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AN ANALYSIS OF  
PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS  
AS TO ITS TEACHING ON  
THE MYSTICAL UNION OF CHRIST AND THE BELIEVER

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A Thesis  
Presented to  
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by  
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## Introduction

### I. Statement of the problem.

It is the purpose of this thesis to present the analysis of the mystical relationship which exists between Christ and the believer. Since there is some misunderstanding and misinterpretation in reference to the Christian conversion and relationship with God, this thesis attempts to clarify the nature of the relationship between Christ and the believer and thus distinguish it from heathen practices. However, since this subject is too extensive to be dealt with at this moment, this thesis will treat Paul's teaching found in his epistle to the Ephesians only.

The thesis consists of three main divisions: (1) Foundation of the relationship; (2) Nature of the relationship; (3) Results of the relationship.

### II. The Acknowledgement of the work formerly done.

There are numerous books written on the Church as a part of Systematic Theology, but most of them give more space for the discussion of the Church organization and function than its organism. Very few based their discussion on Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians. When it comes to the matter of the union of Christ with the believer,

there is hardly any material available. Therefore, the main sources of this thesis are P. B. Fitzwater's Christian Theology and Augustus H. Strong's Systematic Theology with several commentaries on Ephesians.

### III. The method and procedure.

The method which will be used in this study will be of the descriptive type. At first, all the terms and illustrations which deal with the subject of this thesis will be collected out of the contents of the epistle. Then, they will be classified and fully discussed under each item. At the conclusion, the final summary will be made upon this discussion.

The Greek text used in this thesis is Nestle's Novum Testamentum Graece.

### IV. Expected findings of thesis.

A. The union of Christ with the believer is not some sensational entity which is attained by men's effort.

B. It is a union made in the spiritual sphere and is to be realized by faith.

C. This is the closest relationship man can enter into with God, and brings glorious blessings and privileges.

## Chapter I. Historical and Critical Background

### I. Introductory matter about the writing of the epistle.

#### A. Authorship.

The external evidence that the Apostle Paul wrote this epistle is abundant.<sup>1</sup> Many early church fathers, including Polycarp who was a disciple of John who ministered at Ephesus towards the end of the first century, makes reference to some phrases in this epistle. Clement of Rome (95 A.D.) uses language resembling 1:18 and 4:4-6. Ignatius (115 A.D.) both in his Epistle to the Ephesians and Epistle to Polycarp refers to 3:3,4,9 and 5:25. Polycarp who was contemporaneous with Ignatius also referred to 4:26 and 2:5,8,9, and Clement of Alexandria quotes from 5:21-25 and 4:13-15. It was Tertullian who discussed the critical problem, saying "We have it on the true tradition of the Church, that the epistle was sent to the Ephesians, not to the Laodiceans,"<sup>2</sup> and he also mentioned that "it was Marcion that called it the 'Epistle to the

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<sup>1</sup> Henry C. Thiessen, Introduction to the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1958), p. 239; and T. K. Abbott, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistles to the Ephesians and to the Colossians (The International Critical Commentary), (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1956), pp. ix-x.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.



Laodiceans'." This evidence is to show that the epistle was in existence by 95 A.D. and extensively accepted from the early days.

The internal evidence is as strong as the external. It is written after Paul's usual pattern, and no radically different doctrine was presented. In fact it has been criticized as being similar to the Epistle to the Colossians. However, "the passages in Ephesians are as bold, free and natural as they are in Colossians."<sup>3</sup>

The epistle itself claims to be written by Paul, saying, "Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus through the will of God to the saints that are at Ephesus" (1:1).

The author refers to two things which are well known in Paul's life: (1) his imprisonment, "For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Christ . . ." (3:1, 4:1, 6:20); (2) his apostleship to the Gentiles (3:7, Acts 9:15, 22:21, 16:17,18).

Moreover, as in 1 Cor. 15:9 and Gal. 1:1,12 so in Eph. 3:3,8,9, he speaks humbly, yet with confidence of his calling and illumination, which no other can imitate.

However, the genuineness has been doubted.

1. Relationship to the Colossians. De Wette said

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<sup>3</sup> John Eadie, Commentary on the Epistle to the Ephesians (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1883 c.) p. xxxvi.

that it is a "verbose amplification" of the Epistle to the Colossians and the style is much inferior to that of Paul.<sup>4</sup> John Eadie as formerly quoted, denies this for they show the vividness of its originality. The fact that the epistle has 42 peculiar words to it is a strong argument to this objection.

2. Language. Just as stated, the epistle contains 42 hapax legomena. Many Pauline words are used with different cannotation. However, some of his other epistles have more hapax legomena: Romans 100, 1 Corinthians 108, 2 Corinthians 95, Galatians 33, and Colossians 38.<sup>5</sup> There is no set rule that the same person cannot use different words and put new ideas in them. A man so full of the ideas and concerned with the collateral thoughts suggested by them in this occasion has a definite right to use the style and words at his will.

3. Subject. Some say that the discussion is somewhat frimsy. However, if the subject matter is different and difficult as in this epistle, the style and language will naturally be different. Therefore, these objections may not be regarded as destructive enough to jeopardize the

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<sup>4</sup> Thiessen, op. cit., p. 24.

<sup>5</sup> Mr. D.B. Pecota's lecture in the Advanced Greek Course at Northwest Bible College, January 1960

genuineness of Paul's authorship.

B. Background and destination.

Ephesus was the capital of proconsular in Asia since B.C. 129. Apostle Paul visited this city for the first time during his second missionary journey. Due to his obligation to a religious vow, he had to leave the city after a short stay. However, he left Priscilla and Aquilla in his place. When Paul visited the city for the second time during his third missionary journey, he stayed there for three years, and preached the gospel day and night. Since it was the hub of Roman transportation, the gospel was spread not only within the city but throughout Asia. Wonderful miracles accompanied his ministry, and many magicians were convicted and turned away from their old way. Their decision was so definite that they gathered all of their books and burnt them before all men. However, the tumult caused by Demeterius forced Paul to leave the city.

Ephesus was known for its magnificent temple of Diana which made great influence throughout the land by its magic and prostitution. "So universal was the grip of this idea of magic that even the Christians banked on its powers after they were converted (Acts 19:13-20; 1 John

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<sup>6</sup>  
Acts 19:10.

5:21)<sup>7</sup> Gnosticism was also in practice in this city. It is the philosophy that the intellect was supreme and faith and conduct are secondary. This was chiefly treated by John in his epistles. Some of the same words that were used by those religious teachers are found in this epistle to present the Christian doctrine. They are μυστηριον (mystery); γνωσις (knowledge); σοφια (wisdom); τηλειος (mature); and πνευμα (spirit). "Paul may have used some of those terms in a deliberate attempt to interest Greek readers in the Gospel of God's salvation."<sup>9</sup>

Doubts have been inserted as to its destination, for the most important manuscripts, Aleph, B, and 67<sup>2</sup> do not contain the word "in Ephesus" in 1:1.<sup>10</sup> "Lightfoot observes that a reading in St. Paul's Epistles supported by  $\aleph$  B 67<sup>2</sup> almost always represents the original text."<sup>11</sup> Another strange thing is that there is no personal greetings found in the epistle to the church which Paul was so intimately associated. On the other hand so many other manuscripts contain the phrase "in Ephesus" and the patristic

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<sup>7</sup> Charles Caldwell Ryrie, Biblical Theology of the New Testament (Chicago: moody Press, 1959 c.), p. 311.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 157.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., pp. 157-8.

<sup>10</sup> Thiessen, op. cit., p. 242.

