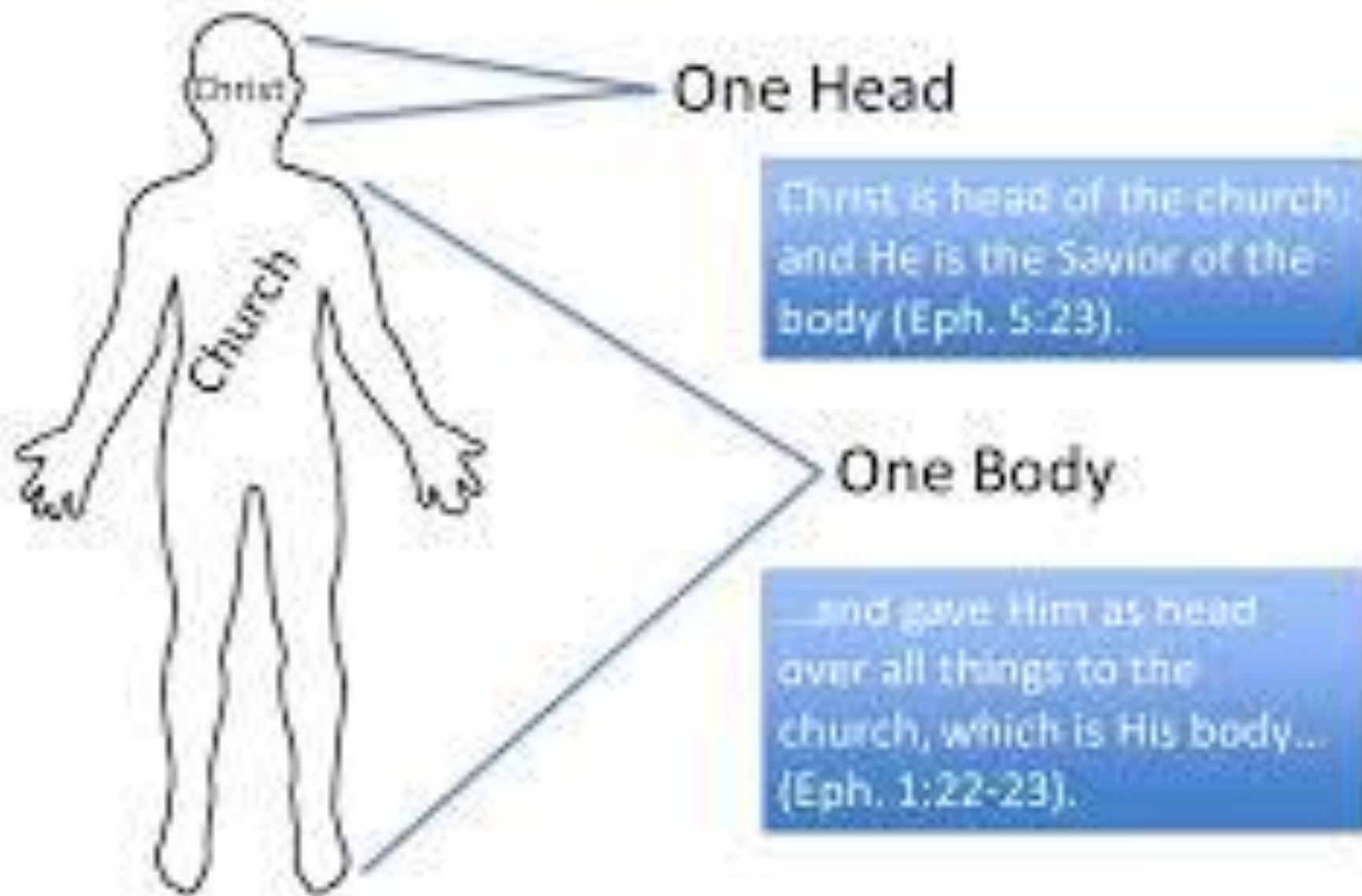


The body of Christ.

I Corinthians 12: 12-31

In the Church, which is his body, Christ is the constituting Power. He is its Life, and without him it is nothing.

