

**THE PAULINE CHURCH UNITY  
FOUNDED ON BAPTISM**

**BY:**

**SHIVURI RESEMATE JONAS**

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**SUPERVISOR: PROF. W.A.  
SEBOTHOMA**

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## **Preface**

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## **Summary of the Thesis.**

The Concept of the Pauline church unity founded on baptism is investigated from a practical theological perspective in terms of both the theoretical and practical method. After outlining the theological principles of this analogy; an actual situation of a local church is researched and the findings of this empirical analysis are used to indicate terms of a practical model of the body of Christ.

An essential theological principle is that the church is to serve the Kingdom of God and to be a continuing incarnation of the word of God. The church which is full of quarrels and divisions would not be able to proclaim the word of God freely. Instead of



preaching the word of God; they will concentrate on calling themselves that; I am of Paul, and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. This type of expression does not build unity among Christians. What we must do as Christians is that we should accept one another regardless of being affiliated to ZCC; Roman catholic church, Apostolic Faith Mission; Nazarene church, etc. According to Paul's views, all churches from different denominations form the body of Christ. There are also a handful of local churches whose members are trying to increase diversity within their pews.

My aspiration is to see all the Christians from different races coming together; praying together and worshipping together as the children of God .My wish is to see the leaders from various denomination focusing on promoting fellowship and reconciliation amongst themselves and their church members accepting one another.

The resolute determination of some whites to travel to black communities to worship or of blacks to join and participate in overwhelming white congregations; reveals the depth of some Christians desire to overcome the barriers which have been part of South African life for so long. This desire may be for more prevalent among the laity than the clergy have traditionally imagined. Christians from different races must change if they want to enter into the Kingdom of God. The disturbing factor is that without a

real willingness to change there is little hope that it will be achieved in a generation still cluttered with the baggage of the past. Reconciliation and dignity of all believers in Christ needs to be encouraged by Pastors and church members, because we all from the body of Christ.

## Chapter one

### 1. Saint Paul in Corinth

#### 1.1. Introduction

#### 1.2. Aim of study

Aim of the dissertation is to establish the basis of church unity in Paul especially 1 Cor.

1 Cor. 1:10 reads as follows : I appeal to you brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; that all of you agree with one another so that there may be no divisions among you and that you may be perfectly united in mind and thought. This solemn appeal for unity is based on the Christian profession of faith in the Lord Jesus, all say the same thing : This common Gk expression does not refer to agreement in words only; but means "to be in agreement regarding deeds, and be perfectly united : The word Katartizo; "to restore; put in order", suggests a mutual adjustment and adaptation; a readiness to give in to one another in the interests of harmony. Christians must be united in their thinking (nous) and in their goal and direction (gnō mē ) of their lives. To be perfectly united in mind means "that Christians" need to be aware that they must not destroy the unity in the church, because as Christians they all form the body of Christ. Believers should "all speak the same thing". Paul could not have expected all Christians to unite in any one verbal statement of their beliefs, but he besought them to agree so far in all essentials that there would "be no division", no "schism" in the body of Christ. The members of the body of Christ must have the same intellectual convictions and opinions, and being thus united in faith and hope and love.

The occasion for such an exhortation to unity was a report which had been brought to Paul by certain relatives or servants of Chloe, who was evidently a person of prominence in the Corinthian church. According to this report there were serious "contentions" among the Corinthian Christians. We are not to suppose that there were separately organized parties in the church or actual schisms from the body of believers,

but there had become manifest a devisive spirit according to which some were renouncing their allegiance to Paul and were declaring themselves followers of Apollas, or of Peter, or of Christ. Just what the reasons were for such claims, or what were the distinctions involved, are matters of mere conjecture. Possibly those who boasted that they belonged to Paul rightfully regarded him as the founder of the church and earnestly defended the doctrines of grace as set forth in his simple statement of the gospel. The followers of the gifted Alexandrian, Apostolic, may have been attracted along his philosophy and rhetoric. Those who claimed the leadership of Cephas, or Peter, may have done so on the ground that he was the chief apostle, or because he was still partial to the forms and ceremonies of Juidaism. The Christ party may have protested that they submitted to no human teachers, but built their creed on the words of Christ himself, as they interpreted these words. All these parties claimed to be Christian while more or less severely opposing their fellow believers. All have their successors in the church today.

Some are fired with evangelistic fevor, their appeal is to the emotions, they claim to prevent "the simple gospel", they are laudably eager to save souls, their range of ideas is somewhat narrow, their forms of expression are conventional, and their sympathy is rather imperfect for others whose spiritual experience is of a different type from their own, and they show scant courtesy to any who differ from them in their specific formulars of faith.

Others prefer a more philosophic statement of truth, they appeal to the intellectual, they are fond of systems of theology, and enjoy abstrue speculations. Others delight in ritual, they appeal to taste and sentiment, they lay their stress on church organization, they love to trace ecclesiastical authority back to popes and apostles, even to Peter himself, to them "means of grace" are inseparable from set times and ceremonies and forms. Still others revolt from all ceremonies and all human authority, they claim to believe only in the Bible and to obey Christ alone, they wish to testify against all sects, and so form sects of their own. All these are true Christians, there is a place for them all in the church of Christ. "Denomination" will continue to exist. These may work in harmony.



### **1.3. Authorship:**

Paul wrote to the church he started in Corinth (Acts 18: 1 – 17) a church now struggling to live in obedience. In a letter marked by loving concern and a true Pastor's heart, Paul addresses problems in Christian conduct and character. At that time Corinth was a great cosmopolitan Greek City, the Capital of the Roman Province of Achaia. Corinth was noted for its thriving commerce, proud culture, widespread immorality and variety of religious. Sosthenes is not, apparently, an apostle, but he is a brother Christian, and this term brother was used among the Christian. Paul and Sosthenes write to the church of God that is in Corinth. This church had a lot of confusion.

### **1.4. Time and place of writing.**

Kümmel W. G. (1979 : 278) indicated that "before writing 1 Cor Paul has sent Timothy through Macedonia to Corinth {4: 17; 16: 10; Acts 19: 22}. He thought that Timothy would arrive there later than a letter sent by a direct route. Mean while those sent from Corinth had reached him; and to them he perhaps gave 1 Cor, in which he answered the questions of the community and spoke also of things that he had heard about by the means. Paul's letter was written in Ephesus {16: 8}. The Sosthens mentioned in the prescripts perhaps the former official of the Corinthian Synagogue (Acts 18 : 17). Paul conveys greetings from the churches of Asia {16: 19}, so he must have worked for a long period in that Province. It is spring {16: 8} at the time he is writing; and in all probability the spring prior to the end of Paul's stay in Ephesus. 1 Cor. would then be dated in the spring of 54 or 55.

### **1.5. Occasion and Purpose of the letter.**

Raymond E. Brown S. S. (1956 : 225) says:

This epistle is Paul's response to information about disorder in the Corinthian church communicated to him at Ephesus by messengers from Chloe; he also formulates answers to questions put to him in a letter from the Corinthian community. The messengers had reported the tension created by factions in the community as well as a



serious scandal {incest}. The letter delivered by the delegates of the community, Stephanus; Achaicus, and Fortunate, asked for Paul's advice on a variety of problems: marriage, and virginity; the Licitness of eating the meat of animals sacrificed to idols; the behaviour of women in sacred assemblies and other problems. The picture of the community that all this information conveys was not a happy one. In the matter of sex, on the one hand the community tolerated the fact that a Christian was sleeping with his own stepmother without interference from the community {5: 1 ff}. And Paul had to underscore that for Christians to have relations with prostitutes was impossible {6: 12 ff}. But on the other hand; there was among the Christians of Corinth an ascetic view which saw all sexual relationships as something sinful {7: 1; 28}. In the day to day disputes the Christians turned to pagan courts for justice {6: 1 ff}, accepted invitations to meals at which meat which had been sacrificed to idols was served {10:27 f}; and took part in meals in pagan temples {8:10}. At the Lord's supper the rich suffered themselves with food and drink that they had brought along, while the poor remained hungry {11: 17 ff}. The whole idea of the Christian belief in the resurrection of the dead was denied by a part of the community {15: 12}. There were report of strife and splits within the community. In {1 - 4} Paul says that there are those persons in the community who describe themselves as belonging to Paul; Appollos, Cephas or Christ {1: 2}, there has been; ever since F.C. Baur; discussion of parties in Corinth. On the basis of acts {18: 24} and {1 Cor. 1: 18 ff} one could also maintain that Apollos was the representative of a kind of Christianity that developed rhetoric and demanded wisdom and see in the followers of Paul those Christians who identified with him and defended his version of Christianity Kümmel W. G. (1979 : 272). Paul have written a letter to the community between I and II Cor in great distress and anxiety of hear, with many tears {2: 3f}, the so called intermediate letter or tearful letter. This letter had caused great trouble among the Corinthians {7: 8 ff; 2: 9} in that Paul in this letter ordered the punishment of the unjust people {7: 12}. In relation to Paul and the community, the letter stands in the period of severest tension. To all appearances the bearer of this letter was Titus, whom Paul accredited with the steadfastness; perspicacity, and tact to bring the community again under his authority. Richard Kugerman (1959 : 255).

### **1. 6. Unity of the Letter 1 Cor 1: 10**

Alexander Jones (1966 : 292) says: All the same;

I do appeal to you, brothers, for the sake of the Lord Jesus Christ; to make up the differences between you, and instead of disagreeing among yourselves to be united again in your belief and practice. From what Chloe's people have been telling me; my dear brothers, it is clear that there are serious differences among you. What I mean are the all these slogans that you have like: I am for Paul; I am for Apollos; I am for Cephas; I am for Christ. Has Christ been parceled out. Was it Paul that was crucified for you?

Were you baptized in the name of Paul. I am thankful that I have never baptized any of you after Cripus and Caius, so none of you can say he was baptized in my name.

### **1.7. The structure of the letter {Divisions}**

Richard Kugerman (1959 : 225) outlined the structure of I. Cor. The structure is illustrated as follows:

i} **Introduction**

ii} **Part 1.**

**Condemnation of Disorder in the Corinthians Church {1: 10 – 6: 20}.**

**A. Factions and Christian Wisdom {1: 10 – 4: 21}**

- a} The nature of the Dissention {1: 10 – 17}
- b} The message of the cross {1:18 – 25}
- c} The membership of the Corinthian Church {1: 26 – 31}
- d} Paul's method of preaching illustrates the Axiom of {1: 25; 2: 1- 5}.
- e} True and False wisdom {2: 6 – 16}

f} The spiritual childishness of the Corinthians {3: 1 – 4}

**B. The incestuous man and a warning against sexual sins {5: 1 – 13}**

- a} The incestuous man {5: 1 – 6a}
- b} Do not permit any moral irregularities in the community {5: 6b – 8}
- c} Immoral Christians should be excommunicated {5: 9 – 13}

**C. Litigation before pagan courts {6: 1 – 11}**

**D. The evil of sexual sins {6: 12 – 20}**

**{iii} Part II**

Answer to questions in the letter of the community {7: 1 – 13: 58}.

**A. Marriage and Celibacy {7: 1 – 40}**

- a} Marriage and its Duties {7: 1 – 24}
- b} On virgins {7: 25 – 38}

**B. Concerning the eating of meat that was offered to Idols {8: 1 - 11:1}**

- a} On knowledge and charity {8: 1 – 13}
- b} Paul an example of unselfish charity {9: 1 – 27}
- c} A scriptural illustrations about Self – Discipline and Renunciation {10: 1-13}
- d} Practical solution of the problem of eating idols meat {10: 14 – 11:1}

**C. Good order in Christian Assemblies {11: 2 – 14:40}.**

- a} Women must be veiled {11:2 – 16}
- b} The celebration of the Lord's supper {11: 17 – 34}.



- c} On spiritual Gifts {12:1 – 14: 40}
- d} On the resurrection of the Dead {15: 1 – 58}

**(IV) Conclusion {16: 1 – 24}**

- A. The collection for the poor of Palestine {16: 1 – 4}
  - B. Paul's itinerary and some Recommendations {16: 5 – 18}
  - C. Greetings and Concluding Blessing {16: 19 – 24}
  - D. Greetings and thanks giving {1: 1 – 9}
1. To the church of God in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be holy, together with all those everywhere who call the name of our Lord Jesus Christ – their Lord and ours.
  2. Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.
  4. I always thank God for you because of his grace given you in Christ Jesus.
  5. For in Him you have been enriched in every – way in all your speaking and in all your knowledge.
  6. Because our testimony about Christ was confirmed in you.
  7. Therefore you do not lack any spiritual gift as you eagerly wait for our Lord Jesus to be revealed.
  8. He will keep you strong to the end, so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. Paul's thank giving rests upon Christian grounds, and reflects the Christian standing of his readers. He indicated to Christians that they have been given the grace through Jesus Christ.
  9. God, who has called you into fellowship with his son Jesus Christ our Lord, is faithful.

**PART 1.****1.8. Comments concerning the structure****Condemnation of disorder in the Corinthian Church {1:10 – 6: 20}**

In these texts Paul was appealing to his brothers in Christ, that they should agree with one another so that there may be no divisions amongst themselves. He encouraged Christians that they may be perfectly **united in mind and in thought**. His appeal to Christians show us that, Christians have the differences in the church of God and Paul was not pleased about that.

**A. Factions and Christian Wisdom {1: 10 – 4: 21}**

Paul was greatly disturbed by the division which occurred in the congregation. The Chloe's family told Paul quite plainly about this division in the church. Paul was not happy with this kind of a situation, because Christians cannot pray in one church while there are divisions amongst themselves. He wrote a letter to the Corinthian church to rectify this kind of a situation. The problem arose from the emergence of a kind of personality cult, where the person and style of evangelist in question began to assume greater importance than the message of the gospel. Such distorted priorities resulted in factions playing off one leader against another. What the congregation had to realize was that the evangelists were simply servants of a common task; and that everything depended on God, who allowed the new life to germinate and grow {3: 6f}

The Corinthian churches differ to the extent that one is a Jewish and the other Gentile with diverse policies towards the law. There were also false teachers who combined with their Judaism attacks on the apostolic authority of the apostle Paul that can against which the apostle had to defend himself via – a – vis the Corinthian congregation.

**a} The nature of the Dissension {1: 10 – 17}**

Paul was telling his brothers that he “got the information from Chloe’s family, that there are quarrels amongst Christians. In verse 12 – 17 Paul says: What I mean is this: one of you says; “I follow Paul”, another;” I follow Apollos,” another; I follow Cephas,” still another; “I follow Christ.”

Verse (13): Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Were you baptized into the name of Paul? (14) I am thankful that I did not baptize any of you except Crispus gaius; (15). So no one can say that you were baptized into my name. (16). {Yes, I also baptized the household of Stephanas, beyond that; I don’t remember if I baptized anyone else}. (17). For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel – not with words of human wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power. With these texts Paul wanted to warn the Christians that they should never put their trust in men, but they should follow Jesus Christ because through him we are united in mind and in thought. If we are united in Christ, divisions in our churches will not take place. We will continue to love one another as children of God, and because we are united in Christ, nothing will separate us from Him.

**b) The message of the cross {1: 18 – 25}.**

(I Cor 1: 18) says: For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. Here Paul is indicating that those who believe in Jesus Christ are regarded as wise and through Jesus Christ they will be united with other Christians. Those who are foolish after being saved, God will be pleased with them, because they are approaching a sign of being united in Christ. In (I Cor. 23) Paul indicated that, we preach Christ a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles. Those who are foolish, will form disunity in Christ. That is why Paul was warning the Christians to be aware of such situations.

**c) True and false Wisdom {2: 6 – 16}**



With regard to wisdom Paul said that; he was speaking the message of wisdom amongst the mature; not the wisdom of this age or the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. By this interpretation Paul advised the Christians that those who have wisdom will be united to Christ. The Spirit of God will dwell amongst them and it will also guide them. Those who are nonbelievers did not understand the wisdom of God, that is why they formed disunity and crucified Jesus Christ. Those who do not believe in Jesus Christ do not have wisdom. Verse 12, said; we have not received the Spirit of the world but the Spirit which is from God; that we may understand what God has freely given us. The Spirit of God is busy uniting Christians because it guides and dwells in the life of the Christians who believe in Jesus Christ.

**d} Paul's method of preaching illustrates the Axiom of {1: 25; 2: 1 – 5}:**

(1) When I came to you, brothers, I did not come with eloquence or superior wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God. (2) For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. (3) I came to you in weakness and fear, and with much trembling. (4) My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the spirit's power. (5) So that your faith might not rest on men's wisdom, but in God's power.

Here Paul continued to encourage the Christians that they must not believe in the worldly wisdom and miracles. As Christians they must put their faith in God's power. Through faith and unity they will alleviate all the quarrels among Christians because they will treat each other as children of God. Those who have faith will not be deceived by the evil spirits and form disunity among themselves. The Spirit of God will unite them.

**e} The Spiritual Childishness of the Corinthians {3: 1 – 4}.**

(I Cor. 3: 1 – 4) Brothers, I could not address you as spiritual but as worldly – mere infants in Christ. I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready for it. Indeed, you are still not ready, You are still worldly. For since there is jealousy and

quarreling among you, you are not worldly? For when one says; "I follow Paul;" and another "I follow Apollos;" are you not mere men? Here Paul further emphasized that quarrels which exist among Christians show that they are still worldly people. That is why Paul is calling them infants. Those who are baptized with the Holy Spirit cannot have jealousy, while his brothers progress in life. Jealousy does not symbolize unity in Christ. Jealousy causes frustration and divisions in the church of God. Christians should not involve themselves in such situations. They must make sure that unity prevails all the time.

**B. The incestuous and a warning against sexual sins {5: 1 – 13}.**

**a) The Incestuous man {5: 1 – 6a}**

In (I Corinthians 5: 1 – 5; 6:12- 20) Paul indicated that there were more serious forms of immorality that raised the heads of Christian community in Corinth. In this regard Paul had pointed out that sexual line has inescapable implications for the believer's relationships. Because all the people have a link with Christ {6: 15 – 17} so what is done with the body also affects Christ. A Corinthian Christian had entered an incestuous union with his stepmother, and the community took no action against him. Str B {3. 358} concluded from rabbinical writings that in NT times the rabbis permitted a proselyte to marry his father's widow; because all former family ties were considered to have been destroyed by the Gentile's entrance into the community of Israel. This may have furnished the incestuous man and the Corinthian community a pretext for tolerating the union. Both Roman and Jewish law forbade such marriages and held them to be incest {Lv 18: 8; 20: 11; Gaius inst 1: 63}. Paul emphasized that the man who had committed such a deed would be punished on the judgement day. The punishment is medicinal; while the man's flesh; i.e. his body enslaved by sin; suffers and is even destroyed through this punishment, his pneuma; the life that is the effect of God's creation and by which man is the image of God. {Gn 1: 27; 2:7} is saved on judgement day.

**b) Do not permit any moral irregularity in the community {5: 6b – 8}:**

According to {Mt 13: 33; Lk 13: 20 – 21} the leaven symbolized the inner dynamism of the Kingdom. Paul uses the leaven as a metaphor for the corruptive influence of evil {Gal 5: 9}. This is a reference to the Jewish custom of destroying all leaven in preparation for the Paschal festival, during which only unleavened bread was permitted {Ex 12: 15 – 16; 13: 7}. Paul wanted the Christians to be unleavened because they are incorporated in Christ who has become for us “holiness and redemption” {1: 30}. Paul encouraged the community to rid themselves of the old leaven; i.e. to clean out the wicked. The church is always engaged in a Paschal celebration, because Christ by his death and resurrection has accomplished the salvation foreshadowed in the Exodus. According to Paul the Christian life should be joyful because Christ has become : for us redemption” {I Cor 1: 30}, and at his parousia the faithful will be glorified with him {Phil 4: 4 – 7}.

In (5: 7) the unleavened bread symbolizes the Christians; in this verse; the virtues that should characterize them. “Sincerity” single mindedness or purity of intention, as well as “truthfulness” should distinguish the Christian.

**c) Immoral Christians should be excommunicated: {5: 9 – 13}**

(9) I have written you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people. (10) Not at all meaning the people of this world who are immoral, or the greedy and swindlers, or idolaters. In that case you would have to leave this world. (11) But now I am writing you that you must not associate with anyone who calls himself a brother but is sexually immoral or drunkard or a swindler. With such a man do not even eat. (12) What business is it of mine to judge those outside the church? Are you not to judge those inside? Paul was warning the Christians that they should stay away from the sexually immoral people. According to him, the people who are sexually immoral are worldly people because they do this against the will of God. If one associate himself or herself with such people, he / she can join them. People who join the unbelieving people in their wrong doing, are busy destroying the unity in Christ.



### C. Litigation before Pagan Courts {6: 1 – 11}

(I Corinthians 6: 1 – 11) show us the litigation in which believers are engaged against one another. This type of behaviour did not satisfy Paul. According to Paul the Christian community should institutes its own courts or at least invite a prudent brother {Sophos} to decide disputes among the brethren {7 – 9}.

The Christians are making mistakes by inviting the unbelieving people to come and judge them. Paul was against these type of an ideas. The Christians not only do not endure injustice patiently as Jesus counseled {Mt 5: 38 – 42}, but they inflict injury on their fellow Christians , wrong doers; warning is probably directed against the laxists who stretched Christian liberty from the law into an antinomianism {6: 12}. This indicated clearly that; there were disputes among believers themselves and they were unable to settle their differences amicably. Paul did not understand the step taken by the believers; that is why he regarded this as a backward step: He did not wanted the believers to be judged by the unbelieving people.

### D. The evil of sexual sins {6: 12 – 20}.

(12) “Everything is permissible for me” but not everything is beneficial.” Everything is permissible for me: - but I will not be mastered by anything. (13) Food is for the stomach and the stomach for food” – but God will destroy them both. The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord; and the Lord for the body. (14) By his power God raised the Lord from the dead, and he will raise us also. (15) Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ himself? Shall I then take the members of Christ and unite them with a prostitute? Never! (16). Do you not know that he who unites himself with a prostitute is one with her in body? For it is said; “The two will become one flesh.” (17) But he who unites himself with the Lord is one with him in spirit. (18) Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body. (19) Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you; whom you have received from God? You are not your own; (20) You were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body. Paul is against the Christians who used their bodies wrongly. He

reminded them that they are the body of Christ and their bodies is the temple of God. If Christians continue to misuse their bodies, they are busy destroying the unity with Christ, and since Christ is Holy, His members must be holy too.

### {iii} PART II

#### **Answer to questions in the letter of the community {7: 1 – 13: 58}.**

In these texts Paul was encouraging the Christians that each man should have his own wife, and each woman her own husband. In their marriage the husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband. He further emphasized that the wife's body does not belong to her alone but also to her husband. In the same way, the husband's body does not belong to him alone but also to his wife. With this explanation Paul was showing that through marriage man and woman are united together. This is the same with Christ. If one believes in him, he / she is united in Him in that way verse 10. To the married I give this command {not I, but the Lord} A wife must not separate from her husband. "But if she does, she must remain unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband. And a husband must not divorce his wife. If they do so they are breaking unity, which Paul was encouraging that should take place among Christians.

(I Cor. 7: 39) indicated that: A woman is bound to her husband as long as he lives. But if her husband dies, she is free to marry anyone she wishes, but he must belong to the Lord.

#### **A. Marriage and its Duties {7: 1 – 24}.**

In (I Cor 7: 5) Paul indicated that man and woman must not deprive each other except by mutual consent and for a time; so that they may devote themselves to prayer. Man and woman must come together again so that Satan will not tempt them because of the lack of self control. This verse is showing us clearly that separation can cause disunity

and this can give Satan a chance of destroying the Christian's faith. The way man and woman are united, show clearly that Christians must also do likewise.

**a} On Virgins {7: 25 – 38}.**

In verse (32) Paul indicated that he would like people to be free from worry. An unmarried man is concerned about the Lord's affairs – how he can please the Lord. (33) But a married man is concerned about the affairs of this world, how he can please his wife. (34) And his interests are divided. An unmarried woman or virgin is concerned about the Lord's affairs: her aim is to be devoted to the Lord in both body and spirit. But a married woman is concerned about the affairs of this world – how can she please her husband. (35) I am saying this for your own good, not to restrict you; but that you may live in a right way in undivided devotion to the Lord. Here Paul continued to encourage the married and the unmarried people to be united in Christ. Marriage must not separate people from the love of God. As human beings we must always try to please God rather than pleasing one another. Those who please one another except God are still immature in the word of God.

**B. Concerning the eating of meat that was offered to Idols {8: 1 – 11:1}**

The Corinthians had inquired in their letter whether it was permitted to eat the flesh of animals that had been sacrificed to idols. According to their views, part of the meat sold in the market came from animals sacrificed to idols. Usually, only certain portions of the sacrificial victims were burned, the remainder became the property of the temple Priests. Much of this meat was sold to the butchers. So the Corinthians saw no wrong in eating such meat. Moreover, the duties of social life involved joining pagan friends and relatives in common meals celebrating family festivals. With reference to their attitude toward this problem, Paul distinguished two groups among the Christians: those who have an enlightened conscience about Christian liberty because they have knowledge and those with "a weak conscience", who attributed a tangible impurity to sacrificial meats and felt that in eating such food they were entering into a relationship with pagan deities or demons. {A Similar problem is discussed in (Roman 14: 1 – 15: 13) where



Paul calls the two groups "the strong" and "the weak". This indicated clearly that Paul did not support the eating of meat sacrificed to idols, because it was regarded as demonic spirit. Allo, Huby, Kuss; and most other exegetes see in the brethren of weak conscience recently converted Gentiles; whose attitude towards idols and idol meat was still influenced by the beliefs and superstitions of their pagan past. According to a few commentators, among them R. Corney and J. Dupout, the brethren of weak conscience are a small group of Jewish Christians who retain the typical orthodox Jewish repugnance for idol meat. Their conduct is still inspired by the Jewish laws concerning legal purity and pollution. Dupout also thinks and argues quite convincingly; that those who have "knowledge" represent another Jewish Christian mentally. They are Jewish Christians who pretend to possess as a charismatic gift a knowledge of scripture and its implication to practical living that make them superior to others. They are the Christian counterparts of the scribes or doctors of the law {see J. Dupont; Gnosis 265 – 377; S. Lyonnet Bib 37 {1987} 17 – 27; W. Schmithals. Die Gnosis in Korinth {Gottingen 1956}. Paul continued to comment that; those who eat meat sacrificed to idols are Christians who possessed monotheistic faith . Those who eat such meat cause disunity in the church of God. Christians must have true faith and stand firm in the word of God. To be true Christians they must adhere to the one true God and to be freed from servitude to false gods. The Christian who boasts of his religious knowledge shows that he does not know the basic truth and this knowledge is the gift of a loving and merciful God. In his arguments Paul quotes the O.T to remind Corinthians about the danger of idolatry so as to prevent them joining the actual sacrificial meals (10: 14 – 22). Christians are now baptized "into" Christ {Rm 6: 3; Gal 3: 27} i.e. to be united with him; so the eating of meat sacrificed to idols was regarded as sin.

