

Unity of the Spirit – One Body Eph. 4:4

Introduction:

Today we will be looking at what Paul says about the “one body” throughout the book of Ephesians. We will also be looking at other scriptures to understand the concept of the “one body” (or church).

Just in case there is any confusion about exactly what Paul means by “one body,” we will be looking at how he uses the term “body” elsewhere in this book.

I. Christ died for the one body, not many bodies.

- A. Notice what Paul says in the book of Ephesians about the death of Christ.
 - 1. Eph. 1:15-21, esp. 20-21
 - 2. It was through that death that Christ can be “at His right hand in the heavenly places.”
 - 3. Eph. 5:25-27 - Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, {26} that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, {27} that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.
- B. It was Christ who bought this one church with His blood.
 - 1. Mt. 16:17-19 - Jesus answered and said to him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. {18} And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. {19} And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”
 - 2. Acts 20:28 - Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.
 - 3. Eph. 1:13-14 - In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, {14} who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.
- C. It is also through that death that Christ became the head over the body.
 - 1. Eph. 1:22-23 - And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, {23} which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.
 - 2. Eph. 5:23-24 - For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. {24} Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything.

II. It is through that one body that we work and are encouraged.

- A. We are to all use our talents and abilities to further the “one body.”
 - 1. Eph. 4:11-16
 - 2. Rom. 12:3-5 - For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith. {4} For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, {5} so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another.
 - 3. I Cor. 12:12-27
- B. This encouragement comes when we follow the pattern set by the first century church.
 - 1. Acts 2:42-47 - And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. {43} Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. {44} Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, {45} and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need. {46} So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, {47} praising God and having favor with all the people.
 - 2. We can see how this plays out throughout the rest of the book of Acts.

III. It is in the church that the saved are gathered.

- A. Notice again what Paul says in the book of Ephesians concerning salvation.
 - 1. Eph. 2:11-16
 - 2. Eph. 3:1-7
- B. This salvation comes only through the sacrifice of Christ; and it is found only in the church.
 - 1. It has always been told that Christ would save people from their sins.
 - a. Mt. 1:21 - And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.
 - b. Mt. 26:27-28 - Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, “Drink from it, all of you. {28} For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.”
 - c. Eph. 1:7 - In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace.
 - 2. In Acts 2, when Peter preaches about the risen Christ, he tells the people what they should do to be in obedience to God.
 - a. Acts 2:37-41 - Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Men and brethren, what shall we do?” {38} Then Peter said to them, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the

gift of the Holy Spirit. {39} For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.” {40} And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation.” {41} Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them.

- b. **Acts 2:47** - And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.
- c. It is only in the church that we can have salvation, because it is not us who adds to the church, but God.

Conclusion:

In order to obtain the “unity of the Spirit,” we must understand that there is only one body.