

Christ's Spiritual Body

By Warren Zehrung – April 16, 2011

We have been given the inestimable blessing of being a part of God's true Church.

We have grown accustomed to referring to the Church of God as the Spiritual Body of Christ.

What does that mean? What are we to understand concerning the Body of Jesus Christ?

We know that Jesus came in a physical, flesh and blood body. The physical body of Jesus is the one John the beloved apostle hugged and leaned on. That body got hungry and tired, just like our bodies.

But how do we get from Christ having a *physical* body, to the concept of the brethren being the *spiritual* Body of Christ? Those are two seemingly non-related concepts.

"How is the church the spiritual Body of Christ?"

In today's sermon, we will explore the development of the biblical concept of how the Church of God came to be synonymous with the spiritual Body of Christ.

Jesus introduces a new concept, not only to His disciples, but also to all the public who were keeping the Sabbath at the synagogue, as He taught in Capernaum.

I have had the tremendous good fortune to go to Capernaum where Jesus walked and taught, but as we shall see, Jesus is now making Himself totally available to all of the brethren in a personal way. Notice how Jesus said it:

John 6:47-48 Truly, truly, I say unto you, He that believes on Me has everlasting life. I am that bread of life.

Those carnal people were thinking only of food and their bellies, and they were not thinking spiritually. The Scriptures show that there was no one hearing Jesus' words who realized that Jesus was speaking of His spiritual life, and spiritual ways, and His higher principles, His words, His standards, His laws, and His way of living. Speaking of Himself, and all that He was, and stood for, Jesus said:

John 6:50-51 This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is **My flesh**, which I will give for the life of the world.

I'll bet that you could hear a pin drop at that point.

John 6:52 The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us *His* flesh to eat?

You can imagine the lifted eyebrows and glances toward each other in the synagogue as the people thought about those words.

John 6:53 Then Jesus said unto them, Truly, truly, I say unto you, Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, you have no life in you.

These are very confusing words to a non-converted person. It would only be after Christ's death and resurrection that the converted disciples would begin to understand what it meant to "put on Christ," and to live and to believe as Christ did.

John 6:54-56 Whoso eats My flesh, and drinks My blood, has eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. He that eats My flesh, and drinketh My blood, dwells in Me, and I in him.

Jesus Christ was saying, if you eat my flesh (which was way beyond their comprehension) – then you will live in me. You will become me, and I will become you. This was something that was really hard even for the disciples to accept. Many of them went away and did not walk with Him any more. The spiritual significance of the Scriptures is always deeper and broader than the physical meaning that is put forth.

John 6:57 As the living Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father: so he that eats Me, even he shall live by Me.

The Father was a rather distant concept to them. In other words Jesus was saying that the Father totally supported Him.

Let's not let the subtleties of the Scriptures go over our heads, because we have to put all the higher meanings together. This takes study, understanding, and God's Holy Spirit.

John 6:58, 63 This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eats of this bread shall live for ever. It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, *they* are spirit, and *they* are life.

Here we are starting to understand the spiritual depth of what Jesus is saying. I suppose most people think, "I have a body, everybody has a body, and Jesus Christ had a body too.

People say, "I am what I am" – in other words I am not going to change to please someone else. That is what is known as "loving yourself."

Let us explore this concept of changing who we are, and the way we are, by 180 degrees. That is what the Bible definition of repentance is – to do an about face, to turn around our lives completely and totally, and go the opposite direction.

I Corinthians 6:9 Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God?

Then a real ugly list of sins follows – drop down to verse 11.

I Corinthians 6:11 And such were *some of you*: but ye are washed, but you are sanctified, but you are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

Paul is being a *little* facetious, a little tongue in cheek there, because [it was not *some of you*] – we were *all* unrighteous sinners when we were called.

Now, Paul is expounding on how the bread [Christ's body] also makes us, the saints, the **brethren into one body**. This is what we are talking about, the **Spiritual Body of Jesus Christ** – the called out brethren.

I Corinthians 10:16 The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the fellowship of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the fellowship of the body of Christ?

