

## A study of Jesus Christ

In our study of the glorification of Christ, his sitting at the right hand of the Father, we studied the three offices of Christ, which are his priestly office, his prophetic office and his regal office.

While Christ sits at the right hand of the Father, He is separated from us in his body, which is a temporary separation as He prepares for us a place where He is, to be filled at the end of time when we shall be quickened with immortal bodies and ascend to be where He is now.

Even though Christ is with us always as Almighty God, fulfilling his promise never to leave or forsake us, we long to be with Him where He is at the right hand of the Father, in our glorified, immortal bodies. For us to long to be there, we have to be members of Christ and He has to be our Head, the firstborn raised from the dead.

**Col 1:18 He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything.**

If we now have established that there has to be a link between the Head and the members for us to follow Christ into heaven in glorious, immortal bodies. If there is no link between Christ and us, then Christ has no members and can, therefore, not be a head since nobody is the head of nothing.

We already know that the link between Christ and his church is one that has been established before creation when God wrote the names of the elect into the book of life. What we see here, however, is the manifestation, the consummation, of that link.

Christ is the One ordained by the Father and anointed by the Holy Spirit to be our Head, which means those whose names have been written in the book of life are His members by God's explicit decree even before the world was created.

The link between Christ and us manifests itself in our name, which is "Christians" or, anointed ones. That name carries all the weight of Christ's sacrifice and obedience to God's decree that these people, known by their individual names, will join Christ at the right hand of the Father at the end of time.

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The name *Christian*, was first given to the disciples of Christ at Antioch, in the time of the Apostles. Prior to this they were called Brethren and Disciples. The name Christian is derived from Christ, and denotes one who is a disciple of Christ – one who follows his doctrine and life, and who, being engrafted into Christ, has communion with him.

There are two kinds of Christians: apparent and true Christians.

Apparent Christians are Christians merely in appearance. They have been baptized and are in the company of the true Christians and profess the Christian faith but are without conversion, being nothing more than hypocrites and impostors. Of them it is said "...many are invited, but few are chosen." (Matt 22:14)

Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?' Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!' (Matt 7:21-23)

Those who are true Christians are not only baptized and profess the doctrine of Christ, but they are also possessed of a true faith, and declare this by the fruits of repentance. They are also those who are members of Christ by a true faith, and are made partakers of his anointing.

All true Christians are such also in appearance, because it is said "In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven." (Matt 5:16) Christians have faith and while the apparent Christians may show what can be perceived as faith, true Christians show visible good works too, otherwise their faith is dead. Good works themselves cannot work justification but they are an effect of the second cause of justification.

God is the first cause of our justification, having given us the gift of faith while we were dead in sin. Out of this gift, justification and life is effected, being the first effect of the first cause. Life cannot be life unless there is action, movement, or works which is the effect of the first cause. This acquired new life is both the first effect and the second

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cause, since it is also the cause of good works, which is the second effect. But the study of the doctrine of works belongs with the study of faith, which we will do later.

So, if we are Christians, with all the power and responsibilities that come with that name, we ought to fully understand what and who we are. We are not just a bunch of sinners who mysteriously were saved from the pool of the dead after the fall; we are those people whose names already sounded in the throne-room of the Almighty God before time began. We are those people whom God loved beyond any understanding and then set forth to create all things so that they, and only they, may join Him forever in paradise.

Eph 2:1-10 And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, <sup>2</sup>in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. <sup>3</sup>Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest. <sup>4</sup>But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, <sup>5</sup>even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), <sup>6</sup>and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, <sup>7</sup>so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. <sup>8</sup>For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; <sup>9</sup>not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. <sup>10</sup>For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.

“Christian” is the name by which we profess and declare that there is an unbreakable, eternal link between Christ and us. We are His members.

1Co 12:12-27 For even as the body is one and yet has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ. <sup>13</sup>For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit. <sup>14</sup>For the body is not one member, but many. <sup>15</sup>If

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the foot says, "Because I am not a hand, I am not a part of the body," it is not for this reason any the less a part of the body. <sup>16</sup>And if the ear says, "Because I am not an eye, I am not a part of the body," it is not for this reason any the less a part of the body. <sup>17</sup>If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? <sup>18</sup>But now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body, just as He desired. <sup>19</sup>If they were all one member, where would the body be? <sup>20</sup>But now there are many members, but one body. <sup>21</sup>And the eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you"; or again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." <sup>22</sup>On the contrary, it is much truer that the members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary; <sup>23</sup>and those members of the body which we deem less honorable, on these we bestow more abundant honor, and our less presentable members become much more presentable, <sup>24</sup>whereas our more presentable members have no need of it. But God has so composed the body, giving more abundant honor to that member which lacked, <sup>25</sup>so that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. <sup>26</sup>And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it. <sup>27</sup>Now you are Christ's body, and individually members of it.

And we share in His anointing:

Acts 2:17 'AND IT SHALL BE IN THE LAST DAYS,' God says, 'THAT I WILL POUR FORTH OF MY SPIRIT ON ALL MANKIND; AND YOUR SONS AND YOUR DAUGHTERS SHALL PROPHECY, AND YOUR YOUNG MEN SHALL SEE VISIONS, AND YOUR OLD MEN SHALL DREAM DREAMS;

1John 2:27 As for you, the anointing which you received from Him abides in you, and you have no need for anyone to teach you; but as His anointing teaches you about all things, and is true and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you abide in Him.

