (or prove innocence), investigate ancestry, etc. The fact that each diverse cell of one’s body contains the code for the whole body is a marvelous illustration and confirmation of the One Body of Christ composed of many diverse members (cells). Each contains the code of the whole Body Christ. We each have a new nature from Him and the Holy Spirit from Him. As our human spirit controls and directs our bodies through our minds so Christ the Head uses the various members of His Body as He pleases. (There is more here to investigate for those so inclined. But this is enough to whet our appetites to be aware of the discoveries of true facts (as opposed to mere theories) about God’s fascinating creation. While simply glorifying the Creator is enough reason to rejoice in them, their applicability to spiritual principles is often instructive as well.)

Another likeness our human bodies have to the Body of Christ is in the death and replacement of individuals over time. This is mirrored in the continued aging and eventual removal and replacement of cells in our bodies. More on that in chapter 15.

Now Paul gives us another reminder.

18 But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.

We had no choice. We have no complaints. We have no boasting, and no belittling. Only to bloom where planted.

By Ron Canner, September 10, 2003