

The Body Of Christ

The first epistle, (Letter), to the Corinthians was written by the Apostle Paul to address some problems, which had arisen in the church at Corinth. In the early chapters of the epistle, Paul addressed the Corinthian believers concerning unity, fornication, discipline, and marriage. The Corinthians also appear to have had some problems in the area of public worship, for Paul moved on to address the subjects of the Lord's Supper and the use of spiritual gifts within the local assembly. The Body of Christ includes all "Born Again" believers, not all church members or all religions. "By one spirit are we all baptized into one body." (1 Cor.12:13) Two factors are involved here.

1. First, there is a body, which is The Church. (Eph. 1:22,23)
2. Second, a person becomes a part of "The Body" by a baptism, not by water but by the Holy Spirit. BAPTISM: means To Place Into, or on; For The Purpose of Identification.

"John baptized with water, but Jesus Christ will baptize with the Holy Spirit." (Mathew 3:11) This was a reference to the Day of Pentecost which took place after the resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ back into heaven - see Acts 1:5-8 and Acts 2:1-5. From heaven, the Lord Jesus Christ "Poured Out" or placed His Spirit on that believing remnant of Israel, just as John the Baptist promised and as was predicted in Joel 2:28-32.

This is also the baptism to which Paul refers in Ephesians 4:1-6. "Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." All is a reference to Believers, not unbelievers.

Paul uses the human body to describe the Church. In Eph. 4:15,16, he said, "Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." I think that Paul got this partly from Psalm 122:3. "Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compacted together." Again, in Eph. 2:21,22, he said, "In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." Obviously these statements can in no way be used to describe Christianity in general. It is the destiny of all true believers.

Of all the cities in Israel, God chose Jerusalem to "put His name there." Even so, of all the groups in Christendom, God will yet choose one group from among all of the groups, which make up Christianity, to put His name there. (Mal. 3:16-18) This "one group" is those that are "Born Again." These are the redeemed of the Lord. Later, in His prayer with His Twelve, He said to the Father, "Keep through thine own name those whom Thou

hast given me. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Thy name." (John 17:11,12). They were the spiritual city, which God had chosen to put His name.

All the redeemed are noted in The Book of Life, but those in the Body of Christ are written in another book also. This is made clear in Rev. 22:19. "God shall take away his part out of The Book of Life, and out of the Holy City." The same point is made in Heb. 12:22,23. "Ye are come unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, the church of the firstborn which are written in heaven." (Some paragraphs are excerpts from Christ Series, authored by C. Elden McNabb.)

"He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly (innermost being) shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)" (John 7:38-39) So, from the day of Pentecost, when the Holy Ghost was given... to our current day and until Jesus returns, Believers are being added to the church, which is His body.

After the Rapture of the church, at the Marriage Supper of The Lamb, we will become the Bride of Christ and as events unfold, end up dwelling with Christ on a new earth, fashioned just for us for all eternity. How great is that?

Until Next Time

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