

The Body of Christ

by Stephen Kaung

The Body of Christ is a spiritual reality, a corporate entity composed of individual members, connected to Christ, the Head, and essential for Christ to fulfill His will on earth.

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:1

Topics: "Body Of Christ"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the importance of understanding the concept of the body of Christ. They explain that the body is made up of many members, each with their own unique functions. The speaker emphasizes that the body is not about uniformity, but rather about unity and cooperation among its members. They highlight the need for every member to recognize their dependence on one another and work together to fulfill their individual functions for the greater purpose of the body. The sermon concludes with a prayer for the listeners to have a deeper understanding and experience of being members of the body of Christ.

Transcript

Will you please turn to 1 Corinthians, 1 Corinthians chapter 12, 1 Corinthians chapter 12, we'll read from verse 1 through verse 3. But concerning spiritual, and of course you'll find a parenthesis, some version says spiritual gifts, some version says spiritual manifestations, some say it is spiritual man, or some say spiritual things, but these are all explanations. But concerning spiritual, brethren, I do not wish you to be ignorant. Ye know that when ye were of the nations, ye were led away to dumb idols, in whatever way ye might be led.

I give you therefore to know that no one speaking in the power of the Spirit of God says curse on Jesus, and no one can say Lord Jesus unless in the power of the Holy Spirit, verses 12 and 13. For even as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of the body being many are one body, so also is the Christ. For also in the power of one Spirit we have all been baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bondmen or free, and have all been given to drink of one Spirit.

Verse 27. Now ye are Christ's body, and members in particular. Chapter 12 of 1 Corinthians is often thought as a chapter on spiritual gifts, or spiritual manifestations.

Now it is true that in this chapter we find spiritual manifestations, that is, the manifestations of the Holy Spirit through gifts in the members of the body of Christ. But as we read the first verse, we find that this

chapter, as well as the succeeding chapters, from chapter 12 at least to chapter 15, if not included, chapter 16, we find that these chapters are under the same heading, concerning spiritual. Now of course in English it would be very awkward to say concerning spiritual.

Spiritual what? And that is the reason why you find translators try to put in some words to fill up the gap. And it is according to their understanding that such words are being put in. Therefore you find in your Bible it is in parenthesis, or in italics, to show that this is not in the original text.

But this is being put in to complete the meaning as the translator understands. Now in the original it just says concerning spiritual. And if you want to translate that word literally, it will be concerning spirituals.

That is pro-number, concerning spirituals, or concerning spiritualities. Now we know that from chapter 1 through chapter 11, Paul writes this letter to the Corinthian believers to correct certain conditions, situations in their midst. In other words, Paul is dealing with the matter of canalities.

We may say concerning canals, canalities, there are lots of canalities in the midst of the Corinthian believers. Lots of things that are done in the flesh, fleshly canals. And now starting from chapter 12, Paul is turning to another subject, concerning spirituals.

Concerning spiritualities, in other words he is trying to be more instructive as to the positive side of the life of the church. Therefore you find under the heading of concerning spirituals, or spiritualities, there are a number of things being mentioned. In chapter 12, even though gifts are being mentioned, yet you find they are mentioned in connection with something more basic than gift, and that is the body.

So in chapter 12 you find the body of Christ being mentioned. And being the body of Christ, the Holy Spirit manifests Himself through the body by giving these gifts. And then of course in chapter 13 you find the law of the body, which is love.

In chapter 14 you find the operation of these gifts, the functioning of these gifts in the body. In chapter 15 you find resurrection, because the life of the body is the resurrection life. In other words, in these chapters you find Paul is touching on the spirituals.

Dealing with spiritualities. And as you deal with spiritualities, or spiritual realities, you find there is one thing that is basic to our understanding of spiritualities, and that is the body of Christ. So here you find a verse, in verse 27, Now ye are Christ's body, and members in particular.

Ye are Christ's body. You know dear brothers and sisters, a body is very important. Because without a body, you cannot express yourself.

