

# 10. See the Church

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## 10.1 The Church His Body

Having devoted your heart to Father at a deeper level than you have known before and having learned what it means to share with Father the compassion and the power of His Mercy Seat, you now hear Jesus speaking to you more clearly than ever. **Love one another in exactly the same way that I love you** (John 15:12).

And you see your brothers and sisters in Christ, those people with whom you join together in worship, in a new light. I want to show you what it is you now see. – **And He put all under the feet of Jesus and gave Him to be head [that which unites] for the sake of all the Church, which is His body, the fullness of Christ filling all in all, Jesus filling with Himself everything in everyone** (Ephesians 1:22-23).

**A Many-Membered Body.** When you see your brethren gathered together and you with them, you are seeing the Body of the Lord Jesus. You are seeing Jesus living and walking bodily upon this earth.

**For just as the body is one, but has many members, yet all the members of the body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. Indeed, we also inside of one Spirit were immersed into one body... and have all been made to drink one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many** (1 Corinthians 12:12-14).

The Lord Jesus Christ IS a many-membered body, the Church. **You are indeed the body of Christ and members of [Him] as a part** (1 Corinthians 12:27).

**This Same Jesus.** Suddenly, knowing Jesus as He is has taken on a further dimension. And of course, if Jesus lives in your heart, then this same Jesus lives in Person in the hearts of your brothers and sisters. If Jesus lives as you, carrying all that you

are inside Himself and revealing Himself now through you, then this same Jesus lives as your brothers and sisters, carrying all that they are inside Himself and revealing Himself now through them.

If Christ lives as you, Christ lives as your brother and sister.

You never leave Jesus alive in your own heart, but hearing that Jesus inside your heart whisper to you, **“Love one another,”** what is happening between you and those with whom you worship?

**Love One Another.** By speaking **“Love one another”** out from your heart, even while speaking the same words out from each one of your brothers and sisters’ hearts, Jesus is placing Father God among you as all of your connections together. By speaking **“Love one another,”** Jesus is taking this word, **“The love of God has been shed abroad in your hearts...”** and placing that love that is God alone, not just in and out from your own heart, but inside the dynamics of all the relationships between you and all other Christians.

It is this commandment coming out from Jesus as the creative Word of God, bringing all things into existence. **“Love one another as I love you,”** causes the Church to be the very Body of the Lord Jesus walking this earth.

**Refusing Temptation.** Before looking at the Body of Christ, who and what it is, let’s consider the temptation of the evil one. When you hear **“Love one another,”** you do not look for any ability in yourself to “do” such a thing, rather, looking into and out from Jesus, you say, **“Let it be to me.”**

The serpent teaches “love one another” in this way, however. *“You can and should be loving one another, but your human performance tells us that you obviously do NOT love as Jesus loves, loser.”* The one

who regards the serpent's logic will never know love but will always be falling short.

But how could we believe love, if we fail to feel and do love?

**Christ Is All.** Christ is all, FIRST, before anything not Christ could ever vanish away.

Love is God among us. Paul made it clear that doing the actions of love all your life amounts to nothing. God is among us only because we believe in Jesus first, against all sight of the eyes and against all human judgment. And yes, as you feel, think, say, and do things that are unloving, and as you place anything wrongful in your actions into the Lord Jesus and as you place Him into yourself, sharing all that you are in every present moment, something happens.

You see, our faith in Christ is predicated on one absolute rock – that Jesus is, in fact, real, and that He really is what God speaks.

**See Jesus Regardless.** And so, as you see and speak Jesus as love poured out, as love among you, regardless of your human failures, you see Him as all. And as you see Jesus as all that you are, regardless, something incredible begins to happen.

Never knowing any “falling short of God,” you continue knowing that God is true, that God Himself is love among you, even when you embarrass yourself by doing unloving things, and even while you humble yourself and apologize, something happens in your life. Bit by bit, that which is “not-Christ” fades away until you know it no more. Love is ALL that you know, first; nothing else is true.

