

The Real Body

(Sermon Notes) By Warren Zehrung 3/17/2018

A good second title would be: **Savior of the body**. This is a Passover sermon as we prepare for the spring Holy Days.

2Corinthians 13:5 Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?

Jesus greatly looked forward to His last Passover with His apostles, and He told them it would be **His last**.

Luke 22:15-16 Jesus said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you **before I suffer**: For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the Kingdom of God.

And suffer He did. Remember how Peter was **warming himself at a fire** as Jesus was being led about: (Mark 14:54)

John 18:18 And the servants and officers stood there, who had made a **fire of coals; for it was cold**: and they warmed themselves: and Peter stood with them, and warmed himself.

So, it was cold when Jesus went through His torment **intensifying** the throbbing sting of His shredded skin... (John 19:1) Jesus had been flogged – tortured, punched out... He was pierced and punctured... His bones were exposed by the skin being torn away... He was crowned with thorns... He was battered and slashed until He was marred more than any man...

He was unrecognizable by His closest friends...but **not a bone** was broken indicating the integrity of His Body.

Scripture reveals that we, the saints of God, the Church of God, the one Body of Christ, are represented by the **bones** of Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 5:30 We are members of **His [Jesus'] Body**, of **His flesh**, and of **His bones**.

The Church of God is not to be broken. Messianic Prophecy: The Lamb of God was not to have any of His bones broken - Why? Because it indicated the **integrity** of His Body – the Church.

Exodus 12:46 In one house shall it be eaten; thou shalt not carry forth ought of the flesh abroad out of the house; **neither shall ye break a bone thereof**.

The Church of God **is not to be broken** – as Christ's bones were not broken (Psalm 34:20, Exodus 12:46, John 19:36).

Those who refuse association with, and decline to fellowship with other brethren – are critically violating the integrity of Christ's Body – which is not to be broken. We have been given the inestimable blessing of **being a part** of God's true Church.

2Corinthians 4:7 We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.

2Corinthians 4:8 We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair;

2Corinthians 4:9 Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed;

2Corinthians 4:10 Always bearing about in [our] body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of **Jesus might be made manifest in our body.**

Not **only** individually in our bodies – but collectively as a people of God. Is the life of Jesus apparent in our body – our separated groups – by our conduct and the way we won't get together in the same towns? Brethren, the question we have to answer is: How is Jesus – the life and meaning of Jesus' life – evident in the things we do – the way we live our life? Paul is speaking of Jesus living His life in us so that His life becomes apparent in the way we live. He died for the entire world – and we, supposed True Christians, can't lay aside our differences!

2Corinthians 4:11 For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the **life also of Jesus might be made manifest** in our mortal flesh.

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?

John 6:51 I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.

John 6:56 He that eats my flesh, and drinks my blood, dwells in me, and I in him.

The disciples were very familiar with the concept of eating the sacrificed Passover Lamb. Jesus was taking them - one step at a time. We want to follow Christ's concept all the way through - until the full picture and meaning is seen. The spiritual significance of the Scriptures is always deeper and broader than the physical meaning.

John 6:63 It is the spirit that quickens; the flesh profits nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.

This next verse emphasizes the **togetherness** as opposed to the **separated** nature of God's people.

1Corinthians 10:16-17 The bread which we break, is it not the fellowship [communion, partnership] of the **Body of Christ**? For we **being many** [brethren] are one bread, and **one Body.**

The Body of Christ is the **entire** Church of God. Consider the example of the first-century Church brethren after just having received God's Holy Spirit.

Acts 4:32 The multitude of them that believed was of one heart and of one soul.

That was Godly love in action! It's as though they were all family. Lately, in the overall Church of God, we have not been oriented in that direction. If we, Brethren, are not of one heart – one mind – one Spirit... We need to ask ourselves if we are truly a part of the Body – or pretenders to the Faith. The Church of God – which is the **Body of Christ** – is ONE Spiritual Body – by definition it is not broken... It is not divided... It exists in Unity... But this scenario does not begin to represent God's separated congregations today where there is no fellowship between them.

We need to ask a serious question: Is one or the other excluding themselves from the fellowship with Christ? Paul addressed the disunity:

1Corinthians 1:12-13 Now this I say, that every one of you says, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. **Is Christ divided?**

I'm of Christ – means that some were saying, "Me and you Lord – I don't need anybody else."

