

**Purpose Statement:** To explain how this power of God is actually realized by us, the members of his body.

**Eph 1:15–23 (ESV)** For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, <sup>(16)</sup> I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, <sup>(17)</sup> that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, <sup>(18)</sup> having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, <sup>(19)</sup> and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might <sup>(20)</sup> *that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, <sup>(21)</sup> far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. <sup>(22)</sup> And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, <sup>(23)</sup> which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.*

**Intro:** We continue our look at this great prayer of Paul for his readers

## 1. The logical flow of this prayer

- A. That we would know God better = Intimacy  
That we would know we know God = Assurance  
That we would understand what is waiting for us because we know him = Inheritance  
That we would understand the power of God working in us to get us to that inheritance = Omnipotence
  - 1). This is that power that backs up those guarantees we will reach our final destination
- B. That takes care of our future - this week we want to see how that power works in us now in our daily life
  - 1). To help us understand this Paul uses the church as an analogy

## 2. The doctrine of the church is one of the great NT truths

- A. NT writings are filled with analogies about her
  - 1). The church is seen as the body of Christ with Christ as its head
  - 2). The church is likened to a building with Christ being the “Chief Cornerstone”
  - 3). The church is the bride of Christ – Eph 5
- B. We see again and again this vital connection between Christ and his church
  - 1). Jesus uses analogy of vine and branches to show how important that connection is
    - a). In that picture he says “Apart from me you can do nothing”

## 3. This is not an easy doctrine to grasp – so Paul prays the Spirit would help us

- A. Let’s get some balance here – this doesn’t mean we don’t exert any effort to learn these truths  
“I just pray and the Spirit shows me everything I need to know”
- B. I fear we live in a time we’ve become so used to being “spoon fed” what we should believe
  - 1). 30 second sound bites tell us what truth is – what our opinions should be  
Easy! Sit and watch and let them tell you how you should think
- C. But real understanding takes effort – takes good old fashioned mental sweat
  - 1). You can’t drive truth deep enough to affect your life without it

**Thought:** Therefore God expects that we put forth effort

**2 Tim 2:15 (NIV)** Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.

**2 Pe 3:14 (ESV)** Therefore, beloved, since you are waiting for these (new heaven and earth), be diligent to be found by him without spot or blemish, and at peace.

- A. It is an effort that starts with God putting in a desire – but we are expected to work it out
  - 1). As we input the Bible the Spirit lights it up so we can understand it
    - a). We grow stronger spiritually – we gain truth to stand against the lies

**Transition:** Today what we want to understand is POWER

- A. How it enables us to live the Christian life
  - 1). Last week – how it gets us to heaven – this week – how it helps us daily

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- B. Paul uses the analogy of the body – this is extremely powerful – we need to understand this
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## I. PRINCIPLES FROM THE ANALOGY OF THE BODY

**Eph 1:22–23 (ESV)** And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, <sup>(23)</sup> *which is his body*, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

### First Principle: All the Parts of a Body Are Intimately Connected

#### 1. The body is a collection of many parts – fingers, toes, eyes, different organs But they are all fused together

- A. Unless sickness or disease is present they all work together in a beautiful harmony

**Thought:** God uses this analogy to show how intimately we are connected to one another

**Ro 12:4–5 (NLT)** Just as our bodies have many parts and each part has a special function, <sup>(5)</sup> so it is with Christ's body. We are many parts of one body, *and we all belong to each other.*

- A. I am a part of you and you are a part of me – we will see the importance of that in a minute

- B. But the primary connection we want to see now is how we are fused to Christ

**Eph 5:31–32 (ESV)** “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and *the two shall become one flesh.*” <sup>(32)</sup> This mystery is profound, and *I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.*

- 1). We have become one with Christ – fused together in an inseparable bond

**1 Co 6:17 (ESV)** But he who is *joined* to the Lord *becomes one spirit with him.*

- a). At the point of salvation we are joined to him – and we have become one with him

Just as the body is intimately united to the head – I am linked to him

**Transition:** Let's carry on with this analogy to see what it means

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### Second Principle: A Healthy Body Receives Power/Energy from the Head

**Eph 1:22–23 (ESV)** And he put all things under his feet and *gave him as head over all things to the church,* <sup>(23)</sup> *which is his body*, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

#### 1. In the physical body the head is the source and center of power

- A. The brain controls everything about the body – everything about the central nervous system

- 1). Life in every part is conveyed through that nervous system

- B. So it is the brain that is giving life and energy to every member of the body

- 1). When the brain ceases to function the rest of the body will die

#### 2. This is the picture Paul uses of Christ and the church

- A. We have no life apart from him – all our energy and power is supplied by him