Having heard the "fellowship of the body of Christ?" a thousand times, what does it mean?

Well we know that is a reference to the entire Church of God – *the called out ones*. But reading this for the first time, the brethren would have had to come to understand this.

I Corinthians 10:17 For we being many *are one bread*, and *one body*: for we are all partakers of that One Bread [Jesus Christ].

This is something to think about. Paul is beginning to define the “Church” and make it synonymous with the spiritual Body of Jesus Christ. We are one bread because we take Passover together. We are one Body, because we take of the symbols of the flesh of Jesus Christ and His blood.

But, brethren, I am getting a little ahead of the story.

Here we see Jesus speaking to His disciples before His death, immediately before the very end of His life.

John 14:6 Jesus said unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man come unto the Father, but by me.

Now we see what our goal is, and the very reason of our existence is. It is to come unto the Father, and to be in His Kingdom.

But to come to the Father we go through Jesus Christ, because He is the only way, He has the only truth, and He is life.

In other words we must *put on Christ*. Christ must *spiritually* dwell in us, His ways, His faith, His attitude, His sacrifice, His character, His mercy, His forgiveness, and His love. There can be no hate towards others. We must become just like Jesus Christ!

Every characteristic of Jesus must be in our minds, and must be replacing all of the wrong thought patterns which once defined us. Because brethren there was a time when you and I were not converted Christians, and we were of this world. That has to be changed out and replaced. Jesus Christ must come and make His abode in our minds and our hearts. That is “Christ in us – the hope of glory.”

Colossians 1:27 To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

Jesus must be in our hearts and minds for us to have eternal God-life in the resurrection.

So if we are not doing as Jesus said, the way that Jesus said to do it, by growing and changing, overcoming and believing the Word of God, we will not have life in us.

That is what Jesus meant by "*my flesh is food indeed, and my blood is drink indeed*"... "*He that eats my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.*"

Also, because we are Christ's spiritual body, God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is *Christ in you*, the hope of glory. Christ lives in us.

I John 4:13 Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.

That is the way that Jesus lives in us, by His eternal Spirit. We cannot see Him or feel Him, but God makes a real definite difference in us. He brings His way into us and we dispose of our way.

John 14:10 Believe thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwells in me, He doeth the works.

Jesus is now talking about this concept of being in each other. Jesus tells them that He is not coming up with some new philosophy here. God the Father was in Jesus Christ and He had the Spirit of God to the full. God the Father guided, directed, and put His ways, His life, His Spirit, into Jesus Christ on earth. Jesus never accepted the recognition for doing the miracles that the Father worked through Him.

John 14:15 "If ye love me, keep my commandments"

Do not just think about the Ten Commandments here, this means to do absolutely *everything* that Jesus had been teaching them for three and a half years.

Then Jesus begins to explain how He will spiritually, through His Holy Spirit, actually be in us continuously, actively, and not just in some sentimental or emotional way. Spirituality is reality. It is eternal. It is God's Life becoming our Life. Our flesh and blood physical existence is going to pass away.

John 14:17 *Even the Spirit of truth; which the world cannot receive, because it seeth it not, neither knoweth it: but ye know it; for it dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.*

They did not have God's Holy Spirit in them yet, but God was directing, calling, and motivating them. They received God's Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost.

John 14:20 At that Day ye shall know that I *am* in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.

Christ lives in us, therefore we are His body. He is in us, and keep in mind, so is the Father.

John 14:23 Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words [that means to begin to do absolutely everything that Jesus taught them] and my Father will love him, and *We* will come unto him, and make our abode with him.

It is not a case of just believing in Jesus and then carrying on doing what we've always done. That is the problem with the Protestant and the Catholic world. They continue as they always were, they live according to the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, when it suits them.

God the Father and Jesus Christ live, dwell, abide in true Christians. Does it show? Does it reflect our attitudes? Read all of John chapter 15, – it is all about abiding continuously with God.

The true Church of God is the body (the group) of true believers that God the Father has called into the **Spiritual Body of Christ**.

