

One Body

by

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We read in Eph. 4:4-6, *“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.”*

When Bro. Earl Atchley passed away in 1987, I was blessed to be given his lessons, and still study from them to this day. This article is based on a lesson he first gave in Colter, OK, in September, 1973.

We want to study about the one body. We will look at what the one body is, what it is made up of, some of the characteristics of the body, and how we become part of it.

The one body Paul is speaking of is the church. Eph. 1:22-23, *“And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.”*

The church, like the body, is made up of a lot of different things.

The church has a head, as our body does. Jesus is the head of the church, Col. 1:18, *“And he 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 body has to have a spirit, or breath, to be alive. Likewise the church has the Holy Spirit, given once a person becomes a Christian, as we read in Acts 2:38, *“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.”* Also the good works we do as Christians are referred to as the spirit that keeps our body of faith alive in James 2:26, *“For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.”*

Our physical body needs blood to sustain and nourish it. Jesus shed His blood for His body, the church, Acts 20:28, *“Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.”* And we partake of His blood when we remember His death as we partake of the communion service in our worship. Matt. 26:26-28, *“And as they*

were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.”

Our body has many members to help it function, as does the church. Rom. 12:4-5, *“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.”* Did you notice that? We are members of His body, the church. But we are members one of another as well.

Let’s look next at some of the characteristics of the one body, the church.

We, as members of His body, are called out from the world. We need to be an example to the world; lead it, not follow it. In Matt. 5:14-16 we read, *“Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”*

The church is a spiritual body, 1 Pet. 2:5, *“Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.”*

Unity should characterize the one body, the church. The different members of our physical body must work together to work well, and so should the church. 1 Cor. 12:25-27, *“That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.”*

Look to Psalms 133, *“Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron’s beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments; As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the LORD commanded the blessing, even life for evermore.”* What an amazing picture. Aaron was the first high priest under the law of Moses, and was so anointed with the precious ointment

mentioned. The book of Hebrews tells us that Jesus is our high priest. The ointment we anoint Jesus with is unity. And unity is like the dew where God commanded eternal life. How good and pleasant unity truly is!

Every member is important to the body. Notice the contrast between a couple of different passages from 1 Cor. 12. Look first to verse 15, *“If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?”* Compare that to verse 21, *“And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you.”* Verse 15 talked about how we think of ourselves, while verse 21 talked about how we think of others. We should not think less of our place within the body. Neither should we look down on any other members. We are all important to God. 1 Cor. 12:18, *“But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.”*

Our last point for this article is this. How do we become part of Christ’s one body? We find the answer in 1 Cor. 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.”* Baptism does not work by itself. It is the only thing mentioned in this particular scripture, but other scriptures bring in other things that work with it. Baptism must be preceded by hearing God’s word and believing it (Rom. 10:17), by turning to Him in repentance (Acts 2:38), and by confessing our faith (Acts 8:35-38).

In summary, the church is the one body we are studying about. Like our physical bodies, it is made up of a head-Jesus Christ, spirit-the Holy Spirit (good works are also referred to as spirit), blood-Christ’s, and ourselves-the members of the church. The body is characterized by such things as being called out from the world, being a spiritual body, unity, and every member being important. We become part of the body of Christ by hearing God’s Word, faith, repentance, confession and baptism.

In closing, let us be a healthy, active body, working together in unity and love.

Offered in the Name of Jesus,
Bro. Terry Warford