- 1). We are so dependent upon him that we can do nothing spiritual without him

- a). We are Spiritually brain dead apart from him

- b). We are like that branch separated from the vine – no source of life flowing into us

- B. When someone is alive spiritually it is because his life – his energy is flowing through them

- 1). When we choose to live in sin we sever that fellowship – life stops flowing in – dry up

#### 3. Notice the extent of life/power available when he is involved

**Eph 1:22–23 (ESV)** And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, <sup>(23)</sup> *which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.*

**Eph 1:22-23 (NIV)** And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, <sup>(23)</sup> *which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.*

**Question:** What does this mean to us who are joined to him? This is so encouraging!

- A. This means our potential is off the charts – we have all we need to live for him and make a difference
- B. In each one of us individually – in the church corporately dwells the *fullness* of Christ
  - 1). The amazing power of the creator is in you and me – in the church

**Point:** If that power is in me right now – that has some incredible ramifications

- A. That means - I don't have to discover some new secret that gets me the power I need
  - 1). Some new magical prayer – or technique the church has somehow missed for 2,000 years
  - 2). The new thing – the vibrations of God – when Jesus is there in power you start vibrating
  - 3). The frequencies the Spirit moves on! What! Produce the right audio frequency and wham
    - a). All these things you can't find in Scripture – but God told them!
- B. I don't need to find something mystical – These electrical feelings that are supposedly Jesus Christ I don't have to beg God for power – hoping he will give it – it is already there because he is there
  - 1). I just have to start using what is already available – I just need to start walking by truth
    - a). So encouraging when I start to consider my weakness  
I have to remember who I'm attached too – the one who is omnipotent! His life is in me
      - 1a). I'm not looking for some feeling to affirm that power has come  
I'm standing on truth that my Savior is alive in me – I'm one with him
- C. In that union I share his power and am united to his experience
 

**Ga 2:20 (ESV)** I have been crucified *with* Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

  - 1). I am united to the one who created the universe – that power is in me
    - a). I live in absolute dependence upon that power enabling me
  - 2). I am united to the one that went to the cross – my flesh that sin dominated has experienced crucifixion with him
    - a). Sins power to control me has been broken at the cross  
And Christ power to enable me to walk in holiness is present
    - b). Paul puts it this way in Romans 6
 

**Ro 6:4–6 (ESV)** We were *buried therefore with him by baptism into death*, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, *we too might walk in newness of life.* <sup>(5)</sup> For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. <sup>(6)</sup> *We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin.*

      - 1a). Baptized *with* him – crucified *with* him – risen *in* him  
so that I can walk in newness of life
      - 2a). That's what it means to be united to him – just need to learn to appropriate that truth
  - 3). What Paul says later in Romans 6 – remember who you are in him
 

**Ro 6:11 (ESV)** So you also *must consider* yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

    - a). I need to preach truth to myself – I already stand on victory ground – so act like it Bill!
- D. The Bible is filled with Scriptures that remind us of this truth when the battles rage
  - 1). I will make it – I am strong now because he is strong – I look away to him  
I rely on his life in me to win the battles against sin - temptation – discouragement and depression
 

**Zec 4:6 (ESV)** Then he said to me, “This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the LORD of hosts.
  - 2). I love the story of David and Goliath – Listen to how David thought when he faced a giant!
 

**1 Sam 17:42-46 (NIV)** He looked David over and saw that he was only a boy, ruddy and handsome, and he despised him. (43) He said to David, "Am I a dog, that you come at me with

sticks?" And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. (44) "Come here," he said, "and I'll give your flesh to the birds of the air and the beasts of the field!" (45) David said to the Philistine, "You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the LORD Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. (46) This day the LORD will hand you over to me, and I'll strike you down and cut off your head. Today I will give the carcasses of the Philistine army to the birds of the air and the beasts of the earth, and the whole world will know that there is a God in Israel.

**David's Response: 1 Sam 17:47 (NIV)** All those gathered here will know that it is not by sword or spear that the LORD saves; *for the battle is the Lord's*, and he will give all of you into our hands."

- a). It's not by my might nor by my power – He will win this battle for me
- 3). Now watch the reaction when you remember whose strength it is that determines the battle  
**1 Sam 17:48-50 (NIV)** As the Philistine moved closer to attack him, *David ran quickly toward the battle line to meet him.* (49) Reaching into his bag and taking out a stone, he slung it and struck the Philistine on the forehead. The stone sank into his forehead, and he fell facedown on the ground. (50) So David triumphed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone; without a sword in his hand he struck down the Philistine and killed him.
  - a). David had to be engaged – he had to fling that stone – he had to fight  
 But the battle belonged to the Lord – he gave that stone the velocity and accuracy
- 4). When the children of Israel were facing a massive invading army in 2 Chronicles 20  
**2 Ch 20:14–15 (ESV)** And the Spirit of the LORD came upon Jahaziel the son of Zechariah, son of Benaiah, son of Jeiel, son of Mattaniah, a Levite of the sons of Asaph, in the midst of the assembly. <sup>(15)</sup> And he said, "Listen, all Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem and King Jehoshaphat: Thus says the LORD to you, *'Do not be afraid and do not be dismayed at this great horde, for the battle is not yours but God's.*"
  - a). They had to engage – had to prepare – but they went to war trusting God to fight for them
    - 1a). He did – God defeated the invading armies – he got the glory!