**a} On Knowledge and Charity {8: 1 – 13}**

(I Cor 8: 1 – 13) says: (1) Now about food sacrificed to idols: We know that we all possess knowledge. Knowledge puffs up; but love builds up. (2) The man who thinks he knows something does not yet know as he ought to know. (3) But the man who loves God is known by God. (4) So then, about eating food sacrificed to idols: We know that an idol is nothing at all in the world and that there is no God but one. (5) For even if

there are so called gods, whether in heaven or on earth {as indeed there are many “gods” and many “Lord”} (6) Yet for us there is but one God; the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live; and there is but one Lord; Jesus Christ, through whom all things came through whom we live. (7) But not everyone knows this. Some are still so accustomed to idols that when they eat such food they think of it as having been sacrificed to an idol, and since their conscience is weak, it is defiled. (8) But food does not bring us near to God, we are no worse if we do not eat, and no better if we do. (9) Be careful, however, that the exercise of your freedom does not become a stumbling block to the weak. (10) For if anyone with a weak conscience sees you who have this knowledge eating in an idol’s temple, won’t he be emboldened to eat what has been sacrificed to idols? (11) “So this weak brother, for whom Christ died; is destroyed by your knowledge. 12. When you sin against your brothers in this way and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ. 13. Therefore, if what I eat causes my brother to fall into sin, I will never eat meat again; so that I will not cause him to fall.

**b) Paul an example of unselfish charity {9: 1 – 27}**

In (I Cor 9: 13) Paul shows the Christians that those who are working in the temple get their food from the temple and those who serve at the altar share in what is offered on the altar. With this verse Paul was encouraging the Christians that they must also take care of the needs of the church into considerations. By this Paul meant that Christians should bring offerings in the church so that those who are working in the church would also get food. In verse 14 Paul continued to indicate that God has commanded that those who preach the gospel should receive their living from the gospel. For unity to prevail in the church all Christians should be faithful with regards to the offerings. Paul have shown his unselfish because he have not use any of these right {1 Cor 9: 15}. In verse 23 Paul indicated that he did this for the sake of the gospel; that he may share in its blessings. Paul was making Christians aware that the church cannot function well if the Christians do not bring offerings to the church. The church also need money to fulfill its role.



**c} A Scriptural illustrations about self – discipline and renunciation {10:1- 13}**

In these verses Paul is warning the Christians about their history. The verses reads as follows:

(1) For I do not want you to be ignorant of the fact, brothers, that our forefathers were all under the cloud and that they all passed through the sea. (2) They were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. (3) They all ate the same spiritual food. (4) and drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them; and that rock was Christ. (5) Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them; their bodies were scattered over the desert. (6) Now these things occurred as examples {a} to keep us from setting our hearts on evil things as they did. (7) Do not be idolaters; as some of them were; as it is written. “The people sat down to eat and drink and got up to indulge in pagan revelry. (8) We should not commit sexual immorality, as some of them did and in one day twenty – three thousand of them died. (9) We should not test the Lord; as some of them did – and were killed by snakes. (10) And do not grumble, as some of them did – and were killed by the destroying angel. (11) These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us, on whom the fulfillment of the ages has come. (12) So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don’t fall! (13) No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful, he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it. Again Paul was encouraging Christians to stand firm in the word of God. If Christians are united to Jesus Christ nothing would be impossible. Christians are defeating various temptations through the help of Jesus Christ who died for their sins. Christians should move away from sins, since this will cause disunity among Christians and Jesus Christ. The Christians who are not obedient to God would be punished.

**C. Good order in Christian Assemblies {11: 2 – 14: 40}**

**a} Women must be veiled {11: 2 – 16}**



The Corinthians were in general obedient to the instructions Paul had given, but some difficulties were expressed in their letter about the behaviour and dress of women in religious assemblies. There were some Christian women who were influenced by the liberal atmosphere of cosmopolitan Corinth and they were attending assemblies without wearing a veil. In this regard, Paul reprobates this behaviour as unbecoming to a woman; because God has established a hierarchy; in which the female is subordinated to the male sex. According to Paul the hierarchical subordination of the women should be recognized in her behaviour and dress. Paul regarded man as the head of the family. The term head imports authority and precedence in the three unions enumerated. He indicated that Christ is the head of every man {“husband”}; the man is the head of the woman {Ep 5: 22 – 23}; and the father {ho theos} is the head of Christ. He continued to indicate that the man praying with covered head dishonors himself by abdicating the dignity God has conferred on the male sex; he also dishonors his hierarchical head; Christ; dishonors her head: The expression may mean; wounds her feminine dignity and / or shames her husband by publicly repudiating the sign of female subjection. Her shame is that of woman whose head has been shaved; an allusion perhaps to the shameful chastisement predicted by ( Iss 3: 24) as well as the natural repugnance. The wearing of a veil is regarded as a symbol of the woman’s submission to male authority to her husband. The preceding arguments must not be pressed as though man did not need woman. There is a mutual dependence :in the Lord”, both are necessary to and have their proper roles in the church. As first woman was formed from the man; so now every man is born of man { 13 – 14}.

**b) The celebration of the Lord’s Supper {11: 17 – 34}.**

The Corinthians; like the churches of Palestine celebrated the Eucharist in the setting of a fraternal meal; which Paul called the Lord’s supper. This celebration resulted in factions and caused a division among the Corinthian Christians. The main cause of this faction were Christians who were well off; possibly the Apollos faction; brought ample food and drink to the assembly but refused to share these with the other groups. Some also over-indulged; even became intoxicated, while others were left hungry. All this was reported to Paul. Although gathered in the same place; the Corinthians no longer

partook of a common meal expressing their union with one another in the Lord,; but each group ate apart {23 – 34}. Paul points up the shamefulness of these abuses by reminding them of the doctrine of the Eucharist {23 – 25}. He calls the original last supper, it is a teaching that he had learned from the primitive community and had faithfully handed on to the Corinthians {Pauline Theology 79: 15 – 16}. Paul sees in the sickness and deaths afflicting the Corinthians a punishment for the abuse in their celebration of the Eucharist. God is calling them to repentance {33 – 34}.

**c) Spiritual gifts {12: 1 – 14: 40}**

In (I Corinthians 12: 4 – 6) Paul shows that: There are different kinds of gifts, but the same spirit. (5) There are different kinds of service but the same Lord. (6) There are different kinds of working; but the same God works all of them in all men. Here Paul is showing that all the gifts that people have, belong to God. These different gifts which are used by different people form the body of Christ, and they are important to God. People who are using these gifts are busy building the body of Christ. The people using these gifts have the spirit of God. Christians should not be jealous with one another regarding gifts, if they do that, they are busy destroying the unity in the church.

**d) On the resurrection of the dead {15: 1 – 58}.**

In (I Cor 15: 3) Paul indicated that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures. After his death, Christ was buried and he was raised on the third day according to the scriptures. To show that Christ was raised, he appeared to Peter and then to the twelve. With this text Paul was trying to warn the people who argued that Christ was not raised. He showed them that, if Christ was not raised, the preaching he was preaching is useless and so is our faith. He testified that God has raised Christ from the dead. In (I Cor 15: 17) Paul indicated that if Christ has not been raised, our faith is futile; and we are still in our sins. These texts shows us clearly that Christ was raised in order to unite all the Christians with him. His resurrection was to form a union with all the believers of different cultures, e.g. black, white, indians, coloured. etc.



As Christians we are united with one another through death and the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Christians are a unity; Christ died for all; and all are baptized into him. “(One Lord; one baptism’ was to be used again by Paul as a great Christian rallying – call in (Ephesian 4: 5)”. Christians; then; have shared a common transforming experience; they have a unity resulting from a common loyalty to the Lord who bought them {compare I Cor 6: 19f}.

**{iv} Conclusion {16: 1 – 24}**

R. Kugerman (1959 : 225) says:

It is clear that Paul taught the Corinthians; as he did to others; that they had a plain Christian duty to give generously for the support of the church at Jerusalem {1 Cor 16: 1}, because he wanted them to relieve the financial needs of the church members there. This financial relieve will assist with the running costs of the church. Paul demanded the Christians to give offerings to the church because it was the universal Christian duty to feed and support those who have ministered to one another {compare I Cor 9: 11}. When one member of the body suffers every member suffers with it {I Cor 12: 26}, and giving to relieve need is a practical expression of such fellow – feeling. Moreover, it is natural to the wealthy Christian to give to those in need; for his heart is full of the consciousness of God’s great gift to him {11 Cor 9: 15}. All of these aspects of the situation Paul brings out again and again in his letters, but there is never any thought of ecclesiastical sub service to Jerusalem.

**A. The Collection for the poor of Palestine {16: 1 – 4}**

(I Cor 16: 1 – 4) Reads as follows:

R. Kugerman (1959 : 255) says:

(1) Now about the collection for God’s people: Do what I told the Galation churches to do. (2) On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income; saving it up so that when I come no collections will have to be made. (3) Then, when I arrive, I will give letters of introduction to the men you



approve and send them with your gift to Jerusalem. (4) If it seems advisable for me to go also; they will accompany me. The poor' in this context, is practically a technical term; corresponding to the "the saints", and it refers to the local Jerusalem church. Paul was making a plea for poor relief so significant. So, too, Paul's great concern was, not that he would not be able to persuade the Gentiles to give – that was fairly easy – but lest he should fail to persuade the Jewish – Christian church to accept {Rom 15: 31}. Once they had accepted, it was not just that the reality of the faith of these new Christians had been proved in a way which the most suspicious or hard – headed Jew could not but see; it was a virtual admission of brotherhood; and it was this supremely that Paul sought.

**B. Paul's itinerary and some recommendations {16: 5 – 18}:**

Writing from Ephesus during Mission III, Paul plans to come again to Greece. He will pass through Roman Province of Macedonia {see Acts 19: 21} to come to Achaia. The riot provoked by the silversmiths of Ephesus forced Paul to leave the capital of Asia; perhaps sooner than he had planned {Acts 26: 1}. (6) Whenever I go: Paul does not say so here; but he may already have had the trip to Rome in mind. His plan to visit Rome is formulated in Rom {1: 10; 15: 23}; in the letter he will write from Achaia, 8 – 9. (See Acts 18: 19; 19: 9) Timothy:

See comment on 1 Thes 1: 1 { Pastoral letters 57: 3}. At this time Timothy was very young and timid, yet Paul tried to send him to Corinth to deal with the problems of that disturbed community {cf. 1 Tm 4: 12}. (12) Apollos: see comment on 1: 10; cf. Acts 18: 24 – 26. Apollos seems to have been disturbed over his unwitting role in the factions of Corinth. (13) Paul's exhortation to the Corinthians ends once again with an appeal for love. (15) Stephanas: see comment on (1: 16).

**C. Greetings and concluding Blessing {16: 19 – 24}:**

The churches of Asia: The communities founded by Paul in the Roman province of Asia in Western Asia Minor, of which the capital was Ephesus. Aquila and Prisca: Paul always refers to the wife of Aquila as "Priska" {see comment on Rom 16: 3}, but Acts

uses the diminutive "Priscilla" {18: 2; 18; 26}. 20. a holy kiss: see comment on (Rom. 16: 16) (21). With my own hand: Paul pens the final greetings and blessing { NT Epistles, 47: 20}. Was Sosthenes {1: 1} his scribe for this letter?(22) Maranatha: Paul uses even in writing to the predominantly Gentile Christian community of meaning "our Lord, come!" {For an explanation of the term – Pauline theology; 79: 61}. Ap 22: 20 plays on the meaning; "Come Lord Jesus!" (23) Our Lord, who reigns at the right hand of his Father and will come in majesty at the Parousia; is to be with all the Corinthians through his bounteous favor, according to his final prayer of Paul. (24) my love: The Apostle concludes this letter in which he has stressed the primary of love in Christian life by assuring his readers of his love for them in Christ Jesus.

### 1.9 Conclusion:

In Paul's preaching the body of Christ goes back to the memory of his own conversion; (cf Ac 9: 4f, Gal 1: 15f) to faith in Jesus whose body, raised from the dead and given life by the spirit, (Rm 1: 4) became the first fruits' of a new creation, (I Cor 15: 23). The words spoken by the Lord at Paul's conversion. I am Jesus, who you are persecuting, imply that Christians are identified with the risen Christ. In Paul's writings Christians are bodily united with the risen body; (Rm 8: 11) by baptism, (I Cor 12: 13) (cf Rm 6,4) and the Eucharist, (I Cor 10: 16f) which make them parts of Christ body (I Cor 6: 15) united in such a way that he and they form the body of Christ. The stress however is on the unity of the body that brings all Christians together in one spirit (Eph 4: 4). The way a human body gives unity to all its component parts is the way Christ, as unifying principle of his church; gives unity to all Christians in his body.

In (Cor 1: 10) Paul says: All the same; I do appeal to you, brothers, for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ; to make up the differences between you; and instead of disagreeing among yourselves; to be **united** again in your **belief** and **practice**. One can see that the theme of Paul's letter to the Corinthians churches was to encourage unity among Christians . Christians must be united in whatever things they are doing in the church, so that they can build the body of Christ.



## CHAPTER TWO.

### **2. Paul appeal for unity in Corinthian churches**

#### **2.1. Introduction.**

The two principal parties in Corinth therefore, were Gentiles calling themselves the disciples of Paul and Jews claiming to be the followers of Peter. The Gentile converts, however, were not united amongst themselves. While some said, we are of Paul, others said, we are of Apollo's. Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? Or were ye baptized in the name of Paul? This indicated that Paul was mostly worried about the division occurring in the church. He wanted Christians to be united

In (1 Cor 1 : 10) Thomas N. (1952 . 1330) says :

**I appeal to you ,brothers in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ , that all of you agree with one another so that there maybe no divisions among you that you may be perfectly united in mind and thought.**

As Paul turns to address the church at Corinth, his first word is an exhortation to Christian unity. Possibly the first need of the modern church is this same direction. The most obvious defect in church life is its divisions : its failure to present to the world a united front; a harmonious message, or a picture of brotherhood. This exhortation is made "through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ". The name is that "by which one is known", or that which one is known to be. Therefore, the name of Christ indicates all that Christ is known to be Saviour and Master and Lord.

As all believes belong to Him; and are under His power and control, the very mention of His name suggests an existing spiritual unity to which outward expression should be given. Believers should "all speak the same thing". Paul could not have expected all Christians to unite in any one verbal statement of their beliefs, but he besought them to agree so far in all essentials that there would "be no divisions", no "schisms" in the body of Christ. The members of this body should be united in mind and thought, having the same intellectual convictions and opinions; and being thus united in to unity was a



report which had been brought to Paul by certain relatives or servants of Chloe; who was evidently a person of prominence in the Corinthian church.

According to this report there were serious "Contentions" among the Corinthian Christians. We do not suppose that there were separately organized parties in the church or actual schisms from the body of believers; but there had become manifest a divisive spirit according to which some were renouncing their allegiance to Paul and were declaring themselves followers of Apollos; or of Peter, or of Christ. Just what distinctions involved, are matters of mere conjecture. Possibly those who boasted that they belong to Paul regarded him as the founder of the church and earnestly defended the doctrines of grace as set forth in his simple statement of the gospel. The followers of the gifted Alexandrian, Apollos, may have been attracted by his philosophy and rhetoric. Those who claimed the leadership of Cephas, or Peter may have done so on the ground that he was the chief apostle, or because he was still partial to the forms and ceremonies of Judaism. The Christ party may have protested that they rejected Judaism. The Christ party may have protested that they submitted to no human teachers, but built their creed on the words of Christ himself, as they interpreted these words. All these parties claimed to be Christians believers. All have their successors in the church today.

## 2.2. Interpretation of various commentaries

**A commentary on the first Epistle to the Corinthians (by Charles Hodge D.D.P. 12 – 15) Reads as follows.**

(10) Now I beseech you brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; that ye 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.

According to Charles Hodge D.D (1975 : 12) there is one exhortation in this verse, which is expressed first in general terms that ye all say the same thing and is then explained in the negative form that there be no division among you and positively "that ye be perfectly joined together .

By the name of our Lord Jesus Christ i.e. out of regard to Christ (Rome 12 : 1 ,15, 30, 2 Thess 4 : 12). Their reference and love of Christ , and regard for this authority as their Lord , should induce them to yield obedience to the apostles exhortation. To say the same thing is a phrase of frequent occurrence to express agreement . Do not say I am of Paul, and I am of Apollos, but all say the same thing.

If we say like that we are busy showing outward profession and Paul was against such ideas. All that there be no divisions among you, literally ; schisms. The word (Oxiona) Means (1) A rent , as in a garment , (Matt 9:16) (2) difference of opinion, (John 7 : 43) (3) Alienation of feeling ,or inward separation. (4) In its ecclesiastical sense , it is an unauthorized separation from the church. The schism which existed in Corinth were not of the nature of hostile sects refusing communion with each other, but such as may exists in the bosom of the same church; consisting in alienation of feeling and party strifes.

But (that) ye be perfectly joined together. The original word (kortorptisw) means to repair, or to mend ; (Matt 4:21) to reduce to place :as a dislocate limb to render complete or perfect (aptios) , then figuratively, to restore or set rightly hole in error; to prepare to render perfect. Hence in this place the sense may be, “ that ye be perfect;” as the Vulgate renders it; or; “that ye be united” as in our translation ; or “that ye be reduce to order”. The content shows that the idea of union is what the apostle intended. They were not to be divided , but united.

This union was to be both in mind and in judgment. The unity which Paul desire was a union in faith and love. Considering the relation in which Christians stand to each other as the members of Christ; dissensions among them are inconsistent with their character, as conflict between the members of the human body.

Now I beseech indicates that Paul was making an appeal to the brethren, that they must agree “ so that there be no dissension among them. As Christians they must be united in the same mind and the same judgment. As Christians is incapable of division as there can be but one Christ ; the church cannot be divided. It is contrary to its nature to be split into hostiles; just as it is contrary to the nature of a family to be divided. As the head is one , so are the members. Christians need to work as the members of the body.



They must be united in such away that nobody can divide them. This commentary indicated that Christians must speak with one voice and in that way they shall live in harmony with one another. They must tear apart all the division which exist in the church of God. Unity among them must also take place in the same mind and judgment. Division among Christians was prohibited, because as Christians they all belong to the same Lord, the same faith etc. Paul further indicated “ that as therefore there is but one Christ; but one redeemer but one baptism Christians cannot be without violating the bond which binds them to Christ and to one another.

**Conflict and commentary in Corinth A Sogo – Rhetorical commentary on 1 and 2 Corinthians (By Ben Withering – ton III P. 94 – 97)**

In socio Rhetorical commentary land 2 (Paul does not demand here that they agree but rather argues them to do so. This comports with his commitment to us “ the art of persuasion it at all possible with his factions converts. Obviously he believe that it is important for his converts to be in agreement on matters essential to the faith , but in light of what follows in Chs 7 – 10 it is clear that he is able to distinguish between essential matters – matters of indifference {adiaphorous } on which equally committed Christians might agree to differ. In an important monograph C.J. Bjerkelund shows that the parakalo ( “I beseech” ) plus a following subordinate clause in Paul’s letters does not simply introduce paranesis(exhortation) but can also introduce proclamation of the gospel. Paul uses the verb to introduce a particular crucial ideas here an exhortation to unity in(4:16) an exhortation to imitation of himself , and in (16:15) exhortation to acceptance of Stephan’s as a local leader. Bjerkulund also notes that Paul uses parakalo because he is addressing his converts as his children. In (1 Cor 3:1) Paul addressed the Corinthians in his father children language in part because he sees them as immature in their faith and wants them to grow. He is trying to reinforce the thought that he is their sage and father in the faith. Paul’s major problem was that he has heard about orally is the Schismatic within the still somewhat united congregation in Corinth (cf 11:18). In Corinth there were different kinds of social divisions and non – uniting behaviors. This type of behavior worried Paul greatly.



**Commentary on the first Epistle to the Corinthians by C.K Barret(P.30 – 35)**

This commentary indicates that Paul does not stand alone. Sosthene's is not, apparently, an apostle, but he is a brother Christian, literally the brother. The term is a common one among Christians(e.g Matt .xxiii. 8 ). It is true that it represents the correct relationship between Christians who in Christ Jesus are all sons of the one father, and must therefore recognize that among them the ordinary distinctions of sex, race, and class have ceased to exist (Gal iii.20,Col iii.11) but true also that the word has a history of use in Judaism (e.g 2 Mac 1.1 Josephus; War ii.122 of the Essenes). According to the African tradition, brother is one who is your mother and father's child, i.e. one who you share the same blood with him, or the term brother can refer to the one who have the same age with your brother. But with regard to Christianity it is a different story. According to (Acts Xviii. 17;) Sosthenes who was a ruler of the Corinthians synagogue was brought before Gallio's judgement seat and beaten. It is not said in Acts that this Sosthenes became a Christian. According to the Western text of (Acts Xviii. 17) he was beaten by all Greeks – presumably as a Jew; but probably the Greeks should be omitted, and the implication may be that Greeks and Jews joined in beating Sosthenes the former, because he had become a Christian; or at least had failed to secure a conviction against Paul. We cannot be certain that the Sosthenes who joined Paul in writing to Corinth had earlier been a leading Corinthian Jew; but it is at least possible; and perhaps more than possible. There is no doubt that Paul is the senior partner; or that Sosthenes genuinely is a partner.

**The interpretation of St. Paul's first and second Epistle to the Corinthians.**

**By. R.C.H. Lenski {P. 38 – 39}.**

**R. C. H. Lenski (1961 : 38) says :**

Brethren through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; that you all speak the same thing and that there be no factions among you, but that you be perfected in the same mind and in the same judgment.

This commentary indicated that Paul uses common translation, and also the loving address "brethren" with its friendly appeal to the heart. There were many troubles and faults among the Christians; and yet these do not sever the fraternal tie that binds them to Paul. While this is true and should not be minimized; a deduction such as the following would be contrary to Paul's intention: that congregations may settle down permanently into evil conditions like those which existed in Corinth without impairing their fraternal relations with Paul and with those who are true as he was. For this entire letter is directed at one thing only; namely to remove the faults and the evils that had begun to show them selves in Corinth. Only because Paul intend to most and most sincerely hopes to accomplish this purpose does he invite to these "brethren". His tone is gentle and matches the fraternal address. The English versions which translate "I beseech" my mislead; for that does not mean "I beg" but rather "I call upon you." "I summon", "I admonish you." This word is tactful and brotherly, and yet Paul is not targeting that he write as an apostle of Jesus Christ. The authority he would exercise is the same whether he speaks softly or finds itself compelled to speak sternly.

Paul mediates his summons "through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." Once more we hear the full, solemn designation of the saviour; which always brings to mind all of his saving power and grace. And now again {v.2.} the "name" is joined with this designation, which directs our attention to the revelation by which Christ makes himself known to us, and by which we know him. The word was used by Paul to introduce the substance of the admonition or the command. Here it is: "that you all speak the same thing." The subject as well as the object of the verb are emphatic by their position. In a broad way Paul states in this brief summary the theme of the entire first part of his letter: That all may speak the same thing. By this Paul indicated that they are all to be a unit in what they think and say as Christians; for the word always involves the thought that is put into words and never indicates merely the sounds of the lips or the form of expression.

A negative formulation is at once added; and this by coordination, "and that there be no factions among you," divisions or parties that disrupt the unity that ought to be. When Paul invites "you all" he does not imply that some of the Corinthians are not speaking as they ought. So he also writes: "that there be," and not: "that there may no longer be"



leaving unsaid whether the factions “are already actual or only impending. One will see that Paul’s purpose was to encourage Christians from different denominations to be united in the body of Christ, separation among Christians was prohibited by Paul. Paul’s carefulness appears also in the third and positive statement which he attaches with the slightly adversative, “but that you be perfected,” etc. Instead of the present subjunctive, which would imply an actual torn condition that is to be remedied, he writes and uses the perfect participle as a predicate after: “that you may be {or may go on being} such as have been perfectly fitted out.” Paul thus omits the implication that the Corinthians are actually divided at this time. He further indicated that when one Christian wishes grace and peace in another he prays that he may apprehend more fully the grace of God, in which he already enjoys. Each comes from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ; the Father is the source, Christ is the means or agent of viii. 6. Paul provides no ready – made doctrine of God or of Christ. What he believed has done; see the notes on (I: 30; VIII 6) and for Jesus as Lord, especially (Xii. 3) and the comment.

(Cor.1.: 11) For it hath been declared unto me of you; my brethren, by them {which are of the house} of Chloe; that there are contentions among you.

This verse contains the reason of the foregoing exhortation. He urges them to union because he had heard they were divided. By those of Chloe, whether the persons referred to were children or domestics of Chloe is left undermind. Chloe was a Christian woman well known to the Corinthians; whether a member of the church in Corinth whose people had come to Ephesus where Paul was; or an Ephesian whose family had been to Corinth, and learned the state of things there; is a matter of conjecture. All Paul wish was to assure the Corinthians that he had sufficient evidence of the existence of contentions among them. This word strifes; wranglings; explains the nature of the schisms referred to in preceding verse. These strifes, as appears from what follows; were about their religious teachers.

(1. Cor. 1: 12): Now this I say; that every one of you saith; I am of paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas and I am of Christ.



This explains the nature of these contentions. In all the apostolic churches there were contentions between the Jewish and Gentile converts. As Paul was the apostle of the Gentiles, and Peter of the Jewish, (Gal 2: 8) it is probable that the converts from among the Gentiles claimed Paul as their leader, and the Jewish converts appealed to the authority of Peter. It is plain from the contents of this and of the following epistle; that these contentions were formented by false teachers (2 Cor. 11: 13) that these teachers were Hebrews, (2. Cor. 11: 22) and that they endeavoured to undermine the authority of Paul as an apostle.

(1. Cor. 1: 13) Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?

The grounds of our allegations to Christ are: **first**, that he is the Christ; the Son of the living God; **second**, that he hath redeemed us; **third**, that we are consecrated to Him in baptism. All these grounds are peculiar to Christ. To no other being in the universe do believers stand in relation which they all sustain to their common Lord. As, therefore, there is but one Christ; but one redeemer; but one baptism; Christians cannot be divided without violating the bond which binds them to Christ and to one another.