Jesus was not speaking of a momentary minor conversion, but a life-long process of attaining Godly character. When Jesus comes and lives in us we start to become like Jesus Christ. If He is giving, we are giving. If He is sharing, we are sharing. If He knows the Father, we begin to know the Father.

Ephesians 4:13 Until we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

Are any of us there yet? Absolutely not! Our goal is very high. In fact, in the flesh, it is unattainable. We will not attain to the perfection of Jesus Christ, but that does not mean that we are not to give it our all. With God's help and with His Holy Spirit we must continue daily, hourly, momentarily to strive to be like Jesus Christ.

Brethren, we are the body of Christ, and Christ lives in us.

Paul explains that we suffer persecutions because Jesus lives in us.

II Corinthians 4:8-9 *We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed.*

That is our role as a Christian. But now notice very carefully verse 10:

II Corinthians 4:10 *Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the *Life also of Jesus* might be made manifest in our body.*

Jesus is to be seen as living in our body, and to be recognized as living in our body.

Paul is speaking of Jesus living His Life in us so that His Life becomes apparent in the way that we live. We are laying down our lives for each other and so forth – just as Jesus did.

Paul is not speaking of eternal life here, because he explained back in 1 Corinthians 15:44, about our resurrection. *"It is sown a natural body; it is raised a **spiritual body**. There is a natural body, and there is a **spiritual body**."*

So, Paul rephrases the concept of Christ living in our bodies to make it clear that he is not speaking of the resurrection. He is talking about the daily life of a Christian.

II Corinthians 4:11 *For we who are alive are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the Life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.*

Jesus Christ, living in us, is to change us so as to make it manifest that He is living in us. We should be different from the people of the world. We should be the people of God and members of the **Spiritual Body of Christ**. Paul is speaking only of converted brethren, not of the world.

We are to become converted by the renewing of our minds, and we must put on godly character. That takes place within our minds, because the Holy Spirit of God is there.

The "*spiritual body of Christ*" is the Church of God. If this is not clear to us, then it needs to become very clear.

Brethren, let us understand that the Church of God is not a physical building, it is not separate corporate organizations that can be seen and perceived.

The Church of God is ONE spiritual entity comprised entirely of all of the converted brethren.

When Jesus considers the Church of God, He recognizes **only one body**, and that is His body of believers.

Jesus Christ has only one spiritual Body, with many members. They possess the Spirit of God, and they are scattered all over the face of the earth.

I Corinthians 12:7 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man for the benefit of everyone.

It is to profit everyone. When God gives His Holy Spirit it is not given to one person to serve that one person, it is given to everyone for the benefit of everyone else. Each part of the Church, the body, is essential to the proper functioning and growth of the body. Paul is using the analogy of our human body.

Our spiritual gift that God has given us is unique and equally important as the other gifts that other people have. Some people may be a tremendously silver tongued gifted speaker, and he might say that his gift is more important than anybody else's gift. Well that is arrogant and that is pride, and that is not what the scripture says. Whatever talent that God has graciously given to us is indispensable to the entire body – the whole Church. We must use our special gift that God has given us, each and everyone of us, in service to God. I have heard people say that they did not receive any spiritual gift that they know of. Brethren, do not say that. You must pray to God and ask, "What can I do to help the Body of Christ, the Church of God?"

God has given us all different talents and gifts. It is not for personal power or self-aggrandizement.

I Corinthians 12:12 For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one **body: so also is Christ.**

Did you notice that brethren? Christ has only one body of believers. That is one Church, the Church of God.

I Corinthians 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.

That Spirit is God's Holy Spirit. God the Father and Jesus Christ can live in us through Their Spirit.

I Corinthians 12:14 For the body is not one member, but many.

Many brethren make up the **Spiritual Body of Christ**.

I Corinthians 12:18 But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body [the spiritual body of Christ], as it has pleased him.

God has a reason for placing us in the body, where, how and at the time He wants. That is God's prerogative. We are not to question that, brethren.

I Corinthians 12:20 But now *are they* many members, yet but one body.