In the case of our Lord Jesus, you find God so loved the world, but how can He express His love to the world in a way that it can be understood? God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son. The only begotten Son of God had to come to this world to become a man. In other words, the Word had to become flesh.

He has to take upon Himself a body. And it is in that body that He declared God and His love. You remember in the book of Hebrews, chapter 10, which is a quotation of Psalm 40.

It is said that sacrifice and offering you do not love, you do not desire. But you have prepared for Me a body. Lo I come to do thy will.

In other words, the Son of God took upon Himself the body of a man. And with that body, He was able to do all the wills of God. With that body, He was able to express, manifest the love of God.

With that body, He was able to teach and to do things that will reveal God to us. And it is in the same body that He atoned for our sins. Think, if He does not have a body.

If He does not take upon Himself such a body, how can He manifest, express, in concrete ways, His love, His wisdom, His righteousness, His holiness? How can we see Him? How can we hear Him? How can we touch Him? He is beyond us. Therefore you'll find it is in a body that God is able to let us see Him, hear Him, touch Him. And it is in that body that He has fulfilled all the will of God and accomplished the work of salvation.

How important is that body to our Lord Jesus? But then we know, of course, that this body was crucified on Calvary's cross. It was broken. But then on the day of resurrection, when our Lord Jesus was risen from the dead, He took upon Himself a spiritual body.

And with that spiritual body, He ascended up to heaven and now at the right hand of the Father. But even though He, in the spiritual body, is now in heaven, yet He leaves behind Him on earth still a body. On the day of Pentecost, when the hundred and twenty believers were in that upper room, the Holy Spirit came upon the hundred and twenty people.

And in one spirit, they were baptized into one body. And from that day onward, you'll find Christ, who is now in heaven, is able to continue to do and to teach as He did when He was in the human flesh. And that's the reason why the Book of Acts.

Sometimes we call the Acts of the Apostles. But you know, in the original manuscripts, there is no such title as Acts of the Apostles. Again, you'll find it is the people who collect the Bible, and they feel you have to put a title on it.

And reading the Acts, they find first, you'll find the Acts of the Apostle Peter, and then the Acts of the Apostle Paul. Therefore, with the other apostles, so they say it is the Acts of the Apostles. But actually, you'll find in Acts chapter 1 verse 1, when Luke said concerning the former treatise, that is, the Gospel according to Luke, he is trying to tell Theophilus of what the Lord Jesus has begun to do and to teach.

In the Gospels, you'll find what our Lord Jesus began to do and to teach through that body which He took upon Himself from the womb of the Virgin Mary. But then the Book of Acts is what He continues to do and to teach. Still in a body, but it is in a corporate body, which is called the Church.

And it is through this body, which is called the Church, He is able to continue to do and to teach. He is able to carry out all the wills of God. And it is through this body that He is to be seen, to be heard, to be touched, as He was 2,000 years ago in that physical body.

So dear brothers and sisters, here we find a statement of supreme importance. And it is said, ye are the body of Christ. It does not say, you shall be the body of Christ.

It does not say, you are going to be the body of Christ. But here you'll find a spiritual reality, a fact, an eternal fact. And the fact is, you are the body of Christ.

Now do we really realize what we are? You know, sometimes we get to be too familiar with terms. And when we are too familiar with certain terms, they begin to lose meaning to us. But here you'll find it is a matter of tremendous vital importance.

And that is, we are, ye are. And of course, the ye are not only include the Corinthian believers, it includes us who believe in the Lord Jesus. In other words, it includes all those who are redeemed of the Lord.

In one spirit, we were all being baptized into one body. And we are, we are the body of Christ. Brothers and sisters, do you really think in terms of this, that we are the body of Christ? You know, naturally speaking, we are all individualistic.

Very individualistic. We are all individuals. And because we are all individuals, therefore it is easy for us to think in terms of, in individualistic terms.

You know, even in our pursuit of spiritual things, we tend to think in individualistic terms. In other words, what will I get? What can I get from the Lord? Or, even in the pursuit of gift. Oh, what gift can I have and display? So, here you'll find with the Corinthian believers, they have the same problem.