Today, Paul would write it this way: I am of Paul; and I of Jimmy; and I of Ron; and I of Vic; and I of David or Dave; and I of Fred; and I of Rick; and I of Gerald or Gerald.

Thirty-two years after Herbert died, why is no one concerned about God's most serious warning? What has happened to the Church of God?

1Corinthians 12:7 But the manifestation [expression] of the Spirit is given to every man for the **benefit of everyone**.

Manifestation means: How something shows itself, – make itself known, the action of showing an abstract idea - it clearly shows or embodies... When the separated churches today --- it does not benefit everyone – does it? Each part of the Church – the body - is essential to the proper functioning and growth of the **entire** body. Brethren, serving only **a part** of Christ's Body is **not** a Scriptural concept.

1Corinthians 12:12 As the [human] body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one **Body**, being many, are **one Body: so also is Christ**.

How many bodies does the Lord have? One!!!

Jesus Christ has only **one Body of believers** – that is the one true Church – the Church of God.

1Corinthians 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 is God's Holy Spirit.]

1Corinthians 12:14 For the Body [of Christ] is not one member, but many [brethren]...

1Corinthians 12:18 But now hath God set the members every one of them [the Church brethren] **in the Body [the spiritual Body of Christ]**, as it has pleased Him...

1Corinthians 12:20 But now are they many members, yet but **one Body** [the one spiritual Body of Christ]...

I see one-upmanship and competition instead.

1Corinthians 12:26 And whether one member suffer, all the members **suffer** with it; or one member be **honored**, all the members rejoice with it.

That is not the attitude among God's scattered churches at all! They are mostly complacent and not the least concerned about those not in their congregation.

1Corinthians 12:27 Now you [brethren] are the **Body of Christ**, and members in particular.

Paul saw the same lack of love, and **disregard of other brethren** going on in his day!

Hebrews 13:1 Let brotherly love continue.

Hebrews 13:2 Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.

Hebrews 13:3 Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also **in the Body**.

Where would Jesus go to Sabbath services if He just dropped in today? Where is **His** unity doctrine believed, and practiced? Those church leaders who will not lift one little finger to bring about a unity of the brethren – a **unity of the Real Body of Christ...** What are they hoping for – an excuse – a pass – a Mulligan – a wink – a do-over?

Fellows, this is our one opportunity!

It is only the Church of God that comprehends **that** the Scriptures take the concept of the **Body of Christ** to a higher spiritual dimension. In fact, the Church of God consists only of the true believers who God the Father has called to be a part of the **one** "Body of Christ." Jesus Christ has only **one spiritual Body** – the Church of God – the Bride of Christ – the saints – the called out ones who will reign and rule with Him in the Millennium. If the Church of God fully appreciated these words we would not be in the scattered state we find ourselves today. Instead we would be growing in perfection unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

Ephesians 4:15-16 Speaking the truth in love, may we grow up into Him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From whom the **whole Body** fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplies, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, makes **increase of the Body** unto the edifying of itself in love.

Brethren, if we as the Church of God could discern who the members of **Christ's Body** are, we would not be **dying off** as rapidly as we find ourselves today.

1Corinthians 11:28-30 Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.

1Corinthians 11:29 For he that eats and drinks unworthily, eats and drinks damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.

1Corinthians 11:30 For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and **many sleep**. [they died]

They are **dying** prematurely because God cannot do anything with them anymore. When Paul said that we must be properly "**discerning** the Lord's **Body**," he meant that we cannot take the Passover and at the same time be responsible for any of the division **in the Body**: the broken, shattered, scattered condition of the Church brethren.

Ephesians 1:22-23 [God] has put all things under His [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.

How are the brethren the One Body of Christ, and where does this belief arise in the Scriptures?

Let's go back and look at the very first spiritual lesson that Jesus Christ taught the apostle Paul. Paul readily admits that he was persecuting the early Christians. He put them into prison, **compelled them to blaspheme, and** caused them to be put to death. (Acts 26:10-11)

Paul acknowledges that: "...beyond measure **I persecuted the Church of God**, and wasted it." (Galatians 1:13) And, **I persecuted this way [Christianity] unto the death.**" (Acts 22:4)

It is most important for us to notice how Jesus viewed the persecution of Christians. Notice what Jesus said to Paul: "...**why persecute thou Me?**" And Paul said, "Who art thou, Lord?" And the Lord said, "I am **Jesus whom thou persecute.**" (Acts 9:4-5)

Jesus did not say to Paul, "Why are you persecuting the Christians?" He said, "Why are you persecuting **Me?**"

The very first lesson that Jesus taught Paul was that **when** he was persecuting the **Church of God Christians** – he was persecuting Jesus Christ, **Himself**. Because the Church brethren are His Body.

