

Hold Fast to the Head

When God made the human body, He knew that He would one day make Christ the **head of the body**, the Church.

Ephesians 1:22,23:

And he [God] put all things under his [Christ's] feet and gave him [Christ] as head over all things to the church, which is his [Christ's] body, the fullness of him [God] who fills all in all.

Colossians 1:18a:

And he [Christ] is the head of the body, the church.

God also knew that He would make us **members of that body**.

1 Corinthians 12:12,13:

For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ.

For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.

The bedrock organizing principle of the one body is *unity*: **one body** and **one head**, **functioning as one** under **one God**.

Ephesians 4:4,5:

There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call—

one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

1 Corinthians 11:3:

But I want you to understand that the head of every man is Christ,... and the head of Christ is God.

The unity of the one body is enriched by its diversity: **one body**, yet **many members**.

1 Corinthians 12:18, 20 and 27:

But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose.

As it is, there are many parts, yet one body.

Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.

Each of us as an individual has unique contributions to make to the whole. We don't see ourselves in isolation; we appreciate the handiwork of God in arranging us in the body both individually and collectively, the way He chose.

Colossians offers tremendous insight into the way this beautiful **unity** and **diversity** are designed to work together in the one body.

Colossians 2:19:

and not holding fast to the Head, from whom the whole body, nourished and knit together through its joints and ligaments, grows with a growth that is from God.

Unity comes first; diversity, second.

- First, we are to hold fast to the head, from whom the whole body grows.

- Second, we are to be nourished and knit together with our fellow members in the body.

When we hold fast to Christ who is the head, and are knit together in love with our fellow members, the outcome is [growth that is from God](#).

So why are the members referred to in this verse as “joints and ligaments”? Exactly what do these terms mean from a practical point of view?

- A “joint” (Greek *haphē*) is a [junction](#) by which the different members of the body are connected.
- A “ligament” (Greek *sundesmos*) is a [band](#) or [bond](#) which binds together.

Within the human body, joints and ligaments are specific anatomical structures which work in tandem to connect one body part to another. A joint is a [junction](#) where two or more bones come together; a ligament is a [band](#) connecting one bone with another.

In Colossians 2:19, however, it is clear that the emphasis is on the connection, not just of one body part to another, but on the connection of all the body parts to the head.

In keeping with an emphasis on that connection to the head, some translators have chosen to render the Greek terms with a broader sense, emphasizing the generic meanings (“junctions” and “bands”) over the specific (“joints” and “ligaments”).

Weymouth’s translation in particular is enlightening.

Colossians 2:19 (Weymouth):

Such a one does not keep his hold upon Christ, the Head, from whom the Body, in all its parts nourished and strengthened by its points of contact [Greek *haphē*, junctures] and its connections [Greek *sundesmos*, bonds], grows with a divine growth.

The whole body is to be nourished and strengthened by its points of contact and by its connections. This translation paints a more expansive picture of the interactions involved in holding fast to the head.

The body has many connecting parts (not just joints and ligaments), and they are all connected one way or another with the head. The various parts are nourished and knit together by interacting with one another, and they grow by staying connected with the head.

The lesson is simple: in the body, we must [stay connected](#):

- [First, to the head](#); and
- [Second, to each other](#).

On an anatomical level, the primacy of the head within the human body is indisputable. No matter what bodily functions and systems you examine, it seems that the head always ends up as the point of origin, even if it's not apparently so at first blush.

Take, for example, the [five senses](#). With what members of the body do we register our sensory inputs?

SIGHT	HEARING	SMELL	TASTE	TOUCH
Eyes	Ears	Nose	Tongue	Skin

Where are the eyes, ears, nose and tongue located? The head! In and of itself, isn't that an astonishing thing to consider?

God put all the perceptual organs by which we learn anything in a single place – our **head**. Surely, He had a purpose in doing so. (After all, the **brain** is right there to process and interpret all the sensory information that we gather through our eyes, ears, nose, tongue and skin.)

Now, studying this from yet another vantage point, let's explore how the head occupies first place in both the infrastructure and the energy systems of the **human body**.

THE HUMAN BODY

INFRASTRUCTURE SYSTEMS

Skeletal System

Skull houses brain

- Brain coordinates all body's functions
 - Cerebrum controls learning, reasoning and speech, plus the senses (especially sight and hearing)

Muscular System

Brain houses cerebellum

- Cerebellum coordinates movement

Cardiovascular (Circulatory) System

Brain houses brain stem

- Brain stem coordinates delivery of energy (oxygen, nutrients) and defense agents (white blood cells)

Nervous System

Brain and spinal cord house nerves

- Nerves transmit information and coordinate bodily function

ENERGY SYSTEMS

Respiratory System

Head houses nose, neck houses windpipe

- Throat takes in life-giving air and passes it to the lungs, which extract the oxygen and expel the carbon dioxide

Digestive System

Head houses mouth, neck houses food pipe

- Esophagus takes in food and passes it to other organs, which convert it into fuel so that nutrients are absorbed and waste is expelled

Well, it looks like you could safely say that the key aspects of our skeletal, muscular, cardiovascular, nervous, respiratory and digestive systems are all first initiated by the head. There is simply no contest when it comes to deciding which part of the physical body fulfills the headship role. Heads down, it's the head!

Because Christ is the head, it is our heart's desire to grow up into union with him. Ephesians 4 states this beautifully.

Ephesians 4:15,16 (Weymouth):

But we shall lovingly hold to the truth, and shall in all respects grow up into union with Him who is our Head, even Christ.

Dependent on Him, the whole body — its various parts closely fitting and firmly adhering to one another — grows by the aid of every contributory link [Greek *haphē*, juncture or point of contact], with power proportioned to the need of each individual part, so as to build itself up in a spirit of love.

Growing up into union with him (our head, Christ) is what it's all about. **Peace** and **love** are the **bonds** that knit us together.

Ephesians 4:1-3:

I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called,

with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love,

eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond [Greek *sundesmos*] of peace.

Colossians 2:2,3:

that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, to reach all the riches of full

assurance of understanding and the knowledge of God's mystery, which is Christ,

in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

Colossians 3:14:

And above all these put on love, which binds everything together [Greek *sundesmos*] in perfect harmony.

In the one body, the unity of the spirit is maintained in the bond of **peace**, and it's **love** that binds everything together in perfect harmony.

In summation:

To grow with a growth from God, hold fast to the head.

Christ as the head is the life-giver in the body of Christ. Christ in us — the holy spirit or spirit of Christ in us — is to predominate in our life and walk.

2 Peter 3:18a:

But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

As we recognize the primacy of Christ in the body and hold fast to Christ as the head, our lives will be filled with grace and the knowledge of him. The evidence will spill over into everything we do as we walk by the faith of Jesus Christ, our marvelous Lord and Savior.