<sup>11</sup> Abbott, op. cit., p. 1.

opinion is also in favor of this. The solution perhaps can be found by regarding this to be a circular letter. Perhaps Paul left a blank after the word "the faithful" to be filled in with the name of the church to which the letter was delivered. Or there was no blank, but later copyist inserted the phrase "in Ephesus" to the manuscript from Ephesus. The testimony of Marcion to acknowledge this epistle to be the Epistle to Laodicia was perhaps because he saw one of the copies at Laodicia or obtained it from there. This theory would explain away the lack of personal greetings as well.

#### C. Occasion and date.

Being imprisoned at Rome, his heart was with the churches in Asia which were born under his ministry. He was especially informed about the rising foe of Gnosticism and the danger of it to the young Gentile churches. Perhaps he felt the need of establishing them in Christ and make their union with Christ as firm as possible. Thus he decided to send this epistle by Tychicus. Since Tychicus is also the deliverer of the Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon, the date of writing of the Ephesians is about the same time. Since there is no mention of his coming trial as found in Philippians, these three were earlier in dates. It was perhaps between 60 to 62 A.D.

## II. Introductory matter about the theology of the epistle.

### A. The use of the word "mystery."

The word "mystery" means something unexplained, unknown, or kept secret. This interpretation naturally infers two ideas: one is something absolutely uncomprehensible, and the other something revealed to the initiated one, but not to the others. Mystic is one who claims to see or know what is hidden from other men.<sup>12</sup>

Often it is applied to the Spiritual things, for spiritual things are usually unexplainable.

All religion must have a mystical element in them, for they have to do with spiritual side of man. They depend on revelation of some kind, for if it depends only on historical facts and tradition, it becomes legalistic and lifeless. There must be the third element which ties up the religion and the man. This third element which is the personal inward experience, is the one which makes the man religious. This is essential to mysticism, and without which religion can scarcely exist. This forms the bond between mysticism and religion.

In other words the mystics are those who are under

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Charles Hodge, Systematic Theology (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1885), Vol. I, p.61.

the immediate guidance of the spirit of God. Hodge quotes,

According to Cousin, 'Mysticism in philosophy is the belief that God may be known face to face, without anything intermediate. It is a yielding to the sentiment awakened by the idea of the infinite, and a running up of all knowledge and all duty to the contemplation and love of Him.' 13

This would include all the philosophical teachings, not excluding pantheism, which would teach the identity of union of God and the human soul, or even the one which teaches the direct intuition of the infinite being. Brahmins, Buddhism, and many other Greek philosophies are thus placed in the category of mysticism. For the basis of above teaching, there must be a realization of the presence of the living God in the soul and in nature.

To obtain this faith three convictions are to be held. The first is that the essence of life and of the world is an underlying spirituality. The second is that the religion is not mere mental assent, or institutional affiliation, but life itself. The third is that the spiritual union may be attained by any man in this life.

In Christian teaching, there is a mystical phase also. Since it is not a mere ethical teaching, and its canon, the Bible is not a mere history book, many personal experiences are expected. Philip Schaff says, "It is the

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Ibid., p. 62.

conscious effort of the soul to apprehend and possess God and Christ, and expresses itself in the words, 'I live, and yet not I but Christ liveth in me'<sup>14</sup> Therefore, every true believer is a Mystic. "The Christian ideas of illumination, revelation, incarnation, regeneration, the sacraments and resurrection are essentially Mystical elements."<sup>15</sup>

Often mention has been made to some Christian groups in the history of Christianity as Christian mystics, making a distinction from other orthodox Christian believers. In regard to this Hodge says,

It is the theory, variously modified, that the knowledge, purity, and blessedness to be derived from communion with God, are not to be attained from the Scriptures and the use of the ordinary means of grace, but by a supernatural and immediate divine influence (or communication of God to the soul) is to be secured by passivity, a simple yielding the soul without thought or effort to the divine influx. 16

These people would assume that the feelings themselves are the sources of the knowledge, and try to pursue them in their religious life, while the other think that the feelings are the channels through which God makes the truth known to the soul. These were often called fanatics,

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<sup>14</sup> Philip Schaff, History of the Christian Church (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1910 c.) Vol. VI, p. 237.

<sup>15</sup> Hodge, op. cit., p. 64.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.



or spiritualists. They might be classified as a Mysterious group rather than the Mystical group.

However, in any case human reason is not considered as the great organ of transmitting the truth. For anything that human reason can comprehend is not titled as Mystery.

Where Paul used the word "mystery" in connection to his teaching of the Church, many theologians think that he did not refer to the above stated first meaning that is something unknown, or incomprehensible. Walvoord says, "It is rather that the truth relating to the church was once hidden, i.e., in the Old Testament, but is now revealed in the New Testament." <sup>17</sup> Concerning what was unknown in the Old Testament, these theologians differ in their opinions. Some say, that it is the relationship of the Church as the Bride of Christ, another that is the unity of the Jews and Gentiles in Christ, and the other the living organic nature of Church.

However, the first opinion, the relation of man to God in the figure of marriage is not a new revelation which belongs to the New Testament only. "In the Old Testament Israel is declared to be the wife of Jehovah, and the entire Book of Hosea is devoted to a historical allegory

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John F. Walvoord, "Premillennialism and the Church as a Mystery," Bibliotheca Sacra, Vol. 111, No. 441 (January, 1954), p.2.

of this relationship."<sup>18</sup> The second idea of the union of the Jews and the Gentiles is not entirely new either. For time and time again God showed Himself as God of whole universe and also His interests in the salvation of Gentiles. But the truth is, as Walvoord points out, the situation as "Christ in you."<sup>19</sup> While the coming of Messiah both in suffering and in glory was mentioned, this relation has never been mentioned.

However, the phrase "as it hath now been revealed" (Eph. 3:5) should be noted, here. Because it shows that the difference was the matter of extensiveness and not the subject itself. The relationship between God and man was known to a certain extent in the Old Testament times, but not in the unique, close relationship in love. Therefore, the word "mystery" in reference to the Church means both in the sense that it is something unexplainable for being a spiritual state, and in the sense that it was hidden in a time and to the people.

B. Words which infer the relationship between Christ and the believer.

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<sup>18</sup> Walvoord, op. cit., Vol. 111, No. 442 (April, 1954), pp. 102-3.

<sup>19</sup> Walvoord, op. cit., p. 8.

1. The use of the word ἐν in connection with the name of Christ.

ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ is used 8 times. <sup>20</sup> ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ is found only once in 3:11. ἐν τῷ Ἰησοῦ is in 4:21. ἐν Χριστῷ is used twice. <sup>21</sup> ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ is found in 1:10, 12, and 20. ἐν κυρίῳ is used comparatively more. <sup>22</sup> ἐν τῷ ηγαπημένῳ is in 1:6 while τῷ Χριστῷ is used in 2:5. The combination of the two is found in 3:11. <sup>23</sup>

With pronoun αὐτῷ the word is used in 1:4 and 2:15 and with ᾧ in 1:7,11,13, 2:21, 3:12.

Besides these there are ἐν τῇ σαρχὶ αὐτοῦ in 2:14, and ἐν τῷ αἵματι τοῦ Χριστοῦ in v.13.

These expressions refer to the close relationship which existed between Christ and the believer.

2. The use of the word διὰ shows a similar relationship.

They are διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ of 1:15, δι' αὐτοῦ of 2:18, and διὰ τοῦ σταυροῦ of 2:16.

<sup>20</sup> 1:1, 2:6,7,10,13, 3:6,21 and 1:15.

