

# His Body

by Richard E. Bieber

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*The Church will only be united when each individual learns to be the member of the Body Jesus is calling them to be in their current place.*

**Scripture:** Romans 12:1

**Topics:** "Church Unity", "Body Of Christ"

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## Description

Richard E. Bieber addresses the issue of division among churches, emphasizing that only Jesus can build and unify His Church. He distinguishes between man-made attempts at unity and the true unity that comes from the Spirit of the Lord. Bieber highlights the importance of each believer understanding their role in the Body of Christ and learning to work together in harmony, submitting to Jesus as the head of the Church.

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## Transcript

If there's only one God and one Jesus, how come they've got all these churches? Why isn't there just one? Some people seem to think that Jesus blew it when it came to keeping his Church together. So they're going to help him. There are the ecumenical bugs who are busy trying to get all the denominations into one big superstructure. They have meetings and negotiations and mergers. So finally after decades of planning they get the Lutherans, Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Methodists and Catholics into one thing giant "church".

But what do they then have? A monster, instead of five smaller monsters they have one big monster. And they call it a church. But every person who has an ounce of faith left in him knows that it's not the Church of Jesus Christ. It's just another man-made pseudo-church that will have to be torn down to make way for the glory of God. Then there are men of deep faith who long to see the Body of Christ on earth manifestly one. And they set to work to bring it together according to the New Testament pattern.

They want to bring the saints of God in the city of Detroit together, so that the Church in Detroit can be seen as one Body. But they end up, not with the Church in Detroit, but with one more sect. For centuries and centuries men have been messing around with the Church of Jesus Christ as though they could build it, or revive it, or cleanse it. There is only one person who can build the Church or do anything else to it, and that is Jesus himself. On this rock I will build my Church.

Jesus didn't blow it. He knows what he's doing. As the hour of his return gets close the saints of God are going to come out of their scattered places into an open visible unity, because the Spirit of the Lord will

bring them into it. The saints in Detroit will come together and become visibly the Church in Detroit. The saints in New York, Lansing, Cleveland, Tokyo, Oslo, Berlin, Moscow, Athens, Rio, and Arusha will do the same. When the King is ready to do this, they will do it.

He will do it. Meanwhile the saints of God need to learn the ABC's of unity right down where they are. Our job is not to unite the denominations or bring all the believers in Detroit together as one. Our job is to practice unity with our brothers and sisters in the place where God has seen fit to put us now. If God has anything to do with the fact that you are in the fellowship where you are, then the first thing you need to learn is how to be one with those people right there.

If we find ourselves in a gathering of believers, not because we like the entertainment, or because it's convenient, or because the style of worship suits our taste, not because our fathers and grandfathers followed this tradition, but because we are answering the call of the Spirit to be there, and feed on the living bread, and serve God in company with these brothers and sisters, then this is the place where we are going to learn what it means to be the Body of Christ on earth.

For as in one body we have many members and all members do not have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ and individually members one of another. You don't learn that at church conventions, or "prayer conferences," or evangelistic crusades. You learn that in the flock where you happen to be. You learn that in the motley company of saints where God has placed you. You are not a lone-ranger for the Lord: You are part of the Body of Christ and without the rest of the body you are incomplete.

Useless. Out of his will. You can no more be out there on your own and do something for the Lord than our forefinger can walk off by itself into the next room and make a phone call. To make a phone call your forefinger needs your other hand to pick up the receiver, your mouth to speak, your ear to hear, your mind to tell it what numbers to press. Picture 250 great big forefingers sitting in the pew; and a monstrous mouth standing up at the pulpit preaching to them and you have a typical church.

No wonder nothing happens. What can 250 forefingers and one big mouth accomplish? They can have a "service" once a week. But suppose one Sunday morning as the mouth is up there preaching to the forefingers a miracle happens. Suppose the mouth and the 250 forefingers all fall down in repentance before Jesus. A cloud of holiness fills the room. And when the Cloud is passed, the forefingers are gone. The big mouth is gone. And straddling the aisles of that church is one giant body.

Two eyes. Two ears. A nose. A mouth. Ten fingers, ten toes, feet, hands, arms, legs, a heart, a mind. The giant bursts out the door and walks down the street. Windows fly open. Crowds gather. The giant opens its mouth and begins to speak the truth of God. It reaches out with hands of love and heals the sick. It bends its ear and listens carefully to cries of pain and sorrow and guilt. It opens its eyes and searches relentlessly for the lost. Seven days a week the giant is out there walking the earth, proclaiming the living word of God.

Every seventh day it comes home to be fed and rested. Frequently it comes in to wash its hands and sing praises to God. But its work is out there. And its members work together. The eyes and the ears and the mouth, and the hands, and the feet work in harmony, because all the members of the body have submitted themselves to the head, who is Jesus himself ... and they fit in with each other. One day as the giant walks down street another giant comes around the corner and walks toward it.