Is Christ divided? Of course the answer must be in the negative. As Christ is incapable of division, as there can be but one Christ; the church cannot be divided. It is contrary to its nature to be split into hostile parties; just as it is contrary to the nature of a family to be thus divided. As the head is one, so are the members. Was Paul crucified for you? Did Paul redeem you? Were you purchased by his blood; so as to belong to him? If not, then you are not his, and it is wrong to say; we are for Paul. Believers bear no such relation even to inspired teachers, as to justify their being called by their names. They are called Christians; because they are the worshippers of Christ; because they belong to Him; and because they are consecrated to him. Or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?; literally; unto the name; i.e. in reference to Paul; so that he should be the object of your faith and the one whose name you were to confess. By baptism we are brought into the number of the disciples and followers of Him into whose name; or in reference to whom, we are baptized. As, therefore; all Christians are baptized unto Christ, and not

unto the apostles; much less any uninformed teacher; it is Christ whom they should confess, and by his name they should be called.

(1 Cor 1: 14 – 15) I thank God I baptized none of you; but Crispus and Gaius; lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name.

Although it was the duty of the apostles to baptize (Matt 28 : 19), yet Paul rejoiced that it had so happened that he had administered that ordinance to only a few persons in Corinth; as thus all pretext that he was making disciples to himself; was taken away. Paul did not consider this matter of chance; but of providential direction; and; therefore; a cause of gratitude. Crispus was the chief ruler of the synagogue in Corinth, whose conversion is recorded in (Acts 18 : 8). Gaius is mentioned in Rome (16 : 23) as the host of the apostle. In (1 Cor 1 : 16) Paul further indicated that he baptized also the household of Stephanas; besides he know not whether he baptized any other. All the interpretation mentioned above indicated that Paul encouraged the Corinthians Christians to be united in all things they do and say; because Christ whom they worshipped is one and they must be one in Christ.

**Pastoral Problems in First Corinthians by J. Stanley Glen.**

**The Westminster Press Philadelphia**

**Copyright 1946 and 1952 (P. 15 – 16)**

**(1 Cor 1 : 10 – 17) reads as follows :-**

10. I appeal to you; brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; that all of you agree and that there be no dissensions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same judgement. 11. For it has been reported to me by Chloe's people that there is quarreling among you. 12. What I mean is this: each one of you says : "I belong to Paul, I belong Cephass", or "I belong to Christ." 13. Is Christ divided? Was Paul; crucified for you? or were you baptized in the name of Paul? 14. I am thankful that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius; 15. Lest any one should say that



you were baptized in my name. 16. {I did baptize also the household of Stephanas. Beyond that; I do not know whether I baptized any one else.} 17. For Christ did not send me to baptize but to preach the gospel; and not with eloquent wisdom; lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power. When I read these verses I find that the evidence is sufficient clear to give us a general appreciation of the circumstances. The people were taking the initiative in promoting the apostle whose spiritual significance had impressed them most and who for this reason they exalted at the expense of their faith in Christ. Some were for Paul; some for Apollos; in this instance was the object of a party loyalty and whose identity has been the subject of perennial speculation. The divided loyalties which in this manner involved the several apostles who had labored among them were the cause of serious dissension in the church as each group played the man of its choice against the others in unity prevailed; as we see from the fact that the groups still worshipped together; it was under serious strain; and quarrels were breaking out. Consequently, there was an urgent need for the kind of action and Paul was quick to provide; both in dispatching his letter and in the plea for harmony which it contained. I appeal to you; brethren; by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; that all of you agree and that there be no dissensions among you; but that you be united in the same mind same judgement. For it has been reported to me by Chloe's people that there is quarreling among you, my brethren. What I mean is that each of you says: "I belong to Paul;" or "I belong to Apollos;" or "I belong to Cephas" or "I belong to Christ" {ch 1 : 10-12}. Paul encouraged Christians to change in this type of behaviour.

**Commentary on 1 and 2 Corinthians {P. 23-24}.**

**Fred Fisher**

**Word Books; Publisher Woco; Texas.**

**Report of dissensions in the church at Corinth 1:10-4:21.**

Before taking up the matters of dispute in the church concerning which they had written Paul {1 Cor 7 :1 – 15:58}, the apostle dealt with some problems of which he had knowledge from other sources. The first of these was the matter of dissension in the church. What this consisted of and the way in which Paul sought to solve the problem is



the concern of this section. First, Paul stated the problem and gave his source of information about it {1: 10-12}. Next, he pointed out the dissensions; when carried to their logical conclusions; violated the Corinthians' duty of complete devotion to Christ {1: 13 – 17}. Then follow a lengthy discussion of the bases of the dissensions. They were based on a misunderstanding of the source of true wisdom {2: 6- 3;4}; and on a false estimation of the place of apostles and teachers in the Christian religion {3: 5-4:5}. Paul followed this with a stirring appeal to the Corinthians to have done with dissensions; sometimes speaking ironically; sometimes harshly, and sometimes with tenderness {4:6-21}. Before we turn to an exegesis of the passage, we must seek to understand the nature and extent of the trouble at Corinth. The pertinent hints from the section itself are as follows:

“I appeal to you; brethren ... that there be no dissensions among you” {1:10}. “What I mean is that each one of you says; “I belong to Paul; or I belong to Apollos,” or “I belong to cephas, or “I belong to Jesus Christ;” {1:12}. For while there is jealousy and strife among you; are you not of the flesh, and behaving like ordinary men? {3:3}. “if any one of you thinks that he is wise in this age; let him become a fool that he may become wise” {3:18}.

I have applied all this to myself and Apollos for you benefit; brethren; that you may learn by us to live according to scripture; that none of you may be puffed up in favor of one against another {4 : 6}. “Some are arrogant; as though I were not coming to you: {4 : 18}. What Paul said in these chapters would be of interest to Jewish Christians; it is true. However; the whole passage suggest problems that had arisen by pagan people's bringing into their Christian life some of the standards which they had before their conversion. The trouble is called dissensions {1 : 10} and quarreling {1:11}. The Greek word behind dissensions is schismata, from which we get our English word “schism”. Verse 10 : Paul began the section with a strong appeal to the church for unity.

**A guide to 1 Corinthians {P. 10 – 15}**

**TEF Study Guide 17**

**Published in Association with the United Society for Christian Literature.**

**1. 10 – 31 Unity in the Church:**

**2. You will not be united unless you follow the crucified Jesus.**

(1: 10 – 13) {a}: I beg you to unite and to stop quarreling. For I hear that you are divided into rival parties, each party saying that it follows a different apostle.

(1 : 13 – 17) : Thank God I did nothing to create a party of my own. I did not even baptize more than a few people.

(1 : 18 – 25) : You are divided because you have followed teaching which the world calls “wisdom” and because you have despised Jesus who was killed on a cross. But in “foolish” is wiser than what such people call “wisdom.”

(1. 26 – 31) : You can see what I mean if you look at the sort of people whom God has called into His church. The world does not regard them as “wise” or “great”. So if you want to boast about anyone, do not boast about them. Boast about God and what He has done for us all.

**2.3. Interpretation:**

Verse 10 is the beginning of a long section of this letter which continues to the end of Chapter 4. In this section Paul wrote about {a} the need for unity {b} the message which Christians preach {c} the work of those who preach and listen in the church. In this section {1 : 10 – 31} Paul was encouraging the congregation at Corinth to be a united body. He had heard of their divisions. We notice among others three important words : “dissensions”; “cross”; and wisdom”.

{a} “Dissensions” {v : 10} : “Divisions” is a better translation. After Paul had left Corinth; he heard from “Chloe’s people {v : 11} that church members had split into separate groups. See note on {v. 10} below; and notes on {11:17 – 34 and 12 :12-31;} where Paul again appealed to his readers to be united.

{b} “Cross” {vv17: 18;23 and see also 2.2} : After Paul had referred to disunity; he went on to a second thought; the death of Jesus on a cross. He said “my work among you was to preach about Jesus {and His perfect offering of Himself} rather than to baptize people”. But it seems that he was also thinking : you have split into parties because you have followed people who proudly push themselves forward {i.e. those whom the world calls “wise”}; instead of following Jesus who humbly sacrificed Himself.

{c} “Wisdom”: We most often use the word “wise” to describe a person who uses the intelligence which God has given him. Many old people are rightly called “wise” because they have discovered by experience that some ways of living are better than others. Some of them have written down what they discovered; and these writings become part of the precious traditions of a nation or tribe. In the same way that God has given wisdom to those in modern times who have learnt how to give a plastic heart to a dying man or who design a helicopter by which to rescue sailors from a sinking ship. Paul did use the word “wisdom” in this way (1. Cor. 2 see note P.24}. And he himself made use of Wisdom of this sort when he spoke {see acts 17:22-23}.

But in chapter 1 he gave the word quite different meanings.

1. God’s own wisdom; which He showed in two ways :

{a} By planning to rescue human beings from the results of their sinfulness {1:21}.

{b} In Jesus Christ, the only wise person {see note on 1. 30b below}.

2. A false way of human thinking and talking {see 1. 17;19;21 and 2.1;4;5}. People who are “wise” in this false way.

{a} Do not build their ideas upon the actions of God but only upon the ideas of other people {Col. 2.8}.

{b} Think and speak as if they did not depend on God. So they foolishly boast about their own wisdom or “cleverness” {see 3.18 and matt 11.25}.



They are aiming at receiving the praise which should be given to God.

{c} Achieve nothing; because through their way of thinking they do not learn either about God {1. Cor 1. 21} or how to live as human beings {Col 2. 23}.

1.10. I appeal to you ... be united in the same mind and the same judgement:

1. Why did Paul make this appeal? Why is unity among Christians important? The reason Paul gave in (3:3) is that if Christians are divided they are not different from other people. In that case, they cannot do the special work to which God has called them to do.

2. Why were the Corinthians Christians divided? In this part of the letter Paul referred to the following two reasons :

{a} Because they paid more attention to their human party – leaders than to Jesus Himself {see note on 1.12 below}. We read of other reasons for disunity in Chapters (6;11;14).

3. What did Paul mean by united in this same mind?

He did not mean that all believers must have the same ideas or that they must all experience the love of God in the same way. But it does mean that they must share some convictions about God and Jesus Christ. Christians do not become united simply by being well organized. One of the most different difficult questions Christians have to answer is: Which convictions is it necessary for us to share in order that we may live as one church? Some people say that the only conviction that is necessary is the conviction that “Jesus is Lord” {1 Cor 12.3}. Most Christians want to share more than this with other Christians before they are fully united with them. (See also notes on 11:17) in which we study some of the ways in which Christians can have unity.

1.11. Chloe’s people : We do not know who Chloe was. She may have been a

woman trader who sent her people to Ephesus; where Paul wrote this letter. If so, then her people could bring news to Paul from Corinth.

1.12. I belong to Paul ... I belong to Apollos : The mistake which the Corinthians were making was to put a human leader in the place of God. Each group of "party" in the congregation used the name of an apostle as their "war cry". They gave their loyalty to him instead of to Jesus Christ. It is a mistake which Christians and others have often made. There are many sects or religious groups who honour one human being {usually the person who founded the sect} as if he were a sort of second Christ. They regard him as the one person whom God has appointed to be interpreter of Christ. For example, we may find that Mormons treat Joseph Smith and that Seventh Day Adventists treat William Miller in this way. Perhaps the big churches have sometimes fallen into the same error, and have paid more attention to such people as Aquinas, Luther, Calvin and Wesley than to Jesus Christ.

At Corinth some people made Paul their hero. Perhaps they were he was a better speaker than Paul. Another group said, 'We belong to Christ.' Perhaps they had split off from the others, saying proudly that they alone followed Christ properly. But Paul said many times that Jesus is for everyone. Therefore no Christians have the right to think that Jesus belongs to their group rather than other groups.

1.14-16: I baptized none of you except Crispus ... I did baptize also the household of Stephanas:

1. Was Paul saying that baptism was unnecessary? No. We see from such passages as Acts 2.41 and Roman 6.3,4, that as soon as people had heard the Christians' preaching and believed that it was true, they were baptized. Paul was simply saying that he was glad that he had not started a 'party' of his own by baptizing many people.

2. We notice that Paul had baptized the whole 'household' of Stephanas. This may mean (but it does not prove) that he baptized children as well as adults.

(See also Acts 16.31-33 and note on 1 Cor. 16.15).

3. These verses remind us that Paul wrote this letter by dictating it to his secretary. He spoke as his thoughts came. If he felt that he had said correct it. (See also note on 15.10 and 16.21.)

1.17. To preach the Gospel, and not with eloquent wisdom: The word which is here translated 'preaching the Gospel' means 'telling good news', want to entrust themselves to Him.

'Telling the story' is, of course, not enough. The one who tells the story will fail in his task unless he is also living the life of a Christian. But 'telling the story' in the right way is necessary.

What is the 'right way'? Paul said that for him the right way was to preach without 'eloquent wisdom'. He did not mean that a preacher should not have eloquence, for every preacher needs, for instance, to speak clearly. Nor did he mean that a preacher should not have wisdom. We have seen above that there is a sort of wisdom (or intelligence or common – sense) which is a gift from God. Paul meant that he preached without drawing attention to his own skill or voice, without drawing attention to his own knowledge or holiness. In this way he was pointing away from himself to what God had done and was still doing. He was aiming at meeting the needs of his listeners rather than at meeting his own need for praise and success (see the note on 2.1).

1.18. The word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God:

1. Are perishing ... are being saved. Some people are on the road to being destroyed, others are on the road to being saved. Paul often looked right to the people who are taking the road to be saved. Once you are sanctified you are taking the right road. Which road are you taking now?



2. The power. Those who are on the right road have 'power' in their lives because they have heard 'the word of the cross', i.e. the good news of Jesu's total

Self – offering. If we have not heard or accepted this good news, we are without power. We are like the old truck which someone once presented to a theological school. The engine was so weak that if more than one passenger got inside the truck, it would not move!

How can hearing this good news bring us power? There was a schoolboy who cheated in examinations because he was terrified of failing. He was terrified because he did not think he was of any value unless he was successful. One day someone told him and his class the story of the life and death and rising of Jesus, and explained that this was God's action. God did it, he said, 'because He loved us all so much.' From that time the boy began to learn that God loved him as he was and not only 'if he was successful'. The 'word of the cross' gave him the power to change the way he lived, and the way he did his work at school.

### **1. Corinthians P 25 - 37**

**By James D. G. Dunn**

**New Testament Guides**

#### **Divisions in the Corinthians church.**

#### **1. Cor 1 - 4**

The longest running critical question regarding 1 Corinthians during the modern period has been the significance of the slogans in (1:12). "Each of you says; "I belong to Paul;" slogans appear to be linked to the talk of division' {literally "schisms"} In (1:10) and though (1:10) does not actually say that there were divisions in the Corinthians church; the other references to "schisms" certainly does "I hear that there are divisions among you' {11:18}. When we add in further allusions to "quarrels" {1:11}; 'Jealousy

and quarrelling" {3:3} "these arrogant people" {4 : 19}; 'boasting' {5:6}; "grievances' and legal proceedings between members {6:1}; 'factions' {11:19} and 'disorder' {14:33}; it is hard to avoid the conclusions that the Corinthian church was riven with disagreement. In the light of this evidence a plausible deduction to be drawn is that the slogans of (1:12) are rallying cries of four different parties.

On first sight; the most straightforward deduction to be drawn from (1 : 12) is that there were four parties or rival factions in the Corinthian church – Cephas party; and a Christ party, a Cephas party; and a Christ party – perhaps related on the different house churches in Corinth. Identifying and describing these parties; however, has been more problematic.

Those who said 'I belong to Paul' were proud of him and held that his excellence surpassed that of Apollos or Cephas. The other slogans are all to be understood as declarations of independence from Paul. Apollos is mentioned as the outstanding Christian teacher who had visited Corinth after Paul. Cephas is the famous pillar, the first witness to the resurrection, an apostle before Paul. The slogan 'I belong to Christ' is not the motto of a specific "Christ party" but simply means "I belong myself to Christ - and am independent of Paul" {Dahl P. 322}. Nils Dahl argues that (1 : 10 – 4: 21) is best characterized as an apology for Paul's apostolic ministry, and that the quarrels in the Corinthian church were mainly due to a substantial opposition against Paul in the church established by him.

**The First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians : (P. 27 – 312)**

**An expression by Charles R. Erdman**

**Published by the Westminster Press Philadelphia, Pennsylvania**

**The problems of the Church.**

**A Division Chs (ch 1 : 10 – 17).**

**1. Exhortation to unity (ch 1:10 - 17)**

(10.) Now I beseech you, brethren, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ that ye all speak the same thing; and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfected to together in the same mind and in the same judgement. (11.) For it hath been signified unto me concerning you; my brethren, by them that are of the household of Chloe; that there are contentions among you. (12.) Now this I mean; that each one of you, saith; I am of Paul, and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. (13.) Is Christ divided, was Paul crucified for you? Or were ye baptized into the name of Paul? (14.) I thank God that I baptized none of you, save Crispus and Gaius; (15.) Lest any man should say that ye were baptized into my name. (16.) And I baptized also the household of Stephanas; besides; but to preach the gospel: not in wisdom of words; lest the cross of Christ should be made void.

This is the spirit Paul rebukes by his searching question : "Is Christ divided?". If all believers belong to Christ, then all must form one body; if they are actually separated; while still holding to Christ, then Christ must be absurd conception. Aside from Christ there can be no real head for any body of believers. "Was Paul crucified for you?" asks the apostle. If Christians remember who died for them, and to whom they therefore belong; they will be slow to say that they belong to Paul of Apollos or Cephas. "Were ye baptized into the name of Paul?" It was faith in Christ, and not in any man; which they sealed signified by baptism, and this faith brought them into a vital relation to Christ. It was denying this faith and renouncing this relation claim such a devotion to a human leader as severed one from believers whose spiritual life had its common source in Christ.

Not only does Paul thus rebuke the party spirit. But he insists that; if it has arisen; it is not due to any fault of his own; or to the method of his ministry. He had refrained even from administering baptism; lest any might suppose that he was bringing believers into a special relationship to himself rather than into a vital fellowship with Christ. He had, indeed, baptized Crispus; the ruler of the synagogue; and Gaius; the generous benefactor of the Corinth; and converts; and also "the household of Stephanas"; but so far as he could recall he had baptized no others of the great number whom he had led to



Christ. He had kept in mind that the supreme task for which he had been commissioned by the Master was preaching the gospel; not even administering sacraments; however important such service might be. He realized; further; that the very character of his preaching must be of such as to present clearly "the cross of Christ" and not to obscure the great fact either by the form of his message or by speculation as to its great central fact.

Christian minister do not always realize that their supreme task is not that of administering finances or of organizing churches; but of preaching the gospel and they do not see that it may be possible to win for themselves followers who are not followers of Christ; they are not free from the peril obscuring the great essential message of salvation by their very eloquence and by their learned discussion of related themes.

#### **2.4. Different opinions in the church :**

Should differences of opinion be allowed or not? If not on what grounds? If yes; on what grounds? Differences of opinion should not be allowed for the following reasons. If the unity of the church of the community is compromised, the nature of the unity of the Christians community are equals; and all of us we are members of the body of Christ. If unity is compromised the body of Christ (mystical body of Christ) cannot stand e.g. I am for Paul; and I am for Apollos; and I am for Peter; and I am for Christ etc. Because here we have personality cult. When should differences of opinions be allowed? When construction criticism of members help towards collective truth seeking or shading light on problems. Paul himself have constructively criticized the Christian conduct (1 Cor 5: 1 – 2), which reads as follows' (1.) It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you and of a kind that does not occur even among pagans : A man has his father's wife. (2.) And you are proud! Shouldn't you rather have been filled with grief and have put out of your fellowship the man who did this? Verse 6 – 7 reads as follows : (6) your boasting is not good. Don't you know that a little yeast works through the whole batch of dough? (7) get rid of the old yeast that you may be a new without yeast as you really are. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed.

### **2.5. Circumcision :**

Paul emphasized that unity is in Christ; not in the law (Judaism), not in the Gentile culture of circumcision. He emphasized that in the unity of Christ there is no Jew or Gentile nor male and female. Quality of unity is in the membership in Christ. With regard to circumcision (Galatians 6 : 11 – 18). (11) Paul said; see what large letters I use as I write to you with my own hand; (12) Those who want to make a good impression outwardly are trying to compel you to be circumcision. The only reason they do this is to avoid being persecuted too the cross of Christ. (13) Not even those who are circumcised does the law; yet they want you to be circumcised that they may boast about your flesh. (14) May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ; through which the world has been crucified to me and I to the world. Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything; what counts is a few creation. (16) Peace and mercy to all who follows this rule; even to the Israel of God. Finally, let no one cause me trouble; for I bear on my body the marks of Jesus.

### **2.6. Weaknesses in the commentaries:**

After reading the commentaries I have realized that I am arguing with spiritual people. They are concerned with the building up of Christians spirit while I am concerned with the content of the subject. They emphasized that if people do not agree in with one another he / she is in a negative form. What do they mean about divisions? I do accept criticism in the church of God because it can sometimes build the body of Christ. Does the names of the churches represent division? The main cause of division is cultural based. Without culture there is no way that we can understand God. Every people must come to God using his / her own culture. The mistake made by the commentaries was that they are busy repeating what is in the text for example one mind; one thought etc. I as Shivuri how can I explain what is unity or Christianity if the commentaries do not give me direction? With regard to Paul it seems hard to doubt that Paul was confronted by some shays criticism if not outright opposition from within the church in Corinth. We need only think of the sharpness of her response in passages like (1: 17;3:1 – 3; 4: 18-21; 8:1 – 3 and 11:16). Two are particularly worth nothing (4:3;) “with me it is a



very small thing that I should be judged by you or by human court"; and 9:3; this is my defense to those who would examine me; Paul would be expressing himself very oddly in these passages if he was not well aware that he had come under criticism from within the Corinthian assembly. It is not necessary to draw in the further evidence of (2 Cor 3:1 and 10 – 13); since the sharper antagonism evident in that letter could be the results of further development and new arrivals in Corinth subsequent to 1 Corinthians. A solution which takes more account of these factors is that of Hils Dahl. He argues that lilon (4:21) best characterized as an apology for Paul's apostolic ministry and that the quarrels in the Corinthian church were mainly due to a substantial opposition against Paul in the church established by him. Paul have difference with some of the disciples in the church in Jerusalem. One of the disciples whom Paul had the differences is Peter. The disunity was because of the continuing influence of Ferdinal Christian Baur; for whom the evidence of a Pauline and Petrine faction in Corinth was the basis from which grew his whole reconstruction of early Christians history as a long running conflict between Pauline and Petrine Christianity. Paul had a good relations with Apollos, that is why their party supported one another. It we as Christians are still following the negative behaviour we are busy destroying the body of Christ. All the parts should work together because we are all the members of one body. If Christians are divided they cannot do the special work to which God has called them to do. What are the benefits which come when Christians work together in God is service? Answer : They will rescue the lost people; liberate them from the bondage of Satan etc. They should confess and by his name they should be called.

### **2.7. The theological ground of unity**

Robert K. Massie (1979 : 19) says :

If we find the idea of racially segregated congregations offensive (and not everyone would) our feeling are prompted by convictions about what kind of human community the church is supposed to be. Those convictions, over the centuries, have found many forms of expression. Consider, for example, the ecclesiological teachings found in the modern catechism of the Anglican church of the Province of Southern Africa.



**1. What is the church?**

The church is the community of the new covenant.

**2. How is the church described in the Bible?**

The church is described in the Bible as the body of which Jesus Christ is the head and of which all baptized persons are members.

**3. How is the church described in the deeds?**

The church is described as one; holy; catholic and apostolic.

**4. Why is the church described as one?**

The church is one; because it is one body; under one head; our Lord Jesus Christ.

**5. What is the mission of the church?**

The mission of the church is to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ.

**6. How does the church pursue its mission?**

As it prays and worships; proclaims the gospel; and promotes justice, peace and love.

**7. Through whom does the church carry out its mission?**

The church carries out its mission through the ministry of all the members.

The central themes of this catechism – the unity of the body, the need for the restoration of broken ties; and the responsibility of all Christian – reflect the powerful biblical tradition that the Christian gospel stands in radical opposition to all humanly created forms of division. “There is no such thing as Jew and Greek, slave and free male and female.” Wrote saint Paul; “for you are all one person in Christ Jesus.” Selecting the sharpest human distinctions he could think of; Paul insisted that each was demolished by membership in the body of Christ. Moreover, Paul demanded that the eradication of those distinctions be embodied in the practice of individuals. God has reconciled us through Christ;” he wrote to the Corinthian church leave no doubt that he expected reconciliation and unity to be a primary commitment of local congregations Robert K Massie (1979. 23). Christians we should be one in order that the world might believe {Jn 17:23}. A divided church can only serve to confuse those who are already confused by the chaos of the world in their search for God. We need to recall that the New Testament knows nothing of a plurality of churches, and that when factions appeared

on the scene in Corinth Paul said that Christ himself was being divided? Bostock, Gerald {P. 101}.

If God; the creator of all things, is truly made known to us in Christ – which is the foundational claim of the church – this must lead to three basic questions : First, how exactly is Christ himself made known? Secondly, what is the role of the church in making Christ known? And thirdly, does a plurality of churches conceal the essential and undivided nature of Christ? Loyalty to Christ; with the boundaries between belief and unbelief drawn exclusively by the church herself. Christ is present among us in the form of a body, a community of believers, and we find his will for his church, also in relation to the interrelation between unity and mission, only by way of an agonizing struggle together with all God's people {Eph 3 : 17 – 19}.

### 2.2.1 UNITY:

According to Mc Namara; Kevin (1961; 256), the unity of the church means in the first place that Christ founded but one church. This truth is universally accepted among those who are today working for Christian reunion; and is clear beyond all possibilities of doubt from the New testament.

Fundamentally there is but one church because there is but one redemption,; the same for all; of which the church is but the continuation and realization in the time after Christ's Ascension. God intended to fashion to himself a single people, to reunite and restore humanity in fellowship with Himself through Jesus Christ; the new Adam; the head and saviour, the human race. If these is agreement that Christ founded but one church, however, there is wide deep disagreement about the nature of its internal unity. One must ask what are the common bonds which constitutes Christ's followers a single church, a single community, a single people. The Classical Protestant reply to this question is that the church is an invisible community of the just, united to Christ and with one another by the interior bond of faith planted in men's hearts by the holy Spirit. The church is essentially one, oneness which needs to be maintained. In the New Testament there are not many churches but one church in many places. The local

congregation is the local expression of the one great universal community in heaven and on earth. W.O. Fennel says of (I Cor 1: 2, 12: 12 – 13; Eph 4: 4 – 6; 1 Cor 10: 16 – 17) that:

“these passages; individually and collectively, make it abundantly clear that the :Ut omnes unum sunt” of our Lord’s high priestly” prayer {John 17: 21} has in Him become an accomplished reality. The church which is essentially his body is essentially one D. J. Pedersen (1984 : 78).