Bible Picture of Christ's Body



No division among christians

- A striking figure.
- Christians are not separate, unrelated units;
- They are compacted together and form one whole, which is “the body of Christ.”
- Of this body Christ is the Head (Colossians 2:19)
- Christ is the central controlling and directing Power.
- Each believer is some member of the body.
- In this passage the apostle is speaking of the members of the body rather than of the Head — of Christians rather than directly of Christ.

THE NUMBER AND VARIETY OF THE MEMBERS

- This makes the body rich and beautiful. In scenery and in paintings we do not love monotony.
- A fair landscape possesses almost infinite variety of tint and form; that is not a painting which is composed of one colour, however brilliant.
- The Church is enriched by the diversities in condition, age, ability, of its members.
- Yet though one member differ strikingly from another, all are equally of the body (ver. 15)
- We must not despair because we are unlike some other Christians.

Contentment is better than envy.

- We must not seek to occupy a place for which we are not fitted.
- We are admitted to the body of Christ by God and he places us (ver. 18).
- We must not move; if we are to be moved, he will move us.
- To choose a place for ourselves would be to put ourselves out of place.

THE VARIED DUTY.

- This explains the variety of place and power.
- The Church offers the utmost variety of work.
- There is something suitable for every capacity.
- As in the body all parts and members perform their special and appropriate duties, so in the Church each believer has his appointed task:
- “To every man his work.”

No man can fill your place as you can

- Some are troubled because they seem to be “inferior” members.
- Take note, an inferior member can often do its work better than a superior member could do that work.
- Each member is specially adapted to perform its functions.
- Every Christian in the Church is specially fitted for the performance of his duties.
- No man can fill your place as you can.

We all need each other

- If a discontented foot envy the hand, or the ear envy the eye, “is it therefore not of the body,” participating in its fights, enjoying its privileges, ennobled by the organism?
- They are for the sake of each other, so that “the eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you?”

THE INTIMATE CONNECTION

- There should be a corresponding connection between the members of the body of Christ.
- Christians are not to be like grains of sand, or isolated trees, or detached houses.
- We admit that our union with Christ should be real; equally real should be our union with fellow believers.
- The anomaly of Christians not speaking to each other, of the rich and poor being separated from common fellowship, is by this figure shown to be monstrous.

We are not set to stand alone

- The member of the body which will have no fellowship with other members is preparing to be lopped off.
- Our union with Christ cannot be very intimate if we have none with his followers
- “A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another” (John 13:34).

THE COMMON IMPORTANCE

- Not the equal importance.
- All are important, but not equally so.
- But the least attractive and the least demonstrative may be the most important.
- The heart is more important than the tongue.
- Many of the Corinthians were madly elated with the gift of tongues; but there is something greater and better than talk.

- The lungs are more important even than the hand.
- The modest and unobtrusive are often of more value than those who ever will come to the front.
- And where true discernment obtains the former are likely to receive “more abundant honour” (ver. 23).
- Apparent feebleness is no criterion; some of the feeblest saints have been the strongest.
- And some of the weakest members of the

- body are much more necessary to its well being than the robust (ver. 22).
- And further, as it is an instinct of nature to adorn the less comely parts of the body (ver. 23), so in the Church, if a right spirit prevails, the humblest and least attractive will receive special care and attention.
- The sick child is the mother's favourite.
- All members are thus important.
- No member of the Church of Christ is non important except he makes himself so.
- And as with the physical body, the body of Christ cannot afford to dispense with the services of a single member, however obscure.

THE COMMUNITY OF FEELING

- (Ver. 26.) Sympathy should abound amongst Christians.
- “Bear ye one another’s burdens.”
- Every Christian should be a good Samaritan.
- Imagine one hand rejoicing in or being indifferent to the laceration of the other.
- Our union with believers should be so intimate and real that when they suffer we suffer, that when they are blessed we are.

We suffer together

- Their health is our health, their strength is our strength.
- Christians should remember that Christ pronounced a second commandment as well as a first.
- When true fellowship is attained we “rejoice with those who do rejoice, and weep with those who weep.”

THE HARMONIOUS WORKING

- How beautifully this is illustrated in the physical body!
- So amongst Christians there is no necessity for collision.
- Contests indicate faultiness and derangement.
- If all did their appointed work in the appointed way, there would be complete harmony.
- And the more harmony the better working.
- What waste of power has been caused by divisions and strife!