Will they fight? Will it be, "This is my territory, get out of here!" The two giants walk toward each other and suddenly they are not two but one. All day the giants are one. In the evening, they return once more to their respective places, waiting for the day when all the giants on earth will, in a moment become one forever. God didn't bring us together to be 250 forefingers and one mouth. He gathered us together to be one body. So we, though many, are one Body in Christ, and individually member one of another.

A miracle has to happen and be sustained in each of our lives that will cause each of us to be that member of the Body Jesus wants them to be. So if the Spirit wants me to be an ear, I will give up trying to be a mouth and be a good ear. If He wants me to be a thumb, I'll quit trying to be an eye and be a good thumb. The opening verses of Romans 12 tell us what we have to do in order for this to happen: 1. "Present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship."

You start with your body. You don't ignore your body. You don't treat it as something unclean. You present your body to God. So that, from now on it is no longer yours but his. Just as Jesus offered up his body on the Cross for you, you now offer your body daily, hourly to the living service of God. People become confused about this. They think that when they become "spiritual" their body is unimportant. They often try to act as if the body is unreal. Sometimes God has to give them a taste of pain to remind them that the body is very real.

The most spiritual thing you can do is serve God with your physical body. You cannot function as part of the Body of Christ until your body is a living sacrifice to God. 2. "Be not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind." Notice that the thing that makes you worldly is not your body but your mind. 'The devil has no body, and he is the most worldly of all. He's the Prince of the world with his mind. So now you turn your mind away from the spirit of this world.

And the spirit of this world is self. Self-pity. Self-realization. Self-aggrandizement. Self-indulgence. Self-glorification. You haven't been able to fit into the Body because self gets in the way. You say you're busy serving the Lord, but you have self on your mind all the time. Just let someone come out and put his foot on that self of yours and you'll see how much you're serving God! You're putting your autograph on every good deed that you do. But now you break away from that self-centered spirit of' this world by means of a power you never had before.

You renew your mind in the word and the Spirit of the living God. You get your mind on Jesus instead of yourself. You dwell on him. You look to him. Now your mind clears and your life is being transformed. Look unto him and be saved, all the ends of the earth. ....not just on the day of your conversion, but all your life. Every day. "You are not of this world, for I have chosen you out of this world, so look to me." 3. "Do not think of yourself' more highly than you ought to think, but think with sober judgment, according to the measure of faith that God has given you."

If you can bake a cake, good, there's no harm in admitting it. If you can play the piano or if you're a skilled mechanic, that's fine. But don't let Satan get you to thinking you're the best one around. Don't start getting the idea that you're indispensable. People with inflated ideas of their own importance simply cannot fit into the Body. Think with sober judgment according to the measure of faith that God has given you. And that measure of faith that God has given you will show you that you have a gift.

But the important thing is not yourself but your gift. Apart from God you are nothing, but this gift which God has given you will enable you to serve him and bring forth fruit. The Son of God has given you something with which you can touch other lives redemptively in his name. A message of hope. An ability to listen to

people. A heart that can feel what that other heart feels. The power to encourage. That is what you have to offer the Body. Think of yourself as the bearer of a gift, an earthen vessel filled with a treasure from God. 4.

"For as in one body we have many members and all members do not have the same function, so we, though many, are one Body in Christ and individually members one of another." You take your gift and fit in. Fit in! You belong to these other ones. You are incomplete without them and they without you. They may make mistakes. They may hurt you. They may seem gruff, but they are still part of you and you of them. We are not together here because we like each other so much. We are not in this fellowship because we just naturally get along so well.

We are here because God put us together and gave us work that none of us can do alone ... and that no other combination of people can do. So we fit in. Submit yourselves to one another in the fear of the Lord. Let each esteem the other better than himself. There is a call that you know you ought to make on some friend. But there is someone in the flock, who ought to be making that call with you, Fit in with your sister. Let your brother fit in with you. There is a need that you know of, but you also know that you are not equipped to meet it.

So you fit in with those who are. There are hundreds of things we could be doing if we would only give up being Lone Rangers and fit in with each other. It is not for us to build the Church. Only the Master can build the Church. Nor is it for us to unify the Church. The Lord of the Church knows what he is doing. There is only one thing for us to do: be that member of his body he is calling us to be in that place where he put us. Give him our bodies. Give him our minds. Take the gift he has given us.

Fit in with each other. Work together. If we will do that, we'll know what it means to be one Body in Christ. Into this Body will come life such as it has never had. A giant will walk out into those streets instead of 250 forefingers and a mouth. And the world around us will hear through us, more clearly than it has ever heard from us before, that Jesus is Lord.

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