

## **“There Is One Body ...”**

*“Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity”* (Psalms 133:1). It is good that men be united; it is something commanded by Christ for He said, *“Be at peace among yourselves”* (1 Thess. 5:13). Furthermore, one of the works of the flesh is division which, if practiced, will keep one from inheriting the kingdom of God (Gal. 5:19-21). Christ prayed for unity and all true disciples of Christ strive to fulfill the prayer He uttered (Jn. 17:20f).

Jesus came to a badly divided world. In addition to the many idols of the pagans, His own nation was fragmented into several sects: Pharisees, Sadducees, Herodians, Essenes as well as others. The world still is divided. It does not have to be. There is a divine plan which, if followed, would eliminate all our world’s divisions. We can be sure that most will never follow God’s plan, but those who will, will attain the unity of the spirit and be united with every other one who also is willing to walk in the plan God gave. There are seven things of which there is one and since “seven” is the number which denotes perfection, agreeing upon these “seven” things will produce perfect unity among Christ’s disciples.

*“There is one body”* (Eph. 4:4). The apostle had already identified the body for in the first chapter he wrote, *“He put all things in subjection under his feet and gave him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all”* (1:22). When Paul wrote Corinthians he said, *“For the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of the body being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For in one Spirit were we all baptized into one body ...”* (1 Cor. 12:12f). He further added, *“But now they are many members but one body”* (1 Cor. 12:20). Since Paul identified the body as the church (Eph. 1:22; Col. 1:18), consider what the apostle is saying in 1 Corinthians: *“For in one Spirit were we all baptized into one church”* *“Now are they many members but one church”* (1 Cor. 12:13, 20). This doctrine did not originate with Paul for, as he told the Galatians, the gospel he preached was not after man. *“For neither did I receive it from men, nor was I taught it, but it came to me through revelation of Jesus Christ”* (Gal. 1:12).

The sentiment Paul expressed was only an echo of the prayer of Jesus which prayer accorded both with what John recorded of what Jesus said and that which the Holy Spirit directed John to write. Jesus said, *“Other sheep I have which are not of this fold. Them also I must bring and they shall hear my voice; and they shall become one flock, one shepherd”* (Jn. 10:16). The Holy Spirit, through John, said, *“Now this he said not of himself but being high*

*priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for the nation, and not for the nation alone, but that he might gather into one the children of God that are scattered abroad*" (Jn. 11:51f). There is one body. That body is the church. There is one church. This one fact stands at the head of the list. All other of the six of these "seven ones" contribute to sustaining "*there is one body.*" The importance of this one church is seen throughout this epistle. Nine times the word "*body*" is found: 1:23;2:16; 3:6; 4:4; 4:12 (twice); 5:23; 5:31. From these passages we see that Jews and Gentiles are reconciled to God in the one body (2:16) and that Christ is the Savior of the body (5:13). From these we learn that there is one church in which reconciliation takes place and salvation is found. How contrary these thoughts are contrasted with men who say that church membership is not important and that one can be saved and never be a member of any church!

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