There should be no schism in Christ's body

- Note: One perverse member may do much harm.
- In machinery, if one part fails to perform its function, fracture and extensive derangement may ensue.
- There should be no schism in Christ's body (ver. 25).
- The Church, the body of Christ, has a vast, complicated, infinitely important work to do: how essential that there should be the truest cooperation, the utmost faithfulness in discharge of duty, on the part of its members!

THE MUTUAL DEPENDENCE

- (Ver. 21.) Christians are not independent of each other: they should not seek to be so.
- We are not the body of Christ individually, but we are collectively.
- We are not set to stand alone, but with others.
- We can help others and be helped ourselves.
- Another's work may be needful for the success of ours, ours for the success of another's.

GOOGLE- I HAVE EVERYTHING!

WIKIPEDIA- I KNOW EVERYTHING!

FACEBOOK- I KNOW EVERYBODY!

INTERNET- WITHOUT ME, YOU ARE ALL NOTHING.

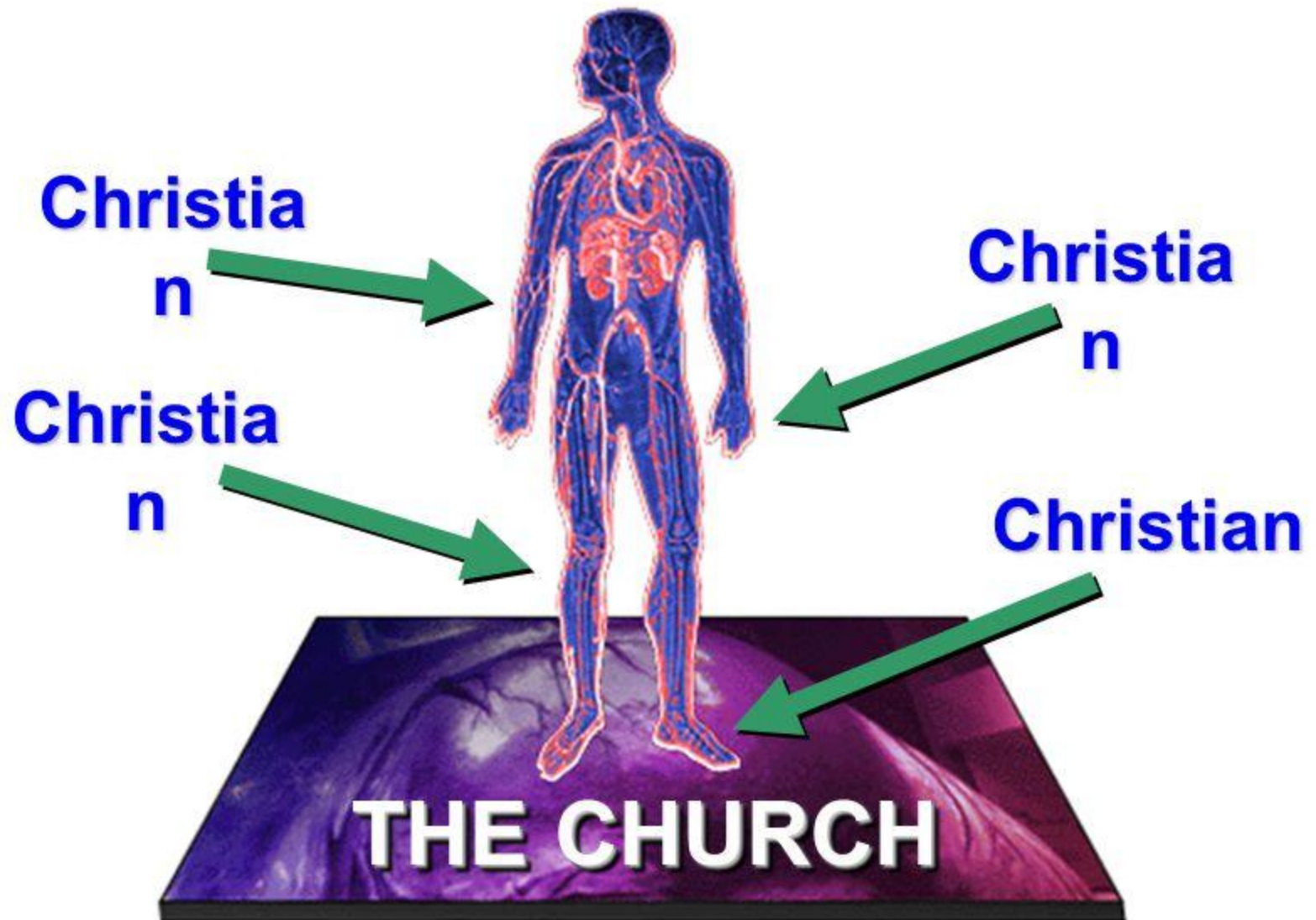
ELECTRICITY- KEEP TALKING IDIOTS.