<sup>21</sup> 1:3, 4:32. <sup>22</sup> 2:21,22, 4:1,17, 5:8, 6:1,10,21.

<sup>23</sup> ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ τῷ κυρίῳ ἡμῶν.

### 3. The use of the word έν.

In 2:14 he made both one, 2:15 into one new man, 2:16 in one body, 2:18 in one spirit, and one body, one spirit, one hope of calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism and one God and Father.<sup>24</sup> These show the oneness which now exists between Jew and Gentiles in Christ, as well as the unity between man and God.

### 4. The use of the prefix συν.

συνεβωπόησεν, (he quickened together); συνήγειρον, (raised together); συνεκάθισεν, (seated together). συμπολίται, (fellow-citizens); συναρμολογουμένη, (being fitly framed together).<sup>25</sup> συνοικοδομήσθε, (built together); συκληρονομία, (fellow-heirs); σύσσωμα, (fellow-members of the body); συμμέτοχα, (fellow-sharers),<sup>26</sup> συμβιβασμένον, (being knit together)

Some of these words show the experience that the Gentiles had with the Jews, but others show human experiences together with Christ in the great dispensation of God. "Together" refers to the closest relationship.

<sup>24</sup>  
4:3-5.

<sup>25</sup>  
2:5,6,19,21.

<sup>26</sup>  
2:22, 3:6, 4:16.

### 5. Parables which teach the relationship.

There are three parables Paul used. The church is illustrated as a building or a temple. It is fitly framed together on the foundation which corner-stone is Christ, and it has the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

Another is the illustration of the Body. Every member is knitted together under one head and grows up into Christ. It shows the organic union.

The other is of Bride. This is the closest human relationship in love. This is what God instituted in the beginning and no man is supposed to separate them. The headship in the union which is Christ the Saviour is clearly shown.

### C. About the word ἐκκλησία.

#### 1. Etymology.

The word has been translated as "church" in most cases in the New Testament. The simplest connotation of the word is "an assembly of body of called out ones." However, in the New Testament, it is almost certain that it is a translation of the Hebrew word Qahal which means the congregation of Israel, which were gathered together before the Lord. <sup>27</sup> The English word "church" is derived

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<sup>27</sup> Daniel Jenkins, The Strangeness of the Church (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1955), pp. 50-51.

from another Greek word κυριακός that means "the Lord's house."<sup>28</sup>

According to Fitzwater there are four different usages of the word.<sup>29</sup>

a) An assembly which means just a simple crowd called together. (Acts 19:32,37).

b) A local assembly of believers which is the same as the local churches in present day. (At. 15:41).

c) The body of professing believers. This means the visible church as a whole inclusive of all who made a confession in regard to Jesus Christ as their Saviour.

d) The Body of Christ. This is so-called "invisible church". Some 114 uses of the word, 111 are used in this regard.<sup>30</sup>

The third idea listed here refers to the body of individuals who are called out of the sinful world, believed on Jesus Christ and regenerated through His blood and have become the sons of God. Those people can be found all over the world without any difference of denominational affiliation. However, the fourth idea is more extensive

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H. Orton Wiley, Christian Theology (Kansas City, Mo: Bacon Hill Press, 1958), Vol. III, p. 103.

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P. B. Fitzwater, Christian Theology (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1948), p. 467.

30

Ibid.

than the third. Because this church is composed of all the saints who are both living and dead. It has no time limitation either. For this is the ideal and invisible eternal church which God purposed in Himself from the eternity. Saints in the past, present and future belong to this as long as they are united with Christ.

This is a great difference from other human societies even if they are of a religious nature. It is also distinctive from the sense of local assembly, for in local groups there can be and actually are these who have no real experience with God regarding to the salvation of their souls. They might claim that they are members of a certain local church, but never be able to claim that they are members of the true living Church of Christ.

It is rather hard, sometimes, to distinguish the usage between the third and the fourth; for they are used almost interchangeably. The church represented in the third usage is included in the fourth. The only difference is whether it is present day's church or inclusive church, which point the Scripture does not distinguish in most cases.

## 2. The origin of the church.

Originally the church was begun in the mind of God even before the foundation of the world. It is connected with God's eternal election of the saints unto salvation,

as well as with the plan of redemption. As the redemption was planned on the basis of God's holy love for lost mankind, the church was planned for the glory of His grace.<sup>31</sup>

The actual beginning of the Church was on the Day of Pentecost. Some say that the church was actually begun when Peter made the confession at Caesarea Phillipi. It is obvious that the foundation of the church is the death of Christ, because the church is composed of only those who are regenerated through the blood of Christ. The redemption was completed when Christ was resurrected from the grave. Therefore, "There positively cannot be found a church, in the New Testament sense, where the death of Christ on Calvary is not preached and believed. Because Christ poured out His blood on Calvary, much fruit has been brought forth."<sup>32</sup> This is part of the reason why the word "church" is not found in the Old Testament: the church had not existed, and it was a mystery.<sup>33</sup> Even in the Gospels, the word "church" was mentioned only twice,<sup>34</sup> and one of them was the prophecy concerning it. This is a God's dispensation peculiar to the New Testament. It is significant that the church was born at the outpouring of the Holy

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<sup>31</sup> Eph. 1:3-6.

<sup>32</sup> Fitzwater, op. cit., p. 471.

<sup>33</sup> Eph. 3:3-6.

<sup>34</sup> Matt. 16:18, 18:17.



Spirit, because the church had to exist in the dispensation of the Holy Spirit. There is a close relationship between the Church and the Spirit of God.

In the Epistle to the Ephesians, the word "church" is used 9 times,<sup>34</sup> and six of them appear in the same context which discussed the relationship of Christ and the Church in reference to a husband and wife.<sup>35</sup> The church is presented as the fulness of God, the instrument to let God's wisdom known and God be glorified, the temple of God, the Body of Christ, and the Bride of Christ. It is also said that Christ loved it so much that He gave Himself up in order that He might present it as a holy church without spot or wrinkle. With this purpose in view, Paul gives practical exhortations concerning the walk, in the latter part of the Epistle. In fact the Epistle itself composed of the discussion on this special relationship of Christ and the believer, both in past, present and future. It is a real revelation of the hidden truth.

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<sup>34</sup> Eph. 1:22, 3:10,21, 5:23,24,25,27,29,32.

<sup>35</sup> Brooke Foss Westcott, Saint Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, n.d.) p. 172.

## Chapter II. The Foundation of the Relationship

The church consists of those who are sanctified and called "saints". Many associations and institutions of this world are founded on the basis of natural complements such as taste, wealth, culture, nationality, the social class, or sex.<sup>36</sup> However, in the church these have no part in the foundation. The foundation of the church is threefold: (1) God's sacrificial love manifested in the redemption; (2) Believer's faith in Christ; (3) Definite experience of regeneration.

### I. God's sacrificial love manifested in the redemption.

It is God who first planned this new relationship. God chose men even before the foundation of the world for Himself.<sup>37</sup> He, not only chose, but as the next verse shows, predestined men unto sonship or adoption according to His good will. This was done when even a single soul was not yet created. This was done in love. As the word "adoption" clearly shows, it is not by nature, but through a special privilege. This means that bringing in some one who is not a member of the family and unworthy for it into the fellowship of the family. There is no other intention doing this but by love. God does this just from

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<sup>36</sup> Fitzwater, op. cit., p.473.      <sup>37</sup> Eph. 1:4.

His own good pleasure. Therefore, the word "chose" is in the dynamic middle form. <sup>38</sup> That is the choosing for Himself. In other passage (2:4) Paul says "God being rich in mercy, on account of His great love with which he loved us . . ." and caused to alive together with Christ. It is clear that there is no merit of human effort. It is all God's.