**David John Pedersen (1984 : 74) Quates W. O. Fennel** that the local church is an expression of an indivisible life. To admit division is to deny its essential calling and nature. It is to mar the image of Christ. Unity in the local church is the expression of its fellowship which is visible to the world. {John 17: 21 – 23}. It calls for selfless love, acceptance and forgiveness {Rom 15: 7} between the members. It requires that members regard differences of opinions and distinctions as secondary to the call to keep, experience and express the unity of body of Christ in each locality and also in a universal sense. Often the very issues over which Christians may divide a local church are not all essential to the reality and practical of fellowship with God in Christ, which the Spirit produces in the body of Christ. D. J. Pedersen (1984 : 74).

Kokichi Kurosaki has written succinctly concerning this unity:

“The legal unity of human organization which is so often governed by men appointed by human methods is substituted for spiritual unity.” By its very nature – being an institution the organized church is prone to become fleshly {Sarkikos} rather than spiritual {pneumatikos}.

Also the existing sectarianism is itself a proof of fleshly mindedness. “For while there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not of the flesh and behaving like ordinary men? {I Cor 3: 30}. The Ekklesia, on the other hand, is a product of the spirit. It is, therefore, absolutely necessary that spiritual means be employed in its government and edification.



Unity does not mean uniformity. The church has neither uniformity nor conflicting, separating differences, neither individualism nor collectivism. It is one living body with diverse members. Obviously this does not mean compromise with sin – practicing gross sin must be excluded from the fellowship.

The only basis for the division of the church into churches is, it seems, the geographical locality. One implication is that the local church is only an expression of the body of Christ *in* and when it encompasses all Christians in that locality. Moreover, this division by locality is not a division in nature, life, or essence, but only in government, organization and management. Certainly all sectarianism must be rejected. {1 Cor 1: 12}.

W.O. fennel quotes Hugh Martin is spelling out that three – fold unity ascribed to the church in the New Testament. First there is the unity of origin which resides in the fact that the church is the creation of God, brought into being by His own divine act. Second, there is the social unity resulting from and expressing the divine life shared in common by all its members. Third, is the unity of temper and belief, the effect of a common aim and loyalty and the pursuit of a common task. {80}. Nowhere is unity based on doctrines or creedal statements, identical ethical standards, manner of worship, on the same organizational or institutional structure, but on fellowship in Christ. As such unity must be received {as already given}, not achieved. {81} 1 Cor 11:29 points to the fact that our unity is expressed in Holy communion and we dare exclude any Christians from the table.

Jurgen Moltman wrote about this unity as follows : “Now the unity of the church is certainly important. It may not be petulantly toyed with. In a humanity which is today being destroyed through its division and enmities, the sign of hope for survival which should not be underestimated. But the church does not arise out of a human vision of unity. Unity does not bring salvation, but salvation creates unity. The unity of universal church can be organised through senods and offices of leadership only not signify “the highest office in the church, but rather the existing “community”. The reformation consequently can be fulfilled :” only if its own impetus come to the fore, not however if

it is broken – off. The reformation’s own impetus was and is composed of three strands : the justifying faith, the universal priesthood of all believers, and the mature, responsible congregation”. D. J. Pedersen {1984.83}.

The base of unity is under the cross for it is there that salvation begins. The closer Christians stay to the cross, the firmer will be the unity of the church. When we see God’s “open heart” on the cross we dare not close our hearts to one another over confessional distinctions or other such secondary issues. Besides, such decisiveness is a distinct sign of spiritual immaturity {1 Cor 3 : 1 – 4}.

The role of women in the church has brought a tension and disagreement in the church. The Pauline passages concerning women {e.g. 1 Cor : 1 – 16; Eph 5: 22 – 24; Col 3 : 18; Titus 2 : 3 – 5} all encourage the Christians housewife’s to behave herself quietly and unobtrusively in the church. {cf also 1 Cor 14 : 34 – 35; 1 Tim 2: 11 – 12}. Paul is saying that men and women are equal but different – equal in status {Gal 3 : 28} before God, but they have different roles to fulfill {Roman 7:2; 1 Cor 7:34}. However, those who interpret the New Testament texts prohibiting women from holding offices literally and without the regard for the Sitz im Leben and other hermeneutical principles may in fact be guilty of the same legalism as that of the scribes and Pharisees and of enforcing their bias regarding the women rather than the attempts by Jesus and the apostles to release women from bondage to the law into that freedom in which Paul says “There is neither male nor female”. Perhaps the evidence we have of the prominent part played by women in the advancement of Paul’s mission particularly on Macedonian and Roman soil reflects not only the greater freedom of women in such areas but also Paul’s flexibility of practice where that would not lead to offence. D. J. Pedersen (1984.84)

In any event women certainly were regarded as full members of the Christians community. Differences of sex class nationality, etc do not affect one’s relationship with Christ and membership in the community. Always our unity is based on our fellowship in Christ and he requires that we follow his leading and obey his word {John 14: 23 – 27}. To maintain our unity {Eph 4 :3} requires that we work at it – frequent gatherings of leaders, shepherding care of individuals to help iron out divisive features,



careful teaching of principles until they are worked out in practice, sub – division into home cells to achieve integration in neighborhoods, the proper exercise of spiritual gifts, spiritual warfare in prayer, genuine praising and worshipping together, and the development of loyalty, servant hood and honouring of one another D. J. Pedersen (1984.85)

### 2.2.2. The Unity of the Church.

Only a miracle could hold these conflicting groups together in one church. The miracle happened because the spirit reigned and gave a unity that was so deep and strong that human factors could not tear it apart. The formation of different churches for Jews and Gentiles would have been natural and would have solved many problems. If Antioch, for instance, could have had two churches, the two groups would not have to eat together regularly and the conflict between Paul and Peter described in Galatians 2 could have been avoided. The idea of separate churches for different groups is never even mentioned in Acts or in the rest of the New Testament . Even when the problems seemed insurmountable, the early Christians knew that they had no alternative but to solve them for the sake of unity. The rest of the relevant materials in Acts concerns the paramount importance of church unity for Paul. It is clear that he was absolutely convinced that Gentile converts should be free from the Jewish ritual law {Gal 2: 5}. He even regarded preachers who tried to persuade the Gentiles to obey the law as proclaimers of another gospel {Gal 1: 6}. We would expect him to for a separate church if such preachers trouble him to much. After he had been a missionary for more than a decade he went to Jerusalem to explain his message to the church leaders for the following reason:

“I did not want my work in the past or in the present to be a failure”. This implies that if he the mother church did not accept his work; it was a failure; if the churches he founded were not accepted into the unity of the church, they were a failure; unity with the rest of the church belonged to the very essence of the church. The ideas about the unity of the church occur in practically every letter of Paul. Many portions are practical exhortation but it becomes clear that Paul’s thinking about the unity of the church is rooted very deeply in his theology, Robert K Massie (1979.15).



The unity of believers was fittingly symbolized by the partaking of the Lord's supper together, and even by the "one loaf" normally used on such occasions {"one bread", 1 Cor 10: 17}. We often forget what a real test this was of true spiritual unity, in days when it was forbidden for Jews to eat with Gentiles, lest they unwittingly incur ritual defilement {Acts 11: 3}. Indeed, even to keep company with them rendered an orthodox Jew suspect {Acts 10: 28}. So the supreme recognition of gentile Cornelius as a full brother in Christ was that Peter was willing to have table – fellowship' with him; and it was for this reason that Paul attacked so furiously Peter's vacillation at Antioch in face of James's emissaries {Gal 2: 12}. To refuse to eat with fellow – Christians {presumably the Lord's supper, was to refuse to recognize them as full brethren. In point of fact, we do not know definitely of a single place in New Testament times times where there was more than one "church" {through there may well have been within the fellowship of that one church several local places of meeting}; nor do we know of any place where the local Christians were not prepared to gather together to eat the Lord's supper together. {although they may frequently have been in the habit of eating it in private houses}. The Christians churches of the Pauline age {by which we mean the various local groups, not "sects" as in modern usage} were by no means isolationists in relation to each other. They had a consciousness of belonging to a collective whole, not just numerically, as "the churches of Judean" {1 Thess 2: 14}, or "the churches of Galatia" {Gal 1: 2}; which we could easily understand, but as "the church of God" {Acts 20: 28}. By this explanation Paul wanted to indicate that in God the Christians have one hope, one faith, one Lord, one baptism, one God and Father of all {Eph 4: 4f}. Paul further explained that the unity of the church means in the first place that Christ founded but one church. This truth is universally accepted among those who are today working for Christian reunion, and is clear beyond all possibility of doubt from the New Testament. Fundamentally there is but one church because there is but one Redemption; the same for all, of which the church is but the continuation and realization in the time after Christ's Ascension. The notion is incompatible with the basic plan of salvation by which God intended to fashion to Himself a single people, to reunite and restore humanity in fellowship with Himself through Jesus Christ, the new Adam, the head and saviour of the human race. The **Spirit of God** brings the oneness

of Christ, as the unique saviour, the unique God, becomes the freedom, the personal variety of God's creation. This is beautifully expressed in the hymnography of Pentecost:

The spirit bestows all things; it appoints prophets; it consecrates priests, it gives wisdom to the simple, it turned fishermen into theologians; it gathers together the whole assembly of the church. Thus, in unity with Christ and in Christ, we enter into real communion not only with God Himself, but also with each other and with the entire communion of saints, past and present. In other words, we became members of the one, holy and Catholic church. Indeed, the unity, the holiness and the catholicity of the church are in Christ. Paul in his preaching indicated that "there is no such thing as Jew and Greek, slave and free, male and female," He indicated that "we are all one person in Christ Jesus." Selecting the sharpest human distinctions he could think of; Paul insisted that each was demolished by membership in the body of Christ. Moreover, Paul demanded that the eradication of these distinctions be embodied in the practice of individuals "God has reconciled us through Christ," "he wrote to the Corinthians, "and God has enlisted us in this service of reconciliation," nor was this solely a matter of individual piety: his scathing critique of the division in the Corinthians church leave no doubt that he expected reconciliation and unity to be a primary commitment of local congregation Robert K. Massie{1979 . 23}.

Calvin's twin emphasizes that all our salvation is already procured in Christ and that we are united to him by the spirit give pointers to possible next steps. We are already accepted unconditionally by our Lord Jesus Christ, therefore, we cannot continue in this state of separation. We must together seek the fullness of faith so that our **faith** will deepen and our unity become more real. But "knowing the faith" is an existential matter. We know the faith by living the faith together in our union with Him more and more as the spirit through word and sacraments builds up our realization of this union. So exposing ourselves together in common worship is an essential part of our coming together. To be gathered together around the Lord's table we enjoy, week by week, could well be the decisive step in our coming together George S. Yule{1983 . 158}.



George S. Yule (1983. 150) indicated that, “there are yet other groups which dismiss the unity of the church as of no consequences either because we should be so completely occupied with human rights and the unity of mankind that so small an issue as Christians unity should not take our time or because we should be so busy making converts to the faith that again spending time on anything else is irrelevant.

But the cross of Christ stands against all these arguments and nowhere is it more persuasively shown than in the first three chapters of Colossians. There the author says that it is God’s purpose “to reconcile to Himself all things in heaven and on earth” and this has been accomplished by the peace Christ brought by his death on the cross. {Col 1: 20}. In Christ the fullness of God dwelt yet he is at the same time the “Head of the body” and the first born from the dead. That is, this reconciliation is from the sheer grace of God yet accomplished in the humanity of Christ; the crucified risen one who took on our fallen humanity.

George S. Yule (1983 . 149) indicated that the clue to the biblical approach to this issue of the church is invariably discussed in the light of the incarnation, death and resurrection of Christ. This rules out either seeing unity as an optional extra or on the other hand trying to achieve it by means of the lowest common denominator of faith. Unity is given to us in Christ, and in this sense the church is already one, but live as if it were not true. It also rules out the other view that unity is achieved by all returning to a particular church. This view is subtly expressed by those who stress certain doctrines about which, they say, “there must be full agreement before there can be unity”. It takes another form in suggesting that denominations which look alike can unite – Methodists with congregationalists; Lutheran and Reformed, Anglican and Orthodox.

There are two things to say about this. God’s reconciliation is as Luther said for “real sinners and imaginary ones,” and He reconciled those who were his enemies and enemies of each other. {Eph. 2}. Hence the unity of the church is about the reconciliation of people who are at odds with each other and basically different. If it were merely the reconciliation of like – minded, than we could call in a management to



help us with ecclesiastical carpentry. Merely uniting those who are alike has nothing specifically Christian about it.

Macquarrie J. (1975 . 26) says :the approach to the unity of the church based upon the incarnation undercuts the spurious distinction that has been made between “seeking the unity of mankind” and “ecclesiastical unity;” for the New Testament sees the unity of mankind already in principle established in Christ. “It is the purpose of God” says the writer to the Ephesians “to unite all things in Christ”, **{Ephesians 1: 10}** and “this he has achieved through Christ’s passion” **{Col 1: 20}**. The church is to be the place where what is promised for mankind is already present as a foretaste, and the concrete historical example of this was the blending of Jews and Gentiles together within the church. This division, religious, racial and cultural, was probably the most deep – seated in the ancient world, so that its healing was rightly seen as momentous.

George S. Yule (1983.155) says: there is no unity without forgiveness and reconciliation – and there on the cross, by standing beside and in the place of enemy. Our Lord has achieved this reconciliation. George S. Yule {1983 . 155}.

### **2.2.3. The theological basis of the unity of the church.**

A good starting point may be the concept of the body of Christ. Paul motivates the Christians about unity by stressing that the church is the body of Christ. By this concept, Paul mean that, the church is, as any association, like a body and should therefore strive to have a good unity. In this case the unity need not belong to the being of the church but can only be part of its well being.

With regard the Lord’s supper (1 Cor. 10: 16 – 17) Paul says that through the bread we are sharing in the “body of Christ” and therefore we all are “one body”. The body of Christ is here, of course, His crucified body and this text therefore seems to point in the direction that the church is one body because we are all connected to the Crucified body of Christ. This seems to be theological root of Paul’s idea that all believers are in Christ. In {II Corinthians 5: 14} he says Christ died for all and therefore all died. In

{Rom 6: 3 – 6} the idea is elaborated that we died with Christ because our old man has been crucified with him. The death of the old and the resurrection of the new man, has a supra individual significance in Paul and is not employed in the sense of “the two segments” of one’s personal conversion. Our old man was once crucified with Christ on Golgotha. And likewise the active “to have put off” the old and “to have put on” the new man {Col 3: 10; Eph 4: 24} refers above to all have to baptism as binding farewell to the old mode of existence and become incorporated into the new being of the church, which Christ has created in Himself unto “one new man” {Eph 2: 15}. With “old and new man”, too, therefore, the corporate point of view stands in the foreground.

For this reason the church, in addition to being called “the new man,” can be spoken of as the perfect man {Eph 4: 13} and as the “one” man in Christ Jesus {Gal.3: 28}. The putting off the old man and the putting on of the new is therefore not only a choice of faith and a sacramental incorporation in baptism, but is also intended to be carried on as continuous reward, a repeated putting on of the Lord Jesus Christ in the concrete existence of believers (cf Col 3:10, Rom 13: 14). The new life consists not only in having once been raised with Christ and in having been replaced under a new rule, but also in being renewal from the day to day (2 Cor 4:16). In this renewal of the inward man, moreover the significance of the heart and of the understanding (the nous) comes in the heart of his own through faith (Eph 3: 17). God “sends” the spirit of his Son into their hearts (Gal 4:6) as the earned and seal of their complete redemption (2 Cor 1:m 22). He pours his love into their hearts through the Holy Spirit (Rom 5: 5 cf Tit 3: 5), he “write” his will in their hearts by the spirit (2 Cor 3:3), he “illumines” their heart with knowledge of Christ (2 Cor 4:6), he enlightens the eyes of their heart” through the spirit of wisdom and of revelation (Eph 1:18). Indeed, the spirit is sometimes represented as himself in the heart of believers praying to God (Rom 8:26, 27, Gal 4:6). He unites himself with their prayer, so that their prayer becomes his prayer, and that which cannot utter is judged by God, who searches the heart, according to the intention of his spirit. McNamara, Kevin P. {1961 . 258} indicated that the visible unity is but one aspect of the Church’s unity, however, the church also possesses an invisible unity, of which the visible is the outward expression. Through the action of the Holy Spirit who dwells in the church as its Spirit of unity and life, the church enjoys and



community of supernatural life with Christ. The interior mystical unity is effected by sanctifying grace, the theological virtues and the manifold gifts of the Holy Spirit. Between the visible and invisible unity there is no separation or division. They are but two moments in a singly unity. They stand to each other in a relationship of complete harmony and mutual dependence. On the one hand the outer unity is dependent on the inner. The visible unit is, moreover, maintained in existence by interior life of faith, which constantly supports and renews it. On the other hand the inner life depends on the visible structure. The church is a single living organism in which, under the universal unifying and animating influence of the single spirit, each part serves the life of the whole. Its unity is the indivisible unity of a living body. This body is the mystical body of Christ, which is identical with the Roman Catholic church. Whoever outside that church is not, at least in the strict and full meaning of the term, a member of Christ's body, nor is any non – Roman Communion a part of member of the church of Christ. Union with the church does in that exist among separated Christians.

#### **2.2.4. The practical results of the unity of the Church**

In his preaching Paul stresses that the different classes to which people belong should have no divisive power in the church. According to Colossians (3: 11) Paul wrote that if we are in Christ, "there are nor Gentiles, and Jews, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarians, savages, slaves and free man, but Christ is all, Christ is in all. The same idea also occurs in (Gal 3: 28 and 1Cor 12: 13). Now he naturally does not mean that these distinctions among men must be removed, he does not deny them.

According to (1 Cor 7: 20 – 21) slaves should be content to remain slaves and in (Roman 9: 2 – 3) Paul did not deny his natural bonds with the Jewish people. The point that he wishes to make, however, is that in the church our unity with Christ and each other completely transcends all the distinctions in us.

In the church of Corinth there were groups with tensions among them. There were followers of Paul, Apollo's, Peter and Christ (1 Cor 1:12). It is not possible to discover the causes of the division but in the light of the individualism (1 Cor 14) and pride (1 Cor 4:6 – 7) of the Corinthians Christians we can had clear reasons for finding fault



with each other. Paul, however, absolutely refused to tolerate this kind of behaviour. As mentioned above, he scolded the Corinthians for trying to divide Christ (1 Cor 1:13) and told them that by their inability to be a unity they were revealing that in spite of all their spiritual gifts they were still children in faith, carnal and worldly (1 Cor 3:1 – 4). Therefore, spiritual maturity should lead to unity. The reverse is also true: unity leads to Spiritual maturity. This truth is emphasized in Ephesians (4:11 – 16). The primary life of thought is that all the church members should co-operate in full unity in order to build the church up. The Christians who are not working for church unity and experiencing the blessings of the diversity in the unity are hampering their Spiritual growth.

It is conceivable that Paul's strong emphasis on unity can be understood to mean there must also be a high degree of uniformity in the church.

Calvin, following the Greek fathers, insisted that all our salvation is already procured in Christ so there can never be any Pelagianism or any talk of adding to Christ's finished work. He has taken to Himself all the consequences of our sin and guilt. He has rendered the true obedience of love to the Father. He has lived entirely by faith in the grace been the true man of prayer and compassion. Our love is perfunctory, our faith is minimal, our prayer are languid, our compassion is severely limited. But this is all covered by his total obedience, and his perfect intercession, George S. Yule (1983 . 159).

For the second emphasis of Calvin is our union with Christ, the head of the body, through the Holy Spirit who binds us to Him so that all Christ did for us now is made present to us, so that what we are in Christ the head, should become visible in ourselves.

This union with Christ implies conformity to Him. So now because of the sheer grace of Christ there is the imperative of faith. We are justified completely by grace, and so by holding what we are in Him, we re called to reflect this glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, George Yule (1983 . 159). Not show this, but is itself divided, then it is not just unfortunate, it betrays the gospel and so blurs the picture of God's purpose for the unity of mankind. This is why the great theologians of the church see the breaking

of unity in the church as so dreadful. "Nothing angers God so much as the division of church" wrote Chrysostom, and Augustin held the same view. More positively, Calvin wrote in his commentary on Hebrews (10:25) "For to what end did Christ come except to collect us all into one body from that dispersion in which we are now wandering. Therefore the nearer his coming is, the more we ought to labour that the scattered may be assembled together that there may be one fold and one shepherd. Few other theologians have expressed the fundamental link between the incarnation and the unity of the churchy racial, cultural or social, the cause is the same – a failure to grasp the nature of our union with Christ which is based on his acceptance of the unacceptable. Christ is not involved in any culture which is found among different cultures. His love embraces all people of different cultures.

The church is a major concept in the structure of the epistle. To be sure, the term occurs in only three of the six chapters. Yet the concept is to be the fore throughout, so much so that the entire context may easily be logical integrated about this concept as if it were the subjects of the whole, without doing any violence to Paul's thought and without rearranging any of the material. The church in Ephesians and in Colossians is the Spiritual body of the Christ, constituted of all who are children of God through the calling of God and by their "faith in the Lord Jesus". The church is conceived as organic with the Christ, his body in the world in the process of redemption, in the unfolding of history.

Francis W. Bear, in the Interpreter's Bible summarizes this central theme of Ephesians: The most distinctive feature in the teaching of this epistle, however, is the doctrine of the church. In the great design of God to "gather together in one all things in Christ (1 : 10) the church represents the primary stage in accomplishment – the gathering of a divided humanity in one, it is the token and the earnest, as it were, of the work of redemption which is ultimately to embrace the entire cosmos, when then creation itself will be set free from its liberty of the children of God" (Rom 8:21).

### 2.3. Paul's teaching:

#### 2.3.1. One Spirit:

As the body is one because God created "one new man", so the source of its life in one: the vitalizing Spirit of God. The most obvious background for this understanding is the creative act in Genesis (2:7), in which God made man's body and then breathed his life-giving spirit into the body, so that man became a living soul. Even as the body is one organic whole, is also dependent upon Spirit for its life. Ray Summers expressed this insight pointedly: Just as the human body has the animating Spirit to give it life, so this body has the animating Holy Spirit to give it life.... Very few interpreters have denied that this is a reference to the Holy Spirit. It is generally unquestioned that Paul is carrying forward this idea of the one body by seeing the one Holy Spirit as the energizing, life giving, life-maintaining principles of this body. Ward Wayne (1963 : 408)

#### 2.3.2 One hope:

The one hope is a reminder that the consummation of this unity is yet in the future. It is already accomplished in the sense that the ground and basis of this unity have already been established in the redemptive act of Christ. It is yet to be achieved in the sense that we have not yet arrived at the perfection to which we have been called. Nevertheless, this goal does unify the church now, because nothing arises barriers and differences more than a deep commitment to a common goal. The actual divisions within Christendom can often be traced to a serious difference in goals. In characteristic fashion, Dr. Carver again reminds us that this hope is God's hope, even as in Ephesians (1: 18) the hope is his glorious inheritance in the saints. God's hope must be realized in the redeemed:

God was not looking forward to different destinies for different peoples. He does not intend that mankind shall be permanently divided and separated by sectional and sectarian limitations. Certainly his ideal is not churches which disown each and refuse the fellowship of unity and love in common relation to one head. God's one hope for all



whom he redeems must become the constraining hope and principle for all the redeemed.

**22. Ray Summer, Ephesians: Pattern for Christian Living {Nashville, Broadman Press, 1960} P. 76.**

**23. Carver; op. cit.. pp 144; 104.**

### **2.3.3. One Lord:**

Here is the integrating authority within the body. The body can have only one head. There cannot be many masters – only one. One of the tragedies of Christendom is the assumption that the Lord is absent from the body and must therefore be represented by visars, Bishops, or other human heads. To Paul the Lord is present. He exercise his Lordship directly through his spiritual presence in the body Ward Wayne (1963 : 409)

### **2.3.4. One Faith:**

To Paul, faith is not a greed but a living personal relationship of trust in Jesus Christ. The one faith is the one vital experience of belief in Jesus Christ which have shared. When acceptance of a body of doctrines is substituted for this life – giving relationship to the one Lord, the signs of decay are already present in the body, Ward Wayne (1963 : 409).

### **2.3.5. One Baptism:**

Because of the tragic distortions which have arisen in the practice of baptism, and, even more significantly, in the understanding of the meaning of baptism, it is difficult to grasp the force of Paul's appeal to the one baptism. What was to him the sign of unity has become the unfortunate symbol of division – Paul believed that we were buried with him by baptism into death {Rom 6: 4} and that as many as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ {Gal 3: 27}. Paul is certainly not thinking of baptism as a magical act which confess a new relationships to Christ apart from a genuine transformation of the life of a believer. But he is saying that baptism is the outward

demonstration of the inward reality of faith in Christ, and just as it cannot be baptism without his inward reality of personal faith in Jesus Christ, So this personal faith in Jesus Christ must be outwardly declared by obedience to the one baptism. Baptism is the way in which oneness with Christ in his death and resurrection is declared and confessed.

When Paul, then, is speaking about the one body, he is speaking concretely. Baptism is an actual, visible sign, by which one is incorporated into an actual body of believers. The Lord's supper is an actual, visible sign of the unity of the body in Christ and within its members. This certainly means that all Christians should seek to express the unity they have in Christ in every possible relationship, Ward Wayne (1963 : 409).

#### **2.3.6. The element of Unity.**

The element of unity is significant in every occurrence of the body metaphor – The believer is united with Christ in his death and resurrection. Because the believer is united with Christ like – member to the body, he dare not join himself to a harlot and there by defile Christ. Because they all partake of the one loaf of the Lord's supper, they who are many are one body. The many spiritual gifts come from one spirit and serves the one body. Thus; in every usage of the term “body,” Paul is emphasizing some kind of unity Ward Wayne (1963 : 403).

#### **2.3.7. Corporate solidarity with Christ in his death and resurrection.**

In (Romans 7: 4) Paul says, “likewise, my brethren you have died to the law through the body of Christ, so that you may belong to another, to him who has been raised from the dead in order that we may bear fruit of God.” It is almost impossible to resist the conclusion that Paul is telling the Roman Christians that in a mystical sense they have entered into the death and resurrection of Christ. This is demonstrated by their “baptism into death” and their resurrection to “walk in newness of life” {Rom 6: 4}. He makes this identification even more explicit when he says: “For if we have been united with him in a death like this, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like

this {Rom 6: 5}. Paul throws more light on the phrase "body of Christ {Rom 7: 4} by its contrast with the "sinful body" in Rom 6: 6. "We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the sinful body might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin."

Here, "sinful body" which is the totality of the pre – Christian, self – centred person who is enslaved to sin. By using the term body, Paul is able to include the concepts of organic wholeness, the inter – relationship of the members, and the self – identity of each individual ward Wayne (1963.401).

