

**YOUR BODY—THE TEMPLE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT***Scripture Reading: I Corinthians 6:19-20*

“Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ” (I Corinthians 6:15)? The Scriptures speak of our human physical bodies, Christ’s physical body that was resurrected, and Christ’s spiritual Body “the church which is His body” (Ephesians 1:22-23). However, in the verse just quoted (I Corinthians 6:15), we see that not only are we spiritual members of the “Body of Christ,” but our physical bodies are members of Christ as well. Therefore, one could say that there is a sense in which Christ has a physical body on earth today; and our physical bodies make up that body. Like one dear brother has said: “This truth has a very practical application to it.” Give it some serious thought.

God made the physical body, that He gave us, “for the Lord, and the Lord for the body” (I Corinthians 6:13). Our passage would teach us that God has a claim on our bodies in this life and in the life to come. Sometimes we think because God has set us free, we are our own bosses....My body belongs to me now, to do with it what I please. Are you your own boss? “Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one’s slaves whom you obey, whether of sin to death, or of obedience to righteousness?” (Romans 6:16)...Truly, someone else owns you; but you can determine which one you allow to own you. “Do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and YOU ARE NOT YOUR OWN? For you were bought at a price; THEREFORE GLORIFY GOD IN YOUR BODY!” (I Corinthians 6:19-20)...This is done by letting the Holy Spirit control your physical body.

*Dick Ware**Notes:***AT HOME IN THE BODY***Scripture Reading: II Corinthians 5:6*

“Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home IN THE BODY, we are absent from the Lord. (For we walk by faith, not by sight) We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.” For all of us who have loved ones that have died, this is a precious passage; and it has brought great comfort into our lives. We cannot count the many times over the years when we have heard, or said, “absent from the body is to be present with the Lord.” And to this we again say Amen.

It is always good to look at our verses in their context, for it provides a special blessing to us. The apostle Paul opens to us a look into his own life and thoughts. He begins in II Corinthians 4:7 by declaring, “But we have this treasure in EARTHEN VESSELS.” He then reveals the sufferings in the body, and the hope, for the sake of the gospel. In verse 16, he refers to the body as “the OUTWARD MAN which perishes, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.” In 5:1, he continues by declaring, “We know that if our EARTHLY HOUSE of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, and house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.” Until then we are “at home in the body,” but with the prayer that we can say, “Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him” (verse 9).

*Floyd Baker**Notes:*

**ABSENT FROM THE BODY***Scripture Reading: II Corinthians 5:8*

There is much confusion today concerning the subject of physical death. Even Christians are not sure what happens when a person dies. Often, Christians will try to comfort the bereaved by assuring them that their loved one has entered into his eternal rest and is enjoying all the blessings of heaven. This isn't true. Paul uses this fifth chapter of II Corinthians to explain what happens at physical death.

Death, in the Scriptures, means SEPARATION. Physical death is the separation of the soul and the spirit from the body. The soul and spirit make up the "true person." The body is just the "house" in which the soul and spirit (the "true man") dwells. At physical death, the "true man" moves out of his earthly "house" and is seen as being "UNCLOTHED" (verse 4). Between death and resurrection, the saints, in their unclothed condition, go to be with Christ to wait in blissful comfort until the Resurrection. When Christ returns to take His redeemed unto Himself (I Thessalonians 4:13-18), the departed saints will receive their glorified body (their eternal "house") in which they will be "clothed" for all eternity. It is at the RESURRECTION that the saints enjoy the promised blessings of reigning with Christ in Heaven.

I Thessalonians 4:13-18 addresses the receiving of the glorified body for the departed saints who have died during this dispensation of the Grace of God. The saints who will be living at the time of Christ's return for His Church will also need a new body that is fitted for dwelling in heaven for all eternity. Paul tells us how the living saints will be changed and given their glorified body in I Corinthians 15:51-53.