I am anointed to confess His name

Mat 10:32 "Therefore everyone who confesses Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father who is in heaven.

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Rom 10:9, 10 that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; <sup>10</sup>for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.

Heb 13:15 Through Him then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name.

to present myself to him as a living sacrifice of thanks

Rom 12:1 Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.

1Peter 2:4-9 And coming to Him as to a living stone which has been rejected by men, but is choice and precious in the sight of God, <sup>5</sup>you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. <sup>6</sup>For this is contained in Scripture: "BEHOLD, I LAY IN ZION A CHOICE STONE, A PRECIOUS CORNER stone, AND HE WHO BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED." <sup>7</sup>This precious value, then, is for you who believe; but for those who disbelieve, "THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THIS BECAME THE VERY CORNER stone," <sup>8</sup>and, "A STONE OF STUMBLING AND A ROCK OF OFFENSE"; for they stumble because they are disobedient to the word, and to this doom they were also appointed. <sup>9</sup>But you are A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR God's OWN POSSESSION, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

to strive with a good conscience against sin and the devil in this life

Gal 5:16, 17 But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. <sup>17</sup>For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please.

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Eph 6:11-17 Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. <sup>12</sup>For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. <sup>13</sup>Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. <sup>14</sup>Stand firm therefore, HAVING GIRDED YOUR LOINS WITH TRUTH, and HAVING PUT ON THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, <sup>15</sup>and having shod YOUR FEET WITH THE PREPARATION OF THE GOSPEL OF PEACE; <sup>16</sup>in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. <sup>17</sup>And take THE HELMET OF SALVATION, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

1Timothy 1:18, 19 This command I entrust to you, Timothy, my son, in accordance with the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you fight the good fight, <sup>19</sup>keeping faith and a good conscience, which some have rejected and suffered shipwreck in regard to their faith.

and afterward to reign with Christ over all creation for all eternity.

Mat 25:34 Then the King will say to those on His right, 'Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

2Timothy 2:11, 12 It is a trustworthy statement: For if we died with Him, we will also live with Him; <sup>12</sup>If we endure, we will also reign with Him; If we deny Him, He also will deny us.

Therefore, we see that to be a member of Christ's body is to be engrafted into Him and to be united to Him by the same Holy Spirit dwelling in Him and us and by this Spirit to be made a possessor of the righteousness and life that is in Christ. We are now acceptable to God by faith in Christ.

Let's see how the members have become like the Head in this union in Christ. It is no accident that the analogy of head and members is used to describe this union.

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We will see a clear distinction between the union that the body has with the Head and the union between the members of the body.

Firstly, the union between the Head and the members, in the language of the analogy:

just as members of the body have one and the same head, by means of which they are joined together by sinews and fleshy ligaments, and from which life and motion are communicated through the whole body;

and just as all the outward and inward senses are seated in the head, from which the whole body and every single member draws its proper life;

and as from the head alone life is communicated to every member, and not from one member to another, so long as they remained joined with the head and with each other;

so, Christ is the living Head from whom the Holy Spirit is sent to every member, and not from one member to another.

Christ is the living Head from whom all the members are made to draw their life and by whom they are ruled as long as they remain united to the Head through the Spirit dwelling in Him through faith by which we become the members of Christ, for it is through faith that we receive the Spirit through whom this union is effected.

Secondly, the union between the members themselves.

The members are united with each other and among themselves by mutual love, which cannot be absent if we are joined to the head for the connection of the head with the body is the cause of the union which exist among the members themselves.

We see clearly that the Head is the power source that gives the gifts of the Holy Spirit, nourishes, guides, and protects the body. It is in the worship service that the Head speaks to the body through the sermon and sacraments administered by the minister of the congregation. It is not a dialog or a discussion – it is that time when the Head speaks to His body in “thus says the Lord.” It is a vertical communication in which the body may only respond corporately to show forth the unity of the body

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of Christ and any response must be a unanimous "Amen" either in song or other corporate praise – nothing else.

The union between the members is commonly called the communion of the saints during which the members share the gifts of the Holy Spirit with one another in various ways and manners.

The head is placed in the highest position and is therefore, deserving of the greatest honor, and is the fountain of all life, so Christ has the highest place in the church, because in him the Spirit is without measure, and from his fullness we receive all the good gifts which we enjoy. In Christians, who are the members of Christ, there is only a certain measure of gifts, which is made over to them from Christ their only Head.

Just as in the human body there are various gifts, and as the members perform different offices, it is the head that animates and moves them all. Similarly, in the church, which is only one body, there are various gifts and offices, and only one Spirit, by whose benefit and help each individual member performs his appropriate office.

Next week we will look at the effect of this union in the members of the body of Christ.

(It is plain from the foregoing that the Pope of Rome cannot be the head of the church.)

The apparent Christians are impostors, deceivers, mimickers of the true Christians, in an effort to have the power of a true Christian, as clearly described in Gal 5:22-24. That they are able to mimic true Christians is evident in their appeal in Matt. 7:22 "*Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?*" But Christ will declare "*I never knew you...*".