

The Mystery: The Body of Christ

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(1888-1974)

"Now unto Him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began." ~ Romans 16:25

The true church of the present dispensation of Grace is called the Body of Christ – The One Body – The Church which is His Body. All of this is Pauline terminology as no other Bible writer employs these terms, and is included in the term “my gospel” (Romans 12:4-5; I Corinthians 12:12-13; Ephesians 1:23; Colossians 1:18, 24-27).

The Body of Christ is composed of only believers, those who have heard (with the heart) the gospel of the grace of God and have by faith responded to its message. In other words, all who have trusted in Christ for salvation. The simple message of the gospel is that:

“... Christ died for our sins ... and that He was buried ... and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures” (I Corinthians 15:3-4).

The Body of Christ is a new divine purpose – a wholly new thing – the **new man** of Ephesians 2:15 – the **Body** of Ephesians 3:6 – the **new creation** of II Corinthians 5:17. The Gentiles were not joined to an existing Jewish body at Acts chapter 2 (this would render Paul’s words meaningless), but a **new Body** of the twain (Jew and Gentile) through the proclaiming of the gospel of the Grace of God, or Paul’s “my gospel” (I Timothy 1:11).

God in time past had given up the Gentiles (Romans 1:24, 26, 28) and during the Acts period He set aside Israel (temporarily) concluding them all in unbelief that He might have mercy upon all (Romans 11:32). Then sending forth His chosen vessel Paul, with the gospel of *reconciliation*, namely, that God was in Christ (on the cross) reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their sins unto them (II Corinthians 5:19).

This is the ministry for believers in this age of Grace according to II Corinthians 5:14-21. Not the so-called commission of Mark 16 and Matthew 28:19-20 which is the commission to the twelve apostles, applying to Israel and the Gentile nations. Many of our 20th century theologians confuse the gospel of the Kingdom with the gospel of the Grace of God, which results in the present day religious denominational confusion. Today such terms as “my church” – “our church” – “your church,” etc. are commonly used, which seems to rule out the Holy Spirit and would indicate that man has taken over His functions.

The true church is not a man made building or organization, in spite of Webster’s definition which he defines as: either the body of members or the building. No where in the Bible has God delegated man to construct a building and call it so and so church, and receive members into it through some ritual or ceremony, which could never add an unbeliever to the only true *One Body*. Also, the building or meeting place is not the church, nor is it the house of God in the dispensation of Grace. We learn from Acts 17:24-25 that God “*dwelleth not in temples made with hands, neither is worshipped with men’s hands.*”

It is tragic and an inexcusable mistake to place the historical beginning of the Body of Christ at Acts chapter 2, on a Jewish feast day in fulfillment of prophecy, it is evident that God did not choose to reveal its exact historical beginning, other than with the ministry of His chosen vessel Paul the apostle (I Timothy 1:15-16; II Timothy 1:8-9; Titus 1:1-3).

If we view the professing “church” of today, with its divisions and subdivisions as being the true Bible church, we reveal the fact that we have a misconception of the Body of Christ, and need to do some serious studying. Today with all the cults and modernism, all (believers and unbelievers) are urged to join the professing “church,” that is, join one of the various religious organizations.

Yet no one can join the only and true assembly, the Body of Christ. It is the work of God to admit believers into the Body of Christ.

“For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one Body ...” (I Corinthians 12:13).

“There is one Body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all” (Ephesians 4:4-6).

Let us think on these things.

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