The original planning was found in God's deep eternal counseling, but its media is Jesus Christ and his redemptive work. Regeneration has to do with the impartation of life to those dead in trespasses and sin. It takes the blood of Christ. <sup>39</sup> Only through His blood the forgiveness of sins is attained, and thus qualified for the new relationship with Christ. Hunter says,

The true Church could not have existed until Christ died; for she must be redeemed by His blood (Eph. 5:25-27). The true Church could not have existed until His resurrection; for she partakes of His resurrection life, and she is the harvest of which He, in resurrection, is the "Firstfruits" in the New Creation. The true Church could not have existed until His ascension; for He must first become "head over all things to the church." Likewise, the true Church could not exist until the advent of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost; for she can be formed only by the present ministry of the Spirit in baptizing all members into one body and causing them to drink into one body and causing them to drink into the Spirit (1 Cor. 12:14)." <sup>40</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> ἐξελέξατο

<sup>39</sup> Eph. 1:7.

<sup>40</sup> A. Mitchell Hunter, The Teaching of Calvin, (Westwood,

Thus God through Christ quickened those whom He chose, and raised them from the dead and finally seated them in heavenly places with Him.<sup>41</sup> The purpose of all God's work and effort was just to present the church holy and blameless, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing.

The third person in the Trinity, the Holy Spirit appears to be the executor of this program, and He seals those who are regenerated and become God's special inheritance. "The seal of the Spirit is not something mysterious, but the personal indwelling of the Spirit in the soul of the redeemed."<sup>42</sup> Apostle Paul in most clear and concise way, speaks of the situation "for by grace ye were saved through faith."<sup>43</sup>

## II. Believer's faith in Christ.

Paul declares "in whom we have the freedom of speech (boldness) and access in confidence through faith in Him,"<sup>44</sup> and also "Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith."

Faith brings God's eternal program into reality. Meyer says, "for the faith in the atonement made by Christ

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N.J.: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1950, 2nd ed.), p. 205.

<sup>41</sup>  
Eph. 2:5,6.

<sup>42</sup>  
Fitzwater, op. cit., p. 473.

<sup>43</sup>  
Eph. 2:8.

<sup>44</sup>  
Eph. 3:12,17.

(Rom. iii.25,30,a.l.) is, as the causa apprehendens of the Messianic salvation, the necessary mediate instrument on the part of man."<sup>45</sup> Even though God has predestined the saints from eternity, it does not mean that the saints are saved without their desire to be saved. Since God created man as a free moral agency he would never intend to violate it. Therefore, "no man is saved against his will; and his desire to be saved is proved by his belief of the Divine testimony."<sup>46</sup>

Faith is a living trust in Christ and all His redemptive work. It is an act of assent to and of accepting what has been told. Lenski says "it is a trustful reception."<sup>47</sup> Christ is the sole object of this faith, that is to say that the atoning death and resurrection of Christ are the central object on which the faith is fixed.<sup>48</sup> Therefore, every sinner, in order to be saved, must hear

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<sup>45</sup> Heinrich A. W. Meyer, Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1884), p. 113.

<sup>46</sup> Eadie, op. cit., p. 150.

<sup>47</sup> R. C. H. Lenski, The Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians, to the Ephesians, and to the Philippians (Columbus, Ohio: The Wartburg Press, 1946 c.) p. 423.

<sup>48</sup> William A. Brown, Christian Theology in Outline (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1906 c.), p. 360.

the Gospel first, accept it and completely trust in the  
<sup>49</sup>  
 Saviour.

However, the faith does not spring out of itself on the soil of the human heart. It is not a result of human effort. Natural man cannot produce faith in regard to his salvation. "Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."<sup>50</sup> Faith is always non-self-causative thing. In human relations faith and confidence are produced always by others, by what they are and what they do. Even deceivers try to build the confidence in others to fulfill their cunning purpose. Saving faith is wrought only by the saving grace of God through the hearing of the Word of Truth.<sup>51</sup> Grace and the eternal counsel of God is the source of salvation, and the faith is the instrument, without which it is impossible to receive anything from God.<sup>52</sup>

### III. Definite experience of regeneration.

Confession of faith in Jesus Christ and the repentance of former sins bring a salvation experience to the person. All what has been done in the counsel of God becomes his. He is sanctified, admitted to the common life in

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<sup>49</sup>  
 Rom. 10:13-18.

<sup>50</sup>  
 Rom. 10:17.

<sup>51</sup>  
 Eph. 1:13, 4:21.

<sup>52</sup>  
 Heb. 11:6.

the unity with Christ, and receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. Whether he is a Jew or Gentile, he is made near to God, and even the household of God. He is an heir, member of the body, and partaker of the promise of God in Christ.<sup>53</sup>

The love and grace which spring out of God's eternal counsel, and faith that is caused to spring out of human heart by the saving grace bring a lost sinner into an experience of regeneration; thus into the new relationship with God and Christ.

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<sup>53</sup>  
Eph. 3:6.

## Chapter III. Nature of the Relationship

### I. Unity with the Godhead.

Examining the uses of the word ἐν in connection with the title and pronoun for Christ, the word ἐν and the words with prefix συν, with other allegorical teachings found in the Epistle, the teaching of Paul as to the relationship of Christ and the believer can be classified as follows:

#### A. From the usage of the words.

##### 1. What Christ is to the Church.

Christ is the Lord (1:3,17), peace (2:14), and the chief-corner stone (2:20). He is the head of the church (5:23), the saviour of the body (5:23), and the bridegroom of the church (5:23ff). Concerning the first two, the word "our" is used in the passage to indicate the definite relationship.

##### 2. What the Church is to Christ.

Church is His body (1:23), the fulness of God (1:23), the temple of God in which He indwells (2:22, 3:17) and the Bride of Christ (5:23ff).

##### 3. What God and Christ did.

God blessed (1:3,6, 2:7), predestined or chose (1:4,5), quickened, raised, and seated (2:5) as well as forgave



(4:3).

Christ came down and preached peace (2:7), led captivity captive (4:8), gave different gifts and ministries (4:11), loved men and gave Himself (5:1,25,26,27), destroyed the enmity, and made two nations, which are Gentiles and Jews, one body (2:15ff), and shines upon the sleeping (5:14).

#### 4. What the Believer does in connection with Christ.

He puts hope (1:12) and faith (1:13,15), hears Gospel in Him (1:13) and the word of truth (4:21), receives the share (1:11), experiences the new creation (2:10,15), framed together as the building (2:21, 4:16), and have access to God (2:13,18, 3:12). The Gentiles find the same experience as the Jews in Christ (3:6, 2:13) and the spiritual growth is obtained in Him (2:21, 4:20, 5:8, 6:10). Daily living is to be conducted in obedience to Christ (5:24, 6:4-6, 4:20).

What Paul shows in this Epistle is the close relationship between Christ and the believer which namely is oneness. The nature of the union is not (a) a natural union, like that of God with all human spirits, as held by rationalists; (b) a moral union, or union of love and sympathy, like that between teacher and student, friend and friend; (c) a union of essence, which destroys the

distinct personality and subsistence of either Christ or the human spirits, as held by many of the mystics; (d) a union mediated and conditioned by participation of the sacraments of the church, as held by Romanists, Lutherans, and High-Church Episcopalians.<sup>54</sup> It is rather, a personal, organic, and spiritual union.

#### B. From allegories.

Paul says in 1:1 that the saints are in Christ and also points out that Christ is to indwell in their hearts.<sup>55</sup> In every one of the allegorical teachings, Paul stresses this unity with Christ.