They are highly individualistic. And because they are highly individualistic, therefore you'll find things corporate, it's hard to be grasped. Now, brothers and sisters, it is true we are all individuals.

But, we need also to see that we are the body of Christ. We are Christ's body. We have to think in terms of, in corporate terms, instead of in individualistic terms.

We need to be delivered from that individualism. And the only way we can be delivered from it is through the working of the cross. That we may really be brought into that corporate realm, and begin to realize that we are the body of Christ.

Not in the future. Not something to arrive at. But, dear brothers and sisters, even now, we are the body of Christ.

Now, whether you understand it or not, whether you realize it or not, whether you are living in it or not, that does not change this eternal fact. Because it is something that Christ has done. Christ is the baptizer.

And he has baptized us, in the Holy Spirit, to be one body. He has done it. And because it is something that he has done it, therefore, it is a fact.

And we are the body of Christ. Just think, what an honor and privilege it is to be the body of Christ. Suppose you are the body of the President of the United States.

And you find that all that is in the mind of the President, all that the President wants to do, is to be carried out through that body. How important must that body be? But, dear brothers and sisters, we are the body of Christ. It is much more honorable than to be the body of the President of the United States.

In other words, whatever is in Christ, today, is to be carried out, to be expressed and manifested through us as his body. Now, if we fill him as his body, then he cannot be seen, he cannot be heard, he cannot be touched, he will be unknown, he will be in an abstract, he will be untouchable, intangible, and nothing of his will can be done on earth as it is in heaven. Now, think of that.

On the one hand, how honorable and glorious it is to be the body of Christ. Yet, on the other hand, how terrible it must be. Now, brothers and sisters, do we realize that? Do we know that we are the body of Christ? And you remember Paul even said, if you corrupt that body, God will corrupt you.

Because that body is of such tremendous importance to Christ the head. We are the body of Christ. Christ is to be expressed through us together.

Christ is to be seen and heard and touched by the world through us as his body. What if we misrepresent him? What if we sin against this body? You know, sometimes we think of sin only in terms, again, in individualistic terms. Now, if I steal something, I sin.

If I do something wrong, I sin. In other words, even in a matter of sin, you'll find our whole idea is individualistic. But have we ever thought that we may sin, the sin against the body of Christ? Now, of course, so far as we are concerned, we know that we dare not sin against Christ.

Now, who dares to sin against Christ? We know that would be too serious to think about. Now, unfortunately, sometimes we did. But we dare not deliberately, purposely, daringly to sin against Christ because we know how serious the consequence will be.

But does it ever enter into our mind that it is as serious a sin if we sin against the body of Christ? You know Saul, when he persecuted the disciples, the followers of our Lord Jesus, and on the road of Damascus, the Lord met him and said, Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? In other words, touching the body is touching the head. Sinning against the body is sinning against the head. But dear brothers and sisters, how careless we are.

We think that it is serious to sin against Christ. But we do not think too much of sinning against the body. If the Lord shall open our eyes to see the body of Christ, that it is that vessel, that instrument through which Christ is to express himself, will you not think twice before you do anything that may in a way hurt the body? You know, many years ago, I think it was in 1938 or 39, when our brother Washman was in England, he visited a dear saint of God.

And that dear saint of God at that time was over 90 years old. He was the writer of that booklet called Safety, Certainty and Enjoyment. And Safety, Certainty and Enjoyment, aside from the Bible, at one time it had the largest circulation.

And many people came to the knowledge of Christ through that book. Safety, Certainty and Enjoyment, written by George Cutting. And at that time George Cutting was in his 90s.

And he was very feeble. He was in bed and most of the time he was just in a kind of unconsciousness. But he woke up from time to time to consciousness.

So our brother visited him at that time. And he told us that he sat at his bedside and just waiting for him to wake up. And when George Cutting woke up and saw our brother sitting there, you know what he said to our brother? He said, I cannot do without him and he cannot do without me.

And he repeated it. And then he went into unconsciousness again. I cannot do without him.

Who is the him? Of course Christ. I cannot do without Christ. Now brothers and sisters, I believe you agree with him in that.

