

## THE BODY OF CHRIST IS TOGETHER

For *AS* the body is *ONE*, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are *ONE BODY: SO ALSO IS CHRIST*. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body . . . -- 1 Cor. 12:12,13

Interdenominationalists have foisted the false notion upon Baptists that the body of Christ is an aggregate of all believers, synonymous with the family of God. This theory has been perpetrated by twisting biblical terminology to make it seem that a person is not saved, unless he is in the body of Christ. While we would readily agree that a saved man is in Christ positionally (despite church affiliation), we do not agree that he is automatically in the church/body of Christ as it is scripturally defined (churches "*IN* Christ" -- Gal. 1:22). Consider each word and the context of First Corinthians twelve.

### FOR

The wise old axiom for Bible study is "And, but, for; see what they are there for!" First Corinthians 12:13 begins with "*FOR*," because it refers to that which has been said prior verse 13, providing the context for verse 13; "(12.) . . . all the members of that one body, being many are one body: so also is Christ. (13.) *FOR* by one Spirit . . ." Evidently, we are dealing, here, with a comparison of *TWO* different bodies and a baptism into *ONLY ONE* of those *TWO* bodies, namely, the visible "representative body of Christ" (the local church). Christ's actual heavenly, physical body is compared with His earthly, representative body. So *ALSO* is Christ!

### BY

Interdenominationalists build their doctrine on the preposition *BY* (much like Campbellites build their doctrine on the word *FOR* in Acts 2:38). Ignoring the context (1 Cor. 12), they make the Holy Spirit a *BAPTIZER* by manipulating the word "*BY*." We determine what the word "*BY*" means by examining its context. A man is enabled to call Jesus Lord "*BY*" the Holy Spirit (vs. 3); one is given the word of wisdom "*BY*" the Spirit (vs. 7); one is given the word of knowledge "*BY*" the same Spirit (vs. 7); to another faith "*BY*" the same Spirit (vs.9); to another gifts of healing "*BY*" the same Spirit (vs.9). Everything, which is done spiritually, is enabled "*BY*" the Holy Spirit. He is our *ENABLER* and *NOT* our *BAPTIZER*.

### ONE

There is *ONE BODY* [local], and *ONE Spirit* . . . *ONE* Lord, one faith, *ONE BAPTISM* [water] . . . -- Eph. 4:5

One means one to the exclusion of all others. The "*ONE Spirit*" and "*ONE body*" of 1 Corinthians 12: 13 are the same as that of Ephesians 4:4-5. But you say, "Everything, in Ephesians 4:4,5 is spiritual." Do you mean that "*WATER*" baptism is not spiritual? (Interdenominationalists and ultra-dispensationalists have never considered "*WATER*" baptism as being very spiritual, being unable to tell the difference between the "spiritual" and the "mystical.") We admit that there are other baptisms, bodies, and spirits, and even gods mentioned in the Bible; yet, there is only "*ONE*" exclusive God, Spirit, baptism, and body. *ONE* exclusive baptism, water baptism! *ONE* exclusive body, a local, visible, representative body/church!

But what about the baptism with the Holy Ghost in the Book of Acts? History! That baptism with the Holy Spirit was the fulfillment of John and Matthew's prophecy (Matt. 3:11 and John 1:33)! That *GROUP* baptism with the Holy Spirit was accompanied by a sound of wind and cloven tongues of fire (never to be repeated supernatural phenomena). And Jesus was the *BAPTIZER*, and the Holy Spirit was the *ELEMENT*.

### SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit is mentioned eleven times in First Corinthians twelve. We cannot agree with

certain overzealous Baptists, who say that the large "S" in Spirit should be changed to a small "s" just this once to mean something other than the Holy Spirit. The same Holy Spirit, who enables saved men to say that "Jesus is the Lord" (vs. 3), is the same Spirit, who enables and leads saved men to be water baptized (vs. 13), a spiritual act, when done scripturally.

### ARE WE ALL

Both sides of this issue agree that the "*WE ALL*" refers to all believers, who are baptized in some way. Still, some imagine mystical baptism, insisting that Paul was not a member of the Corinthian church. Yet, it does not violate either secular or biblical language for Paul to speak in the vein of common experience (of whatever local church he belonged). We all can be married to one wife without being married to the same wife! Moreover, Paul could have moved his membership anywhere (from the Damascus church to the Jerusalem church. -- Acts 9:26 to wherever).

### BAPTIZED

The Holy Spirit in the Bible is never the *BAPTIZER*; He is always the *ELEMENT*! Jesus is always the *BAPTIZER* (Matt. 3:11). To say that there are *TWO* different Spirit baptisms (Pentecost and salvation) or that there is both a Spirit baptism plus a water baptism is a contradiction of the *ONE* baptism, in Ephesians 4:5. Take one—not two or three! Nevertheless, is there water mentioned in the passage? No, but neither is there any invisible, mystical, nor ethereal phenomena mentioned there either. Why do gainsayers find a mystical Spirit baptism in Gal. 3:27 or Rom. 6:3? Neither the Holy Spirit *NOR* water is mentioned there! The context of such passages will not allow such an arbitrary, mystical, and allegorical interpretation.