##### 1. Allegory of a building.

The building is to be framed together for the habitation of God. Each believer as a part of the building is joined to the other and to Christ the chief corner-stone. This picture implies to that of the Holy place of the temple where God's presence was manifested. Paul says that the church "is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all" (1:23).

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<sup>54</sup> Augustus H. Strong, Systematic Theology (Philadelphia: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1907 c.), pp. 799-800.

<sup>55</sup> Eph. 2:22, 3:17.

## 2. Allegory of a body.

The body is the body of Christ and the saints are the members or parts of the body. All make up one body and together they exist. They are united to the head which is Christ. They can not exist without Christ. Where Christ is, there is the church. Where is the church, Christ meats and deals with the people. "One could even say, Christ is incarnate in the church."<sup>56</sup> Body and its members are inseparable. It is possible to exist only on the basis of union.

## 3. Allegory of marriage relationship.

The relationship between a husband and wife more vividly shows the unity of Christian and Christ. This relationship was first instituted by God Himself. When God created woman He created from the flesh of the first man, Adam. Therefore, when Adam first saw Eve, he uttered "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh" (Gen. 2:23). Christ taught that "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh."<sup>57</sup> When they left their

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56

Gustaf Aulen, The Faith of the Christian Church (Philadelphia: The Muhlenberg Press, 1948 c.), p. 322.

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Eph. 5:31.

parents and married, they were no longer two persons. They were legally and socially considered as one. By their social relations, the two bodies actually become one flesh. They belong to each other, and to no one else. Therefore, they are not able to play harlotry.<sup>58</sup> However, even this union is not perfect, for the physical and material are but ephemeral.

The Israelites were as wife to God. God loved the nation, and separated them from all other nations of the world. He dwelt among them day and night. His glory would never depart from Israel. When Israel was defiled His name was defiled. When Israel was attacked, the Lord said that this is my battle.<sup>59</sup> Jehovah was their God exclusively, and the Israelites were God's people exclusively. It was somewhat a mystical union, for it was closed to the people from outside.

While was yet called Saul, he was persecuting the churches. One day, he saw the light and heard the voice from heaven on the way to Damascus. The voice he heard was not "Why persecutest thou the Church?" but "Why persecutest thou me?" He said that "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest." That means that when Paul persecuted the

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<sup>58</sup>  
1 Cor. 6:15,16.

<sup>59</sup>  
2 Chronicles 20:15.

Church he was persecuting Jesus. The Church and Jesus were the same thing. "That was to say that when Paul had stood, holding the coats of the men who were stoning Stephen, he had witnessed the persecution of the Body of Christ.;

The sufferings of the Church are nothing less than the sufferings of Christ Himself. At the same time the attributes of Christ become the possession of the Church through this union. Therefore, it is the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

Paul, himself experienced this union with Christ. He said "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me".<sup>61</sup> The passage "God made us alive together with Christ . . . and raised us up with him, and made us to sit with him in the heavenly places, in Christ Jesus" was spoken in the same way.

## II. Personal and mutual unity with Christ.

The word "personal"relationship means that (a) it is the individual thing, that no other person can enter in it; (b) it is a person to person relationship; (c) the

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Bruce Kenrick, The New Humanity (London: Collins, 1958), p. 34.

61

Gal. 2:20.

intimate affairs which is the closest relationship, having to do with the character.

A. Individual experience.

The relationship between Christ and the believer is the personal or individual matter. As discussed previously in the chapter for the foundation of the relationship, it is based on God's grace and man's faith. It is not an institutional, or mechanical union. The person must hear the word of truth by himself, and believe it for himself. He must accept Christ as his own Saviour. No one else can do it for him. Buying indulgences, or saving merits for other persons is erroneous teaching of salvation. Faith is the only means that brings God's provision into actual experience, and it must be on the individual basis. Therefore, the unity which faith brings is also an individual unity.

B. Person to person relationship.

It was God who chose the people; the people responded to it. There must be two personalities in this relationship. There is one on the acting part who is Christ, and the other who is believing, the receiving party. Therefore, it is distinctive from pantheism. Christ loved and gave Himself, and man received Him. Christ preached peace and both Jews and Gentiles believed it. Grace was

given, and the faith received it.

There is a will enfolded in this relationship, therefore it is not a mechanical union, nor constrained union by force.

There are three distinctive persons in the Trinity, yet they compose one eternal Godhead. "They are other-conscious inter-personalities. They are inseparably and infinitely social as well as eternally sacrificial in relation to each other."<sup>62</sup> The similar relationship is expected between Christ and the believer.

As the building, the believers are framed together and grow into the Lord. Christ himself is the chief cornerstone. The foundations and the the buildings on them have mutual relationship. Either one of them can not exist without the other. The foundation needs the upper superstructure, and vice versa. "The purpose of the cornerstone is to hold two walls together and to support the superstructure. Without Christ, therefore, the whole building of the Church would collapse."<sup>63</sup> Each believer is strengthened by uniting each other and to Christ the head.

Almost the same thing can be said of the Body of

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<sup>62</sup> John B. Champion, The Heart of the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1941 c.), p.191.

<sup>63</sup> Jenkins, op. cit., pp. 56-7.

Christ. The head alone cannot be the body and the members alone cannot be called the body. They are complementing each other and compose the perfect body. Nygren says:

Christ is not the head pure and simple, but he is the head of his Church. Similarly, the Church is not a body in itself, viewed apart from the head, but it is just the body of Christ. The body of Christ is Christ himself. 64

Even after the Day of Pentecost, the Church could not claim herself to be the Way, truth, and life. If she ever did, she would be independent. She would be exalting herself. There would have been no mutual relationship with Christ. Actually without the foundations or Head, the church could not have existed. The church must constantly look back and see the rock from which she is hewn out.

The marriage relationship is based on the agreement of the wills of two parties. There is not only the physical union, but the union of heart and purpose. Physically they might be different: man is larger, stronger, bolder. He is more qualified to be a leader than his wife because of his mental and moral abilities. The wife has her own characteristics that the husband does not possess. Therefore, he has his own part to occupy and the wife has her own. They cooperate and do their parts, then there is a

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Anders Nygren, tr. by Alanx Carlsten, Christ and His Church (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1956 c.) p. 96.



perfect personal union. If Christ is going one way while the Church is going in the opposite direction, there is no unity.<sup>65</sup>

C. The closest relationship.

Christ and the believer have the same life. They are connected each other as if the same blood is going through in their veins. They are no longer two separate persons, but one. "On the part of the betrothed there is entire devotion and unflinching fidelity."<sup>66</sup> As a man loves his wife as his own body, Christ loved the Church and gave Himself up for her with the self-sacrificing love, the Church should respond with the self-surrender of obedience.<sup>67</sup> The sphere of Christ's activity is among the saints in the church, and their world of activity is in Christ. They are one. They live together, act together, suffer together and rejoice together. "There is no union without its reciprocal indwelling, and no indwelling without its possession."<sup>68</sup> They belong to each other. This is not done

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<sup>65</sup> Champion, op. cit., p. 195.

<sup>66</sup> Fitzwater, op. cit., p. 479.

<sup>67</sup> James Orr, ed., The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1939), Vol. II, p. 960.

<sup>68</sup> Champion, op. cit., p. 198.

by mere conformity, but willing bestowal. Both parties give themselves to each other. The husband lives within the wife and the wife living in the husband. Just as the tree is extending into the branches and the branches are rooted into the tree. It is definitely not the pantheistic but personal union.