How many times does it need to be said in the Bible that we are one *Spiritual Body of Christ*.

I am making the point and getting to the fact that the Church of God today, does not appear to us, or the world, to be one Spiritual Body of Christ. We are a divided people. Therefore, we are not prepared to meet Jesus Christ at this time.

I Corinthians 12:25 That there should be *no division* in the body [of Christ]; but *that* the members should have the same care one for another.

Brethren, I could give you example after example of entire church groups that not only do not have the same care for other groups, but they despise the other groups. They look down on the other groups and they disclaim the other groups. We must understand this: There are converted brethren all around the world.

I Corinthians 12:27 Now you are the body of Christ, and members in particular [that is individual members of the ONE spiritual body of Christ].

We need to ask ourselves what the will of God is, with regard to **Christ's spiritual Body**.

What will be the result if you and I fail to become the unified Christian Body that God intends us to be? These scriptures that we have just reviewed say over and over that the Body of Jesus Christ *is one*. It is unified and it is one in Spirit.

We are supposed to be integrated into a common bond of fellowship that knows no bounds! I do not see that, brethren. We are in a serious situation.

Paul shows that our very salvation depends on our caring for one another. This is not something to be taken lightheartedly.

I Corinthians 1:13 "*Is Christ divided?*"

Absolutely not! Christ is not divided, and the scriptures are clear. Christ's body is supposed to operate as an integral whole. Each member of the Body of Christ has a responsibility to live according to the rules of the Kingdom of God, now at this time, for the benefit of all the other members. We know that "*when one suffers we all suffer.*" We are not waiting for Jesus to return and make us – force us – to recognize and love one another. You remember when you were kids and there was a fight on the school grounds, or between cousins, and an adult would come along and make you shake hands. Most of the time kids would get over it, but some of them would hold grudges. When Jesus Christ comes back He is not going to say, "Okay now you all kiss and make up."

Brethren, if we are not now behaving as Christians should behave we will not be in the First Resurrection, or the Kingdom of God. It is incumbent on us to apply ourselves with all of our hearts and all of our strength to becoming that One Body we are called to be. Paul ties our being in the spiritual Body of Christ with our deep spiritual unity with all Church members.

Romans 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is your reasonable service.*

In the Church of God today there is not a lot of that *living sacrifice* going on. Many want to be comfy-cozy and they are not presenting their bodies as a living sacrifice. When there is wrong doctrine, when there is wrong practice in the Church they do not take a stand. They do not stand up for the wounded, injured victim. It is a badge of honor to stand up for one of the ones that have been hurt, and stand up for the truth of God.

Romans 12:2-5 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think *of himself* more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith. For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: So we, *being* many, are **one body in Christ**, and every one members one of another.

This concept of Jesus being one with the Father and the Father being One with Jesus, and us being in Jesus, and Jesus being in us, is now extended to all the members. We are "one of another." That is an incredible statement. It is God-inspired. Every one of us are members one of another. We do not reject an arm or a leg.

Romans 12:6 Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us,

Then Paul lists various talents and gifts given to the brethren. One is strong, one is wise, one is watchful, and one is unifying, etc. We all have different gifts and no one can use his gift from God to the exclusion of the other members. That would be a wrong use. That would be like punching yourself out – you just do not do that.

Then Paul goes into a series of guidelines as to how individual members are to conduct themselves.

Romans 12:9-11 *Let* love be without dissimulation – [no double standard, or respect of persons]. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. *Be* kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another; Not slothful [or lazy] in business; fervent in spirit; [always] serving the Lord;

He is saying that we must have zealously about our Christianity. Christ is living in us.

Romans 12:12 Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer;

When you pray to God the Father you do not have to sit or kneel there and say I am praying to God a million miles away off in heaven. We are told that God the Father and Jesus Christ will make their abode in us. Pray to God. He is right there tuned-in to our hearts and our minds and our prayers, and our feelings and our hurts and our fears.

