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Members of One Body

Definitions in **bold** letters are from **Strong's** Exhaustive Concordance
Other definitions are from **Webster's** Dictionary, 1828 Edition
or Roget's Thesaurus – **May 17, 2015**

1 Corinthians 12:14-31

Introduction: This and the following two chapters were written to **correct disorders** which had arisen in the Corinthian church over the question of spiritual gifts, especially with regard to envy and strife over the relative importance of various gifts. The great test of **all spirituality** is its relation to Christ and his spiritual body the church. So-called "GIFTS" that led to the denunciation of Christ or any conduct that contravened the will of Christ were not of God, but of the **devil**. "Gifts" that take people away from the church are not of God's Spirit at all, but are derived from the evil one (1 Corinthians 12:1-3). There is **diversity** in the **unity** of the church, since the Lord has not given the same gifts to all Christians (1 Cor. 12:4-11). The great metaphor of "**the body**" is developed as a figure of Christ's **spiritual body, the church** (1 Cor. 12:12-31). (Source: Coffman Commentaries on the Old & New Testament classic.studylight.org/com/bcc/)

1 Corinthians 12:12-14, 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**, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been ALL made to **drink** into **one Spirit**. For the body is not one member, but MANY.

NOTE: a. All the members of that one body, being many, are **one body** . . . for by one Spirit we were all **baptized** into one body: The "body-like" unity of Christians is not a goal to achieve; it is a fact to be recognized. Paul clearly says we *were* all baptized into one body. i. Passages like this have led many to regard baptism as sort of the "initiation ceremony into the community of Christians." While this may be *an aspect* of baptism, it is not its main point. The main idea behind Christian baptism is the identification of the **believer – his "immersion" IN Jesus Christ** (Romans 6:3-5). The idea that baptism is primarily the initiation ceremony into the church has led to, and reinforced, unbiblical ideas such as the baptism of infants (upon the thinking, "who wants to exclude them from the church?"). ii. But here, Paul does not have in mind **water baptism** as much as **Spirit baptism:** For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body. Paul here is writing of the common "immersion" **all believers** have in the Holy Spirit and IN Jesus, a common "immersion" which brings them into **ONE body**. (Source: David Guzik's Commentaries on the Bible classic.studylight.org/com/guz)

Thought 1. For proof that what's written here is referring to "Spirit Baptism", NOT water baptism, we'll look at more scriptures. Ephesians 4 says there is ONE baptism.

Ephesians 4:4-5, There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, **ONE baptism**...

Thought 2. So, the obvious answer about which baptism SAVES is it's the baptism of the Holy Spirit that saves. He is also called the "Holy Ghost."

Acts 1:5, For John truly **baptized with water (immerse);** but ye shall be **baptized (immerse, WASH)** with the HOLY GHOST not many days hence.

Mark 16:15-16, And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.

He that **believeth AND** is **baptized SHALL BE SAVED...**

AND defined 2532. kai pronounced kahee , SO THEN, SO.

So defined, for this reason. (1913 Webs. Dict.); **Then, therefore.**

SHALL BE SAVED defined 4982, sozo pronounced sode'-zo, to SAVE, i.e. deliver or protect (literally or figuratively).

Save, to rescue from a state of condemnation and spiritual death, and bring into a state of spiritual LIFE. (1913 Webs. Dict.)

Thought 3. As you can see, "shall be saved" does NOT mean "WILL BE" saved. It means SAVED. So, the conclusion is: **"He that "BELIEVETH for this reason, therefore is baptized IS saved."** God's way is then that when a person believes, they're saved.

1 John 5:1, Whosoever **believeth** that Jesus is the Christ **IS BORN** of God...

Acts 9:17-18, And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, **Brother Saul,** (He was born again on the Damascus road) the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be **FILLED** with the Holy Ghost. And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was **BAPTIZED (the ordinance (command) of Christian baptism [dip in WATER]).**

Acts 10:42-47, And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify... that through his **name (authority)** whosoever **believeth** in him shall receive remission of sins. While Peter yet spake these words, the **Holy Ghost** fell on all them which **heard** the word. ...they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. For they heard them **speak with tongues,** and magnify God.

Then answered Peter, Can any man forbid **WATER,** that these should not be **BAPTIZED,** which **HAVE received** the Holy Ghost as well as we?

Thought 4. The above sets of verses prove conclusively that people are saved because of faith (entrusting their spiritual well-being in Christ), at which time the Holy Spirit baptizes (immerses) them INTO the body of Christ.

Ephesians 2:8, For by **grace** are ye **SAVED** through **FAITH;** and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God...

1 Corinthians 12:15-20, If the **foot** shall say, Because I am not the **hand,** I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? And if the **ear** shall say, Because I am not the **eye,** I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath **God SET** the members every one of them in the body, as it hath **pleased him.** And if they were all **ONE member,** where were the **body?** But now are they many members, yet but one body.