We cannot do without him. The Lord Jesus said, I am the vine, ye are the branches, abiding me and I abiding you, because without me ye can do nothing. And how important it is for us to realize that.

Now sometimes, you know, it takes some things to happen before we realize it. We think that we can do without him. We think that there are many things we can do.

All right, the Lord said, try it out. You know, and we try and try and finally we realize that it is true. I cannot do without him.

How glorious it is that we cannot do without Christ. We need to realize that. But, George Cuttings said, he cannot do without me.

Now who are you? Are you that important to Christ? Certainly. Without you he can do many things. No, George Cuttings said, I cannot do without him, but he cannot do without me.

Oh, brothers and sisters, if you see that we are the body of Christ, then you begin to see, it is true, we cannot do without him, the body cannot do without the head, but equally true, the head cannot do without the body. We are the body of Christ. What can he do if he does not have us? He will not be able to talk today.

He will not be able to teach today. He will not be able to do anything today. He will not be able to bring in his kingdom today.

He will not be able to glorify the Father today, to fulfill all the work that he has to do today. He will be completely bound, limited, fettered, hindered, blocked. Oh, brothers and sisters, what an honor to think that we are Christ's body.

He cannot do without us. Now, if he depends so much on us, isn't that serious? Can we play with this idea of the body of Christ? You know, thank God, on the one hand, that today many people began to have the concept of the body of Christ. Ten years ago, very few people even had the concept of the body of Christ.

But now you'll find among Christians, almost most Christians, at least have some concept of the body of Christ. Now, thank God for that concept. But the body of Christ is more than a concept.

If you only have a concept of the body of Christ, you will not be in the reality of it. In other words, even though you have that concept, and yet it is vague, it is nebulous, it is abstract, it does not have anything to do with your daily life, you can live on with that concept as an individualist. And it doesn't seem to bother you a bit.

But brothers and sisters, this body of Christ should be a consciousness. It should not remain just as a concept in your mind. It has to be a consciousness in your heart.

In other words, we need to have that body conscious. Now, a consciousness is not something that you can manufacture. A consciousness is not something that you hear a message on the body of Christ and you get that consciousness.

You get that concept. But a consciousness has to come by revelation. By revelation.

Dear brothers and sisters, how needed it is that we, as the body of Christ, that we should receive revelation from above that we are the body of Christ. And as you receive that revelation, then you'll find

that consciousness is being born in your heart. And once that consciousness is born within you, then you'll find it begins to direct, control, and govern, regulate your life.

Now, how does that revelation come? We know from the scripture that revelation comes from two ends. Sometimes revelation comes as you are waiting before the Lord. In other words, in His light you see light.

As you wait upon the Lord, as you seek His face, as you seek Him, then you'll find at times the Holy Spirit just reveals, just reveals His word to you. His word becomes living and real to you. That we call revelation.

So sometimes we receive that consciousness through direct revelation of the Holy Spirit. But at other times, and probably more often, you'll find that revelation comes after the Holy Spirit has disciplined us. In other words, He tried to lead us into circumstances and through the working of the circumstances He began to break us to the point where we begin to see the body of Christ.

In other words, through circumstances He break down our individualism. You know how strong we are as an individualist. We are able to go through a lot and say, we don't need our brother and sister.

You go it alone. But it takes some circumstances to break down that individualism until you begin to see that you are not alone, but you are in the body of Christ. And it is sometimes through the discipline of the Holy Spirit we are brought into revelation.

But anyway, brothers and sisters, do not be contented just with the concept of the body of Christ. Because if that is all you have, it does not operate. You will find you're living a life in contradiction to the very concept of the body of Christ, and you don't know it.

But once you are given revelation, and the revelation needs to be deepened, and the consciousness is within you, you'll find it is almost like a subconscious. You know, it's more than just conscious. It's almost like a subconscious.