Minear; op. cit; p. 173

### 2.3.8. Love:

Bostock Gerald (1996 : 104) says :

The sign and seal of the unity given by God is love which Christians have for one another and in particular for those who are different from themselves. It is love which must be sharply distinguished from the self regarded of an enclosed society. As Jesus made it clear, Christian's love is characterized by its regarded for those who are different, and there is no reward for loving those like oneself {cf Mt 5: 46f}. It is through the love of those who are different in spirituality and in the aspects they reflect of the Christ, that the spiritual enrichment and reward of a God – given unity are enjoyed. Not only that, but it is the awareness of love that crosses human boundaries which will reveal the God who enables such unity.

Christian love has to be loyal both to human individuality and to the divine kingship. What this means for the church is that, just as the eye or hand are different from one another, so the various churches have different functions within the total body of the church, and are entitled to guard their identity and their function. But they are not entitled to say to one another: "I have no real relationship with you, and I have no need of you" {cf I Cor 12: 14 – 21}.



Christian unity, to use a memorable phrase of C.S. Lewis, requires “the mutual love of incommensurable.” This means that the true church of Christ is not characterized by a monolithic unity, or by a Pharisaic separatism, but by a federal structure which expresses the mutual love of individuals within a common Kingdom. And it is by such love that people will “know what Christianity is” namely the spirit of the invisible God mediated by Christ and manifested in the mutual love, and will be seen in united action for the poor and the lost. The church may reasonably claim that her essential unity has been revealed on the mission field, and it is precisely when Christians undertake the work of mission that God is revealed to them and through them. If Christians demonstrate the spirit of love, all the barriers of doubt and division will not prevail. The basic quality of the unity is love. Paul never tires of pleading for love among church members: you are the people of God... be tolerant with one another and forgive one another whenever any of you has complaint against someone else ... and to all these qualities add love, which binds all things together in perfect unity ... it is to peace that God has called you together in the one body.

{Col 3: 12 – 15, cf also Rm 14: 19; II Cor 13: 11; Eph 4: 2; 1 Th 4: 5: 13}. The love in the church should result in a very real unity.

In (Philippians 2: 1 – 2) Paul writes that the church members should have “kindness and compassion for one another” and should have “the same thoughts}. The love which reveals God is by its very nature an inclusive love; and will be seen in United action for the poor and the lost Bostock Gerald (1996 : 104).

### **2.3.9. One Body:**

Ward wayne E (1963 . 407) says:

Paul has already made abundantly clear in all his writings, and especially in his epistle, that by this expression means “the church, which is his body” {1: 22; 23} is one because Jew and Greek, circumcised and uncircumcised, have been reconciled to God “in one body through the cross” {2: 16}. This oneness of the body is not just one attribute or one characteristic of the church. It is the very essence of the church, which is the creation in Christ of “one new man in place of the two” {2: 15}. Practically all

commentaries make a serious mistake here and almost everywhere else in Ephesians in trying to determine whether Paul is speaking of the universal body or the local body, the invisible church or the visible church. Such a distinction is based upon the Platonic doctrine of the universals and particulars and has no meaning in Paul's Hebrew realism. Because this is a central problem of the doctrine of the church today, it will be discussed further in the application of Paul's teaching to contemporary church life.

**John P. Baker lists ten inherited patterns that hinder the expressions of the body of Christ.**

**D. J. Pedersen (1984 : 82)**

1. Building – Centeredness;
2. Clergy – dominated church;
3. Denominational differences;
4. Church Substitutes;
5. Dignity and formality;
6. Fragmented Congregation {i.e. two services per Sunday situation};
7. Love of the traditional
8. Love of things associated with “church”, e.g. King James version of the Bible;
9. An unresponsive congregation;
10. A social and moral institution.

One of the most severe and most common misconception and hindrances to the local church expressing the body of Christ, is the clergy – laity distinction. All Christians called to be God's people {I Cor 1: 2. 26, Eph 4: 1; 4; 2 Tim 1: 9} thus all God's people are “Clergy” {from the Greek word **Kleros**}. The word laity is derived from **Laos** which means “people”, usually God's chosen people that is, Christians {Acts 15: 14; 1 Peter 2: 9 – 10}. Thus “Clergy” and “Laity” in New Testament usage referred to the same people, not to two classes or groups within the “church”.

**In D. J. Pedersen (1984 : 82) Oscar Feucht put it;**

“When we take a closer look at the New testament, we can see that all Christians are God’s laity {Laos} and all are God’s Clergy {Kleros}. Any distinction we make between clergy and laity cannot clear the laity from being ministers of the gospel or from being responsible as God’s clergy David J. Pedersen (1984.95)

With this understanding mission and ministry means all of God’s people exercising their spiritual priesthood every day wherever they are. It is to be the “salt of the earth” in the earth. It is to “bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ” {Gal 6: 2}. It is to appear before God on behalf of others and to know that others appear before God on your behalf. It is the exercise of mutual support among the members of the body of Christ.

The body – context for the local church means that the church is meant to be a company of people as committed to one another as to Christ. What exists to reality is often far from this. Howard Snyder quotes Keith Miller as saying; “Our churches are filled with people who outwardly look contented and at peace but inwardly are crying out for someone to love them ... just as they are – confused, frustrated, often frightened, guilty and often unable to communicate even within their own families. But the other people in the church look so happy and contented that one seldom has the courage to admit his own deep needs before such a self – sufficient group of the average church meeting appears to be” david J Pedersen (1984 : 100)

Acceptance by Christ necessitates acceptance among Christians {Rom 15: 7}. Reconciliation with God entails reconciliation with others {Phil 4: 2 – 3}. Union in the spirit involves with one another, for the Spirit is primarily shared, not an individual experience {2 Cor 13: 14; Phil 2: 1; Eph 4:3}. Thus , to embrace the gospel is to enter into community. One cannot have the one without the other. This sense of community frees one from anxiety about oneself to become open for others. Prejudices fall among. We loose our insecurities because we no longer need self – confirmation. People who are different become surprises which we gladly accept.



This sense of community in the local church is where and when the body of Christ finds its most effective expression. As Jürgen Moltman has written; “congregation; then, is no longer the sum of all those who are registered as members of the church rolls. congregation is rather a new kind of living together for human beings that affirms:

- That no one is alone with his or her problems
- That no one has to conceal his or her disabilities,
- That there are not some who have the say and others who have nothing to say;
- That neither the old nor the little one are isolated;
- That one bears the others even when it is unpleasant and there is no agreement and;
- That, finally, the one can also at times leave the other in peace when the others needs it, D.J. Pedersen (1984:86).

There is a great need for all Christians in a locality to be in community {not to be confused with communication} with each other so as to demonstrate a different lifestyle from that of the world and its bickering and selfishness.

In line with this it must be recognized that the church is highly organized just at the time when her members are caring less about organization and more about community.

Jürgen Moltman has suggested that the church call itself the “community of friends” which would make the way open for the removal of disconnectedness among churchgoers and also of the exclusivity with respect to the “evil world” and thus open up for friendship with the friendless. This would carry over to the style of worship which would become festal celebrations of the community’s own history with God. Love feasts and common meals {cf Acts 2: 46} together are glorious opportunities for this sense of community to be experienced in mutual care, support and accountability. There is a sense in which it begins “in the belly”, not in the head. One must savor it before one can speak about it. “For this reason everything depends on the emergence of small, freely constituted, comprehensive communities in the large, incomprehensible districts of the church, D.J. Pedersen (1984”87).

Community exists only when persons really know each other. God as love is experienced not in large organizations and institutions but in communities in which people can embrace each other.

### **2.3.10. One God:**

Ward Wayne (1963:409) says: To a man with the Jewish heritage of Paul, the oneness of God was the cardinal fact of his being. All unity derived from this fundamental unity in the nature of God. The unity of the body, composed of those who have been called in Christ, is grounded in the one God; yet, this unity is not an isolated, mathematical unity. This one God is Father of us all {that is, all who are in one body} and is related to us in a three – fold way. There may be a suggestion of the Trinity in these three prepositional phrases which delineate the varied relationships of God the Father to the members of the body: “who is above all,” the instrumentality of God in creating and preserving all things {cf Col 1: 15 – 20}; “in all” the spiritual presence of God within the believer and within the Christian community. These three relationships parallel very closely. Paul’s characteristic descriptions of functions of Father, Son {Christ}, and Holy Spirit. Whether this is intended or not, it is certain that within the seven – fold structure of unity {4: 4 – 6} he clearly distinguishes the Spirit, the Lord {Paul’s regular term for Christ}, and God the Father. Far from trying to present a doctrine of the Trinity, Paul is doing something much more important – he is describing in a vital way the relationship of God to the believer in Christ Jesus within the Christian community.

Immediately following this magnificent description of the unity of the body; Paul corrects any possible misunderstanding of this unity by reminding us that “grace was given to each of us according to the measure of Christ’s gift {4: 7}. Thus, the individuality of each member of the body is preserved, avoiding any idea of absorption and loss of personal identity; and, at the same time, the variety of gifts for proper functioning of the body will be stressed.

Paul names these spiritual gifts which are manifest in the body: some apostles; some prophets; some evangelists; some pastors and teachers {4: 11}. Paul is certainly saying that these gifts {or offices} serve the purpose of training {equipping} the saints “for the work of ministry” with a view to “building up the body of Christ.

Carver op. cit P. 144

### **2.3.11. CONCLUSION:**

When Paul proclaims the church's unity “one body, one spirit ... one hope ... one Lord; one faith; one baptism, one God and Father of all” {Eph 4: 4 – 6} it is of this grace that he is bearing witness. The idea of the church as a single world wide community of believers, not divided by their separateness in space and time, one because God is one, and Christ is one, and grace is one, was used by the new testament teachers to interpret and guide the corporate life of “the churches” – that group of small and obscure communities who confessed Jesus Christ as Lord. We have seen that Spirit and Baptism, unity and love all requires that the church keep as essential for all her members a living, personal life – changing faith in God. Body – life depends on the members on – going experience pf and commitment to; the life which is in Christ {John 10: 10}. Certain hindrances will need to be overcome, particularly in the area of misunderstandings concerning the priestly role of all members. The sense of commitment must be facilitated, sought and nurtured if the church is to be an effective expression of the body of Christ. The application of these principles will need to be made with specific interpretation for the church.



## **Chapter 3**

### **3. The analogy of the body**

#### **3.1. Introduction**

##### **1 Cor 1: 10 Reads as follows:**

I appeal to you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another so that there may be no divisions among you and that you may be perfectly united in mind and thoughts. Paul used 1 Cor 1: 10 and the other text to analyse the concept of the body of Christ. The body of Christ can be used in line with the thematic study of church unity in Christ. One of the big concept illustrating unities in Paul is the body of Christ. We will show that the body of Christ came through belief and practice. As I have already said, Paul used various passages to illustrate the analogy of the body of Christ.

#### **3.2 The analogy of the body: the church is a unity, with members having diverse function:**

##### **3.2.1 Passages: 1 Corinthians 12: 4 – 31**

This passage contains what is perhaps St. Paul's most extensive use of analogy. The purpose of this passages seems to reinforce in the minds of the Corinthian Christians truth of their basic unity as followers of Jesus and the truth of their church. The exact nature of the conditions within the congregation of Corinth is not clear, but apparently some of their people had become endowed with various prophecy and speaking in tongues. This situation seems to have cause a controversy within the congregation regarding the value of the various gifts of the Spirit. Paul's emphasis is that all Christians are one in Christ is church, regardless of their differences in abilities, talents, and gifts; and because of their possession of these gifts, they are to use them to build up

the church in various ways, person contributing according to the nature and strength of his particular gift. The full text of this passage is as follows:

Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit, and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord, and there are varieties of working, but it is the same God who inspires them all in every one. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between Spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. All these are inspired by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills.

{1 Cor. 12: 12} For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, is one body, so it is with Christ. For by one spirit we were all baptized into one body – Jews or Greeks, slaves or free-and all were made to drink of one spirit. For the body does not consist of one member but of many. If the foot should say, “because I am not hand, I do not belong to the body”, that would not make it any less a part of the body. And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body”, that would not make it any less a part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would be the hearing? If the whole body was an ear, where would be the sense of smell? But as it is, God arranged the organs in the body, each one of them, as He chose.

If all were a single organ, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, yet one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, “I have no need of you”, nor again the head to the feet, “I have no need of you”. On the contrary, the parts of the body, which seem to be weaker, are indispensable, and those parts of the body, which we think less honorable, we invest with the greater modesty, which our more presentable parts do not require. But God has so adjusted the body, giving the greater honor to the inferior parts, that there may be no discord in the body, but that the members may have the same care

for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together, if one member is honored, all rejoice together.

Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, the healers, helpers, and administrators, speaking in various kinds of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracle? Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all interpret? But earnestly desire the higher gifts, Breed James L (1985:11).

The first, most obvious thing that we see here is Paul's comparison between the church and the human body. The human body is composed of many different parts having widely different functions. Yet, as one body, it is a single functional unit and all of its members work smoothly and in harmony together for the good of the whole. If the human body, should it lack one of its members deemed crippled and its ability to function is impaired. Likewise, the members of the church each have a different set of talents, abilities, and charismatic endowments. For the church to function well, each member must contribute his talents, abilities, and charismata to the work of the church. Thus the church, like human body, operates as a functional unity, and, like the human body, when one or more of its members, are not functioning, it is to that extent crippled. Each member of the church has his definite place, function, and value within the whole "body" of the church. St. Paul adds an unexpected twist to this analogy, however. Where we should expect to find him using the word "church" or some similar term, Paul uses the word "Christ". He seems, in this usage, to equate the "church", the whole organization of Christians as a group, with Jesus Christ Himself. As he say, " **For just as the body is one, and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ (1 Cor. 12:12).**

Further on, he makes his point again. " **Now you are the body of Christ, and individually members of it ....**" (1 Cor. 12:27)



Paul's description of the church as a functional unit like the human body is obviously an analogy, and a very good one. When he actually equates the church with the body of Christ, however, it does not seem to be an analogy any longer. Paul further indicated that, the apparent means of uniting the diverse human members into one body is baptism

(1 Cor. 12:13).

### **3.2.2 Roman 12:3 – 8**

In Romans we find a passage, which is parallels (1 Cor. 12) to a marked degree. These verses are as follows:

For by the grace given to me I bid every one among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgement, each according to the measure of faith which God has assigned him. For as in one body we have many members, and all the members do not have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of another. Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith if service, in our serving, he who teaches, in his teaching, he who exhorts, in his exhortation, he who contributes, in liberality, he who gives aid, with zeal, he who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.

Paul reiterates his theme that each Christian is real member of Christ's actual body, that each Christian has different talents, abilities, and charismatic gifts which he is to use faithfully and diligently, and that all Christians are equal in importance of function in the body, since the body of Christ – the Church – is a whole, a unit. From this we may propose also that the church as a body cannot be broken down into independent parts without severe injury, both to the church and to its members. The church, in fact, is by nature and integrated social unit. Thus Paul emphasizes again his belief that the Christian are in truth the body of Christ.

Paul makes a further statement here, however, which has important ramifications. In Romans 12:5 he says: “.. So we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another”.

From this we may gather that Christians, besides being members of Christ, also have a relationship to each other, and that this nature than simple friendship or fellowship.

Paul asserts that Christians are members of Christ in the same way that a man’s limbs are members of his body and that individual Christians also have this same relationship with each other.

In addition, Paul makes this statement to different congregation. The Corinthian Christians are members of Christ, and so are the Roman Christians. Since Paul is not addressing individual Christian here, but congregations, we may also infer that he sees each congregation as a member of the body of Christian, In the same way that one’s limbs are a part of one’s body, so the congregations existing in different cities are members of Christ. Thus, no congregation may say, “I am the body of Christ”, nor can any individual say that, really. Both must affirm that they are “in Christ” as extension of the church. There is no isolationism among Christian, nor is there such as things as an essentially independent congregation. Rather, “a separation of the individual and social aspects is not possible, the personal union with Christ also involves incorporation in the collection Christian society”.

{1} Herbert M. Gale, *The use of analogy in the letters of Paul* {Philadelphia: The Westminster press, 1964} P. 162}.

### **3.2.3 Ephesians 2:11 – 22**

Breed James (1985:14) says: The analogies drawn here are not quite the same as those we have seen in first Corinthians and Roman, but they still give us a similar picture.

Therefore remember that at one time you Gentile in the flesh, called the uncircumcision by what is called the circumcision, which is made in the flesh by hands – remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in

the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near in the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who has made us both one, and has broken down the dividing wall of hostility, by abolishing in his flesh the law of commandments and ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby bringing the hostility to an end. And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near, for through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and member of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets. Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are built into it for dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

The emphasis in this passage seems to be on the union in Christ of two basically dissimilar groups of people: Jews and Gentiles. In and through Jesus, Jews and Gentiles are merged into one body. We have the image of Jesus "Creating in Himself" a "new man" to replace the two antagonistic bodies of Jews and Gentiles. In this image it seems that both Gentiles and Jews are personified as "bodies" although the analogy is not quite that explicit. In this explanation Paul sees both Jews and Gentiles merged and unified in this "new man", Jesus. The idea of Jesus as the new man is an important element here, but not for the purpose of this study. What we are interested with, is the element of unity and the analogy drawn between that unity and a physical body. In Paul's message concerning the church, the aspect of unity within one body remains important. Here Jesus is called the cornerstone of God's temple as well as the "new man" in whom Gentiles and Jews are united. The analogy of the temple and that of the body are closely related. The temple is pictured as being joined together in Jesus and as "growing" in Him until it is a fit dwelling place for God. Likewise, in the body, the Jews and Gentiles are united with each other and reconciled with God. In both images those who are joined together in Jesus Christ have access to God in the Holy Spirit.

{2} Rudolf Schnackenburg, *The church in the New Testament* {New York: herder and Herder; 1965 trans. W.J. O' Hara P. 167).



#### **3.2.4 Galations 3:26 – 29:**

The main point of Galations 3:1 – 4;7 seem to lie in 3:26 – 29.

For in Christ Jesus you are sons of God, through faith. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free there is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.

Breed James L (1985:16).

In Jesus, all men are sons of God through faith. Baptism is the means by which this is accomplished. The state of "Sonship" involves union of diverse people in Christ, the heir of Abraham and of God's promises to him, these people are also made heirs of God's promises. The uniting factor here, in contrast to previous passages, is faith however. It is by faith in Jesus as God's Son that people become united with Him. By faith in God, Abraham received His promises, and by faith in Christ, we die to the law and live in Christ. The Holy Spirit seems to be an important factor in the union in Christ in other passages, and baptism is the means of union. Here the chief factor is faith done. The Spirit is still important, through (cf Gal. 3:1 – 5). The Spirit is received by faith, and miracles are invalid worked by faith. No clear picture of the function of the Holy Spirit in terms of Christian unity appears, although the Galations are enjoined to "walk by the Spirit" (Gal 5:16), be "Led by the Spirit" (5:22 ff). It is from the Spirit that they will "reap eternal life" (6:8). The Spirit seems to play the source of strength, inspiration, and orientation toward God. From (1 Cor. 12:9), we see that faith is a gift of the Spirit. Thus the Spirit remains a unifying factor in Christ's body for Christians.

{3} Jesus: baptism" of the spirit in (John 20: 22 – 23), was without water, as was the "baptism" of the Holy Spirit in (Acts 2: 1 – 4).

#### **3.2.5 Ephesians 4: 1 – 16:**

(Ephesians 4:1 – 16) is dealing with the work of the Holy Spirit as a unifying agent within the church. Beyond this, it repeats the affirmation of the previous passages we have studied, attesting to “One body, one Spirit, ... one hope ... one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God”, describing Christ as the head of the body, and the body as His church. As we see, the main thought of this passage is not new to us, although there are some new element in it.

I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, beg you to lead, a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all lowliness and meekness, with patience, forbearing one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one spirit, just as you were called by the one hope that belongs to your call, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all, who is above all and through all and in all. But grace was given to each of us according to the measure of Christ’s gift. Therefore it is said, “When he ascended on high he led a hash of captives, and he gave gifts to men”.

(In saying, He ascended”, what does it mean but that he had also descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is he who also ascended far above all heavens, that he might fill all things). And his gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, for the equipment of the saints, for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of fullness of Christ: so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the cunning of men, by their craftiness in deceitful wiles. Rather speaking the truth in love we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every joint with which it is supplied, when each part is working properly, makes bodily growth and upbuilds itself in love, Breed James L (1985:17).

**3.2.6 (Ephesians 4: 3 – 4)** affirms the function of the Holy Spirit as a unifying agent within the church. It is mentioned in close conjunction with the “body.” “Body” in this verse seems to refer to the church, although the connection is not drawn precisely.



Verses 7 – 13 are another list of the various gifts and abilities given to Christian for the good of the community. Verse 12 claims again that the Christian community is the body of Christ. The church as an organization of people may be built up, but the body of Christ, one would think, should need no building up. Verse 13 may explain this problem somewhat in saying that it is individual Christians who are build up as they grow and mature within the church attaining to “the stature of the fullness of Christ”. The body of Christ is one, which has received its perfection, having been glorified by God. The witness of (Eph. 4:12 – 13) is that the Christians addressed here have not yet been perfected. They are indeed no longer spiritual “Children”, but in their unity of the faith, their knowledge of the Son of God, and their maturity, they have not yet reached their full stature. (Eph. 4:15 – 16) affirm that the church is indeed the body of Christ, though and that it is a body which is capable of growth and being built up.

In his preaching Paul indicated that Christ is the “**head**” and the church is the “**body**”, and furthermore the “**body**” grows because of the life, which it receives from the “**head**”. In this explanation Paul seems to justify the concept of the body of Christ growing and developing, since the “**head**” is the really the locus of the people who have been joined to Him. With this separation now confirmed between Jesus and his “**body**”, the writer of Ephesians may in good conscience attribute growth to the body while still calling it Christ’s body. The head cannot live apart from a body, and without a head, the body is not complete. We have the additional witness that faith and the Holy Spirit are agents of major importance for creating and building up the unity of Christians within this body.

As in the Pauline, a number of suggestions have been made to explain both the background and the understanding of body of Christ in Ephesians. The following is indicative of current understanding of this notion in Ephesians. Roberts (1991:59), the close of Christ (TEV: Christ body) indicates the close and inseparable relationship between Jesus and the church. The image express the notion that the Anointed is the Representative of God’s people, and the members have been incorporated or included in himself when he brought salvation to pass.... What has happened to the Anointed has happened to them .... (my italics).



It appears from the rest of the commentary that the above more or less comprises the essence of Roberts' interpretations of the nature of the "body" in Ephesians. This essence is, that the basic of the 'close and inseparable relationship between Jesus and the church'

is their incorporation into what he has done them, thus a 'representation'. And as is also clear from his commentary on the respective occurrences, the body is a corporate entity, made up of those who are incorporate into Christ because of his work for them.

The comments at the other junctures (Roberts 1992) are as follows: (2:16) – one body, all those from two groups of people, (3:6) – the same body, the Gentiles are now included in God's plan of salvation, (4:4) – one body and one spirit, Roberts remarks on the connection between body and Spirit. It is the Spirit who is responsible for the practical experience of their incorporation as members of the body of Christ 4:12 – build up the body of Christ: Here the collection acquires a new function since it introduces the matter of the organic functioning of the church (there is also possible stress on organic unity, as we as an incorporation of missionary extension of the body) , 4:156 (2x) – this furthers (4:12), although it includes more, since it also returns to the image of the "one new m an" of (2:15, 4:16) Cont – the last part of v 15 brings the relationship of head – body in focus.

Roberts maintains that we have two images here, and the nature of the problem is in the way these two are related. He further remarks on the gifts, which the various members of the body use to build themselves up, (5:23) – analogous to the head to – body (that is Christ – to Church) is the marriage relationship. From this one may deduce that the headship of Christ implies more than authority. In fact, it implies unity with Christ because of their origin in him. This origin is founded on the salvation Christ brought for the church (and that seems all), (5:28) as their own bodies. Basically the reference is to the physical body of the husband – and the message is clear – the example of the care for that body should constitute the basis of care of husbands for their wives, (5:30) – because we are members of his body: Christ has thus cared for the believers, the members of his body.

More extensive is his earlier Arnold (1989: 19 – 85) discussion, where he relates the head to the powers. Besides the ‘superiority’ dimension of ‘head’ in this context (Eph. 1:20ff), he adds that the Ephesians author ...’ appears to stretch more meaning out of the term when he applies it to the church. In verse 23, the “head” has become coordinated with a “body” which is the church, or the body of Christ. After Arnold negates the Gnostic redeemer myth (and I think justifiably so), he refers to some definitive research in this regard. He points out that this head – body correlation could be a development of the Pauline concept of the body of Christ. ‘The idea may have originally been planted in Paul’s mind in his encounter with the Christ along the Damascus road, where the risen Christ identifies himself with the followers: “Why do you persecute me?” His discussion of ‘fullness’ (: 82 – 85) as it appears in (Eph. 1:23) and relates to head – body, is noteworthy. Unfortunately, he ends with the usual conclusion on this matter. Lincoln (1990) holds to the following: On (Ephesians 1:23 – 23) he remarks (67 ff) that the sense of ‘leader’ for leadership (being derived from the Old Testament via the lxx) underlies also the head over all things in Ephesians, also head over the church, his body (:68). Strictly head and body is kept separate here, but because of their juxtaposition in Colossians they are related here.

After dismissing the host of interesting possibilities by referring to more possibilities than scholars usually do he moves closer to the idea that in Colossian ‘body’ and ‘cosmos’ are related. This enables the application of this notion to the church in Ephesians. The church in Ephesians is Christ’s fullness, being filled by Christ. When discussing (3:16) he (:180 – 181) argues that the hapax legomenon (sussoma) could best be translated as ‘concorporate or shares in the same body’ (on the basic a rendering by J A Robinson), and by means of this the author is drawing attention to the unity of the church in itself, rather than to her unity with the Israel of the past. Ephesians (4:12) refers back to (4:4), where it in turn refers back to (1:23) and (2:15). Lincoln remarks that in the letter case one should interpret it to refer to the two groupings that were united, namely Jews and Gentiles. His comments on (5:30 – 32) don not offer different information on the head - body relationship.

Of all the immediately relevant passages for this essay, Moritz (196:9 – 22) only deals with (1:20 – 23). He (: 21) relies substantially on the work done by Arnold. On the



'headship' of Christ he comments that ... 'extra dimension of Christ's superiority compares with the limited authority given to Adam.... He has been appointed head of the church and over the powers'.

Best (1998:189:196) denotes a separate section on 'the body of Christ'. He argues that the usual fable interpretation could be the key to the understanding of the use of the metaphor in Ephesians. However, what undercuts this interpretation according to him is the lack of stress on the diversity of gifts in Ephesians. Distinct from the earlier epistles Best (1989:193), is the identification of Christ as the head of the body. He eventually concludes that in Ephesians, Christ as head is both 'overload' and source (in the sense of stamwater).