NOTE: i. Here, Paul puts the question in the mouth of the one who **feels excluded** from the body. It is as if some of the Corinthian Christians were saying, "I don't have this certain **spiritual gift**. I guess I'm not part of the body of Jesus Christ." After all, *hands* and *eyes* seem more important and more "glamorous" than *feet* and *ears*. So Paul wants these Christians who feel excluded that they are indeed members of the body, and their sense that they are not, is just as foolish as the foot or the ear who feel excluded. ii. Yet, the same principle can be stated towards those who **DESIRE** to **exclude others** from the body. Paul could have just as well said, "The hand cannot say the foot is not of the body because it is not a hand." Paul also wants Christians who might exclude others because they don't appreciate their place in the body to recognize the fact of UNITY.

b. If the whole body were an eye, where would be the hearing? Not only is this DIVERSITY in the body of Jesus Christ **acceptable, it is essential**. The body cannot work properly if all are hands, or if all are eyes. The body must have different parts and gifts, or it would not work together effectively as a body.

c. Just as He pleased: Why is the foot a foot and the hand a hand? Because it pleased **the Designer** to make it so. So, the hand can take no "pride" in being a hand, and the foot can take no "shame" in being a foot. Each is serving the pleasure of the Designer.

i. In the design, we see the wisdom of the Designer: **everybody has something;** but **nobody has everything**.

(Source: David Guzik's Commentaries on the Bible classic.studylight.org/com/guz)

1 Corinthians 12:21-25, And the **eye** cannot say unto the **hand**, I have no need of thee: nor again the **head** to the **feet**, I have no need of you. Nay, much more those members of the body, which **SEEM** to be more feeble, are NECESSARY: And those members of the body, which we think to be LESS honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our **uncomely (inelegant [wanting polish])** parts have more abundant **comeliness**. For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked: That there should be **no schism (division) in the body;** but that the members should have the SAME CARE ONE for ANOTHER.

NOTE: Now, Paul writes to those **tempted to pride** and a sense of superiority because of their gifts or place in the body. They cannot say to such parts, "I have no need of you." b. Those members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary: Often, we consider a part of our body unnecessary or of low importance – **until it is HURT**. Then **we realize** how important it is! The hand or the eye may *seem* to be more important, and may have more "glamour" in its position – but it is not more necessary or important than other parts of the body. c. Less honorable, on these we bestow greater honor: The parts of our bodies normally covered by clothes are often considered less honorable – but we give them greater honor by clothing them so carefully!

i. Clarke on the less honorable parts: "seem to mean the principle *viscera*, such as *heart, lungs, stomach, and intestinal canal*. These, when compared with the *arms and limbs*, are comparatively **weak**; and some of them, considered in *themselves*, uncomely and less honourable; yet these are more **essential to life** than any of the others."

ii. Even so, God composed the body, having given greater honor to that part which lacks it: If someone **FEELS** they are a "hidden" or "unglamorous" member of the body of Jesus Christ, God knows how to bestow honor (GLORY) upon them.

That there should be **no schism** in the body: Seen from God's perspective, with the illustration of the body, there is never any reason for schism in the body. The "**pride**" of the "**honorable**" member is checked, as is the "**shame**" of the "**less honorable**" member. e. That the members should have the same care for one another: Paul's theological point about the nature of the body of Jesus Christ has now come to a very

practical application. The Corinthian Christians should care for one another because **they are all part** of the **same body**.

i. The parts of the body work together. The eyes and ears do not only **SERVE THEMSELVES**, but the WHOLE BODY. The hands do not only feed and defend themselves, but the whole body. The heart does not only supply blood to itself, but serves the whole body.

(Source: David Guzik's Commentaries on the Bible classic.studylight.org/com/guz)

1 Corinthians 12:26, And whether one member **suffer**, ALL the members **suffer** with it; or one member be honoured, ALL the members **rejoice** with it.

NOTE: As there is a mutual exertion for the general defence, so there is a mutual sympathy. If the eye, the hand, the foot, whole man **grieves**; and if by clothing, or any thing else, any particular member or part is adorned, strengthened, or better secured, it gives a **general pleasure** to the **whole man**.

(Source: The Adam Clarke Commentary classic.studylight.org/com/acc/)

1 Corinthians 12:27-28, Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. And God hath SET some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that **miracles**, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, **diversities** (VARIETY [many and different kinds]) of **tongues**.

Tongues defined 1100, glossa pronounced gloce-sah', a language (specially, one **naturally unacquired**). (Meaning this language is supernaturally acquired)

Thought 1. Notice, there are "different kinds" of supernatural languages. Most Christians are aware of only one kind, which is a source of more confusion.

1 Corinthians 12:29-30, Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles? Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?

NOTE: the Spirit distributes to every one as he will. We must **be content** with our own rank and share, if they be lower and less than those of others. We must **not be conceited** of ourselves, and **despise** others, if we are in the higher rank and have greater gifts. Every member of the body is to preserve its own rank, and do its own office; and all are to minister to one another, and promote the GOOD of the body in general, without envying, or despising, or neglecting, or ill-using, any one particular member. How blessed a constitution were the Christian church, if all the members did **their duty!** (Source: The Matthew Henry Commentary on the whole Bible classic.studylight.org/com/mhc)

1 Corinthians 12:31, But **covet earnestly (desire)** the **best** (more advantageous) **GIFTS:** and yet shew I unto you a MORE excellent (superior, important) **way (ACT [deed])**.

Gifts defined 5486, miraculous faculty [the power of doing any thing; ABILITY.

There is no faculty or power in creatures, which can rightly perform its functions, without the perpetual aid of the Supreme Being].

Thought 1. So, the last verse reads: "But desire the more advantageous ability assigned to somebody. And yet shew I unto you a far more important ACT."

1 Corinthians 13:1, Though **I speak** with the **tongues** of **men** and of **angels**, and have not **charity (LOVE)**, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.