*Marvin Duncan**Notes:***INCREASE OF THE BODY***Scripture Reading: Ephesians 4:16*

How does a local church and individuals within the local church continue to grow? Most Christian book stores have manuals with programs and contests that the writer assures will bring growth; but the real answer is not in human wisdom or fleshly activities, even when done with the best of motives. God's formula for corporate and individual growth in the Body is found in Ephesians 4:16.

Once again, the Apostle makes the comparison between the human body and the Body of Christ to parallel our instructions. First, we must understand that "the whole body [is] fitly joined together." God's marvelous wisdom has properly placed the foot, the head, the eye, and all the parts of the body in exactly the right place to function at its very best. This is also true for believers. In His wisdom, God sovereignly leads us to the place where we best fit in and where He can best use us in the cause of Christ. Secondly, we must see ourselves as being "compacted by that which every joint supplieth." In the human body, the joints connect different parts of the body together so each vein, each muscle, and each limb functions as intended. Every saint is to serve in a similar capacity. Through the use of our spiritual gifts, we are to supply a needed aspect of ministry which enhances the needs of other believers. Thirdly, we need to understand that it is ONLY when "EVERY PART" of the Body of Christ is functioning in this way that growth is sustained. No one is excluded from this needed exchange of mutual ministry. No member is too obscure or feeble to contribute something that will benefit others. Therefore, when each of us seeks to edify other believers, this "effectual working...[is what] maketh increase of the body."

If you or your church are not growing, perhaps it is because you are not doing the part God would have you do in the work of the ministry.

*John Fredericksen**Notes:*

## THE HEAD OF THE BODY

*Scripture Reading: Colossians 1:18*

“And He is the Head of the Body, the Church, who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead, that in all things He might have the preeminence.” This is probably one of the most descriptive and powerful passages in the Word of God concerning the Lord Jesus Christ. It is truth that is given from the standpoint of the revelation of the mystery which was dispensed to us through Paul. It is true that in the prophets and the four Gospels, we learn that Christ is God and that He is Lord over all creation; but the Pauline Epistles are the first and only place that we learn that Christ is the Head of the Body—the Church!

Christ is not the Head of the kingdom church. Of that church, He is the Christ or King and the High Priest. He is Israel's Lord and Christ, but today He is more! He is Head over a new Church, a heavenly organism that did not have its beginning with Israel on the day of Pentecost. The Church, the Body of Christ, is the called out people of the dispensation of grace, and both this Church and this dispensation had their beginnings simultaneously with the salvation of Paul! This entire teaching is not even the subject of the Old Testament prophets or of Christ on earth or even of the Book of Acts before the salvation of Paul!

Just read down from verses 24-29, and you will see that it is called a mystery (or secret)! Compare this with Ephesians 3, and it should become even clearer. To mix this mystery program, and its distinctive higher revelation of Christ, with the kingdom program of the four Gospels is to confuse God's clear and precise truth and to fail to honor the preeminence that the Lord has received. God has seen to it that Christ has received the preeminence—the highest of glory—which He alone is worthy to receive. We dishonor Him when we fail to accept and rejoice in what God has accomplished and revealed.

*Donald A. Webb*

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## CALLED IN ONE BODY

*Scripture Reading: Colossians 3:15*

Discernment and understanding of things spiritual can come only to the saints of God in Christ. “Now we [mature believers] have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man” (I Corinthians 2:12-15).

Only the believer can perceive the manner of attaining to the peace of God. The formula is that of *yieldedness*. “Let the peace of God rule in your hearts!” It's beyond the realm and possibility of human effort to so live. Without the indwelling Holy Spirit's enablement, one cannot overcome—cannot conquer desperation, but even at lowest ebb, the saint of God can claim victory. The apostle Paul testifies that, even when mired in deepest discouragement, he has confidence of a solution to his dilemma: “O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? *I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord...*” (Romans 7:24-25a).

The oneness of the Body of Christ assures all of its members that this overcoming peace is equally available to each one. “The weakness of God is stronger than men...for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I glory in my infirmities” (I Corinthians 1:25, II Corinthians 12:9).

*Robert E. Hanna*

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