### **3.3. The diverse members of the church know unity in Christ through the Sacraments.**

#### **Passages 1 Corinthian 6:13 - 20**

This passage describes the nature of Christians as people who has in some way been pointed to Christ. It also adds another element to our understanding of what Paul means by "body"

Breed James L (1985:18) says: "All things are lawful for me", but not all things are helpful. "All things are lawful for me", but I will not be enslaved by anything. "Food is meant for the stomach and stomach for food" – and God will destroy both one and the other. The body is not meant for immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. And God raised the Lord and will also raise us up by his power.

Do you know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I therefore take the member of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never! Do you not know that he who joins himself to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For, as it is written, "The two shall became one". But he who is united to the Lord becomes one Spirit with him. Shun immorality. Every other sin, which a man commits, is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body. Do you not know that your body



is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God? You are not your own, you were brought with a price. So glorify God in your body.

Paul asserts that “meat” and one’s “stomach” will be destroyed eventually but that one’s “body” is for the Lord. For us, the word “body” usually denotes a physical object. In humans; it is a physical object of material flesh and blood. St. Paul does not deny that concept here, but indicates that there is more to a man’s body than meat and bones and blood.

The term “body” in his usage includes more than that, and may in some instances he set over against a man’s flesh. This has significance when we apply it to the body of Christ. Paul says further that the human body is intended for some sort of relationship with God. It is “for the Lord”. The analogy is set up in which meat and the stomach are somehow in a relationship between man’s body and the Lord. The body of man seems to have a divine orientation. Meat and stomach are intended for each other, and so is the body intended for the Lord. This analogy seems to demonstrate only that the body of man was demonstrate only that the body of man was created for a definite purpose – to be “for” God.

In going on from this, Paul draws another analogy to demonstrate the nature of Christ’s body. He compares the relationship of Christians to Christ’s body with the union of man and women in sexual intercourse. The union of a man with a prostitute is a bodily union involving all aspects of their nature as “bodies” yet it is on the order of a “fleshy” union. In contrast the union with Christ is a bodily union too, but in a spiritual sense. A man has (or “is”) a body, and he has both fleshy and spirit aspects or tendencies within himself. The union with the body of Christ is according to the spiritual aspects or tendencies within himself. The union with the body of Christ is according to the spiritual aspects rather than that of the flesh. A man can glorify God in his body and his Spirit, and on the other hand, he can profane his body.

Finally, Paul compares the body of a Christian to a temple in which the Holy Spirit dwells. Connected closely with the fact of the Spirit’s indwelling is the fact that Christians do not belong to themselves but to God. This again underlines Paul’s

understanding of the Holy Spirit as an agent of unity, connecting man to God through Christ (cf 6:19 – 20).

### **1 Corinthians 10:14 – 22**

This passage emphasizes the sacrament of the Lord's supper (the Eucharist) as a means of becoming one with Christ (I Cor 10:14 – 22).

1Cor 10: 14 – 22 reads as follows: Therefore, my beloved, Shun the worship of idols. I speak as to sensible men, judge for yourselves what I say. The cup of blessing which we break, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread. Consider the practice of Israel, are not those who ate the sacrifices partners in the altar? What do I imply then? That food offered to idols is anything, or that an idols is anything? No, I imply that what pagans sacrifice they offer to demons and not to God. I do not want you to be partners with demons. You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons. You cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of the demons. Shall we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are you stronger than he?

Paul seems to equate the bread and wine of the Eucharistic meal with the body and blood of Christ. Those who eat the bread and drink the cup participate in, or have communion in, Christ. In Paul's mind the loaf used in the Eucharist represents the body of Christ, and by eating of it, Christians become one body in Him. He compares this unity of Christians in the Eucharist with the unity of the Israelites in the altar as they eat of the sacrificial meal.

The church is essentially the body of Christ. It is a society founded upon the act of the Eucharist, fulfilling itself visibly in time through the constant celebration of the Lord's Supper. In the words of St. Paul: The loaf which we break, is it not a communion in the body of Christ? Since the loaf is one, we though many, are one body: for we are all partakers of that one loaf (I Cor 10:16 – 17) The faithful become members of Christ's



mystical body the church by communicating together in His sacramental body at the Eucharist. It is the Eucharist that creates the unity of the church. The church is held together, not by outward magisterium and power of jurisdiction, but by the Eucharist. Unity is not imposed from above by any external authority, but created from within by common participation in the one loaf. The external organs of church government – the discipline of canon law, of ecclesiastical courts, and the rest – are certainly indispensable, but they are entirely secondary.

But while thinking of the church christologically, as the body of Christ, we need to keep in mind another “icon” to complete and balance our ecclesiology – pneumatological “icon” of the church as the kingdom of the Holy Spirit. St. Irenaeus spoke of the Son and the Spirit as the “two hands of God” which always work together. If the church is Eucharistic, it is at the same time Pentecostal: it is an extension of the Incarnation and of Pentecost. After the upper room of Maundy Thursday there comes the upper room of Whitsunday: and both upper rooms are normative for just appreciation of the nature of the church. When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues like flames of fire, divided among them and resting on each one. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:1 – 4).

In this gift of the Spirit at Pentecost, there are three elements of special importance. First, the Spirit is not conferred solely upon a particular hierarchical order, but is a gift to the whole people of God: “they were all filled with the Holy Spirit”. It is helpful to recall the distinction, emphasized by Vladimir Lossky, between the two givings of the Spirit. The first occurs on Easter Sunday, when Jesus risen but not yet ascended – breath upon the disciples and says to them: “Receive the Holy Spirit”. Whosoever sins you remit, they are remitted, and whosoever sins you retain, they are retained” (John 20: 22 – 23). At this moment the apostles represent the hierarchy of the church: the gift of the Spirit is specifically linked with the authority to bind the loose, and this particular power is not conferred upon the whole body of Christ, but transmitted through the apostolic college to the episcopate. In the second giving of the Spirit



recorded in Acts 2ff, on the other hand, the apostles no longer represent the hierarchy but rather they constitute the entire body of the church as it then existed. The Spirit descends at Pentecost upon each and every member of the redeemed community, and this universality of the Pentecost gift continues in the church throughout all age.

It is difficult to decide whether Paul is speaking of the elements of the Eucharistic meal literally or figuratively. Do the bread and wine represent Christ or are they actually the body and blood of Christ in some sense? Or, on the other hand, is the mere act of taking part in this rite the means of participation of Christ, or do the bread and wine themselves have special properties? However we interpret it, the Eucharist is represented as a key factor in the unity of Christ with his followers. The Eucharist seems to be a means of achieving union although this idea is vaguely expressed. The Eucharist is, however, very clearly seen as an outward expression of that essential unity, and it is shown as a means of continuing in that union. Breed James L (1985:20-21).

### **1 Corinthians 12: 13**

The rite of baptism stands out more clearly than the Eucharist in St. Paul's thought as the means of entry into the body of Christ. In referring again to I Corinthians 12:4 – 31, let us consider especially (12:13:)

**“For by one Spirit were we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, slaves or free – and all we made to drink of one Spirit”.**

The baptism specified here is “baptism in the Spirit”. It was the general experience of Christians that in baptism they received the Holy Spirit, although this was not always the case. With few exceptions, however the term “baptism” in the New Testament denotes a ceremony of ritual washing with water, except where the context specifies otherwise. Paul thus specifies the ceremony of baptism as the means of entry into Christ's body, although he adds that this is made possible only by action of the Holy Spirit. We may infer from this that for Paul, the Spirit makes actual that which the rite of baptism symbolizes – unions with Christ.

**Galations 3: 26 – 29**

This passage is quite similar to the one above I Cor 12:13. Paul here speaks of being “baptized into Christ” and of having “put on Christ”.

Breed James L (1985:21) says: For in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. For as many of you as were baptizes into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s offspring, heirs according to promise.

In baptism, all distinctions of class, sex, and race are made of no importance, because all Christians are “one” in Christ, even though each has a different function as a member of His body. Paul reiterates, however, that the means of entry is baptism.

**3.4. Jesus is the “Head” of the church, and the church forms his body.**

Passages: **Ephesians: 1:22 - 23**

“... and he has put all things under his feet and has made the head over all things for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all”.

Here as in (Eph 4:15 – 16), we find a variation of the Pauline “body” analogy. Jesus Christ is called the “head” and the church constitutes His “body”. Basic to this analogy is the description of the way the head acts to unify and build up the body.

Physiologically, this is not a good example. Life and growth do not flow from the head to the other members of the body. This example does express a basic truth of relationship of Christ to Christians, however. In union with Him, Christians do not become submerged within His personality, nor do they become equal with Him. Rather, they receive of his “fullness” and grow in maturity and grace from him in order to approximate his stature.

**Ephesians 2:19 – 22**

This relation of Christians to Christ is given added depth by the analogy of the temple in (Eph 2:19 – 22).

Breed James L (1985:22) says: So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets. Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are build into it for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

As the cornerstone of God's holy temple, Christ is the key supporting member, upon whom the foundation and the walls are built, the foundation being the apostles and prophets and the walls being the whole number of Christians. Even here, however, the analogy is extended to show the temple being "joined together" and "growing" by the action of the cornerstone, Christ. The purpose of the growth of the temple in this analogy is to provide a dwelling place for God, or for His Holy Spirit. The action of the Spirit here is unclear. Perhaps it is the mode in which God inhabits this temple. Jesus himself is the principle of unity and growth in this analogy of the temple, in contrast to such passages as (I Cor 12:4ff), which specify the action of the Spirit as the principle of unity.

**Ephesians 5:21 – 33:**

In (Eph 5:21 – 33) Paul proposes the illustration of human marriage as an analogy of Christian unity in Christ.

Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives, be subject to you husband, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its saviour. As the church is subject to Christ, so let



wives also be subject in everything to their husbands. Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and give himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot of wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.

Even so husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no man ever hates his own flesh, but nourishes it, as Christ does the church, because we are members of his body. "For this reason a man shall leave father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one." This is a great mystery; and I take it to mean Christ and the church; however; let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respect her husband.

This passage affirms that in marriage a man and woman become united in "one flesh". The writer here interprets Gen (2:24) to mean that in marriage there is – mystical union of bodies as well as "union" in sexual intercourse.

The proposition of this analogy is that, the marriage relationship is somehow like the relationship between Christ and the church. The church is subject to Christ in a patriarchal sense and is joined to Him in a mystical union, which is real and tangible despite its mystical nature.

Christ is the husband of the church because he is her head and because he loves the church as much as a man loves his own body when he loves his wife. Having established this, the comparison naturally suggests an ideal for human marriage. The symbols of Israel as the wife of Jahweh is common in the Old Testament of Hosea 1:2ff."

We should also know the mention of baptism here (Eph 5:26 – 27) as a concomitant of bodily union with Christ. Baptism is compared to the rites of purification that a bride was obliged to undergo preceding marriage. Baptism is presented here as a rite of cleaning, purification, and sanctification, which involves the use of water and specific ritual formular or preaching. The mystical aspect of this union is stressed here (5:32),

but so is its concrete, tangible aspect. Again we see the figure of the “body” and the “head”, Christ, acting upon the “body”, the church, in a way quite similar to the examples we find in (Eph 2:19 – 22 and 4: 15 – 16).

{5} The Jerusalem Bible {Garden City; York; Doubleday and Co: Inc; 1966; Alexander Jones, General Editor} Notes to (Eph 5: 21 – 32).

**Colossians 1: 17 – 27:**

(Colossians 1: 17 – 27) indicated that Christ is the head of the body, which is identified with the church. He is preeminent in the church and in the whole of creation. In Him are hostile and stranged people reconciled, purified, and sanctified. The body is capable of internal growth and maturation.

(Colossians 1:17 – 27) reads as follows:

For in him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or authorities – all things were created through him and for him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. He is the head of the body, the church; He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything He might be pre-eminent. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.

And you, who once were strangled and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, he has now reconcile in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and irreproachable before him, provided that you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel which you heard, which has been preached to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, became a minister.

Now I rejoice in my suffering for your sake, and in my flesh I complete what is lacking in Christ’s afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church, of which I became a minister according to the divine office which was given to me for you, to make the

word of God fully known, the mystery hidden for ages and generations but now made manifest to his saints. To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of his mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

In (Col 1: 18 – 20), Paul claims that Jesus does not only reconcile hostile and estranged people in Himself, but everything in the whole creation, “whether on earth or in heaven” making peace in the whole universe by means of His shed blood. If we still take His “body” to be the church in this analogy, then we see a close connection between this work of reconciliation in the inverse and the nature of the church. This connection is not explicit in the analogy in (Col 1:17 – 27), but it may be a legitimate inference to draw from it. Perhaps the writer saw universe reconciliation as a work of the church as Christ’s body. By participating in the body of Christ, however, Christians surely take part in this reconciling work, even though the motive power has been supplied by Christ. Here again we see an implicit distinction between Christ and Christians, even though they are united in one body.

(In Roman 12:1), there is a statement similar to the one in (Col 1:24) where Paul enjoins the Christians to:

“... present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship”.

Here, however, the “sacrifice” does not in any way “complete” or “continue” Christ’s afflictions. The “sacrifice” is a gesture of personal devotion to God and worship of Him.

However we may interpret this verse, there is an important point here regarding the church: Jesus suffered in order to establish the reign of God, and anyone who continues his work must share this suffering ... Paul shares by his suffering as a missionary in those that Jesus had undergone in his own mission.

It is the nature of the church as Christ’s body that it is intended to share in the work, mission, and suffering that Christ accomplished in his body of flesh. The church does



this by continuing to work for reconciliation in the world. As Christ's suffering was for the sake of the church, His body, in which reconciliation takes place, so Paul can say that his own suffering are for the sake of the church as Christ's body. It is only in Christ that Paul's suffering are effective and meaningful.

The New Testament way is to start from the cross of Christ, whereby God reconciled Jews and Gentiles, bond and free, Greek and Barbarian, male and female, not only to Himself but also to each other. In the New Testament, therefore, unity is integral to the fact of the church and the problem is not how the divided church can be done, but how the church can be divided. "He (Christ) is our peace", writes Paul, "made both one ... having abolished in his flesh the enmity.... that he create in himself of the twain one new man, so making peace, and might reconcile them both in one body unto God through the cross... (Eph 2:14 ff). Jesus Himself had said, "Other sheep I have, which are not of this flock, them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice, and they shall become one flock, one shepherd, (Jn 10:16) – a thought which John underlined by observing that Jesus was to die "not for the notion only, but that he might also gather together into one all the children of God that are scattered abroad" (11:52).

Here is a unity given to the church by the very acts of redemption and calling. So Paul tells the Galatian Christians that "ye are all one man in Christ Jesus" (Gal 3:38). This unity is given and established by the act of God, Christians neither made it nor, in the ultimate sense, can they break it, any more than they can fall out of their Saviour's hand (Jn 10: 29 f). Christ is not divided (I Cor 1: 18), and those whom He has baptized through the Spirit into one body (I Cor 12: 13 cf. Rom 12: 5, Eph 4:4) cannot be severed from that body. "If the foot shall say, because I am not the hand, I am not of the body, it is therefore not of the body?" (I Cor 12: 15). Like it or not, "all of us, united with Christ, form one body, serving individually as limbs and organs to another" (Rom 12:5). The unity of this "one body in Christ" can be ignored and denied, but it cannot there be destroyed. Invariably, therefore, the New Testament views the empirical facts of Christian division in the light of the antecedent fact of Christian unity, not vice versa.

The church's unity has to be explained in terms of its union with God. The church is one because Christians share a common relation to the three persons of the one

Godhead – a relation that is common, not merely in the sense of being similar in every case, but in the further sense of being a single, communal relation whereby God, Father, Son and the Holy Spirit, holds all Christians, every moment, in saving union with Himself. God’s relation to the whole church is numerically one, just as a father’s relation to his whole family is numerically one, embracing both the group (“my children”) and each individual within it (“my child”). The unitary action of God causing sinners to stand in His grace is what makes and keeps the church one, as a glance at the New Testament account of the church will show.

{6} The Jerusalem Bible. Note to (Col. 1: 24)

**Colossians 2: 16 – 23.**

This passage again repeats statements we have seen concerning the relationship with Christ to the Church. He is the head, the Church is His body, and by His action the body is nourished, strengthened, united and caused to grow and mature:

Therefore let no one pass judgement on you in question of food and drink or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath. These are only a shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ. Let no one disqualify you; insisting on self-abasement and worship of angels, taking his stand on visions; puffed up without reason by his sensuous mind, and not holding fast to the head, from whom the whole body; nourished and knit together through its joints and ligaments grows with a growth that is from God.

If with Christ you died to the elemental spirits of the universe, why do you live as if you still belong to the world? Why do you submit to regulations “do not handle; do not taste; Do not touch” {referring to things which all perish as they are used} according to human precepts and doctrines? These have indeed an appearance of wisdom in promoting rigor of devotion and self-abasement and severity to the body, but they are of no value in checking the indulgence of the flesh. This passage indicates that the Christians are free from their power and they have to act in accord with the will and

work of Christ. Paul here suggests that the rules of conduct, worship, and diet and the rules of ascertain prescribed by Judaism and Hellenistic sects are in reality burdens laid upon men by the supernatural forces; spirits, or angels of the created world. Since Christians have died to the world in Christ's death, they are no longer bound by these cosmic powers, but are bound by Christ; and the rulers of life in Christ are of a much higher order than the regulations governing life on earth. This suggests that the Church as Christ's body is set apart from the world and all of the rules, traditions, customs, and institutions created by men in the world. It should not, then, consider itself bound by these man-made regulations; but steadfastly remain true to its own nature as Christ's body.

{7} Arndt and Gingrich, Greek – English Lexicon P. 806

{8} Theological Dictionary of the New Testament {Grand Rapids, Michigan; Wm. B Eardmans Publ. Co; Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich eds; Geoffrey W. Bromily; Eng and trans Vol. Viii 1971} by Eduard Schweizer  
pp. 1036 – 41.

{9} Arndt and Gingrich; Greek – English Lexicon P. 701

{10}. Arndt and Gingrich Greek – English Lexicon P. 901

{11} Ibid; P. 681

{12}. Ibid;

{13} Eduard Schweizer ..... TDNT Vii 43

### 3.5. A Corporate Personality

As is well know – another fairly thorough investigation into the matter was the one undertaken by Best (1955). He starts off by making the point that the Christ that lies



behind the phrase 'in Christ' should be described as a corporate personality (1955:20), and that the term 'corporate personality' suggests that believers as a body express the personality covers three conclusions that can be made from a study of the occurrences of the 'in Christ' formula: (a) it implies a relationship between Christians and Christ (b) it leaves a place for the salvation that is in Christ (c) it gives the E'V a local flavour. There are thus two fundamental ideas in this formula: believers are 'in Christ', and the locus of salvation is Jesus Christ (1955:21), see also Bultmann (1968:312). Baptism brings us into our share in Christ's death, and it therefore makes us a part of the inclusive personality, which is Christ (1955:66). Does Paul identify Christ with the church? According to Best it is not taught in I Corinthians 1:12 – 13 or Galatians 3:15 – 29, while in I Corinthians 6:12 – 20 some measure of identify is present in that is said that Christians are members of Christ. It is not said, however, that they constitute Christ, but only that together with him they constitute one being ('one Spirit'). In (I Corinthians 12:12) we do see to find that the church is called "Christ", yet this expression is later reduced (v 27) to 'body of Christ' (1955: 81). The very use of the word 'body' suggests that Paul wishes to evade the identification of Christ and the church (1955:111). In the Best's view it is not adequate to derive the idea of the church as a body with members from the stoic commonplace of the state as a body and the citizens not liken the church to a 'body' but to the 'body of Christ' (1958:83). The fact that already in (I Corinthians 10:17 and 11:29) the church is called the body of Christ indicates that it was thus called before the metaphor of the body of Christ' was not occasioned by the metaphor of body and its members came into play (1955:84). Thus the depiction of church as the body of Christ was not occasioned by the metaphor of body and member. The church was in the first place termed 'the body of Christ', and only thereafter the conception of Christians as members of the body, as living as a body, was formed. It can thus be concluded that the occurrence of this metaphor in Greek culture is not the occasion of Paul's depiction of the church as the 'body of Christ' (1955:85).

The different phrases 'body of Christ', 'in Christ', 'with Christ' et cetera, are projections of the fundamental idea of the corporate personality of Christ and the believers. They do not fully describe the church. Consequently the church is not really

and ontologically the body of Christ (1955:100). The phrase 'the body of Christ' refers primarily to the relationship of believers to Christ and only secondarily to the believers' mutual relationship. They may be regarded not only as members of his body but also as members of the Christ himself (1 Cor 6:15), and that the church may, in a sense, even be called Christ (1 Cor 12:12), with Käsemann's (1993:162) contention that believers are members of the Christ.

An idea which can be regarded as related to, or a variant of the notion of corporate personality is that of 'representation'. This position is taken, among others by Roberts (1992: 284), see also Du Plessis (1992: 212 – 217). Roberts bases his argument mainly on the Adam – Christ parallel drawn by Paul in (Roman 5:12 – 21), according to which the deed of the representative has become the deed of those he represents: the choice for sin and the choice against sin respectively. Because Christ is the representative of those who believe in Him, they are 'represented', and as such regarded as part of him. Christ is the representative of the church. Because it is represented by Him, its members have been incorporated into Him, grafted into Him, and in this way they become his body Roberts (1992:284). Thus the church 'becomes' the body of Christ, by being 'incorporated' or 'grated' into Him as a result of being 'represented' by him. However, how it should be understood that one is incorporated or grafted into someone by being represented by him/her, is another matter.

In the end it should be pointed out that there is no substantial difference between the interpretations of Käsemann and Best. In my opinion the only difference between the two is that while Käsemann interprets against the backdrop of Gnosticism, Best does so against that of the Old Testament. When Best (1955:110) maintains that, according to Paul, believers may be regarded not only as members of Christ's body, but also as members of Christ himself (1 Cor 6:15), and that the church may, in a sense, even be called Christ (1 Cor 12:12), I can see no difference with Käsemann's (1933:162) connection that believers are members of the Christ –



### 3.6. The Spiritual gifts

I do not pray for these only, but for those who are to believe in me through their word, that they may all be one, even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that thou has sent me (Jn. 17:20 – 21). The unity of the church of Christ is a gift of God bestowed in the birth and constitution of the church of the Pentecost.

The unity of the church is a gift, not something sought or grasped or attained, but, as with any gift, something which may be refused or dishonored or misused. The gift of unity is, in the first instance, in its origination, something which belong to God. He gives at Pentecost something of His own, something of Himself, His Holy Spirit, to the church.

The unity given to the church at Pentecost is vouchsafed for all man baptized into the body of the church since Pentecost. It is this same unity received and enjoyed within the church among the members of the church and manifested and verified in the life of the church in this world which is the witness of the church to the world.

In his attempt to correct the abuses of the church at Corinth, Paul tries to remove all pride and boasting concerning spiritual gifts (especially the excessive display of tongues) by reminding his readers that all gifts come from the same spirit. The variety does not necessarily represent a gradation in value or importance, but, rather, the varied needs of the body to which each ministry contributes its significant function. This is the argument of (1 Corinthians 12:4 – 31). Beginning with the assertion that “there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit” (v. 4), Paul lists the many gifts, which are inspired by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills (v.11). Then he draws the analogy that “just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ” (v.12). After an extended and detailed discussion of the importance and inter-dependence of all the members of the body, he applies the figure to the Corinthian church: “Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of



miracles, the healers, helpers, administrators, speakers in various kind of tongues” (vv. 27, 28). Here there is an identification of priority because of the numbering of the first three offices (apostles, prophets, and teachers) and because of the concluding statement: “But earnestly desire the higher gifts” (v. 31).

These are the primary uses of the “body” metaphor which form the background for the body – concept in Ephesians and Colossians. In view of the variety it is remarkable that they have so much in common. It is quite important to notice the motifs, which run through all of them because they come to their culmination in Ephesians. When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all with one accord in place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues like flames of fire, divided among them and resting on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:1 – 4). The gift of the Spirit at Pentecost is a gift of unity: in the word of Acts 2:1, “they were all with one accord in one place”. It is the special task of the Spirit to draw human kind together. This aspect of the Spirit work is vividly emphasized in Greek hymnography, when it contrast God’s descent at Pentecost with his descent at the building of the tower of Babel (Gn 11:7). The God of old came dawn in order to divide humanity, but at Pentecost He came down in order to unite. As the hymn of the feast of the Pentecost expresses it, “when the most high descended and confused the tongues, He divided the nations, but when the distributed the tongues of fire, He called all the unity”.

Yet the gift of the Spirit not only calls human kind to unity but it is also a gift of differentiation. The tongues of fire are ‘divided’, so that they rest upon each one personally. The Holy Spirit is a Spirit of freedom, and He bestows upon humankind and infinite diversity. Unity and differentiation. Such are the two aspects contrasted but not opposed – of the gift of the Spirit to the church. The church is a mystery of unity in diversity and of diversity in unity. In the church a multitude of persons are united in one, and yet each of them preserves his personal integrity unimpaired. “When the spirit of truth comes, He will guide you into all truth” (Jn 16:13).

Essentially the purpose of spiritual gifts is to enable even the two or three gathered together to “embody Christ in the world”, and so to build up his body with all the fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22 – 26, Ep 4:12 – 16, Mt 18:19 – 20). In the light of this understanding, the local church cannot be an accurate expression of the body of Christ if it closes its doors to the proper exercise of spiritual gifts.

Arnold Bittlinger points out that there is no systematic classification of spiritual gifts in the New Testament. Often stating that gifts are not just “enthusiastic or mystical phenomena” (106) he goes on to explain that:

“... a charism (or gift) is a gratuitous manifestation of the Holy Spirit, working in and through , but going beyond the believers natural ability for the common good of the people of God”(107). The key elements in this definition are:

- (a) a gift is a manifestation of the Spirit,
- (b) a gift is “gratuitous” and not a reward, and therefore, not an evidence of holiness,
- (c) a gift may coincide with a believer’s natural talents, but it will go beyond this,
- (d) a gift can be only operate in a believer’s, and
- (e) a gift is intended “for the common good of all the people of God”, for the upbuilding and extending of the Body of Christ.

As regards the duration of the Spiritual gifts (or Charismata), Roberts Banks say, “... they are clearly not temporary in character but permanent features of the community’s life as long as this present age lasts. They are not given merely to help the churches get started but are intended as the main constituents of their gatherings so long as they continue to meet. According to Paul it is only when “that which is perfect is come” (1 Cor 12:10), when all communications between God and mankind of an intermediary character are abolished, that these gifts will come to an end” (109).

Robert Banks lists five guidelines for the proper and effective functioning of the gifts: They must be exercised.