**Question:** What battles are you facing today? Did you forget who dwells in you?

- A. Did you forget he is willing to empower you – to give you victory – the battle is the Lord's
  - 1). Yes – you must do what you must do – but you must depend upon him
  - 2). You must face the battle through truth – not emotions – depending upon his power

**Transition:** We are fused to Christ – that means his power and his experience becomes ours

- A. That changes everything – we face our battles in his power – we are not weak

### Third Principle: A Healthy Body Receives Its Orders From the Head

**Eph 1:22–23 (ESV)** And he put all things under his feet and *gave him as head over all things to the church,* <sup>(23)</sup> which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

#### 1. Christ was resurrected from the grave and was raised into glory

- A. All things were put under his feet = everything
  - 1). Man thinks he is an agent with free will but he's not
    - a). One day Christ will say – that is enough – and end all things
    - b). The heavens and earth will be made new
    - c). The rebellious sinner will bow – call Christ Lord and be sent to everlasting destruction
      - 1a). The sinner will discover who is Lord – who is in control of all things
  - 2). He is Lord of all – He is the Lord of your next breath
    - a). Your very next breath will be allowed or stopped according to his will
    - b). Whether you make it home from church today will be determined by him
  - 3). This is the foolishness of rebelling against him

- a). You anger the one who holds your next breath in his hand  
The one who holds your eternal destiny in his hands – you anger him!
- 1a). You try his patience! The Bible calls one living like that a fool

B. He is the head over all things for the church

- 1). Churches claim to have leaders – Senior Pastors – Elders – Board members
  - a). But they are good leaders only to the extent they are good followers  
They are good leaders only to the extent they are surrendered to Christ
  - b). I have watched so many important decisions be made out of fear – panic  
With no prayer at all – no stopping and saying let’s seek the Lord for his will

**Thought:** That is my constant prayer – we would hear him – and bring him glory

## 2. Do you have a life vision? Have you ever taken time to seek God? Pray it through. Write it out?

A. Here is mine – it would be for the church too

“To make Jesus known to every one I can

In every way I can

On every day I can”

- 1). Then I pray – “Lord, show me how this can happen. What means can I use?”
- 2). I pray for opportunities that day for those things to happen
  - a). *That gives me a direction for my life every day – not floating – not drifting*
  - b). How do I use basketball – music – art – FB – computer for that? I can leave a tract etc.
- 3). When I go to the gym – it is to work out – but it is also filtered through that vision
  - a). So I pray for open opportunities – I meet people – create relationships with that in mind

B. This is the way Paul lived

**1 Cor 9:24-26 Berean:** Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way as to take the prize. <sup>25</sup>Everyone who competes in the games trains with strict discipline. They do it for a crown that is perishable, but we do it for a crown that is imperishable. <sup>26</sup>*Therefore I do not run aimlessly;*

- 1). He lived his life with purpose

**Point:** My life is not my own – it belongs to Christ – He is over me – Lord use me today

**Transition:** We are intimately connected to Christ – his power and his experiences

A. But we are the body – He is the head – that means we line up with his purposes

- 1). A body that doesn’t follow the brains commands is sick physically – and spiritually

## Fourth Principle: What Does having his fullness mean?

**Eph 1:22–23 (ESV)** And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, <sup>(23)</sup> which is his body, *the fullness of him who fills all in all.*

### 1. The church is meant to compliment Christ

A. The world should be able to look in and see a bit of the divine

- 1). They should see a reverence reflected in those who are here – this is more than just a meeting  
We have come to meet with our King
  - a). Revelation 1 says he walks amongst the candlesticks – the churches – he is here  
Have we come in ready to meet with him – worship him – hear from him

### 2. My prayer is this church would radiate Christ

A. We can be filled with people – have activity everywhere – but if we lack Christ – so what

**G. Campbell Morgan:** The Church of God apart from the Person of Christ is a useless structure. However ornate it may be in its organization, however perfect in all its arrangements, however rich and increased with goods, if the Church is not revealing the Person, lifting Him to the height where all men can see Him, then the Church becomes an impertinence and a sham, a blasphemy and a fraud, and the sooner the world is rid of it, the better.