Whenever you are saying something, or when you are doing something, somehow within you, you'll find there is a check, or a restraint, or a constraint. Are you building up that body? Are you tearing down that body? Sometimes we may say things casually, but if you have body consciousness, maybe it will stop you and say, well, you say it, will it hurt the body? Or will it build the body? Or sometimes you are doing something to your brothers and sisters, and you think nothing about it. But if you have that body consciousness, it will stop you, and you begin to wonder whether it will build the body or destroy the body.

Brothers and sisters, we need to be before the Lord that He will give us a consciousness of the body of Christ. And it is only after we have that body consciousness then we begin to live in the body. Now, we are in the body, remember this.

We are. We are. We are the body.

Whether you are conscious of it or unconscious of it, you are the body. And we are in the body. But, the difference is, if you are conscious, you are living in the body.

If you are not conscious, you are living in yourself. That is the difference. So, first of all, I think we need to realize this.

Paul said, ye are Christ's body. Oh, how glorious that is. But how terrible.

Then you find, Paul continues to say, and members in particular. You know, with human beings, it is our tendency to go to extremes. It is very difficult for us to be balanced.

We either go to one extreme, or we will swing to the other extreme. You know, sometimes we are so individualistic, we can only think of us as individuals. In other words, we cannot see the body of Christ.

All we can see is my Lord and I. That's it. I do not care about you brothers and sisters of it. It is just a matter of my Lord and I. And sometimes we take that position, and we think it is a spiritual position.

But that individualism has to be broken. You have to see that it is more than my Lord and I. It is our Lord and us. And yet you find, when people begin to see this, they tend to swing to the other extreme.

In other words, everything is corporate, there is nothing individual. I call it the tyranny of the body. You find a swing to the other extreme.

In other words, you just wipe out personalities, wipe out individuals, and everything is corporate. Everything is the body. In other words, the body controls everything.

And as a matter of fact, it is not the body controls everything, it is a member or a few members use the body to control everybody. And how serious that can be. In other words, it does not give any liberty to any individual.

It tries to uniform, unify everybody. Everybody must be the same. That is not the body.

That is a lump of meat. In the body you find many members. And all the members are different.

Therefore it says, members in particular. Members in particular. In other words, we are not all alike.

We are all different. Now, so far as the life is concerned, there is one life. Because the life in the body is one life.

The life in my hand is the same life as in my foot. It is the same life as in my stomach. You will find, so far as life is concerned, the life in the body is only one.

You cannot have two lives in the same body. Now if you have two lives in the same body, then it is a civil war. And that is the problem, you know, with many Christians.

You have civil war all the time. You know, you have the life of Christ in you, and then you have your Adamic life still there, and there you find civil war. And no ending to it.

You know, and corporately it is the same. In the body of Christ there is only allowed one life. The life of Christ.

And if you allow any other life to intrude into that body, you have problems. You have problems. That is the reason why, in the body of Christ, it does not allow any other life to enter into that body.

Only the life of Christ prevails. All the other lives must be cut off by the cross. You know, the body of Christ demands the death of our self-life.

Because if we try to put in ourselves into the body, immediately you find there is more than one life. And if there is more than one life, that body cannot live. So far as the body of concern, there is only one life.

Unity of the life of the body. We are one because we have one life. That is the unity of the body of Christ.

But, so far as functions are concerned, you find we are members one of another. We are members in particular. In other words, everyone is different.

Variety. Diversity. God does not love uniformity.

He loves variety. Because only with diversity you can get fullness. So, brothers and sisters, God has put us in the body of Christ as members in particular.

Every one of us is different. Now, sometimes you hear people say, we do not allow difference here. What do you mean that you do not allow difference? If you speak of life, yes.

In the body there is no allowance for difference. It has to be the life of Christ. Even though there might be different degrees, but not in kind.

There can be only one life. But, other than life, brothers and sisters, the body of Christ has to allow differences. Because God makes it that way.

If you do not allow differences, you cut across the very meaning of the body of Christ. We are members in particular. God not only makes every one of us different physically.

There are no two persons exactly alike, even with trees. Now, of course, I make all the mistakes with Turner and Carter, but I don't think the father or mother would make that mistake. They can still see the difference.