### INTO

The Israelites drank of Christ and were baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea (1 Cor. 10:1-4), identifying themselves with Moses, a type of Christ. O.T. baptism foreshadowed N.T. baptism. Neither the O.T. baptisms nor the Corinthian baptism nor the Acts 2 baptism were mystical nor invisible nor secret. Baptism is an *IDENTIFICATION* with someone or something. It is also an initiation into the *LOCAL*, visible, *N.T. REPRESENTATIVE, BODY/CHURCH* as Baptists have practiced for thousands of years.

If we were to say that a man was baptized *INTO* Roman Catholicism or *INTO* the Catholic church, no one would misunderstand. They would never imagine that he had been mystically baptized into an invisible Catholic cathedral. Still, when we talk about a man being baptized *INTO* Christ, there is mass mystical confusion. Being baptized *INTO* Christ in Galatians 3:27 is equated with "putting on" Christ. How does one mystically *PUT ON* Christ? He doesn't! One *PUTS ON* Christ or "identifies with" Christ, by water baptism. We are baptized *INTO* Jesus Christ and *INTO* His "death" in Romans 6: 3-5, symbolically.

If Jesus Christ is the *ELEMENT* and the Holy Spirit is the mystical *BAPTIZER*, how is it that Christ's "*DEATH*" is also an *ELEMENT*? Well, it isn't! How do we mystically get baptized "*INTO HIS DEATH*?" Except symbolically, we don't! We are *PLANTED* in the *LIKENESS* of His *DEATH* (water baptism), identifying ourselves with both our Lord and His death (Rom. 6:5; Gal. 3:27). This identification initiates us into a local, visible, representative church/body.

### ONE BODY

The *BODY* of Christ, into which believers are water baptized, is a body of fellowship and service. It is scripturally defined as the "*CHURCH*" (Eph. 1:24; Col. 1:18). This local body/church is contrasted with the body of His flesh (Col. 1:22) and is counted as *ONE* flesh with Jesus Christ as are the *TWO* bodies of a husband and a wife counted as *ONE FLESH* (Eph. 5:31,32).

The context of First Corinthians 12:13 reveals the kind of body, which is under consideration. It is the kind of body, whose members are able to have the "*SAME care one for another*" (vs. 25); the kind of body, which is able to avoid "*SCHISM*" (vs. 25). Difficult? Yes, but try it in an invisible church of all

believers. It is the kind of church in which all the members are able to enter into the *suffering and rejoicing* of fellow members (vs. 26); the kind of body that works together (verses 14-23); the kind of body or earthly church that has earthly teachers set in it by God (vs. 28).

The Corinthian body was called "*THE*" body of Christ (vs. 27) - not "*A*" body nor "part of the body" (verse 27). The *WHOLE* body is fitly joined *TOGETHER* without saved Charismatics and infant baptizers (Ephesians 4:16), and it can come *TOGETHER* as a *WHOLE* (1 Cor. 14:23), as "*ONE BREAD*," and as "*ONE BODY*" (1 Cor. 10:16-17). It is the kind of body that God tempers *TOGETHER* (1 Cor. 12:24)). It is also *KNIT TOGETHER* (Col. 2: 19), *FITLY FRAMED TOGETHER*, and *BUILDDED TOGETHER* (Eph. 2:21-22), and *PLANTED TOGETHER* (Rom. 6:5). It is a *TOGETHER* body - not a dismembered body (which is not a body) scattered all over heaven and earth. *SO ALSO IS CHRIST TOGETHER! A MYSTICAL, INVISIBLE* body doesn't have it *TOGETHER!*

-- by Herb Evans

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#### THE LOCAL CORINTHIAN BODY

Chapter One - Local Address - 1 Cor. 1:2 "the church of God which is at Corinth"

Chapter Two - Paul's Local Visit - 1 Cor. 2:1 "I, brethren, when I came unto you"

Chapter Three - Local Divisions - 1 Cor. 3:3 "there is among you . . . divisions"

Chapter Four - Paul's Local Messenger - 1 Cor. 4:17 "I sent unto you Timothy"

Chapter Five - Local Discipline - 1 Cor. 5:4, 5 "gathered together . . . to deliver . . . to Satan"

Chapter Six - Local Disputes - 1 Cor. 6:4 "set them to judge who are least . . . in the church"

Chapter Seven - Local Writers - 1 Cor. 7:1 "concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me"

Chapter Eight - Local Questions - 1 Cor. 8:1 "Now as touching things offered to idols"

Chapter Nine - Local Missionary Support - 1 Cor 9:11 "we should reap your carnal things"

Chapter Ten - Local Communion - 1 Cor. 10:21 "ye cannot be partaker of the Lord's table"

Chapter Eleven - Local Ordinances - 1 Cor. 11:2 "keep the ordinances, as I delivered them."

Chapter Twelve - Local Body & Functions - 1 Cor 12:27 "ye are the body of Christ"

Chapter Thirteen - Local Tongues - 1 Cor. 13:5 "he that speaketh with tongues"

Chapter Fourteen - Local Gifts - 1 Cor. 14:23 "desire spiritual gifts"

Chapter Fifteen - Local History - 1 Cor. 15:3 "I delivered unto you first of all"

Chapter Sixteen - Local Collections - 1 Cor. 16:1 "concerning the collection" -copied