

Episode 2-42 – Ephesians 1 Part 8 - Christ and His Body

I. The purpose of Paul's epistle to the Ephesians is to tell us what God's present purpose is in all His work today. This includes His work in the world and in the individual believer. Ephesians is the book of God's present purpose, the book of being "in Christ," and the book of God's grace.

II. In Ephesians 1:21, Paul speaks of Christ as over every other power, heavenly or earthly. Then, in verses 22-23, he speaks of Christ as the Head of the church which is His body. Today we will study what this phrase means.

III. The Head. Is this speaking of a human head?

- A. Head = Greek *kephale* (like in English "encephalitis"). Used of the human head in the first 6 occurrences in Matthew.
- B. Matthew 21:42. *Eis kephale gonias* = into the head of the corner. Not a human head here! True in parallel passages: Mark 12:10, Luke 20:17. Peter uses the same language in Acts 4:11, I Peter 2:7.
- C. I Corinthians 11:3,4,5,7,10. "Head" is not the top part of a human body!
- D. Ephesians 4:15, 5:23. All show "head" means more than a human head.
- E. "Head of the corner" is a quotation of Psalm 118:22. Principle of divine interchange: Greek *kephale* = Hebrew *rosh*.
- F. Genesis 2:10. "Heads" = headwaters = the source from which a river flows. This is the basic meaning of head: an outflowing source.
- G. Human head: all actions get their source here, commands in response to stimuli, etc. Therefore a head is an outflowing source.

IV. The Body. Is this speaking of a human body?

- A. Most think of a human body here. But animals have bodies as well!
- B. Body = Greek *soma* (like English "somatic cell"). Used of the human body throughout the gospels, with perhaps one exception.
- C. Matthew 26:26. What did Christ mean by "body" here? Also parallel passages Mark 14:22 and Luke 22:19.
- D. Romans 6:6. Sin is a concept, and does not have a human body.
- E. I Corinthians 10:16-17. Not Christ's human body, nor are "we" a single, human body.
- F. I Corinthians 15:37-40. The body of grain plants, celestial and terrestrial bodies. The human body is certainly a terrestrial body. Is the resurrection body celestial or terrestrial?
- G. What is "body"? We speak of a "body of water." In the winter, you want clothes with more "body." The "body" of paint is thick or thin.
- H. A Scriptural clue: Colossians 2:17. What a word means can be defined by its opposite.
 - 1. Example: light. Does it mean bright? II Corinthians 4:17. Does it mean low in weight? II Corinthians 4:6.
 - 2. Here, the opposite of "body" is "shadow." The opposite of shadow is the substance of a thing. A body, therefore, is the actual, organized substance of a thing.
- I. The human body is the substance of a person, same with an animal body. A body of water is the substance of the water, organized by the sides of the lake or stream. Body of cloth and paint are their actual substance. The body of sin is the reality of sin. The

body of plants is its material substance. Terrestrial and celestial bodies are the actual substance of those things.

J. "He is the Head of the Body" = He is the Source of the Substance. He flows to them and they become, in part, what He is in reality.

V. The Church. Is this speaking of our human organizations?

A. Church = Greek *ekklesia*, *ek* = out, *klesia* = called.

B. Acts 19:32, 39, 41. *Ekklesia* is translated "assembly." This makes the translation of "church" seem dubious. Here, it speaks of the city leaders of Ephesus who met in the amphitheater. By this usage, we could call the United States Congress the "church" of the United States!

C. Acts 7:38. This shows that the "church" goes back to Israel in the wilderness under Moses. Therefore, the "church" cannot have replaced Israel, as popular Christian thought would suggest.

D. "Church" occurs in the Old Testament. The Principle of Divine Interchange: Hebrews 2:12 & Psalm 22:22. Hebrew *qahal*. Often used in the Old Testament for a chosen leadership group capable of representing the rest of the people and making decisions for them.

E. *Ekklesia* = outcalled. *Klesia* is from *kaleo*, which means "to call." What kind of calling? Can mean "invite" or "bid." This only fits 1/3 of the New Testament occurrences. Otherwise, "to name," "to position," or "to designate." The latter meaning fits *ekklesia* AND *qahal*. Out-called are marked out in a special way, or positioned out of another in a unique, representative position.

VI. Conclusion: Jesus Christ is the Source of the substance of the out-positioned ones. The *ekklesia* is clearly God's *ekklesia*. The members of His *ekklesia* find the source of the substance of their positioning in Jesus Christ. He created these positions (Colossians 1:16). He qualifies those who fill them (Colossians 1:12). He places us in those positions (Ephesians 2:6). Finally, He sustains us in those positions, bringing us into conformity with Himself (Colossians 1:20). He is the Source!