- (a) in a balanced way (1 Cor 14: 6, 1 Thes 5: 12 – 14)
- (b) within a intelligible context (1 Cor 14:9, 23)

(c) evoking a discerning assessment (Rom 12:3, Eph 4:7, Thes 5:21).

(d) under the individual's self control (1 Cor 14: 27, 30 – 31, 40,) and

(e) within a framework of love (1 Cor 13). (110).

A closer look at 1 Cor 12 (cf Eph 4 : 11 – 16) will help us to see this more clearly:

VV. 1 – 2 Ignorance is a hindrance, be it from lack of understanding or lack of experience (both are necessary)

VV. 7 Everyone has at least one gift. There are no spectators. No member is unnecessary – God is far too creative to be wasteful. Often, it seems, we have reduced the member of the Body to two-one which talks and one which listens.

V.14 You have not got a body when people expect it to operate as a one-man-band.

V.15 – 16 You must function as you are. Every member is needed. There is no room for inferiority complexes, nor for individualism.

V.17 – 19 Do not try to be and do everything yourself. You are not everything. Give others a chance to function and eliminate superiority complexes. Be prepared to receive what another has to give. Be willing to be limited.

V. 20 Gifts help you find your place in the Body.

V.21 – 24 Weaker members are necessary. No one is insignificant in God's purposes.

V. 25 – 26 Our unity is on the basis of Christ, by and in the Spirit through love ("same care") (cf Eph 4:3). Spiritual gifts should not be confused with the fruit and Holy Spirit (III). The gifts do, however, need the fruit. The gift without the fruit are powerless and irritating to others and are devoid of edification all around. Thus 1 Cor 14 is the practical application of 1 Cor 13 to the proper use of the gifts described in 1 Cor 12. (cf especially 14:4,19,26).

The character of the believer exercising a spiritual gift may not affect very much its outward manifestation, but it will have a big effect upon its power for solid edification. This is of vital importance.

As to how these gifts are bestowed, discovered or evoked it must first of all be recognized that the gifts are manifestation of the Holy Spirit are given according to His Will (1 Cor 12:11). Rom 12:6 points to a simple three – fold

Process : (a) God gives the gifts



- (b) Faith receives them, and
- (c) We use them.

It is imperative that each believer discover his gift (s) if he or she is to be an effective servant of the kingdom and not a lame member of the body. As Elizabeth O' Connor has written, "When one really become practical about gifts, they spell our responsibility and sacrifice... the identifying of gifts brings to the fore.... the issue of commitment. Somehow if I name my gift and it is confirmed, I cannot "hang loose" in the same way. I would much rather be committed to God in the abstract than be committed to him at the point of my gifts... doors will close on a million lovely possibilities. I will become a painter or a doctor only if denial becomes a part of my picture of reality. Commitment at the point of my gifts means that I must give up being a straddler. Somewhere in the deeps of me I know this. Life will not be the smorgasbord I have made it, sampling an tasting here and there. My commitment will give me an identify" (112).

The releasing implication of gifts identification is, as we saw from 1 Cor 12: 20 (above), that it helps each believer find his or her place in the body of Christ and in the service of His Kingdom. As Howard Snyder put it,

"The discovery of his spiritual gift often turns a frustrated, guilt – ridden Christian into a happy and effective disciple". (113)

The reception of spiritual gifts is not dependent on correct doctrinal knowledge or on maturity. Spiritual gifts are not reserved for some elite corps or class. The very message of Pentecost is that weakness is swallowed in power. Fear disappears as faith triumphs. However, the identifying of all one's gifts is seldom accomplished at the beginning of one's Christian experience.

Peter Wagner lists five steps for the discovery of gifts:

- (a) Explore the possibilities
- (b) Experiment with as many as possible,
- (c) Examine your feelings,

- (d) Evaluate your effectiveness,
- (e) Expect confirmation from the body (115).

To sum it up there are three questions one may ask in seeking to identify one's gifts,

- (a) What do I enjoy doing?
- (b) How am I improving and developing?
- (c) Do others recognize this in me?

It also needs to be said 'that a believer does not choose his/her own gifts but he/she must discover what gifts God has given him/her. Membership in a small group structure is the most common (and perhaps most effective) facilitator of this process.

### 3.7. Conclusion

For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, slaves or free, and we were all watered by the one Spirit. (Translation and emphasis mine). This is an indication in favour of the interpretation that the body of Christ is pre-existent in relation to the "parts". Incorporation into it takes place through baptism. The latter brings about the eschatological abrogation of human differences: In Christ, they no longer exist - that is to say, in His body, in the church.

For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, being many, are one body, so it is with Christ (Translation and emphasis mine).

To begin, Paul makes two points about the human body. First, he makes mention of the unity of the body, a unity which is preserved in spite of the body's many limbs or members. And second, he follows with the assertion that all the many limbs or members of the body go together to form one body.

It means, therefore, that in our attempt to understand the use of the analogy later on (vv. 13 – 27), we need to keep both aspects of it in mind (1) the unity of the human body in spite of its plurality of limbs (v 12a), and (2) the many limbs going together to form

one human body (v. 12b). It is this two pronged approach which allows us to follow Paul more easily and straight forwardly. The appendage (v. 12 c) “so also is Christ”, is entirely meaningful since it is consonant with the two points the apostles has just made on the basis of the analogy in (v. 12) and which he is about to spell out in (vv. 13 – 27), that is, Christ, like the human body (any human body), maintains His unity or integrity under all circumstances, and as true of the human body that all its limbs go together to comprise it, so it can be said of Christ that in some way, all His limbs or spirit – baptized Corinthians go together to form one body, the church (v. 13), a church that belongs to Him (v. 27).

Like the human body of (v. 29) which enjoys its oneness of unity in the face of its many members, Christ, too, preserves His oneness or integrity in the face of the Corinthians who now belong to Him. He does so through the Spirit and in spite of the ethnocultural and especially charismatic diversity (cf vv. 4 – 11) of all the Corinthians Christians. Paul emphasized that through the spirit, all the Corinthians go together to form one body, one human body ....be they Jew or Greek, slave or free, and also that it is in (v.27) that the apostles seeks to make even more meaningful the compact and enigmatic appendage of (v. 12 c:) “so it is with Christ”.

Ziesler’s observation is quite germane here, He writes:

As for the body of Christ, it is in no way equivalent to Christ as a person, but is the community of those who live by and under the divine power... In 1 Cor 12:12 – 31 ... the apparent equation of the church with Christ in (v. 12) must be understood in the light of the whole argument, which is that the church is the body empowered and controlled and defined by the Spirit, (see especially vv. 13 and 1 – 11), ‘so also is Christ’ in (v. 12) is thus a condensed expression for this view, which is more fully set out in (v. 27), ‘now you are the body of Christ and individually member of it, and which rests on the understanding of the church as the community of the Spirit.

**Hence, for Paul, the church is a visible body, but a body whose constitutive reality is essentially mysterious, since it is the body – made up of the multitude of those who believe – of Christ invisibly present in them in order to communicate to them His life of grace.**



Thus the concept of the Church as the body of Christ is more than just a metaphor.

The term directly expresses something about the relation of the church to Christ, its profound union with him through the Spirit, indeed unity with him in the Spirit, the constituting of this unity by baptism and its renewal by the Eucharist, and about the intrinsic union of the members among themselves, with the obligation of making this unity visible and fruitful.

The church itself can only be understood as the result of Christ's saving action in his suffering; crucifixion, and resurrection, and his continual activity in the Holy Spirit.

The body of Christ, formerly crucified and now glorified, inseparable from the person of Christ; unite to itself all the faithful. They become members of Christ in baptism by means of their bodies. The physical union of Christians to the individual body of the risen Christ brings about participation in Christ's life in a mystical union; or, in other words, a real and mysterious union ... It is in this way that the mystical body of Christ is built.

It is built by those Christians and congregations – perhaps standing alone in various parts of the world, but mysteriously members of each and of Christ who are steadfastly faithful to Christ's gospel and continue in His mission of reconciliation and his suffering.

{19} Ibid P. 199

{20} Certraux P. 93

{21} Jacque Maritain; Saint Paul {London: Cassell and Co. Ltd. 1942 P. 198.

{22} Schnackenburg P. 169

{23} Francois Amiot; The Key concepts of St. Paul {New York: Herder and Herder; 1962; trans John Dingle} PP. 185 – 186.

## Chapter 4

### **4. The doctrine of the mystical body of Christ.**

#### 4.1. Introduction

I, as Shivuri, I don't want to involve myself whether the letter to the Ephesians was written by Paul or not. What I know is that the letter to the Ephesians form part of the New Testament Kanon. Paul also uses this letter to explain unity in the church of God.

Paul in his doctrine, speaks, always and everywhere, of the union with God that binds all men together in Christ. He indicated that "God has raised to a supernatural perfection the natural unity that exist between men". Henceforth they are one, but one in Christ, one with a unit so sublime that they are as little able to attain it by their unaided efforts as they are to comprehend it by their unaided reason. This unity affects our being from every point of view. It unites us with ourselves, it unites us with one another, it unites us each and all together with God, it unites us each and all together with Christ. Thus, by a kind of multiplication of itself, so to speak, it adapts itself to our multiplicity and enfolds us, just as we are into its own oneness.

#### 4.2 The mystery of Christ

In the first place, unity, unites us with Christ. This is the principles of all the rest, it is from the savior that all supernatural unity comes to men, just as it is from Him that they have their whole supernatural life. From the supernatural standpoint, to exist means to be in Christ. To have life in the eyes of God, to have dignity, a hope, an eternity, is also to be in Christ. To perform salutary works, to know, to hop, to love, is again and always to be in Christ.

He is the head, we are the members, He is the vine, we are the branches, He is life in its source, and we are animated by that life, He is unity, and we many are one in Him who is one. Between Him and ourselves all is common. All that He is, all that He has done,



even His least action, is a cause of our most interior life. His purity, His justice, His holiness “flow into” us, as theologians say, they become our own, because he has become our own, and thus we are made holy, just, and pure before God, but solely because him and in him. His birth and His life, His death and His resurrection especially His own, since He is ours, they are prolonged in a mysterious way, by the sacraments and by grace, in our elevation to glory.

Secondly, the “mystery” unites us with God. This union we have in Christ, and only in Christ, since He is God and since we are in Him, in him we are made divine, since he is the Son and we are in Him, we of adoption in Him, since he possesses the Spirit and we are in Him, in Him we have the Spirit.

The justification that makes us intrinsically holy is the prolongation in the members of the action of the triune God, whereby the body and blood of our head was made the body and blood of the holy of holies at the moment of the incarnation.

Thirdly, the “mystery” unites all men together in Christ, since in God’s eyes all men have only by one reason of their attachment to the one saviour, it follows from the same principles that gives each one his individual life. Hence, men are catholic and universal they are men of the church and of the universe, and intrinsically so. Each is perfected by all the others in what is most interior to Himself, that is, in this Christ from whom he has life, each has his personal life and holiness, his good works and his merits, but he possesses them in common with all other men, they are truly his own, but at the same time truly theirs.

One and the same holiness flows in all of humanity, each has this holiness as his own and each is intrinsically holy, because each of Christ’s members is truly alive, and each possesses this holiness through union with all the others, by communion with all the saints, living and dead, because all live in one and the same Christ. Thus is mankind united with itself in Christ.

Finally, the “mystery” unites each man with himself. At the same time it imposes an obligation to rise above self, it establishes a new, purer, supernatural code of morality, it calls for a Christian holiness, for a Christian chastity, and above all for Christian

charity. In Christ we must live for God and for our brethren, since we are to live with them in Christ. This indicated clearly that Paul speaks of our incorporation with Christ in the church and with our brothers and sisters. If we are in union with God, then we as Christians will be binded together in Christ.

#### **4.3. The Mystical Body:**

St. Paul is the first to proclaim and explain the doctrine that he has learned. Even while he is yet engaged in the task of laying the foundations of the church, we hear him telling his neophytes that the church is the body of Christ. Henceforth it is no longer Christ that we seek, but the church. But not deceived, however: the church is not a mere multitude of isolation individuals. The church is Christ, there is neither Greek nor Barbarian, neither Jew nor Gentile, but only Christ, who is all things in all men. John also states that he is the new life that is infused into men, the unfailing light that is kindled in their souls, and the divine gift whereby all receive the power to become Sons of God. In the same breath he describes the divinity of the Savior and the divinization of the mystical body, the two are disclosed together, one with the nature of is revealed only when the nature of the church is revealed, for the fullness of Christ is the church. Therefore the church cannot live the life of grace that she has received, without manifesting herself to others and to herself as the mystical body of the Savior. This idea of union with God through Christ in the church continues to grow more perfect and complete until Euthanasius, Hilary, and particularly Cyril of Alexandria come to explain more fully the nature of this unity, and to show how it enables creatures to share the very life of God in Christ.

Since it is inseparable from the dogma of christology, the doctrine of the mystical body is one with central truth of Christianity. They did battle for the dogma of christology, but in order to illustrate this truth of two natures in the one person of Christ they spoke of the two elements, divine and human, g race and nature, that are united in the members of the Savior. They fought for the dogmas of ecclesiology, of grace, of the real presence, of the value of good works, and each time, in order to give these truths a better expression, they have mentioned the mystical body.



The message is this: in the church, which is the continuation of Christ, there exists between the incarnate word and each Christian more than any bond of love, however ardent, more than relation of resemblance, however close, more than the bond of total dependence that binds to their one Savior all men who have received the grace of pardon and sanctification. There is something more than the union of subjects to any kind, more than the insecure incorporation of members in an organism, more than the closest possible moral union. There is a "physical" union, we should say, if the very term itself did not appear to place this bond in the category of mere natural unions. At all events it is a real, ontological union, or since the traditional names are still the best, it is a mystical transcendent, supernatural union whose unity and reality exceed our powers of expression, it is a union that God alone can make us understand, as he alone was able to bring it into being.

#### **4.4. We must stop regarding all separations, past and present, as acts of schism.**

The word "schism" which in the New Testament means a needless division in the local church occasioned, not by disputes about revealed truth, but by arrogance and lack of love (1Cor 1:10, 11: 18 f, 12: 24 f.), was in the patristic period applied exclusively to separation, for whatever cause, from the catholic church – an act which the fathers, not distinguishing between the church visible and invisible, equaled with separation from Christ and saving grace. Rome maintains this view, though allowing that schism through invisible ignorance may not prove to be damning. Recently, under Anglican guidance stemming from men like T. A Lacey and O. C Quick, world Protestantism has embraced the notion that the church is in a state of "internal schism", and the ecumenical movement has called an association of "penitent schismatic". But this is surely unhelpful and misleading. It suggest that all our separations, as such, are morally blameworthy and unjustifiable. But this is not so. To separate for truth's sake, at the summons of a biblically enlightened conscience, is not sin. When, without failure of love or respect, men dissociate themselves from their previous church connections in order to be free to obey God, this is not, and never was schism. It may be their duty to break with Rome over the gospel, and as the baptist and independent dissenters of 1662



though it their duty to stand apart from the re-established church of England and gather churches according to what they held to be the biblical model. For such separation the word “schism” is a pejorative misnomer, which should be dropped from ecumenical discussion. It can only engender a false sense of guilt about divisions which are rooted in clearage of principle, and encouraged an ungodly attitude of “union at any price”. Union between separated churches in the same area is certainly to be sought – after all, as Forsyth said, “union is unity talking effect” – but it may not be bought at the cost of truth, or the compromise of conviction J. I. Packer (1966.24).

**4.5. We must practice intercommunion with Christians and congregations of sound faith**

In (1 Cor 10: 16f) Paul speaks of the Lord’s supper, the communion of the body and blood of Christ, as a means whereby the union of Christians with Christ, and in Christ with each other, is both expressed and deepened. The “one loaf” both evidence and contributes to our oneness in the one body. Fellowship at the Lord’s table is thus a means of maintaining “the unity of the Spirit”. Here is the theological argument for an open communion table, from which no adherent of an orthodox Christian body is barred, and it is an unanswerable argument, for to decline to express at the Lord’s table the union which we have with our fellow – believers would actually be a breach of unity. We may regret that the church of England is so grudging and slow to move at official level in the matter of eucharistic fellowship with non – Episcopal lovers of Jesus Christ, but evangelicals can give a leader here, both in welcoming free churchmen to our communion service and in communicating with them at theirs and this we should actively do.

**4.6. We must insist that evangelical doctrine is the only proper basis for closer church relations**

It is commonly said that Anglican unity is “cultic” rather than “confessional”, and that the Anglican communion is not a “confessional body. It is assumed that this is to its credit, but the truth is the reverse. Basic to the biblical idea of the church, as we saw, is

the thought of knowing and maintaining the “one faith”. Every church, therefore, should be a “confessional” body. It is good, no doubt, that we should be in full communion with the old Catholic, who have the historical episcopate, even though their faith is as yet far from evangelical, but it is deplorable that we should not yet have entered into comparable relations with, instance, the church of Scotland. This indicated clearly that all churches must be treated equally. By doing this we shall be busy promoting unity among various churches. Unity among various churches must prevail because the church is essentially a fellowship of believers, the totality of those who Christ has united to Himself through the Holy Spirit. What constitutes the church is not any of its historical outward features papacy, hierarch, succession, or any institutional means of grace – but the actual grace given reality of faith in the Christ of the gospel. Faith is primary, because Christ, and the Holy Spirit, and the forgiveness of sins, and primary. Reconciliation is needed if we still have churches who do not practice regular communion with each other, and exercise to announce itself, not as the church (i. e the universal church outcropping in the particular place, but as the local representative of the congregational, or Methodist, or Anglican, or Baptist denomination, the position is actually scandalous, for it hides from view the true unity of the one church of God. In such a situation, all parties are in the same boat, even if, the oldest retains its original geographical title and calls itself (say) not “the Anglican church” but the church of England. The logic of situation turns all the church families involved into denominations and indeed sects de facto, whatever they may call themselves J. I. Packer (1966.26).

When I go back to Paul I find him speaking about “one faith” through which, as he tells us elsewhere, men receive God’s grace and actually come to belong to the one church. Paul further proclaims the church unity “one body, one spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God, and Father of all “(Eph 4:4 – 6) – it is of this grace that he is bearing witness.

What does Paul mean by “one faith?” Paul’s answer certainly would have been: faith in Jesus Christ according to my gospel in other words, trust in the person of the Savior on the basis of certain truths about His work and its effects. So the idea of the church is of



a community which knows God's grace through believing in Jesus Christ, and which knows Jesus Christ through believing specific doctrines about Him.

The idea of the church as a single worldwide community of believers, not divided by their separateness in space and time, one because God is one, and Christ is one, and grace is one, was used by the New Testament teachers to interpret and guide the corporate life of "the churches" that group of small and obscure communities who confessed Jesus Christ as Lord.

Forsyth expressed that the "total church was not made up by adding the local churches together, but the local was made a church by representing there and then the total church". The church in the town, or in the house of so-and-so, means the total church as emerging there, looking out there, taking effect there"

The one church is to be many as England to her countries. It is not strictly speaking correct to speak of the Corinthian churches but of the church of Corinth, as it comes to the surface there. And the church in a private house was as much the church as the whole Christianity of Corinth. So in the one locality you might have a multitude of churches "with and equal in the whole churches everywhere". In fact, the New Testament knows only these two applications of the word church- to the one universe church, as such, and to individual congregations, the twos and threes who, meeting in Christ's name, locally manifest the one church's life.

Is it right, then to call a group of congregation a "church", and speak of (say) the church of England, or the Methodist church? In principle, one can justify this usage, in as much as the banding together of local congregations into a team for mutual aid and more effective evangelism which is, from one standpoint, every denominations formal rationale-is itself a characteristic manifestation of the life of the church universal, no less than is the meeting of a single congregation. But when different families of churches live side by side, in a state of local overlap, yet do not practice regular communion with each other, they breach the bond of unity which Paul was stressing to the Corinthians community.



Paul's use of the "body" figure in the entire paragraph concerning the breaking down of "the dividing wall of hostility" and the reconciling of both Jew and Gentile unto God "in one body through the cross" (2:11 – 22). This has been brought about because the "blood of Christ" has been offered as the point of reconciliation, and He has actually created in himself one new man in place of the two (2:13 – 15). It is certain that the "one new man" (v. 15) and the "one body" are terms for the church because Paul goes on to call them "saints and members of the household of God" v. 19, "a holy temple in the Lord" (v. 21), and "a dwelling place of God in the spirit" (v. 22). This is the focal point and climax of Paul's doctrine of the church. The church is not a human organization, it is a new creation. Into the Old creation came sin, alienation, and estrangement. Man was alienated from God by sin, the intimate fellowship of creature with creator was broken. As a corollary, man was estranged from his fellow man. Enmity sprang up between individuals, races, groups and nations. Now, miracle of miracles, God has reconciled sinful man unto himself in "the blood of Christ", i. e, in his life. How has this happened? At one point God was in perfect communion with man – in Jesus Christ. At one point the relationship between God and man was unmarred by sin – in Jesus Christ. At one point man offered a perfect obedience unto God and was accepted – in Jesus Christ. As Paul so eloquently argued, the barriers of sin and hostility were breached, all of the humanity, reconciled unto him "in one body through the cross, thereby bringing the hostility to an end" (2:16). What had been true in Christ is now being realized in his body, the church. Through the redemptive act of Christ, the church came into being. It is the community of reconciliation, a fellowship of those who have entered into a new relationship to God, and thereby an new relationships to their fellow man, through Christ. For this reason, strife, estrangement and divisions are the most devastating sins imaginable in the church. They are not "just any sin" which mars the believers relationship to God, the are the sins which strike at the very root and nature of the church. If the church is that new creation of God in which man is reconciled to God and neighbor "in one body", it must demonstrate in its life the fact of reconciliation. If it is not demonstrating this reality of the new humanity it is failing to be the church. From this point of view, the church is always in the process of becoming the church.

In the great ethical appeal which constitutes the second half of this epistle, Paul makes a very important statement concerning the "one body". In the sentence he makes a play upon the work "call", which, in the Greek, is also the root word for "church" (4:1): "I, the prisoner of the Lord, call you, therefore, to walk worthily of the calling to which you have been called". It is impossible to render in smooth English the order of the Greek word. The sentence begins with the verb *parakalo*, "call alongside", in the emphatic first position. Then he inserts the object "you" before he comes to the subjects "I, the prisoner of the Lord". This urgent appeal "calls them along" to walk "with all lowliness and meekness, with patience, for bearing one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace (4:2, 3). This "unity of the spirit" brings the concepts of their oneness to the center of attention and introduces a most remarkable statement of those elements which constitute the unity of Christian believers (4:4 - 6)

When Paul speaks of the church throughout this epistle (or elsewhere) he is speaking concretely of the actual bodily relationship of Christian believers wherever they are gathered together under the call of Christ.

When Paul, then, is speaking about the one body, he is speaking concretely. Baptism is an actual, visible sign, by which one is incorporated into an actual body of believers. The Lord's supper is an actual, visible sign of the unity of the body in Christ and within its members. This certainly means that all Christians should seek to express the unity they have in Christ in every possible relationship. But it does not mean that they should seek an even larger, organic institution which would incorporate more and more individual Christians, while trying to gloss over or ignore the actual differences in the understanding of salvation, baptism, the Lord's supper, discipline, or the nature of the church.

The best thing a Baptist can do for a Presbyterian is to bear his witness concerning infant baptism, or predestination, if he really believes in them, as his own contribution to the understanding of God's revelation of himself in Christ and in the church.

A committed Christian is bearing witness to truth as he sees it, and he can never be involved in the colossal hypocrisy of pretending that his understanding of truth does not



make any difference. To him it make all the difference, and, to that truth, as he sees it, he must never be devoted.

In fact, one congregation cannot even be a church in a particular place if it ignores its responsibility and relationship to all true believers everywhere. It cannot be the church if it ignores Christ's commission to evangelize unbelievers everywhere.

Because it is clear that the one body is an actual fellowship of Christian believers as members with one another in the body of Christ, it follows that a national "church" or denominational "church" cannot really be a church. It is a great ecclesiastical institution, but it cannot be "the church" in the sense Paul described. To identify this structural institution with the church is one of the great heresies of Christendom as Emil Brunner pointed out in the misunderstanding of the church. The church certainly must have a bodily form, but that form is not a great ecclesiastical structure it is the dynamic fellowship of Christian believers as members one of another, bearing one another's burdens, partaking of the one loaf, submitting to the common discipline, reconciled to one another and to God in the most intimate personal relationship. This Koinonia is the essence of the church, and whenever the structure of the institution is identified with the church, a terrible distortion has occurred.

Such is the meaning of Paul's great concept the church as of the body of Christ. A rediscovery of it would transform Christendom, but the implementation of it will always be a continuing task as "we grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every joint with which it is supplied, when each part is working properly, makes bodily growth and upbuilds itself in love (4:15, 16). To say that any church or denomination has attained this "unity of the faith of the knowledge of the Son of God" or has measured up to "the stature of the fullness of Christ" (4:13) is to border on blasphemy, but to commit ourselves to speaking the truth in love so that we may grow toward that matchless goal is the highest loyalty for the members of his body-the church.

It is therefore important that one should hold on to the fact that the believers become members of the church as people who are in the first place united with Christ and not



the other way around. By becoming members of the church they also share in Christ Käsemann (1972. 202) see also Bultman (1968:311). According to Käsemann Paul is not actually interested in the church in so far as it becomes instrumental in Christ earthly revelation of himself and of his becoming a body in the world through his spirit. The church as the body of Christ is the sphere of his reign in the world, and this the reason why the notion of the body of Christ is only employed in paranetic contexts. Through all the gifts the members are bound together on an equal basis, and it is this fact which legitimes the use of the metaphor "body of Christ".

Because Christ is the representative of those who believe in him, they are the "represented", and as such regarded as part of him. Christ is the Representative of the church. Because it is represented by Him, its members have been incorporated into Him, grafted into Him, and in this way they become his body Roberts (1992. 284). Because we are members of his body: Christ has thus cared for the believers, the members of his body.

In (Eph 4: 4f) Paul indicated that the unity of the body is directly involved in the metaphor itself. Paul cannot conceive of anything else, the body is one in as much as there is but one spirit, one hope, one faith, one Lord, one baptism, one God and Father of all. Like is not so much proved as assumed. It is to Paul axiomatic, the basis of all subsequent thought . How, for instance, could Jew and Gentile become 'one in Christ' unless there was 'one body' in which to be united (1 Cor 12: 13)'. By this Paul indicated that unity can be grasped by a flesh of spiritual insight, brought by the spirit. He further indicated that, " those who are brought by faith into a new relationship with Christ find themselves thereby brought into a new relationship with countless others. The sense of being Christ's brings with it, immediately and inseparably, a sense of oneness with all Christ's people. On the broad scale, this is a confessional unity, for it is based on a common confession, made by lip and life, that Jesus is Lord. On a narrow scale, it is a local unity, for they find themselves actually meeting together with those living in their vicinity who profess this same "faith -loyalty" to Jesus Christ. Paul emphasized the fact that all Christians should accept one another regardless of their

affiliation, because there is no Jew or Gentile in God. All Christians form the body of Christ.

