

# Elder Vernon Johnson

## Numbers

### One Body

Eph. 4:4 "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling." The church is declared to be one body. She is said to consist of many members, yet but one body:

1. Rom. 12:4 "For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: 5 So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another."

2. 1 Cor. 10:17 "For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread."

3. 1 Cor. 12:12 "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. 13 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. 14 For the body is not one member, but many. 15 If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? 16 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? 17 If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? 18 But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. 19 And if they were all one member, where were the body? 20 But now are they many members, yet but one body. 21 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. 22 Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary: 23 And those members of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness. 24 For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked: 25 That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. 26 And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. 27 Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular."

4. Col. 3:15 "And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful."

The above verses compare the church to one body with Christ being the head. This is true of every local church. Each local church has many members, yet they are part of one body. When we consider our natural body, the various members of that body do not function when they are separated from the body. Sometimes the nervous system of the body becomes messed up and the body becomes spastic with some of the members seemingly acting independent of the rest of the body. These are lessons for the church. When the members of the church are acting in unity the body of the church performs as it should. It brings forth honor and glory unto God. When some of the members of the church began acting independently of the other members of the church then the church becomes spastic and dysfunctional.

The church has only one head and the head is the governor of the body. When each member of the church receives its instruction and direction from the head (Christ) then the body (church) is fully functional, beautiful, and brings honor and glory to her head. The problem comes when certain members began to act independently from the head, then shame and reproach comes to the church.

Each member of the body is to have the same care for the body as it has for itself. When one member suffers all the members are to suffer with that member. When one member rejoices, then all the members are to rejoice with that member. We are to have the same care one to another.

One of the purposes of the gospel ministry is to bring about the unity of the body in the faith: Eph. 4:13 "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." Another purpose of the gospel ministry is to promote the work of the ministry (spiritual growth) of each individual member of the body. The whole body grows spiritually when each of its members grows spiritually. Furthermore, when each member of the church works together the body grows by what each member supplies: Eph. 4:15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: 16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."

An erroneous view of the church is that it is a place where you go and hear the gospel preached, then go back home and live your life. Rather the church is a body, often referred to as a family and it functions as a living organism, with each member of the church working and laboring for the spiritual growth of the church and manifesting love one for another in the unity of the faith. Whether in worship service or away from the meetinghouse the church still exists and is to manifest that unity. This involves each member praying for one another and laboring for one another's good.