God makes it that way. And not only we are different physically, but we are different in our souls too. I often say our temperament is the shape of our soul.

You know, our soul has a shape, and that is our temperament. Some people are born slow, other people are born quick. You know, some people are born careful, other people are born more bold, and things like that, you know.

There are certain temperaments, and these temperaments are neutral. You cannot judge a temperament that this is bad or this is good. They are neutral.

They are neutral, you know. And God makes it that way. This is the shape of our soul.

Now, these temperaments need to be controlled. That's true. Needs to be mellowed.

That's true. In other words, these temperaments need to be controlled by the Holy Spirit, by the life of Christ. Then, they are all useful.

If these temperaments are under your own control or used by you, then they are all hurtful. They are all harmful. No matter whether you are slow or quick.

You know. God makes it so differently. And the same thing you'll find in 1 Corinthians 12.

There are diversities of gifts. One spirit, but diversity of gifts. Diversity of services, but one Lord.

Diversities of operation, but one God. In other words, here so far as the functions of the body are concerned, you'll find we are members in particular. We are all different.

All different. But behind all these differences, there is a unity. It is a manifestation of the Holy Spirit.

Whether it is manifested in one member or in another member, in one gift or in another gift, still, it is the manifestation of the Holy Spirit. One Spirit. There are many services.

Yet, in spite of all these different services, there is only one Lord. There are many operations, but in spite of all these operations, the power behind it is God. One God.

It's unity in diversity. So, brothers and sisters, remember, we have to allow differences. Do not try to make everybody the same.

Do the same thing. Exactly the same. It cannot be done.

It is not the will of God. We have to be what we are. What God has made us.

What the Holy Spirit has given to us as His manifestation. Be faithful in that. Don't try to imitate.

Don't try to copy. But just be what God has made you to be. Unless we are in that position, we will not be able to manifest Christ as His body.

So, dear brothers and sisters, you need a balance. On the one hand, we are the body of Christ. You have to think in corporate terms.

Whatever you do, whatever you say, in your actions and reactions, you cannot think that you are just alone. You know, sometimes we think, well, I'm alone. It will not affect anybody else.

You know? No, you are not alone. Because we are the body of Christ. Whether you are in a meeting, or whether you are in a home, or whether you are in the office, or whether in your bedroom, you are not alone.

You are the body of Christ. In other words, we need to see that we are the body of Christ. And that should govern our actions and reactions, our speech, our works, and everything.

We are the body of Christ. And yet, on the other hand, it doesn't mean that we are no longer individuals. We are still individuals.

Even in the body of Christ, we are individual members. You are you and I am I. We are all different. Even in eternity, you find we are still.

Our... so far as individuals are concerned, you find they are still there. Individualism is gone. But individuals are still there.

Even the twelve foundations of the holy city bears the twelve names of the apostles. And these twelve stones are all different. Not the same stones.

Twelve different stones. All expressing Christ. But it is Christ in Peter, Christ in John, in James, and so forth.

So, brothers and sisters, remember this. We need to maintain that balance. Now, seeing that we are the body of Christ, you realize that we cannot do without Him, and He cannot do without us.

And seeing that we are members in particular, then you begin to see, I cannot do without my brothers and sisters, and my brothers and sisters, thank God, cannot do without me. Now, are we conscious of this? Are we conscious that I cannot do without my brothers and sisters? Are we conscious that my brothers and sisters cannot do without me? Therefore, in 1 Corinthians 12, you find Paul to illustrate this point. He said, I cannot say to the ear that I do not need you.

Why? Because I see. Since I see, you don't need to hear. Because I is at the front, ear is at the back.

Therefore, does not need it. No. The hand cannot say to the foot, to the feet, foot, say, I do not need you.

I am at the top, you are at the bottom. I do not need you. You cannot do that.

For the eye to see, it needs the help of the ear. You know, sometimes you see because you hear it first. You hear something, you turn around, and you see it.

If you never hear, well, when you see it, it may be too late. The same thing with hand and feet. You know, you say, my hand can hold things.