**A Gathering Together.** What is the Church? What is the Body of Christ? First, the Greek word translated “church” is *ecclesia*, which means a simple gathering together of people. As Jesus said, “**For where two or three are gathered together in My**

**name, I am there in the midst of them**” (Matthew 18:20).

Jesus was talking about something more of Himself than His personal union with you, alive in your heart and always and utterly with you in all things. Jesus was talking about what Paul called “**the fullness of Christ**,” which is the Church. Church is the gathering together of Christ with Christ.

**A Literal Body.** On the road to Damascus, Saul of Tarsus experienced the complete shattering of everything he thought he knew, with that mighty blow causing him to become “Paul,” or “the little one.” One of the things Jesus said to him, however, took many years to percolate inside until Paul knew what Jesus meant. Jesus said to Paul, “**Why are you persecuting Me?**” (Acts 9:4). Paul was persecuting Christians.

But Paul could not take Jesus' words metaphorically or symbolically or mystically. To Paul, Jesus was speaking literally; that is, Jesus was telling Paul the truth. It was Jesus Himself, walking this earth in His physical Body, whom Paul was persecuting – the Church.

**Jesus as Seed and Plant.** Jesus had said, “**Unless a grain of wheat is planted into the ground and dies {that is, becomes a plant}, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain {many more seeds just like itself}**” (John 12).

There is one Seed of God only, the Lord Jesus. On the day of Pentecost (Acts 2), this same Jesus was planted by God into the earth, into the flesh of His Church. In so doing, the One Seed of God “died,” that is, became something that looks entirely different, the plant of the Church.

A plant IS the seed in plant form, bringing forth many more seeds just like the first. The Church IS the Lord Jesus in earthly form, bringing forth many more sons just like Him.

**Inside of Faith.** The Church, your local gathering together, you, together with your brothers and sisters with whom you worship, IS the Body of the Lord Jesus walking this earth today. **You are the Body of Christ and a member as part of Him.**

Now, there is a moment when the many seeds come forth out from that plant to be sons of God together with Jesus, Christ revealed now in all glory through them. That moment is the resurrection of your body. Nonetheless, you do not see or judge your local assembly by outward appearance now as the plant, rather you see and judge all things by faith, that Christ is all that you are together. It is inside of this faith that you love one another.

**The Fulness of Christ.** Here is how it works. Jesus begins (not a time word, but a source word, all here now), Jesus begins as every Word God speaks entering into your heart through faith to become all that you are. This same Jesus, then, goes forth from you as a Spirit of power, connecting you together with your brothers and sisters, and thus becoming, now, Christ as a many-membered Body, the fullness of Christ, all that Jesus is as Father revealed.

In the next lesson, we will look more at Christ as a connecting Spirit of power. But first know that you, together with your brothers and sisters in Christ ARE – **the Church, which is His [physical] body, the fullness of Jesus filling all inside of all.**

## 10.2 Drinking One Spirit

**For just as the body is one, but has many members, yet all the members of the body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. Indeed, we also inside of one Spirit were immersed into one body... and have all been made to drink one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many** (1 Corinthians 12:12-14).

James pointed out that **“The body without the spirit is dead”** (James 2:26). Jesus said, **“It is the Spirit that gives life”** (John 6:63). And Paul added, **“He who is joined [glued together] with the Lord is one spirit with Him”** (1 Corinthians 6:17).

What does it mean that all believers drink one Spirit together?

**The Metaphor of Water.** God uses this metaphor of “drinking” as one of many to enable us to know Spirit. Jesus said, **“If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink”** (John 7:37).

Scientists say that our physical bodies are about 80% water. Drinking is how we replenish the water that constitutes much of our form. It’s not that we “lose” some of the Holy Spirit and thus have to “get more”; it’s that God wants us to understand the Spirit of Christ by which we are one body together as a living and dynamic connection, always fresh and new. Christ as a connecting Spirit of life is never stale or stagnant.

**New Every Morning.** Here is how Jeremiah described this renewing quality of the Spirit of Christ. **“His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness”** (Lamentations 3:22-23). It is this same Spirit, then, which we drink together, that is Christ Jesus as a Spirit of power connecting us together as His body and by which He lives, not just in each one of us, but also in the entire Church together.