They cannot be separated. "There is no hint that that divorce is possible in this relationship (Eph. 5:22-<sup>69</sup>32)" There is a declaration of love eternal, infinite, unchangeable, incomprehensible, stated through Hosea; "I will betroth thee unto me forever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving-kindness, and in mercies;"<sup>70</sup>

Wherever He goes, she will follow.<sup>71</sup> She will keep her eyes on Him, she will become like Him.<sup>72</sup> There is a sweet union and communion for ever and ever.

### III. Christ is preeminent in this relationship.

There are three passages where the "head" is mentioned: (1) 1:22, "and he put all things in subjection under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the

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<sup>69</sup> Ryrie, op. cit., p. 193. <sup>70</sup> Hosea 2:19,20.

<sup>71</sup> Rev. 14:4.

<sup>72</sup> 1 John 3:2.

church." (2) 4:15, "but speaking truth in love, may grow up in all things into him, who is the head, even Christ."

(3) 5:23, "For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, being himself the saviour of the body."

In Chapter 1, the preceding context shows that the Christ was exalted above all things in the world, and the following context, he is said to the head of the church. "He, the exalted Saviour, the incarnate Son of God, seated as head of the universe, is made head of his church."<sup>70</sup>

In the passage found in 4:15, the conformity of the believers to Christ is spoken of. Saints are expected to grow and be conformed to him, for He is the head of the body.

In the fifth chapter, the headship of Christ is discussed in the marriage relationship. As the head of the family, the husband is expected to love his wife and protect her from every danger, and the wife is expected to obey and help the husband. It is noteworthy that here, Christ is presented not only as the head of the Church, but also the Saviour of the same. Christ is the head in the building, the body, and in the home.

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Charles Hodge, A Commentary on the Epistle to the Ephesians (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1950), p. 87.

#### A. Federal head.

God made Adam as the head of the human race; that is all mankind belongs to him and receives his influence.

"Therefore his first sin affected the whole human race."<sup>71</sup>

Under the headship of Adam all mankind, man and woman, old and young, became sinners. They have within them the inherited Adamic nature. As long as they are human, they are under the headship of Adam. They cannot escape from it.

God raised the second Adam, who is Christ. The first Adam failed to keep God's commandment and to preserve the peace and life for his progeniture, while the second Adam accomplished what the first failed. By his perfect obedience even to go all the way to the Cross, he purchased the salvation. Then He arose from the death as the first fruit of the new humanity of the new creation. This is what Paul relates in 1 Cor. 15:23. He is the first fruit to the rest of mankind. And "that which happened to the head, happens also to the whole body."<sup>72</sup>

#### B. Organic head.

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<sup>71</sup> R. B. Kuiper, The Glorious Body of Christ (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, n.d.), p.91.

<sup>72</sup> Nygren, op. cit., p. 95.

Paul often tells that Christ is the head of the church and the church is His body. Their relationship is the one of the head and the body. 4:16 explains thus: "From whom all the body fitly framed and knit together through that which every joint supplieth, according to the working in due measure of each several part, maketh the increase of the body unto the building up of itself in love." The church was not only originated by Christ, but also in Christ and it can not exist for a moment without Christ, for there is a vital relationship as an organism.

Their relationship is reciprocal; they depend each other, yet the priority is always in the Head. When the member of the body is cut off, the Head may still live on, but when the Head is cut off the body dies immediately. This is illustrated even in the parable of the Vine and the branches. The tree is the source of life in the branches. They are dependent on the tree for their existence. Church is solely dependent on the Head, Christ. Without which the Church cannot be the Body of Christ.

Christ is the head of the Church in the sense that the head directs all the movement and activities of the members. The members can not move by their own will and desire, because they do not possess the mental faculty. They are directed by the order which comes from the head. Members do not tell the head what to do, for in the head

there is the control of the whole body. By what Christ is, the church can be what it is today.

Head is also the center of the feeling. The pain or disorder of the smallest nerve or fiber vibrates to the head, and there it is felt. Thus the sufferings of the members are at the same time the sufferings of the head, and also of the whole body.

### C. Ruling head.

Christ is shown as the ruling head of the church in the passage of the discussion concerning the husband and wife. He holds the authority and government in the home. This is God's order from the beginning. The man was created first and the woman was created afterwards for the man. Man is appointed as the center of the household. What ever he decides in connection with the family affairs that is absolute. He is the strength of the home, also. Wife receives her help from him. His influence is felt by every member in the family. The household is represented by the man. He is the protector of the family, as well as the blessing of the household. He is the one who decides the walks of the family. Therefore, Paul says that he is also the "Redeemer of the body." <sup>73</sup> That is "not only its

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<sup>73</sup>  
Eph. 5:23.

Redeemer by an act of atonement, but its continued Deliverer, Preserver, and Benefactor, and so is deservedly its Head."<sup>74</sup>

He is the one who bestowed the grace, and gave the gifts to each members accordingly. "He gave some to be apostles; some prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;"<sup>75</sup> The dispersement was according to His will. The members have no right to murmur or complain as to the gift they received. This is given by the head, for the perfection of the body.

Christ is also the head over all things. Everything was placed under his feet. He is the Lord of lords and the King of kings. He himself declared that "All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth."<sup>76</sup> To be united with the Head is to be united with the King of the world. By uniting with this head, the Church will reign with Him for ever.

#### IV. Organic and vital unity.

From the foregoing it is obvious that the union is organic. The body is a living organism. The limbs exist for the heart, and the heart for the limbs. Each member of Christ's body lives for him who is the head; and Christ

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<sup>74</sup> Eadie, op. cit., p. 411. <sup>75</sup> Eph. 4:11.

<sup>76</sup> Matt. 20:18.

the head equally lives for his members. Organism is something living. Therefore, in this relationship between Christ and the believer, there must be the stream of life flowing throughout.

The members are interdependent. Five parts of the body are fitly built together. Each organs are closely related together. Every muscle and nerve is connected to each other. Every joint is united to each other. No part is independent. They work together. They are most vitally united to their head. The members may not be connected each other in a direct way, but they are all connected with the head. Through their one common head, they are united to each other. Without their relationship with Christ, there is no true fellowship among Christians. They are united only through their unity with Christ by faith.

It is a vital union. There are many members in the body, but they are all "bound together by the vital influence derived from the head."<sup>77</sup> As the flow of life goes through every part of the body and vitalizes its systems, divine influence flows from Christ the head into every member of the body, and distributes the life eternal.

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<sup>77</sup> Hodge, op. cit., p. 244.



Christ said, "I am the Life," "I came that they may have life, and may have it abundantly," and "I give unto them eternal life."<sup>78</sup> "The body derives its vitality and power of development from the head."<sup>79</sup> When a man unites with Christ, he is connected with the Life. And the eternal life flows into his whole being and quickens him. As the result, rivers of the living water will gush out of his inner being. Therefore, on the other hand, once they are disconnected from the head, immediate death comes upon them. They are in an inseparable relationship.

"For we are members of his body."<sup>80</sup> "This form of expression," Meyer says, "is a reminiscence of Gen. 11. 23. Adam expresses the origin of Eve out of his bones and out of his flesh."<sup>81</sup> Christians receive their life from Christ as Eve did hers from Adam. Christians partake of the life of Christ as Eve was the partaker of Adam's life.<sup>82</sup> Eve was made out of Adam's flesh. In allegorical parallel, Christ gave his flesh to eat and the blood to drink in order that they may partake of His life.

At the last supper, Jesus said to his disciples,

<sup>78</sup> John 11:25, 10:10,28.

<sup>79</sup> Eadie, op. cit., p. 324.