All right, how far can you reach? Without the help of the feet, you can only reach, you know, an arm's length. That's all you can do. You need your feet to help you fulfill your function.

In other words, the function of the hand is to grasp, is to hold. But for it to fulfill its function fully, it needs the help of the other members. Dear brothers and sisters, on the one hand, we are members in particular, and because we are members in particular, we have our special functions to fulfill.

And yet, in order to fully fulfill our special functions, we need the help of the other members. Without the other members, no matter how faithfully you can work yourself to death, and it is very limited. Very limited.

Like the hand. It's very limited. Where can you reach? Very limited.

You cannot fulfill your function. So, brothers and sisters, we need to have a consciousness that I need my brothers and sisters. I cannot do without them.

I cannot. But at the same time, they cannot do without me. You know, sometimes we think, well, who am I? I'm just a little brother.

I'm just a little sister. Now, these big brothers and big sisters, of course, the Church cannot do without them. But I'm just a little brother, a little sister.

If I'm here, nobody will notice. And if I'm absent, nobody will miss me. So, if I pray, it does not add anything to the prayer.

If I keep quiet, it does not take away anything. If I praise, the Lord is not worshipped better. And if I do not, the Lord is not worshipped less.

So, I'm nothing. I'm not needed. I'm not needed.

No. Instead of thinking in that kind of terms, you have to reverse it and think, brothers and sisters, don't look down on me. However small I may be, you cannot do without me.

Now, we should have that kind of spiritual mentality. Now, you may think, oh, who am I? Surely you can do without me. That's being humble and being spiritual.

No, that is carnal. To be really spiritually minded, you have to see that your brothers and sisters cannot do without you. You cannot do without me.

A body cannot do without any member. If one member suffers, the whole body suffers. If one member is glorified, the whole body is joyful.

And it is true. It is very true. Well, would that encourage you a little bit? Sometimes you think, well, if I'm active, it's all right.

It's not all right. If you're absent, the body suffers. Sometimes you think, well, if I do not function, I have only one talent.

Wrap it up, bury it in, nobody will feel it. No. The body suffers.

We have to come to that consciousness, that as I cannot do without Christ, and Christ cannot do without me, so I cannot do without my brothers and sisters, and my brothers and sisters, thank God, cannot do without me. Ye are Christ's members, Christ's body, and members in Christ. Now, finally, how do we come into this body? In 1 Corinthians 12, verse 13 said, In one spirit you were baptized into one body, whether Jews or Gentiles, barmen or freemen.

Now, this is the meaning of the baptism in the Holy Spirit, or with the Holy Spirit. Now, today there is so much confusion about that term. What is the baptism in the Holy Spirit, or with the Holy Spirit? As you read the scripture, you'll find the baptism with the Holy Spirit, is done on the day of Pentecost, and in the house of Cornelius.

On the day of Pentecost, the 120 were baptized in one spirit, into one body. But, on the day of Pentecost, they were all Jews. Therefore, you'll find it has to be repeated in the house of Cornelius.

And, in the house of Cornelius, you'll find these Gentiles being gathered there. And, the Holy Spirit fell upon them, and they were baptized in the same spirit, into the same body. Why? Because they were Gentiles.

So, the baptism in, or with, the Holy Spirit were fulfilled on the day of Pentecost, and the house of Cornelius. And, it is historical. In other words, when we believe in the Lord Jesus, not only the Holy Spirit has regenerated you.

He that is born of the Spirit is spirit. On the day that you believe in the Lord Jesus, you are born of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit has renewed your spirit, make it a new spirit, and He comes and dwells within you.

That is personal. But, at the same time, the Holy Spirit has done something corporate. Which you are not aware of.

And, what He has done corporately is, He has baptized you into the body of Christ. It is already done. It can be easily proven.

Why? Because, immediately after you believe in the Lord Jesus, when you meet another Christian, you immediately feel there is a bond. And, where does it come from? Because you are members of the same body. So, brothers and sisters, see it.

That the meaning of the baptism in the Holy Spirit means that we were baptized into one body. When you believe in the Lord Jesus, you are not only regenerated as an individual, but you are being baptized into the body corporately. It is done.