Think of the Spirit of Christ, that is, the Holy Spirit, as a large swimming pool of water. Think of your own spirit as a small cup of water. Not only does this Holy Spirit fill your own spirit, but your spirit is poured out into that far larger pool, a pool which you share with all other believers in Jesus as one Spirit together.

**What Is the Church?** But what is the Church, and with whom are you drinking one Spirit together?

Let's begin with all who call upon Jesus in some way, followed with all who will call upon Him, but haven't yet, and including all who have died believing in Jesus. Now, you could go into an assembly where you think that all of these people love the Lord and belong to Him. Then you could go into an assembly where you think that everyone is connected to outward form and ritual and none know the Lord. You would be wrong on both counts. And God will NEVER tell you who in either assembly are connecting with Jesus Himself. Rather, He simply says to you, "Love them."

**Part of Each Other.** If the Lord Jesus lives inside your heart, then that same Jesus lives also inside the heart of every individual who belongs to Him. And it's not just that you are brothers and sisters together, but you are members of one another, part of each other and part of the visible expression of the Lord Jesus together.

Even more than that, this same Holy Spirit whom Paul said is **GIVEN TO US** as the fulfillment of the promise God made to Abraham (Galatians 3), this same Holy Spirit that IS the love of God poured out inside of your heart, is also poured out inside of the heart of every believer in Jesus. And this poured-out Love among all of you together is that same One Spirit.

**True of All Others.** Because you say to God, "Let it be to me according to Your word," and because you believe God has given you all that you ask, you KNOW that the love of God fills your heart always, regardless of what you feel, think, say, or do.

Here is an absolute. The same is true of all others who drink of that same Spirit with you. All who believe in Jesus love you more than you can know, all think of you more highly than they do of themselves, all lay down their lives for you. Because the love of God is shed abroad in all of our hearts together through the same One Spirit given to each

one of us and to all, we love one another with a pure heart fervently.

**A Spirit of Power. I was with you in weakness... in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that your faith should be... in the power of God** (1 Corinthians 2:3-5 – condensed). The Spirit of Christ connecting us together as one body is a Spirit of dynamic power and life.

In 1 Corinthians 12-14, Paul describes many of the ways by which the Spirit gives differing gifts of service inside the Church. But in the middle of that, Paul places Love as the rule of all our sharing of the life and power of the Holy Spirit. It's not about what is visible, it's about Him who is invisible, Father God Himself in our midst, rejoicing as we, by our kindness and tender regard for one another, make Him visible.

**Wanting to Be Loved.** Why do you keep all other Christians "at arm's length," so to speak? There are two reasons, both of which were seized by Adam in the garden. The first reason is that you, by your former way of thinking, consider yourself superior and them inferior. Out from this self-exaltation, you secretly despise all others and judge them as false and insincere. And the second reason is that you are afraid and do not trust them. Often, you have good reason for your mistrust, for others have manipulated and abused you, just as you have done to them.

Yet the deepest ache of your heart is to be loved and honored by others, that is, to BELONG; you were made just like God.

**The Same One Spirit.** Think about all the Christians with whom you have an ongoing relationship. Think about all the Christians you know. Think about all Christians across the earth and through the heavens.

It does not matter what they think or feel or do in any present moment. You drink the same One Spirit with them; the same One Spirit is poured out in their hearts and yours. And that One Spirit is Christ Jesus as a Spirit of power, causing all of you together to be the embodiment of Love. They LOVE you, whether they know it or not. You LOVE them, whether you feel that you do or not. All of them, Christ as them, lay down their lives for you.

**Free to Love. We also inside of one Spirit were immersed into one body... and have all been made to drink one Spirit. – The love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us** (Romans 5:5). Notice the “we,” the “our,” and the “us.” We together, all who belong to Jesus share together that same One Love.

When you KNOW that all believers in Jesus, the entire Church of Christ, loves you beyond what you can know – and you them. When you KNOW that all believers in Jesus think more highly of you than they do of themselves – and you them. Then you know Love; you know that you belong. And now you are free to love one another as Jesus loves you.

**Committed to Love.** In your freedom to love one another as Jesus loves you, understand two things. First, know that, regardless of any outward doing or speaking, all who belong to Jesus are the same as you, longing to belong, afraid of being hurt. And second, know that the Love of God poured out inside the One Spirit you drink together is the only thing real.