The only way that is possible is if Jesus considers the **Church brethren to be His body** – the Body of Christ! Another one of the places where we find Jesus connecting the **Church brethren with Himself** is in His parable of Matthew 25.

Matthew 25:40 ...Truly I say unto you, In as much as you have done it unto one of the least of these **my brethren**, ye have done it unto **Me**.

It is in Paul's epistles that we find the concept of the Body of Christ being expounded upon. There is no justification for scattered groups to disregard, let alone have **contempt** for other brethren who are led by God's Spirit. It is Paul who develops and presents to us our **very clear definition** of the One True Church:

Colossians 1:24 Who [Paul speaking] now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for **His Body's sake, which is the Church**.

Colossians 3:15 You [brethren] are called into **one Body**; and be ye thankful.

One of the places that we find Jesus connecting the **Church brethren with His Body** is in the parable of Matthew 25. Jesus does not just connect with us – He **associates with us** in an inseparable way. A relationship... We, the Church, see right here that we are **Christ's Body**.

Matthew 25:38 When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? Or naked, and clothed thee?

Matthew 25:39 Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?

Matthew 25:40 And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as you have done it unto one of the least of these **my brethren**, ye have done it unto **Me**.

Only those who are called of God are the brethren – with God's Spirit. Jesus still takes it **personally** how Christians treat one another. But, how are we the "Body" of Christ? We must absolutely grasp the definition of the **Lord's Body** from the Bible itself. The **Body of Christ** consists of the **members** of the **Church of God**. This concept of Christ's Body being composed of all Church brethren is **solidly** established in Scripture. Jesus Christ has only **one spiritual Body** with many members scattered all over the face of the earth. Paul continues to share the first lesson that Jesus taught him in Colossians 3:15:

Colossians 3:15 Ye [brethren] are called into **one Body**; and be ye thankful.

How can we be properly thankful to God when we refuse to be one people?

Paul learned that Christ has one body of believers. He's not so much speaking **possessive** but **identically**. Not, "Jesus **has** a body," but, "The Church **IS** His Body."

The Holy Scriptures take the **Body of Christ** to a higher Spiritual dimension. **You**, brethren, are the **Body of Christ**, and members in particular. There is something deeply significant here that we need to examine.

If the Church of God fully appreciated these words – we would not be in the scattered state we find ourselves today. The true "Church of God" is the **body** of true believers that God the Father has called to be a part of the "Body of Christ." Jesus is the head of His Church – He is the Head of **His Body**.

Colossians 1:18 And he [Jesus] is the head of **the Body, the Church**: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; [the only one at this point] that in all things He might have the preeminence.

Colossians 1:21 And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath He reconciled...

It is Passover time—we are supposed to **admit** and remember how miserably sinful we once were... But that sinful body died when we were baptized. Reconciling us...

Colossians 1:22 In the **body of His flesh** through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in His sight:

In the **body of his flesh** means that when Jesus died – **so did we**. When Jesus was buried – **so were we**. When Jesus was raised by His Father – **so were we!**

Romans 6:3 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into **His death**?

Romans 6:4 Therefore we are **buried with Him** by baptism into death: that like as Christ was **raised up** from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in **newness of life**.

Many verses firmly establish that "the Lord's Body" is a direct reference to **the people** of the Church of God.

In Genesis we find the **concept of marriage** being first introduced to Adam. The very first **description of a marriage** found in the Bible is this:

Genesis 2:23 This is **bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh...**

There is an exact parallel in Ephesians: In the same way we protect and care for our own body – Jesus protects and **cares for** His Body – the Church brethren.

Ephesians 5:23 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**. (second title)

Ephesians 5:27 That he might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

Ephesians 5:29 For no man ever yet hated his own flesh [body]; but nourishes and cherishes it, even **as the Lord the Church**: [His own Body]

We saw earlier:

Ephesians 5:30 For we are members of **His [Jesus'] Body, of His flesh, and of His bones.**

Ephesians 5:32 This is **a great mystery**: but I speak concerning Christ and the Church.

It is so much a great mystery – that our church leaders today do not get it!