Romans 12:13-16 Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality. Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not. Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep. *Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits.*

These Biblical instructions are for the entire Body of Christ around the world. "Be of one mind toward one another." Is there somebody in your congregation that nobody talks to because he is unseemly, unattractive, not a lot of fun to be with, he is poor, he is sick or he is weak?

Romans 12:17-19 Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but *rather* give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance *is* mine; I will repay, says the Lord.

This is not just talking about in the Church of God, it says *all men*.

Romans 12:20 Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.

It might take a little while, a few months or even a few years, but you do it that way because God says that is the way to deal with your enemy.

Romans 12:21 Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

This is a constant temptation in many of our lives. If Jesus Christ is living in us we will still feel like getting even, or feel like having the last say, but Jesus will be saying, "Do it this way."

We are to put into practice the way of life that Jesus taught.

As individual members of His body, we are to live as Jesus lived. Because He is Spirit He can come and live in each and every one of us. He told His disciples if I do not go away the Holy Spirit cannot come. When Jesus was in the flesh on the earth, He could not be speaking to every man around the earth day and night. But now in His omnipotent power as a Spirit being, Jesus Christ can be with us individually no matter where we are. Jesus Christ is our Lord and Master and we are to follow in the steps of our Master. We are to be Who He is, and what He is.

What He has promised to us, as an eternal reward, will be of no consequence, if we do not apply Christ's values in our daily lives.

What has happened to the Church of God? We have come to a time when we claim to be aware of other members of the **Spiritual Body of Christ**, but we will have nothing to do with one another.

We must ask ourselves, "Who is my brother?" Who can I reach out to? How can I heal the breach? Who is a member of the *spiritual Body of Christ*? Do I show myself as a brother to them? Satan's done a job of dividing the Church. It is not the continuous will of Jesus Christ that the Church be divided. Christ is going to have to gather His elect and put the Church back together. Jesus said that He would build or construct His own '*ekklesia*,' assembly, or congregation. This is what He has done. He has built this one Church, it is His One Body.

Today, we find ourselves in a world of divisive confusion. There are so many groups, organizations, individuals and churches that claim to represent Christ's spiritual Body, but they will have nothing to do with others of the very same background, beliefs and practices.

We are obligated by God to extend our realm of fellowship and service to include all who have the earnest of God's Holy Spirit, and to all in whom God and Jesus Christ dwell.

We cannot hate, despise, neglect, or reject any of the saints, as that behavior will disqualify us from the Kingdom of God. We are the saints – the set apart brethren to be Christ's Body.

Those who are only interested in preparing themselves, saving themselves, while neglecting the spiritual welfare of their brethren, have fallen for the deception of Cain, who asked in Genesis 4:9, "*Am I my brother's keeper?*" You could almost hear the ugly tone of his voice when he asked that. Of course the answer is "yes," we are our brother's keeper.

Jesus Christ has only **one spiritual body**, and thus He has only one Church. Jesus is the Head of His Church, and converted Christians are individual parts of that one spiritual Body - the Church of God.

Ephesians 1:22 And He [speaking of God the Father] has put all *things* under [Jesus'] feet, and gave Him *to be* the head over all *things* to the Church, Which is His body, the fullness of Him that fills all in all. [that means that the entire plan of God is filled up in the *spiritual body of Christ*]

God the Father has made Jesus Christ to be the Head, the one in authority, the one in charge, and the one that owns and directs His body. God's will and plan for mankind is filled all in all in the Spiritual Body of Jesus Christ. It is just like how our minds tell our body how to function, from the sympathetic parts to the unsympathetic parts, to the parts that operate automatically, to the parts that we have to tell to do something. If your ear itches you have to tell your hand to go and scratch it. But we do not have to say to our heart, "beat, beat, beat". Jesus Christ is the Head and He is working everything out in us.

Sometimes, we do not understand everything that other members of the Body of Christ are doing. We do not understand everything that our body is doing on the inside.

That is because our job is different from other peoples' jobs, and we do not have all the knowledge that our Head, Jesus Christ, has. Jesus puts us where it pleases Him, for His purposes.