When other Christians say, think, feel, and do unkind things to or about you, see Christ, even inside the hurt. See that Jesus shares heart with them just as He does with you.

**And we also are committed to setting forth our souls, laying down our lives for our brothers and sisters.**

## 10.3 Commitment

You are the unfolding of God’s thoughts concerning you, spoken by Jesus and becoming your ongoing daily life. You are and have never been anything else.

You have had three problems with knowing that ongoing reality, however. The first is that you have not yet fully believed that Jesus, with His redemption, has already fully connected you back into the knowing of God’s thoughts becoming you. The second is that you have shared with Adam a dislike of yourself and your circumstances, that unfolding that is the revelation of God, but which we sometimes call “the daily grind.” And so you have desired a “superior Christ.”

**Your Problem.** And the third blockage that has kept you from knowing yourself as the revelation of Father is the face of all your brothers and sisters in Christ, who are to you as Eve was to Adam.

Your problem is simply this. Stepping aside from pretending, you realize that, for the most part, you don’t like other Christians and what they do, especially what they do that aggravates you. How could that be Christ through them? But even more than that, you hold other Christians “at arm’s length” primarily because you are convinced that they suspect you of falseness, that they don’t like you in the same way that you don’t like them.

I hope to change your mind.

**And We Also.** As we have seen, if the Lord Jesus lives as you, then He lives also as all who belong to Him. If the love of God is shed abroad in your heart, then it is also shed abroad in the heart of everyone who belongs to Him.

But just as sharing heart with God as the Mercy Seat, His throne, the authority of love in creation, requires a stated devotion to Father (something Jesus Himself completes for us), so in the same way does

becoming the fulness of Christ, that is, the Church. This final expression of God in the universe, the Church as one body together, requires something from you we will call commitment. **And we also are committed to laying down our lives for the sake of our brothers and sisters** (1 John 3:16).

**Your Fourth Agreement with God.** Before we look at commitment, I want to talk about your fourth agreement with God, your agreement to be His Mercy Seat, to share Heart with your Father.

Before that agreement, as you continued to speak Christ as your only life, you found yourself speaking goodness into others. You found faith for others you never had before, but different as well. You KNEW that the Spirit of Christ was always going out from you, blessing and healing and giving life and joy. Yet again, a new desire arose in you, a longing to know the Lord Jesus as you never had before. You knew that Christ is the Redeemer, and that God was also in you, reconciling the world to Himself.

**Stricken with Fear.** Then the day came when you suddenly saw your next step in God. You saw the Mercy Seat, as God means it; you saw the reality of sharing Heart with God. And you were stricken with fear, for you KNEW that this place of Mercy was Holy and not to be used for foolishness.

You heard the Father speaking in your own heart. “Will you be My Mercy towards others? Will you share heart with Me?” In agony and joy, you began to draw that which offends into Love inside your heart, the throne of heaven, the Mercy Seat of God. And there above the Blood sprinkled on your heart, you released the offender and set him or her free of you. You knew the power of God in a way you never knew before.

**Now Turned Around.** As you said, “Yes,” to Father and as you began to share His Heart, you saw all the difficulties in your life, every circumstance,

even every mistake you made, as Father sharing His travail for others with you. The agony you turned, together with Father, into precious fruit for others, entirely by faith, by knowing Father with you.

As you made that agreement with Father as the Lord Jesus in you, something incredible happened to you. In that moment, it was not just you inside of Jesus, there in Gethsemane and through every step of the Atonement, but now it was that same redeeming Jesus inside of you. You had turned around. No longer were you “going into God.” Now it was Father entering His creation through you.

**The Travail of God.** You now knew that it was not just you inside of Jesus, as precious as the reality continues to be even now, but it was also Jesus inside of you. You knew Jesus now as a Personal Spirit Word, still human, yet as a Life-giving Spirit. You knew your heart as the Lord Jesus. And you knew God was in you reconciling the world to Himself.

You saw your daily human circumstances in an entirely different light, as the travail of God for others. And you knew Christ Jesus as the Sustaining One, the Word of power out from which all things are continuously generated. Not just all things in you, but you saw Him sustaining all things in your world. You looked out, and you saw the passion of His heart.