Reciprocity of action must be fully maintained

- Reciprocity of action must be fully maintained.
- The organs of the body are distinct but not separate, since they combine in one organism and are subordinate to a unitary result.
- They are supplied with blood by the same heart and they are all dependent on nerves running from nervous centres.
- Spinal cord, medulla, cerebellum, cerebrum, are local in position, but not local in function.

We are the Body of Christ

1 Cor. 12:12-27



Fellowship of life that binds

- It is a fellowship of life that binds believers together.
- The oneness of a family lies, not in the fact that its members dwell together under the same roof.
- or bear the same name, but in the common sympathies and affections that grow out of their natural kinship.
- The oneness of an army lies in the enthusiasm of its devotion to the common cause, far more than in the force of military discipline.

The unity is not in the name

- The fact of people forming themselves into a visible society, calling themselves by the same name, meeting in the same place, consenting to the same creed, using the same language, joining in the same modes of worship, doing the same work, does not make them one in Christ.
- These are but the outward signs and symbols of unity.
- They may be the mocking semblances of it.

THE COMPLEMENTARY CHARACTER

- One supplies just what the other lacks.
- So that if all supply what they can, the body becomes perfect in working.
- The eye needs the ear; both the hand; all the foot.
- The Church is not a club which each member joins for his own advantage and convenience.
- But a body in which each member is incorporated for mutual cooperation in common subjection to the Divine Head –JESUS CHRIST

The common bearing of a Christian Church

- Chrysostom says, “When a thorn enters the heel,
- the whole body feels it and is concerned;
- the back bends, the belly and thighs contract themselves,
- the hands come forward and draw out the thorn, the head
- stoops, and the eyes regard the affected member with intense gaze.”

Christians are not independent of each other

- John Howe says, “It is a most unnatural thing to rejoice in the harm of another.
- In the body, when one member is suffering, all the members suffer with it.
- And to delight in the harm of others is as contrary to the spiritual nature which is diffused in the true body of Christ, as if the head or any other member should rejoice that the hand or foot is in pain.”

THE UNITY AMIDST DIVERSITY

- “Many members, but one body” (ver. 20).
- In the body there is the greatest variety, but the greatest unity; one life pervades the whole.
- So with the Church — the members are one in Christ, vitally united to the one Head, pervaded by the one Spirit, joined in one baptism, sitting at one Supper of the Lord, engaged in one work, and going forward to the same destiny.
- There is the great spiritual life principle which pervades all true believers and makes them one .

CONTEMPT IMPLIES FORGETFULNESS OF THE RULE OF DIVINE PROVIDENCE.

- Can we say to a brother, “I have no need of thee”?
- Whilst we remember that the Head of the Church has stationed him where he is, and has given him what he possesses?
- To question his place in the Church, his function in the body, his service to the Head, is to dispute the wisdom and the authority of Christ himself.
- To look down upon them with disdain would be a proof of folly as well as of sinful self conceit.

THE VITAL UNION WITH THE HEAD AND SUBORDINATION TO IT

- We may survive severance from some members of the body; we cannot severance from the head.
- We perish unless we are vitally joined to Christ.
- And as with the physical body, the head must rule or all sorts of disorders will be occasioned.
- We must be united to Christ as servants to a Master.
- He is the Head of the body; we are the members.

conclusion

- It is for him to direct, it is for us to obey.
- Some seem sorely tempted to exercise lordship over Christ; they are wise above what is written.
- Were it polite to give them the appellation, we might well call them disloyal fools.
- Disloyal, because insubordinate to their Lord; fools, because they not only disorganize the work of the body and injure the other members, but are in the surest way of bringing immeasurable evils upon themselves