Ephesians 5:31 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall **be one flesh.**

Paul is saying that Christ and the Church share **one inseparable unity.** Jesus the Messiah will be reigning and ruling in the Millennium – and the Church proper will be His wife. But right now, the Church of God is not prepared to be the wife of Christ. We are separated, alienated, estranged and even set against one another. Yet, in the Millennium we will be glorified **co-Saviors** with Christ (Rev 3).

How do we get there—from here?

Jesus Christ revealed to Paul that the **Church brethren are in effect, His body** – as husband and wife are one flesh – one body in marriage. The Church of God is the Body of Christ. The Bible **says it** many, many times! Is the Church Christ's Body? I think we can agree!

Romans 12:4-5 For as we have many members in one body [fingers, toes, eyes, and nose] . . . "So we members [the called out ones], being many, are **one Body** in Christ... and every one members one of another.

How dare any minister or group of ministers to separate God's people **from** one another?

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, practices and spirit. 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 every one members one of another... Now that is a big concept that the Church today **does not** believe – for if they did – we would not be scattered and shattered. Are we the Lord's **ONE** Body? Are we the **Real** Body? This verse spells it out!

Ephesians 4:12 For the perfecting of the **saints**... the edifying of the **Body of Christ.**

Are we the Saints? Are the saints the Lord's Body? We are not to be "Independent." We are "**aligned**" in the One Body of Christ. We are tearing down the walls of **separation.** Some men profess, "We are doing the work!"

John 13:35 Jesus said, By this **shall all men** know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another.

Unity and oneness within the Church of God would **confirm** the working of God's Holy Spirit in a way seldom witnessed in the world. Our unity and oneness would demonstrate to the world that, as promised, the Father sent Jesus, and that **salvation** and hope are coming to mankind.

Ephesians 4:13 **Untill** we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God.

Five times Jesus Christ expressed His wish for **our unity**. [Here in John 17]

John 17:23 Jesus prayed to His Father, "I in them, and you in Me, that they may be made perfect in **one**; [what would that accomplish] and **that the world may know** that you have sent Me, and have loved them, as you have loved Me.

The Church **IS** family in the truest sense of the word. We should not be afraid to plunge into the hearts and minds of one another. We are to "**be there**" for each other. Give encouragement where it is needed – to **lift the spirits** of others when they are down. That's Godly love in action. You are a part of the **One Body** of Christ. God desires sincerity, and He desires truth. He is not fooling around! God has gone through a great deal to bring about His magnificent plan. Again, we must not be afraid to plunge right into each other's hearts and minds. Christ is about to return! Will we meet His expectations for us? He has a certain **number** of people that is being filled up – then the door will be closed.

Look at the example of the first-century Church brethren after just having received God's Holy Spirit. That was Godly love in action! It's as though they were all family. Lately, in God's Church **overall**, we have **not** been oriented in that direction. We are not as on-target, as we should be. We know that God's plan is coming to fruition. God through His Spirit is bringing it about. We know that it is going to be worked out – but will we personally meet Christ's standard of loving one another?

1John 4:21 This commandment have we from Him, That he who loves God love his brother also.

We all say that we love God. But God has given us **each other** to love and practice our love on.

1John 3:14 We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we **love the brethren**.

The Church is the Body of Christ because:

1) Members of the Body of Christ are joined to Christ.

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

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.

2) Members of the Body of Christ follow Christ as their Head.

Ephesians 1:22 And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church,

Ephesians 1:23 Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

3) Members of the Body of Christ are the physical representation of Christ in this world. The Church is the people through whom Christ manifests His life to the world today.

4) Members of the Body of Christ have been given God's Holy Spirit.

Romans 8:9 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

Romans 8:14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

5) Members of the Body of Christ possess a diversity of gifts suited to particular functions (1 Corinthians 12). "The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ" (verse 12).

6) Members of the Body of Christ share a common bond with all other Christians, regardless of background, race, or ministry. "There should be no division in the body, but . . . its parts should have equal concern for each other" (1 Corinthians 12:25).

7) Members of the Body of Christ are secure.

John 10:28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.

John 10:29 My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.

8) Members of the Body of Christ partake of Christ's death and resurrection.

Romans 6:4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

Romans 6:5 For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:

Romans 6:6 Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him,

Colossians 2:12 Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.

9) Members of the Body of Christ share Christ's inheritance.

Romans 8:16 The Spirit itself bears witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

Romans 8:17 And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.

10) Members of the Body of Christ receive the gift of Christ's righteousness.

Romans 5:17 For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.

We wish everyone a most enjoyable and spiritually profitable Passover.

End: The Real Body