**Christ, the Redeeming One.** You looked out and you knew the Desire of the Lord Jesus towards His Church, that she might know Father together with you, that His entire Body might walk together in love.

**In this is love, that He laid down His life for us, AND WE ALSO are committed to laying down our lives for the brethren.** “What does it mean, Father, for me to lay down my life as Jesus for the brethren” – became the guiding question of your life.

I want to talk, now, about that commitment, that agreement with God that is Jesus Himself

already your only life, that agreement to commit yourself to walk together with your brothers and sisters as the local Church, the local expression of Jesus walking this earth in His Body as Father revealed. **For we are members of one another** (Romans 12:5).

**Full Reciprocity.** You see, as Jesus commands you, “**Love one another**,” He is not actually saying to you, “Love other people.” Jesus said, “Love *allélón*.” *Allélón* means full reciprocity, full back and forth, a fully shared love.

God has given us a picture of such love in the marriage between a husband and wife who love one another. And so “**Love one another**” creates through you, if you want it, a commitment of marriage to the believers in Jesus with whom you fellowship, to share life together with them. **Having purified your souls [your self-stories] inside of submitted hearing of the truth into sincere brotherly love, love one another fervently out of a pure heart** (1 Peter 1:22).

**Commitment AND Liberty.** What is commitment?

Commitment is NOT any kind of forced obligation. As Paul said, “**Owe no debt or obligation to anyone, except to love one another**” (Romans 13:8). Commitment cannot exist apart from full liberty, and liberty is not found separate from commitment. It’s not half and half, but all of one and all of the other.

We are talking about marriage with one another, to walk together as the local expression of Christ. It means expressing the Love that is Father towards one another in the daily things of life, in little acts of kindness and gentle words of encouragement, and it means honoring one another as the Lord Jesus Himself.

**Bullies in the Church.** I must give one warning here. There are many men and women in Christian

circles who are humanly gifted and capable on the one hand, but do not know God as meek and lowly of heart on the other hand. Then, when the Holy Spirit anoints them as He anoints all, they assume that their “superior” capabilities mean that they are called to be “leaders” in the Church.

And some of those imagine that the anointing of the Spirit upon their human capabilities mean that they are “in charge” and “above you” in the gathering together. They use the anointing of the Spirit to exalt themselves and to bully other precious saints. Do not be like them.

**See Jesus Alone.** Do not be like them and do not place yourself under their manipulation. Nonetheless, they also belong to Jesus. Loving, as the Mercy Seat of God, even those who imagine themselves “superior” by their Spirit giftings, will cost you everything. For that is also how Jesus loves you. God is after one thing alone – you heart, that you might share Hheart with Him.

Practice being the Mercy Seat especially towards those who abuse you in the name of Christ.

And here is one of the most important steps in seeing and knowing Jesus as He really IS. You will begin to know Jesus as He is as you see Him alone in the faces of your brothers and sisters through all circumstances of daily relationships, whether difficult or joyous.

**Pray out Loud.** If you are ready and willing to make such a commitment to Father through Christ towards His Church, then pray something along these lines.

“Father, I believe that You are Love poured out in my heart through Your Spirit given to me. I believe You also, Father, that you are that same Love poured out in the hearts of all who belong to Jesus. Father I know that You want to become seen and known by all creation and that You can win Your desire only through a Body, the Church, the fulness of Christ.

Therefore, for Your sake, my Father, I commit myself to love all who belong to You and especially those with whom I walk daily, to love them even as You through them love me.”

**Knowing Jesus As He Is Together.** As you are seated upon the Mercy Seat, now sharing heart with Father, you see the Church of Christ as the Body of Jesus.

28. Christ is a many-membered body; believers are part of one another. The Church is the end of all salvation, the fullness of Christ, the dwelling place of God forever. Church is Father made known.

29. Believers live in and by the same One Spirit. We see each other as belonging to each other. We drink of the same Spirit together. We see the entire Church across the earth as one Spirit and one body.

30. You commit yourself to walk together as one with other believers in Jesus, to love one another, to be together the revelation of Jesus Christ, Father now seen and known.