#### 4.7. Covenant of love in marriage

The climax of this long saga of love covenant and marriage, and the point at which marriage becomes a sacrament in the New Covenant, is noted in St. Paul's epistle to the Ephesians: "Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her, that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that He might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or nay such thing, that she might be holy or without blemish. Even so husbands should love their wives as they do their own bodies. He who loves his wives loves himself. For no man ever hates his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, as Christ does the church, because we are members of His body. "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one". This is a great mystery, and I mean in reference to Christ and the church " (5:25 – 32). Perhaps we can best understand what the apostle is saying here by starting at the end. The word translated as "mystery" is sacramentum in Latin and mysterion in Greek. It is the very word St. Paul uses and enlarges on at the beginning of his letter, in describing the hidden plan of God whereby all are to be united in Christ: the mystery of God in Christ, the paschal mystery, which is at the center and heart of the new covenant.

What the apostle says about marriage, therefore, is related to or falls within this divine plan. The union of Christ with His church is so intimate as to find no more apt comparison than the relation of husband and wife. The relationship of husband and wife in turn finds its only adequate expression and sign in Christ's love for His church. Furthermore, since the union of Christ with His church is sanctifying, making her holy, so the union of husband and wife is mutually sanctifying because it is situated within the mystery of Christ's union with His church. This is especially so since Christ "gave Himself up" for the church, purifying her. In this way the union of husband and wife is drawn into Christ's sacrificial love for His church, and thus into the mystery of His



death and resurrection. Marriage, then, is a sacrament. It is a covenant between a man and a woman, committing them to live with one another in a bond of married love whose character was established by God. This covenant is a symbol of the undying covenant love established by Christ with His church in the paschal mystery.

It is an encounter with Christ which makes effective the graces it signifies, the graces needed to make human love enduring faithful, and fruitful, and so a suitable image of the love between Christ and His church.

#### **4.8. Theology of Ecumenism”**

John (17:19 – 21) Reads as follows:

<sup>19</sup> For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified. <sup>20</sup> My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, <sup>21</sup> that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me.

The theology of ecumenism seeks to define the conditions of that unity more precisely, with a view to assessing accurately the present position of our separated Christian brethren and the implications of their hoped –for union with the church. It seeks to determine their relationship to the church, both as individuals and communities, and the way which that relationship can best be developed in the direction of Christian unity. The theology of ecumenism indicated that union with the church does not in fact exist among separated Christians. That is why John (17: 21) indicated that all of them must be one in Christ. The theology of ecumenism examines the conflict between truth and error in dissident Christian communities and the manner in which it work itself out in the course of time. It investigates the diversity which is compatible with the church’s unity and the possibility and significance of intermediate stage or reunion on the way to the unity. The theology of ecumenism encourage reunion among the Christians members in the church of God. The obligation to strive for Christian unity is established and the necessary guidance provided concerning the proper methods to be used. The theology of ecumenism justifies the place of a varied and pervasive ecumenical programme in the life of the church, of an habitual awareness among Catholic of the ecumenical problem and a concern to promote sympathy and genuine



understanding between themselves and other Christians Mc Namara Kevin<sup>P</sup> (1961 : 254)

#### **4.9. His Body; the church ; in Ephesians.**

If there is any doubt that the phrase of “body of Christ” is actually a metaphor in the earlier epistles; the usage in Ephesians should certainly remove it. As if to forestall any attempt to erase all distinctions between Christ and the church, thereby identifying the extension of the incarnation, Paul deliberately changes the figure: Christ is the head of the church; his body! The God of our Lord Jesus Christ ... has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, which is his body; the fullness of him who fills all in all {Eph. 1 : 17; 22; 23}. He makes an appeal for the submission of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is Himself its Saviour”{5 : 23}. Thus, Christ is the head of the church and the saviour of the church, not simply identical with the church. Further; “the church is subject to Christ,” and in the same way, wives are to “be subject in everything to their husbands” {5:24}. Again, the church cannot be identified with “the resurrection body” of Christ because the relationship is intimate communion like that of husband and wives: “Husbands; love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself for her; having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word; that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing; that she might be holy without blemish {5: 25-27}.

This expression has become a significant term in biblical theology indicating the community in unity of the Godhead in Israelite monotheism and corollary community in unity of God’s people. The concept is epitomical in a biblical monograph by Aubrey R. Johnson, the one and the many in the Israelite conception of God{1942} and, further delivered by such interpreters as John A. T. Robinson, the body, a study in Pauline Theology {Chicago : Henry Regnery Company, 1952} pp, 13ff.

{18} Ibid P. 58

{19} cf Best; go Cit P. 141

#### 4.10. Conclusion

Brethren, I am writing this thesis to remind you of the battle that we Christians are engaged in, the fight of God's faith. In his letter to the Ephesians the Apostle Paul says: "Put on all of God's armor so that you will be able to stand safe against all strategies and tricks of Satan, for we are not fighting against people made of flesh and blood, but against persons without bodies – the evil rules of the unseen world, those mighty Satanic being and evil princes of darkness who rule this world, and against huge numbers of wicked spirits in the spirit of the world, (Eph 6:11 – 12). Let us not allow the different cultures in our churches divided our Christianity. All Christians in the various denominations are the followers of God. Let us be united because we all form the body of Christ. All of us, as the followers of Jesus Christ believe in the trinity and we are which was brought about by the blood of Jesus Christ. But the bad side of it, unlike other religious such as Buddhism, Islamic, Hinduism, etc, the Christian community is made up of unites (denominations) who segregate one another as children of God. In Hebrew chap. 4 verse 9 it is said "so there is full complete rest still awaiting for the people of God. I do not think the complete rest mentioned in this verse is for Christians who discriminate one another on grounds of affiliation to the Zion Christian Church, Lutheran Church, Anglican Church, or any other denomination.

We must bear in mind that all Christian's denomination form the body of Christ which is the Heavenly church – in- awaiting. Therefore if we reject one another, it means we do not quality to form that holy church (1 Corinthians 12:13 – 27). In his letter to the (Ephesians Chap 4: 3 – 4) Paul says, "try always to be peace with one another, because we are all parts of the one body, we have the same spirit, and we all have the same God and Father who is over us all and in us, and living through every part of us".

Paul hits out at disorders in every church or denomination. He emphasizes the need for peaceful and friendly relationship in the church. People who are always engaged in

quarrels, arguments and claims that they have some secret knowledge above the world of God, are condemned in this letter. But avoid stupid arguments, long lists of ancestors, quarrels, and fights about the law. Give at least two warnings to the person who causes divisions, and then have nothing more to do with him. You know what such a person is corrupt, and his sins prove that he is wrong (Titus 2:9, 10).

Brethren, behold philosophers are at loose to preach the Gnostic gospel that will lead many Christians astray. This shows that there are great religious battles among various denominations. The victory of Christ is the victory of churches. The victory of the church is for all Christians regardless of membership to Zion Christian Church, Roman Catholic Church, Pentecostal Church, and Apostolic Faith Mission etc. Thus let us not listen to the false teachers and their philosophy for we have our great teachers. What is left for us is to stand firm and fight this good fight of faith. Furthermore let us make sure that we are united in the body of Christ and we are His members. Again let us take care not to be swayed from this belief (13ff) by any threat, be it fear for the spirit world, or political forces. We are incorporated to Christ through his cross.



## Chapter 5.

### **5. The unity of the church as the witness of the church**

#### **5.1. Introduction.**

I do not pray for these only; but for those who are to believe in me through the word; that they may all be one; even as thou, Father, art in me; and I in thee; that they also may be in us; so that the world may believe that thou hasn't sent me. {John 17: 20 – 21`}.

The unity of the Church of Christ is a gift of God bestowed in the birth and constitution of the church at Pentecost. The unity of the church is a gift, not something sought or grasped or attained, but; are with any gift, something which may be refused or dishonored or misused.

The gift of unity is; in the first instance; in its origination, something, which belongs to God. He gives at Pentecost something of His own; something of Himself; His Holy Spirit, to the church. The unity given to the Christ at Pentecost is vouchsafed for all men baptized into the body of the church since Pentecost. It is this same unity received and enjoyed within the church and manifested and verified in the life of the church in this world which is the witness of the church to the world.

#### **5.2. The integrity of witness in Unity.**

The unity which God gives the church is not given for the sake of the church as such to be secreted within the church or to be merely prized or praised therein, but the unity of the church is given to be content and shape of the church love for and service to the world. William Stringfellow {1964. 394}. Nor does God give unity to the church for His own sake; as if He needed anything at all, even the unity of those who call upon His name. The gift of unity is not an act of necessity for God, but an act of generosity of God.

It is for the sake of the world; for the sake of all persons and powers who do not or will not call upon God's name, that unity is given to the church, for it is in the unity of the church that the world may behold the unity into which God invites the whole of the world. The unity of the church of Christ which is the gift of God is the same unity revealed in the world in Christ Himself; that is; man reconciled to God and; within that unity, reconciled within himself, with all the men and with all things in the whole of creation. This is the unity which the church is given and which the church embodies on behalf of the world which the church receives as the representative of the world before God. The unity given to the church is the exemplification and forerunner of the restoration of the unity of the whole of creation in Christ. Hence the very unity of the church is the authentic witness of the church. W. Stringfellow {1964. 395}. Where the church denies or rejects or perverts the gift of unity the witness of the church to the world is lost. That is a loss which the church suffers even more acutely than the world, though it must be remembered that God thereby suffers no loss whatever. The disunity of the church does not stop God's love for the world; nor does the disunity of the church modify or diminish God's witness to Himself. The disunity of the church, rather, deprives the church of the joy of witnessing to God's care for and work in the world.

And precisely because God's love for the world is not depended upon the unity of the church, and His action in the world does not witness to Him; the world is not pardoned from failure to acknowledge and honor God by the mere disunity of the church and immorality of the church's witness. The world is not excused for unbelief by the dissipation of the church's unity or the collapse of the church's witness in unity, but the world is thereby abandoned to death by the only people born of the resurrection from death.

Disunity does not compromise or interrupt the word of God for the world; but it does distort and even destroy the church's witness to the word of God; in the world. The unity of the church essentially involve the establishment and existence of the church as a living people, a holy nation. Manifest and militant, in this world; which embraces as its witness to a broken, divided and fallen world; all diversities of mankind and which

empirically transcends here and now and already all that separates; alienates and segregates men from themselves, each other and the rest of creation. Any specific schemes or proposals for merger or consolidation among the sects and denominations, any plans or prospects for reunion of the church, must grasp and serve this end: unity is integral to witness; the church exists merely for the sake of the world.

### **5.3. The Sacrament of Unity.**

The unity of the church which is the witness of the church is not necessarily a monolithic institutional unification of the several churches a "super church" – for the very reason that the witness requires a unity encompassing all diversities of human. But that unity does inherently involve a total community and organic union of all who are baptized professing the same biblical and apostolic faith, living in communion with one another now; and with the whole of the people of God who have gone before and who are yet to be; and sharing a manifold but common ministry for the whole world W. Stringfellow {1964. 396}. The style of the common life of the church and of the members of the church is most manifest and most comprehensive in the sacraments given and ordained by Christ himself: in baptism and in the holy communion. There can be both a common understanding and universal recognition, within the whole church, of the baptism of each member of the church. No can there be such a unity of the church lest all and any who are baptized be welcome into the common life of the church which is the holy communion.

Both baptism and the holy communion are ecumenical sacraments in the broadest meaning of ecumenical, that is, both are sacraments of the unity of all mankind in Christ. It is too misleading to the world as well as to many church people to speak of these sacraments as sacraments of the unity of the church as such. They are sacraments of that; all right. But only in the sense in which the church is and is called to be image of the world in reconciliation.

Baptism and the communion – far from being mere religious rituals – are most concretely political and social in character. Baptism confesses the faith and experience



of the church, and of the people of the church; in all times and places in the grace of God in Christ reconciling the whole world including, now, this particular person being baptized, and marks the initiation and guarantee of the new life of the one baptized in this world in the society of the church.

Let it be emphasized that the holy communion is not a celebration of God's presence in any sanctuary or shrine, but it is the celebration of God's presence and activity in the world and those who gather now and then in a sanctuary of the church do so as a witness to the world that God's presence and action in the world is truly reconciling since those who gather have been and are in fact already reconciled, despite their sin, despite all their worldly cares, despite all of their different conditions; despite any affliction common to men; despite even the power of death itself, despite everything known and suffered in this world by men W. Stringfellow (1964. 397.

Unity as witness requires a recovery in the presently separated churches of the sacramental integrity of both baptism and the holy communion, and that may too easily imply that; since the validity of baptism in most denominations and even sects is already generally acknowledged in the several churches, the main course to unity is inter communion.

Surely inter – communion, such as that which exists between the Episcopal church and the Phillipine Independent church or between the church of England and the church of Sweden; is a venture in unity. But inter – communion between churches in different places; such as in these examples, is a different matter, from the point of view of unity as witness; than inter – communion among churches in the same place. But it is no witness to that unity if there were inter – communion between, say; Lutherans and Episcopalians in America and there, still existed in the cities and towns of the land separated congregations of Lutherans and Episcopalians. For how is such separation to be explained to the world or understood by the world? How is the communion a sacrament of common life if we now and again share the Lord's table but then are separated in the other practices of our lives? While inter – communion between churches in different places is a step toward unity which is witness, inter – communion

without organic union among churches in the same place faces the obstacles which are perhaps most difficult to resolve for the sake of unity, that is, the so – called non – theological divisions among the churches.

Inter – communion without organic union would permit the various congregations of different denominations in the same place to cling a little longer to that which divides and distinguishes them one from another according to class or wealth or social status or race or ethnic origin or language or local tradition. Local inter – communion and organic union would , in other words, most profoundly test whether the church will be the church whose unity truly is a witness to the world because it in fact transcends those very things.

- Like class and status and property and all the other vested interests
- Which divide the world and alienate men from each other Yet any unity is too cheap which merely represents a formal theological entente or abstract reciprocity respecting baptism and the communion, without a resolution in the organic union of the church of all the secular division of the several churches. Comity may be more faithful and mature in a Christian sense than hostility but it is much less than the unity which is witness. W. Stringfellow {1964.398} I have used W. Stringfellow oftenly because he is so relevant to my thesis in Chapter 4.

Or to put it all very bluntly, the unity which is witness inherently requires an organic union of all the churches in a shared common life in all things.

Unity means not just friendly relations and fraternal collaboration – nor even intercommunion – among the several churches of Protestantism Orthodoxy, Anglicanism and Rome; as welcome as that may be; but in the end it means the organic union of all the churches for the sake of the world.

#### **5.4. 2. The Apostolic Precedent of Unity.**

The unity of the church which is witness to the world is a gift of God in Pentecost. As the account relates {Acts 2} in Pentecost is God filling the apostles with His Holy Spirit in a way which shows on lookers and strangers the universality of the word of God. The holy spirit in the day of the Pentecost made the word of God present and active in this world and accessible to every man whoever he be; wherever he be; in a way, indeed in which the on – looker is converted. In Pentecost, the gift of unity, the gift of the Spirit which is one and the same for all who receives it, the gift of the Spirit which is unifying, is given to the church in a way which is versatile enough to reach and embrace all men in all of their diversities and divisions and separations. Pentecost is; remembered, a public witness to the word of God. There were multitude of people on the day of the Pentecost. There were men of every tongue and nation and station; each hears the testimony of the apostles to the word of God in his own language, in a way which he may understand and believe in spite of any worldly distinction between himself and any other man. The unity given in Pentecost transcends all worldly disunities, and the worldly divisions common among men do not threaten the unity given.

Though the gift of the Spirit be manifold; it is not divisive of the church. Though there be varieties of work and service within the ministry and witness of the church, each is a manifestation of the same Spirit, each attests to the same word of God.

#### **5. 5. Success or Failure?**

What constitutes the visible unity of the church is itself a controversial subject. At its 1991 Assembly in Canberra, the WCC ratified a statement on the nature of unity, some sentences of which at least would receive general {but as always, not universal} acceptance. The unity of the church to which we are called is a Koinonia given and expressed in the common confession of the apostolic faith; a common sacramental life



entered by one baptism and celebrated together in one eucharistic fellowship; a common life in which members and ministries are mutually recognized and reconciled; and a common mission witnessing to the gospel of God's grace to all people and serving the whole of creation.

If this description of the ecumenical goal is on the whole correct, then the changes described in the previous section constitute steps on the way; but not arrive at the ecumenical goal. They represent the creation of preconditions of unity, but not unity itself. The general feeling of ecumenical stagnation that is prevalent reflects the inability to move beyond friendly division to genuine unity along the lines described by such statement as that adopted by the Canberra WCC Assembly. Division still exists, and not just in the sense of the continued existence of distinct church bodies. Visible unity or full communion at least in some conceptions; is compatible with the continued existence of distinct denominations or traditions. Division consists in the continued absence of many of the elements of visible unity referred to above, most notably, common eucharistic life and mutual recognition of ministries and thus of sacraments. Cooperation of various sorts is possible despite this division, but it steps of the common life called for by visible unity, {M.Root {1993. 388}}.

#### **5. 6. The Unity of the Church and the internal Unity of the Churches.**

M Root{1993.396} indicated that the social forces in contemporary American religion that undercut ecumenical striving for visible unity also operate on the denominational level. One of the aspect of the problem can be highlighted by asking what is the relation between the unity ecumenically sought and the unity which already exists within each denomination. Do the means by which a large theological comprehensive church maintains its own unity mitigate against the pursuit of unity with other churches? A commonplace of complaint about the slow pace of ecumenical progress is that ecumenical proposals are blocked by institutional inertia and the instinct for self-preservation. These complaints rarely are given much specificity.

Unity is more pragmatic, institutional, and bureaucratic. Few denominations have structures in place to explore theological self – definition. The problem of conflict in various churches is not simply American, but is even more pronounced in the national or folk churches of Northern Europe. Colin Podmore of the Council for Christianity unity of the general Synod of the church of England has noted the way the English church maintains its unity by means of an informal self – denying ordinance according to which important changes in faith and order {which are then required by unity projects} are not pushed through against the opposition of significant minorities. The divisions within American denominations may not be as institutionally ingrown as they are in the church of England, worries have been expressed in some American churches that theological comprehensiveness and the ability to act on ecumenical proposals are now in serious conflict. When the internal theological diversity within a church includes differences on the criteria for church fellowship or on the theological issues that need to be settled in the process of over coming historical differences; then theological comprehensiveness has anti-ecumenical consequences.

Beyond this particular problem, the more comprehensive and general question concerns the relation between the unity of the particular denomination and the quest for larger unity. Are proposals for wider unity reinforced or undermined by the social means by which denominations maintain whatever unity they possess? In at least some cases; denominational unity and wider ecumenical unity seem to rest on opposing dynamics M. Root {1993. 375}.

#### **5. 7. Reconciliation through Jesus Christ.**

{Col. 1: 20} indicated that God’s purpose “is to reconcile to Himself all things in heaven and earth” and this has been accomplished by the peace Christ brought by his death on the cross. In Christ the fullness of God dwelt yet he is at the same time the “Head of the body” and the first born from the dead. That is, this reconciliation is from sheer grace of God yet accomplished in the humanity of Christ, the crucified risen one who took on our humanity. “He became like us”, said Irenaeus; “that we might become like Him”,. Emphasizing that justification is not only through Christ but by



incorporation into him. Here we are at the heart of the Christian faith, that God so loved the world that He became our brother man in Jesus Christ and lived our life with all its physical, social and historical limitations George S. Yule{1983.151} so identified Himself with us that he stood not only beside the oppressed and the outcast; but beside the enemy and in the place of the enemy suffered the consequences of the sin of the whole human race because of this complete identification. When the Scribes and Pharisees jibe at Him to come down from the cross {that is; not to identify Himself with us, but to use His power His own favour} he, instead, descends into hell the place of separation from the Father and utters the cry of dereliction “why hast thou forsaken me.” “Crucified, dead, buried, descended into hell” is the description of God’s costly grace for our salvation. In the light of this all others considerations are secondary. He said “yes” to us. Thus “yes” which God has said to us must never be superseded by the “noes” we say to each other. Because he has accepted all of us as we are; it entails that we must do so also. This does not mean that we stay as we are but in the body of Christ we cannot put our barriers against each other when God has none. Luther put the point with characteristics insight in a letter to the ministers of Nuremberg who were bitterly divided over the issue of ordination. As Christians we need to be united with one another.

Christ has accepted, not the righteous but the ill assorted variety of hypocrites, proud, selfish and irritable and blind men and women; taking on their fallen nature in order to heal and redeem it. He saved us precisely at that point where we are at enmity against Him, where we are corrupt and disordered {and it is at this point of our disorder we must unite with each other George S. Yule {1983. 15}. This brings out Calvin’s twin emphases that justification is not only through Christ but in Christ. “Evangelicals” tend to stress the former and “Catholic” the latter, but both are essential. As Athanasius puts it he not only gave us medicine of redemption but he took our place as patient. He took into Himself our disordered nature and by his own obedience healed it. He fulfilled the law for us – Christ the one on behalf of the many. He accepted us completely as his brothers and sisters, and as the obedient one, the new Adam; He is the head of this whole new race. This means that Christians in the whole world should accept one



another as Christ did. Divisions of Christians the whole world is forbidden. We as Christians we must condemn such division.

In baptism this truth is marked upon us for in baptism we are united to Christ through His spirit who makes the once and for all work of Christ present to us. In the liturgy of the French reformed church, the minister, prior to the actual baptism; takes the child in his arms and says; "little child; for you Jesus Christ has come, he has fought, he has suffered. For you He entered into the shadows of Gethsemane and the terror of Calvary; for He uttered the cry. ' it is finished". For you he rose from the dead and ascended into heaven; and there for you He intercedes. For you, even though you do not know it; little child; but in this way the world of the gospel is made true; 'We love Him because He first loved us'. This is the truth about us George S. Yule { 1983.152}.

In Colossians the author takes up this fact of our baptism into Christ's death and resurrection, and in (3.9) suddenly writes "Do not lie to one another." This clearly refers back to (2: 12) where he had made the point of our union with Christ in baptism through His death and resurrection . Because God truly loves us, He seeks our welfare and freedom from sin and if we continue in sin we say in effect "Christ has not risen from the dead. We are still slaves to sin and death. This too denies our baptism. Then we adds disunity in the body of Christ which denies our baptism just as much as legalism and unrighteousness. For in the body of Christ there cannot be the separation between Jew and Greek {that most deep – seated division in the ancient world that was religious, racial and cultural, and has certain parallels in our own day}. No can there be barriers between circumcised and uncircumcised, that is between the Jewish, non – Jewish Christians which is uncomfortably like our modern denominations. Nor between barbarians and Scythians as contrasted with the Graeco Roman Civilization, which was the major cultural division in the ancient world. Nor between bond and free, the division between the oppressed and often the oppressors – the division now only too familiar in our world. If this division divide the body of Christ we deny the fact of Christ's death and resurrection marked on us in baptism just as much as we do by our Pelagian legalism or idolatrous living. We have in effect given the priority to nature instead of grace. George S. Yule (1983. 153). Each of us has been united to Christ

through the Spirit by grace only. That is, our natural endowments of race, culture, religion or social status have nothing to do with it at all. If we boast in them or divide the Body of Christ because of them we immediately cease to live by faith in the grace of God alone. We come with the vast variety and in this wonderful way God has united us by dying for each although we were at enmity with Him. The dying of the Son of God on the cross at the hands of sinful men is the death sentence on all sons of men. There is nothing that is fit to build on except this that he loved us and gave Himself for us. L. Newbigin (1957. 98) "Bible studies on first Peter" in we were brought together. Jews and Gentiles, Greeks and Barbarians, circumcised Jewish Christians and non – circumcised Christians, black and white Catholics and Protestants are all accepted in Christ through unacceptable. He is our peace who has broken down the middle wall of partition.

#### 5.8 Conclusion.

Since the only basis for unity is the sheer grace of God in Jesus Christ, then we have to accept each other because He has accepted us unconditionally. It is therefore inadmissible for a church to say we shall accept you if you accept our orders as valid, or our doctrine as valid. This is the way of the Pharisees. Of course doctrine and orders are important but they are no more cause for boasting and exclusiveness than St. Paul blameless Jewish pedigree. There is no unity without reconciliation, but this reconciliation has been given in Christ by his death on the cross.

We cannot now say that we must refrain from unity with those Christians from whom we differ in the interests of truth because our disunity already denies the truth of the gospel that God has accepted us unconditionally for Christ's sake. This entails that we must differentiate between this central initiative of the Holy trinity in our salvation – Christ incarnation, his atoning death and resurrection, our union with Him through the Spirit and the various deductions we make about how this achieved. Because it is the sheer grace of God by which we are saved then there can be no limit to the extent of our response, for it must be the call to live by faith in this God of all grace who has purchased our freedom at such cost to Himself, and this call to faith is a call to love



Him with heart and soul and mind and strength and our neighbour as ourselves. Hence if we come together under grace then we are committed to seek the fullness of the faith, for as Anselm stressed; understanding the faith leads to deeper faith. We should hope that in uniting churches would gain not only from each other but from other Christians as well. For unity means unity in the faith; to grow together “to mature manhood,” to a knowledge of the son of God” to the “full stature of Christ” {Eph. 4: 12 – 13}, and every true move to unity is at the same time a move towards a deeper understanding. “It is the purpose of God” says the writer to the Ephesians “to unite all things in Christ” {Ephesians 1: 10} and “this He has achieved through Christ’s passion {Col. 1: 20}. The church is to be the place where what is promised for mankind is already present as a foretaste, and concrete historical example of this was the blending of Jews and Gentiles together within the church. This division, religious, racial and cultural, was probably the most deep – seated in the ancient world; so that its healing was rightly seen as momentous. There is no unity without forgiveness and reconciliation and there on the cross, by standing beside and in the place of the enemy, our Lord has achieved this reconciliation. Division comes when; because of our being orientated towards ourselves rather than towards God; We claim the various endowments of race, religious insights, culture, wealth, that, we have as the result of God’s gifts as our rights and privileges and use them to set ourselves up over against others who have not got these.

When Paul speaks of the Church throughout this epistle {or elsewhere} he is speaking concretely of the actual bodily relationship of Christian believers whatever they are gathered together under the call of Christ.

I conclude my thesis by saying that, there will be no unity unless there is genuine reconciliation. God bless all the Christians who find themselves within the unity which Paul has spoken.



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