<sup>80</sup> Eph. 5:30.

<sup>81</sup> Meyer, op. cit., p. 302.

<sup>82</sup> Hodge, op. cit., p. 344.

"take, eat; this is my body"<sup>83</sup> The word "eat" is normally used to describe the action of animals munching grass. This is no discreet swallowing of a wafer.<sup>84</sup> Therefore, according to Jesus, it is the munching of His flesh. No one has used such a forthright and intense expression to describe the relationship that existed between Christ and the believer. It is more realistic than spiritual. Christians chew the flesh of Jesus, the son of God, and the flesh becomes their flesh and his blood their blood.

In this regard, Kenrick says, that the temple of God, and the bride and bride-groom may be the metaphor, but "we must discard the use of the word 'metaphor' when applied to the phrase 'the Body of Christ'"<sup>85</sup>

For in the words of the distinguished New Testament scholar J. A. T. Robinson, to say that the Church is the Body of Christ is no more of a metaphor than to say that the flesh of the incarnate Jesus is the body of Christ! Neither of them is "like" His Body (Paul never says this): each of them is the Body of Christ, in that each of them is the physical complement, and extension of the one and the same Person and Life.<sup>86</sup>

The Church is actually the Body of Christ. That is the Spiritual body in which Christ was raised from the death and lives forever. If so, the body in which the believer joins together is the body of a new creation.

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<sup>83</sup> Matt. 26:26.

<sup>84</sup> Kenrick, op. cit., p. 33

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

## V. Unlimited spiritual unity.

### A. Spiritual unity.

The spiritual unity means (1) Unity whose nature and sphere are spiritual; (2) Unity which is wrought by the Holy Spirit.

#### 1. Unity whose nature and sphere are spiritual.

It is obvious that the unity of Christ and the believer is not the physical unity. Because Christ is not physically manifested on earth, it is impossible for a man to unite with Christ in the flesh. The days that disciples could see Him with their eyes and handle with their hands are eternally gone. Therefore, it is of moral nature rather than the materialistic and physical unity. Union after the spirit is superior to the one of the flesh. Physical unity is temporary, but the union of the spirit is eternal. Even in the marriage relationship, youthful passion from the natural desire last but a short period. Nevertheless as the couple live along and cultivate their love in and through their life experience, they reach the spiritual unity. They exist only as they are and not in any other way. This state might be called an identical union.

The union is entirely in the spiritual realm. Since it is the union with God it can never be physical. It is also the unity with the resurrected Christ. The

process of unity is by quickening, raising and seating with Christ in the Heavens. It is the unity with the resurrected body of Christ. It is a spiritual body; that is a Spirit-quickened body, a Spirit-filled body.<sup>87</sup> This is a matter of spiritual sphere. The death with Christ does not put the believer actually on the cross. Being raised with Christ does not mean that the believer ceases to live in this world physically. This is all in spiritual realm. "Heavenly places" is a peculiar word in the Epistle. It means the supra-mundane, supra-sensual, eternal order,<sup>88</sup> which is the spiritual world. This is not the distant future but the present. This is to be perceived by faith and not by sight. The characteristics of the unity is similar to the one of the Trinity. Three persons in one perfect unity is only comprehensible in the spiritual realm. It is also true that this unity is possible due to the fact that man is spiritual being as well as physical being. It is the unity between man's spiritual part and God who is the Spirit.

## 2. Unity which is wrought by the Holy Spirit.

"In whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God in the Spirit."<sup>89</sup> Hodge takes this as "Ye are

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<sup>87</sup> Kenrick, op. cit., p. 71.

<sup>88</sup> Westcott, op. cit., p. 7.

<sup>89</sup> Eph. 2:22.

builted by the Spirit into an habitation of God." <sup>90</sup> The Holy Spirit is the bond of unity. As presented in 2:18 the Holy Spirit enables both Jews and Gentiles to have access to God the Father. God bestowed his grace, Christ by dying on the Cross completed the redemption, and it is the Holy Spirit that brings this into the human heart. As an executor of God's soveriegn will and also the successor to Christ on earth, he constantly deals with the human heart. He is the one who gives influence to man and creates the desire to come to the Lord. He is the Spirit that goes between God and man and intercedes for him. He applies the salvation of God prepared by Christ to the human heart. Both Gentiles and Jews have access to God through His ministry. Thus he builds the temple of God on earth. Then he seals the believer as God's special possession. The believer is therefore assured of his salvation with the earnest of the Spirit in his heart. The practical application of the salvation is all done by the Holy Spirit. The spirit is one. There is no other spirit. One spirit unites the believer with Christ in one body. There is a perfect unity.

B. Unlimited unity.

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<sup>90</sup> Hodge, op. cit., p. 154.

The church is permanent, eternal. Death can not take the believer out of the church. Nothing can separate the children of God from Him. As long as he is a Christian, he is in the Church. If the man has never been born again, he has never been in the Church, never united with Christ.

The Church is His Body, which is endowed with supernatural power, and it is full of it. It is the fulness of that filleth all in all. "In Him dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, and in Him ye are filled"<sup>91</sup> Christ is the fulness of God, and the Church is the fulness of Christ. It is the fulness of the fulness. Christian experience in the union with Christ has no limitation. It is eternal. It is infinite. Should the limitation be, that is the limitation of God Himself.

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<sup>91</sup>  
Col. 2:9,10.

## Chapter IV. Results of the Relationship

### I. Creation of new man.

"When ye were dead through your trespasses and sins,"  
"when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive  
together with Christ," "and raised us up with him, and made  
us to sit with him in the heavenly places, in Christ Jesus;"  
"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for  
good works."<sup>92</sup>

Men were dead in their sins and trespasses. Adam  
was first created after the image of God and reflected His  
righteousness, but he lost it afterwards by sin. The new  
creation is to form a new image of God in man.<sup>93</sup> Christ  
came down from heaven and took a sinful human body, and  
died on the Cross to pay the ransom. On the third day,  
he rose again from the death victoriously. He conquered  
over sin and death. Old Adamic body was corrupt, but He  
came out in the new spiritual body. The sole purpose of  
this was to quicken those who were dead in trespasses  
together with him, to raise them up together and cause  
them to sit in the Heavenlies with Christ. It was nothing

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<sup>92</sup>  
Eph. 2:1,5,6,10.

<sup>93</sup>  
John Calvin, Commentaries on the Epistles of Paul  
to the Galatians and Ephesians (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans  
Publishing Company, 1948), p. 296.

but the creation of a new human race. Paul uses the words "old man" and "new man" to denote the difference of the creation. <sup>94</sup> The old man belonged to his head old Adam. His entire course of life was Adamic; that is earthly. It was carnal. It was after the prince of the power of the air. He followed the spiritual pattern that was evil.

The word ἀήρ (air) means air or darkness from which the meaning derived to show the spiritual sphere where evil spirits operate.

He was under the curse of the law and his destination was death and eternal destruction.

However, God by His mercy and grace, united them into the spiritual body of Christ Jesus. He is now a new man. His whole being is changed. "If any man is in Christ he is a new creature; the old things are passed away, behold, they are become new." <sup>95</sup> Old body is dead; Adamic nature is crucified. His locality of life is in "heavenly places with Christ." He is following new principle of life. His habit and character is completely new. As Christ rose up from death, the believer is also resurrected.

This was done completely by God's grace. It is the free gift. There is no room for any man to boast about it. What he did was just to accept it through faith which

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<sup>94</sup> Eph. 4:22,23.

<sup>95</sup> 2 Cor. 5:17.



was bestowed by God within.