It is done. But, why is it that we are one body and in the body, and we find we do not have that consciousness? Or, we do not live in the reality of the body of Christ? I think it is because you do not read on. In one spirit, you were baptized into one body, whether Jews or Gentiles, born on freedom, and we are all made to drink of one spirit.

Now, that is the key. So far as being in the body is concerned, we come into the body by the baptism in the Holy Spirit. It is done.

But, we are made to drink of the same spirit. In other words, we are not only being baptized in the spirit, but we are to drink of the spirit. The drink of the spirit, of course.

If you go out to be baptized, suppose you are going to be baptized, you will be baptized, say, in the river or in the water, and you will find the water all around you. You are surrounded by the water. But, if you go to drink of the water, now, you drink it in.

You don't drink water by pouring some water on your head. You don't drink water by even immerse your body in your tub. No, no, you are baptized that way.

But, when you drink, you open your mouth and let it come within you. Baptism is once, but drinking is a daily thing. We need to drink day by day.

Now, you cannot say, I drank three days ago. You cannot live by that. You have to drink continuously.

Continuously. Now, brothers and sisters, the trouble is, we are in the body. But, if we don't drink of the spirit, in other words, if you do not draw upon the spirit of God, if you do not depend upon the spirit of God, if you do not live by the spirit of God, if you do not walk by the spirit, if you do not do things according to the spirit, if you are not in the spirit, then, the body of Christ is not real.

If you are in the flesh, you yourself are real. But, if you are in the spirit, the body is real. You know, when you live in your flesh, who is real? Only yourself is real.

Nothing else is real. But, if you drink of the spirit, if you obey the Holy Spirit, if you live according to the Holy Spirit, then, what will happen? In the beginning of the chapter, he said, no one can Jesus, say Jesus is Lord, unless by the Holy Spirit. If you really live in the Holy Spirit, then Jesus is Lord in your life.

In other words, He is the head. And, being the head, holding fast the head, you live in the body. You live in the body.

That is the secret. We cannot live in the body aside from the Holy Spirit. Because, it is by the law of the Spirit of Life that we are able to live at all.

You know, individually or cooperatively. So, brothers and sisters, that is the reason why Paul said, be filled with the Spirit. And, be filled with the Spirit means, be continuously filled.

It means, be continuously ruled by the Holy Spirit. If we are continuously under the rule of the Holy Spirit, we say Jesus is Lord. You know, saying Jesus is Lord, in 1 Corinthians 12, does not mean that you just say it with your lips.

You know? If you just say it with your lips, it doesn't work. With that, it means, you cannot say Jesus is Lord. In reality, it is not by the Holy Spirit.

It is only when you live in the Holy Spirit, then Jesus is Lord to you. And, with Him as your Lord, you are able to live as members in His body. So, dear brothers and sisters, I hope, you know, just as a reminder.

You know, as you find the Scripture, we need to be reminded. Peter said, I know you know these things, but I feel that it is my duty before I go, that you need to be reminded. So, sometimes we need to be reminded that we are Christ's body, and members in particular.

Live by the Spirit, and you will be living in the reality of Christ's body. Shall we pray? Our Heavenly Father, we do praise and thank Thee that it is something glorious that Thou hast done. It is through Thy redemptive work, finished work on the cross, that Thou hast taken upon Thyself today a covered body.

And Thou hast put us on that body, set us there as members one of another. This is something which Thou hast done. Oh, how we praise and thank Thee that nothing can change it.

But Lord, we do want to be in the good of it, to really experience this body, and to function as members in that body. So we ask that Thou will open our eyes and bring us into that consciousness, that it may not be something that we have to think in order to live it, but it may be something so supernaturally natural within us that it is just subconscious conscious of it. Lord, we pray that we may really be members one of another in Thy, under Thy headship all the time, that Thou may be able to be seen and heard, touch, live, and accomplish whatever needs to be done on earth as it is in heaven.

So we just offer ourselves to Thee, to be that body that Thou may say, I'm well pleased in Thy precious name. Amen.

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