- 1). A Christless church is worse than no church at all
- 2). The devil loves Christless churches – they are no threat to him at all
  - a). He can send people to them – where they feel so secure – and remain lost
  - b). Why do you think these heretical churches get so big – no Satanic opposition
    - 1a). He is feeding people into them – where they sit secure and unsaved
    - 2a). The phony Gospel they've heard has deceived them enough to seek nothing more

**Transition:** Let's turn to what this means as far as our service goes – and our life with one another

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## **Fifth Principle: What Does Being A Part of His Body Mean in Our Service for Him?**

### **1. The individuals of a church form one body**

**1 Cor 12:12 (NIV)** The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ.

- A. But all the parts of that one body have a different purpose - a different role
  - 1). The eye doesn't do the same thing as the foot, or the ears etc.
  - 2). But each part is necessary for the healthy functioning of the body
- B. It is the same in the Spiritual body of Christ - we are one - yet we each have our role to play
  - 1). God has given each of us our function to make the body of Christ on earth healthy

**1 Cor 12:18 (NIV)** But in fact God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be.

- 2). AND he calls each one of us to action – nobody is to be spectating

**Eph 4:16 (NIV84)** From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, *as each part does its work.*

**Point:** Because you are part of his body you have some kind of work to do

- A. The body is only healthy when it's members take this seriously
  - 1). Let me encourage you to ask God what he wants you to do in his church
- B. We need to see that serving him is a great privilege – it's a part of our joy
  - 1). I get here early to set up – Lord fills me with joy – I love serving with the others

**Objection:** But I think he's calling me to do something that is really going to stretch me

- A. Praise God! You're about to grow! You're about to see him come though
  - 1). He won't call you to anything he won't enable you to do
    - a). As you step out you will see him move – lift you – enable you  
Take you beyond what you thought you could do
  - 2). It is his enabling power that will make a difference – his life in you will accomplish it
    - a). Do you think he could do that ministry? Then trust him to do it through you
      - 1a). You have everything you need to do what he's calling you to do

**2 Pet 1:3 (NIV)** His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.

**Php 4:13 (ESV)** I can do all things through him who strengthens me.

- 3). This doesn't mean you don't have to study – prepare – apply yourself
  - a). God doesn't bless laziness – he blesses those who apply themselves

- b). But we do that depending upon his enabling - his ministering through us  
**2 Co 3:5-6 (ESV)** *Not that we are sufficient in ourselves to claim anything as coming from us, but our sufficiency is from God,* <sup>(6)</sup> *who has made us sufficient to be ministers of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit. For the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.*

**Objection:** But I'm about ready to retire – not sure this whole service thing is for me

- A. Retire from serving God? NO! Now you have time to really concentrate on the kingdom  
 1). Scripture tells us to lunge across the finish line – we don't stroll across  
 B. How do you know if your mission is through – if your still breathing it isn't

## Sixth Principle: Being Part of a Body Means We Are Responsible To Each Other

### 1. Because we are one – my actions affect you

- A. This means if I'm joined to you – if we are one body – my sin affects you – affects the whole  
 1). When I allow sin to cool my spiritual temperature – that coldness affects you  
 a). The temperature of all of us goes down a bit – heatsink  
 b). When I'm blazing – that fire spreads – it leaps to others and affects them positively  
 B. OT illustrates this principle when Achan sinned – touched unclean thing – 36 men died because of that  
 1). It's the way it is – Pastor sins – the church dwindles down  
 Missions suffer – the affect of his sin reaches all the way to the “uttermost parts”  
 C. World sees us sin and our Lord is blasphemed and the church is affected  
**Rom 2:23-24 (NIV)** You who brag about the law, do you dishonor God by breaking the law? (24) As it is written: *“God's name is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you.”*  
 1). Again that affects the way the world thinks of all of us – nothing but hypocrites!  
 a). That affects their willingness to hear our message doesn't it

**Point:** Because my actions affect you – this should inspire holiness

- A. I need to see the ramifications of being in a body – of being one with others

## CONCLUSION

### 1. We are united to Christ = we are incredibly powerful

- A. We don't have to walk around defeated – we need to see who we are and act like it  
 B. But that power is not going to flow into a life that chooses sin  
 1). Sin severs fellowship with God – that power is cut off  
 Therefore you must choose to live by receiving orders from the head – His will  
 C. We saw that “united to Him” means to be called to his work  
 1). God has no sons who are not servants – you have a purpose in the body – pray it through  
 D. “In Christ” we are united to each other – my spiritual state affects the whole  
 1). If I go cold the spiritual temperature of the whole goes down – spiritual heat sink  
 If I blaze for Christ – as I interact that fire spreads – the temperature goes up