He that chose Jewish believers into the union with Christ by His sovereign will now chooses Gentiles also into the same state on the same basis. This was not done by the media of Mosaic rituals. Christ fulfilled the law so perfectly that it had no more to ask. Now both Gentiles and Jews are standing on the same ground that is Grace.

No Gentiles were formerly allowed to go into the inner court of the temple without the penalty of death. They were separated by the wall of enmity, and the Gentiles were far off from God having no part in God's grace and blessing. However, Christ destroyed the partition, and reconciled the two in one body. "To be in Christ, which is the portion of all who are saved, is to partake of all that Christ has done, all that He is, and all that He will ever be."<sup>97</sup>

By one death, in one body, through one blood, both have access to the Father who is one. There is one Body, one Spirit, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God the Father, and one new man.

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F. B. Meyer, Ephesians: A Devotional Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1953), p. 162.

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Lewis Sperry Chafer, Systematic Theology (Dallas, Texas: Dallas Seminary Press, 1948 c.), Vol. IV, p. 97.

The newness καιρός (and not νέος) shows something different from the old. Church is now composed of believing Gentiles as well as believing Jews. There is no Jewish fence of partition. Any believing man can come into it without hesitation. The eternity will show that among them are the people from every tribe, tongue, people and nation. They are no longer Jew or Greek: They are Christfans.

II. Forming of Christian personality which constantly grows towards perfection.

The new man in Christ Jesus is expected to grow. He is a living creature. In the metaphor of the building, the spiritual building was to grow in the Lord. As the body of Christ, the believer was expected to grow as an organic unity, also. The new born babe must grow. The growth must be consistent until he becomes a full-grown man.

At the beginning of the Chapter 4 where Paul discusses the matter of growth, he exhorted the Ephesians to "walk". This is the Hebraism. It means "to live a life"--constant daily trodding of life's pathway. Walk is consisted of each step. Step at a time. It is similar to a constant growth of a body.

"Full grown man" means not an old aged man, but a

fully developed matured person. The full grown man is the fulness of Christ. The Body of Christ is the fulness of Christ. The full grown man is the Church itself. The Church is exhorted to grow unto its full stature.

The perfection of each Christian is determined by his true relation to Christ. For he is designed to be conformed to His fulness in the eternal council of God.<sup>98</sup> This is to attain the perfection of Christ. Abbott says that it is "the full possession of the gifts of Christ."<sup>99</sup> Therefore the exhortation was to walk according to the call wherewith he was called. When he can reach perfection, no one knows. Perhaps it is not until the marriage supper for the Lamb of God. Even as it is, the perfection must be pursued.

His walks of life must be different. He is to put on the image of Christ. "We get grown up in every respect as our relation to him requires of us."<sup>100</sup>

In order to fulfill this, Christ gave different gifts and ministries in the Church, so that they may be helped and not to be tossed to and fro like a ship in the storm, by different teachings.

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<sup>98</sup> Westcott, op. cit., p. 63. <sup>99</sup> Abbott, op. cit., p.121.

<sup>100</sup> Lenski, op. cit., p. 544.

As for moral perfection, Paul gives many practical exhortations. That is not to walk as unregenerated Gen-  
tiles, but to walk in love and light.<sup>101</sup> God is both love and light. He that belongs to the source of love and light should walk accordingly.

### III. Believer's victorious living in the world.

Paul based his discussion on the fact that the man is a spiritual being as well as physical. He called in one place "inner man." He admitted also that God is Spirit and at the same time he accepted the existence of evil  
spirits or spiritual power which is antagonistic to God.<sup>102</sup> The unregenerated man belonged to this prince of the power of the air. But when he comes to Christ and is regenerated he is delivered from it and becomes the partaker of God's spiritual blessing. That evil spirit is characterized as darkness and disobedience. Paul thereupon admits that there is a constant warfare between God and the evil spirit as well as between saints and the spiritual forces. The new creation meets diverse temptations.

That is why the apostle urges the saints to put on the whole armour of God to be able to stand in the evil  
days.<sup>103</sup> Saints are not expected to fight with their own

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<sup>101</sup> Eph. 5:2, 6:8.      <sup>102</sup> 4:23, 3:16, 2:2.      <sup>103</sup> 6:13.

armour or by their own human power. If they stand by their own power they will utterly faile. Paul says, "be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of his might."<sup>104</sup>

The armour which is provided by God is composed of righteousness against the evil nature of the enemies; of peace against the disobedience; of faith and salvation against darkness; and of the Word of God and prayer against the wiles of the devil.

No matter how strong the evil forces are, the believer does not need to be afraid. Because when Christ died and was resurrected, God put all the principalities and powers under His feet. It is not only for time--past and present--, but for eternity. Christ is above every possible thing in the world and the world to come. He put everything that can be named under His subjection.<sup>105</sup>

By the unity with Christ the believer is placed above all things. As Christ is victorious over death and hell, the saints in Christ are also the victors. "We are more than a match for the mightiest forces of hell; we walk upon our high places."<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>104</sup>  
Eph. 6:10.

<sup>105</sup>  
1:20-22.

<sup>106</sup>  
F. B. Meyer, op. cit., p. 119.

## Chapter V. Findings

From the foregoing study the following can be summarized as the conclusion.

I. The union is not some sensational entity which is attained by men's effort. It is solely based on God's mercy and grace. This was planned even before the foundation of the world in the depth of God's eternal council. It was completed by the redemptive work of Christ on the cross of Calvary through His blood. The Holy Spirit is the executor of the program on earth. Man's work or effort is not counted as the basis for attaining this union. He is a lost sinner and has no standing ground before God. It is only by the Grace of God and through faith.

Whether this union brings an ecstatic experience or not is undeterminable, because the epistle does not deal the emotional aspect of the union. However, the silence may infer that the union does not necessarily accompany some sensational experiences. Nevertheless, the union brings a radical change in the believer's life. It is likened, therefore, to be a new creation.

II. Spiritual union which is to be realized by faith.

This is a matter of spiritual world, and not of physical world. Therefore, it is wrought by the Holy Spirit into man's spiritual part in the sphere of the spirit.

The union is hence invisible, but real. It can be felt within the spirit.

Faith is the causa apprehendam, which brings the union into fully personal realization. The faith is created by the hearing of the Word of God.

III. The closest relationship which brings great blessings.

The oneness is shown by several ways in the epistle. It is a personal union based on the will. That is the union of the characters. Also it is an individual thing; no one else can enter into it. Each individual must exercise his faith and experience it for himself.

It is an organic union. The believer is connected with Christ and sustained by the life He gives. There is an organic functions between the saints and Christ. Its head is Christ and He demands the subjection of the members of the body. But he at the same time is the Saviour. Christ and the believer are just one as one complete body, or a loving husband and wife who are brought together through their marriage vow. There is no separation expected. Separation means the death.

The new man in Christ must grow unto the perfect stature of Him. There is some expected temptations, but through the union with Christ, the believer is victor of all things like Christ was. As Christ is above all things

the believer is also above all things in time and eternity. All the blessings dwelt in Christ, the fulness of it, is the inheritance of the believer. It is spiritual, but it is more actual and realistic experience to be united with Christ in faith. It is not only the matter of temperamental state, but the Life itself.

#### Conclusion. Impert to Theology as a Whole

The union of Christ with the believer is one of the foundations of Christianity. Without clarifying this relationship, all other theological arguments are like building an air-castle. Therefore, it was the little attempt of this thesis to clarify the nature of this relationship from the Biblical theology standpoint, especially of the Ephesians.

In order to complete the work, further study on the subject based on other books of the New Testament is suggested.



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