Ephesians 2:16 And that he [Jesus] might reconcile both [Gentiles and Jews] unto God in *one body* by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby:

Jesus Christ does it in His *One spiritual Body*, and He is not doing it here and there in separate organizations at separate times. Jesus Christ is not saying that He wants one group to go and leave this other group off, 'I want this one group to prosper and I want this other group to fail'. We do not deal with our body that way – and neither does Jesus.

Ephesians 3:6 That the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and of the *same body*, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel:

He is not saying that the Jewish Christians get the preeminence, and the Gentiles over there will be lesser. No, they are in the **same spiritual Body of Jesus Christ**.

Ephesians 4:1 I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,

What is our vocation to which we were called? We are to be Christians, and that is our job.

Ephesians 4:2 With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love;

That is how we go about it, not getting the jump and leaving other people out. But sharing what we know with one another. People say that they do not want to gossip. Look brethren, understand what it means to forebear one another in love. People die, people get sick. We pray for one another. When one member suffers we all suffer. We do not sit on that kind of information – but we share it – for the common good of all.

Ephesians 4:3 Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

We hold it together, and that makes it peaceful. But when someone gets left out, overlooked, forgotten, that wars against the bond of peace.

Ephesians 4:4 *There is* one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;

Remember brethren, we are members one of another. We are to go into the Kingdom of God together. That is the way that Jesus Christ pictures it.

Ephesians 4:5-6 One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who *is* above all, and through all, and in you all.

There we see God the Father in us again, as we saw back in John 14.

Ephesians 4:7 But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

Yes, God graciously gives us some things. One man can be stronger and can pick up more, one man might be taller and can reach further. God has an abundance of gifts. Why does God give us all of these gifts? Is it to sit on them, to gloat, to prosper by ourselves? No! Godly gifts are:

Ephesians 4:12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

We are to all be edified by the gifts of one another. If someone sings beautifully we all are to grow by that.

Ephesians 4:13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

We are not there yet!

Ephesians 4:15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the head, *even* Christ:

This is going on to perfection. **Jesus Christ is the Head of His one spiritual body.**

Ephesians 4:16 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.

Notice, we have muscles and if those muscles were not tied to the bone with sinews and tendons and so forth, the body would not work. You would just be a glob. But we are not, and we have strength and mobility. Every part of the body has to work. Eyeballs have to swivel, elbows have to turn back and forth, fingers have to grasp. All of the joints add a measure, effectively working together. When it says, "...increase of the Body" it is talking about the **spiritual Body of Jesus Christ**. The Church is to grow by what we put into the Church. Let there be no division among us, brethren.

Ephesians 5:23, 29 For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the Church: and He is the Savior of the body. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourishes and cherishes it, even as the Lord the Church:

Jesus Christ nourishes His body, He cherishes His body, and He loves His body.

Ephesians 5:30 For we are members of His body, of His *flesh, and of His bones*.

Paul adds the "*flesh and bones*" there as an obvious reference to the New Covenant marriage (Genesis 2:23, Ephesians 5:32).

Genesis 2:23 And Adam said [of Eve], *This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh:*

Paul is drawing the analogy that the church is going to marry Christ.

Colossians 2:19 And not holding the Head [Jesus], from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increases with the increase of God.

This is the same thought that we just saw in Ephesians. The Church is to grow up together. All of the church is to be together. Jesus Christ said that if the Church were to be together that would be a witness to the world that we are the people of God.

Again, the Bible reveals that the one *spiritual body of Christ* is the Church.

Colossians 1:18 And he [Christ] is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all *things* he might have the preeminence.

The Bible says this over and over. The point is: the Body is not divided. The spiritual Body of Jesus Christ is one, and it is important for us to recognize this.

I Corinthians 11:30 For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.

It is important for us to recognize and serve and fellowship with our brethren in the spiritual Body of Christ.

I Corinthians 3:23 And ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's.

We belong to Christ, and we are of His spiritual Body. Christ belongs to God.

Paul was inspired by Jesus Christ to write these words:

I Corinthians 1:10 "Now I beg of you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment."

WZ/pp/sl