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**IMPORTANT ASPECTS OF THE CHURCH
IN EPHESIANS**

by
MASAYA HIBINO

**A THESIS
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PREFACE

Among the Pauline writings the Epistle to the Romans is thought to be the greatest by many Christians. But there are some who believe that Ephesians is the greatest. In Romans Paul carefully and logically explains the Gospel of God. But in Ephesians, after a brief salutation, Paul immediately sings praises to God's eternal purpose in Christ, and takes the conclusion of Romans as the accepted starting-point.¹ Coleridge pronounced Ephesians to be "one of the divinest compositions of man."² Lidgett estimates the Epistle as not only "the crown and climax of the Pauline theology, but of the New Testament as a whole."³ Carver goes further and says, "the greatest piece of writing in all history is this Ephesian Epistle."⁴

Occasion and Purpose of the Paper: In the middle of the last decade, as a beginner in the Christian faith, this student sat under a teacher who held an ultra-dispensational viewpoint in his interpretation of the Scriptures. This teacher laid great stress on the importance of the Jewish people in the plan of God; but he minimized the Church by making it a mere "after-thought" of God, or a "parenthesis" in the divine program during which salvation, rejected by the Jews in their

1. J.S. Lidgett, God in Christ Jesus; A Study of St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians (London: Charles H. Kelly, 1915), p. 1.

2. S.T. Coleridge, Table Talk (Edinburgh: John Grant, 1905), p. 82. The date of this particular table talk was May 25, 1830.

3. Lidgett, op. cit., p. 3.

4. W.O. Carver, The Glory of God in the Christian Calling (Nashville, Tenn.: Broadman Press, 1949), p. 3.

repudiation of the Messiah, was offered to the Gentiles. After the "Church age," which will be terminated by the Second Coming of Christ and the "rapture" of the Church, God again will deal with the Jews in order to bring about His purpose. This teacher taught that the Church is a "mystery" unknown to the prophets of the Old Testament, and explained that the New Testament Church is in no way related to the prophetic promises or to the Kingdom of God in the Old Testament. Since the writer was still new in Christ and did not have much knowledge of the Scriptures, he accepted the view to be the only true one without much thinking.

During his undergraduate seminary days, this student was exposed to a view which was decidedly opposed to the dispensational view of the Church. At that time it was a very painful experience for him to admit that his then-accepted view could be wrong. But by and by he began to grasp hold of a larger view of the Church in relation to the eternal, unchanging plan which God "purposed before the foundation of the world" (cf. Ephesians 1:4). The Old and the New Testaments became one unified book to his mind. Because of this experience, the student has been interested in this subject for quite some time.

In his Institutes of the Christian Religion John Calvin devoted about one third of the whole work to the subject of the "Holy Catholic Church."⁵ Of course, this student realizes that

5. According to the English translation by Henry Beveridge (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1957), out of 1258 pages, 400 pages are given to this subject.

it was a big issue during the Reformation Period. Nevertheless, it definitely shows the importance of the subject. It has been taken up and discussed throughout the history of Christianity. And in our day, along with the ecumenical movement, there has been a tremendous interest arising on the subject. Many books have been written about it. Many denominations are seriously engaged in a re-thinking of the nature and mission of the Church. Truly Coates is right in saying, "The Church is the clue to the Bible as history, and it is also the culmination of the Bible as theology."⁶ Thus the importance of the subject in itself, coupled with the special interest in the subject in our day, and the student's own personal interest in it, have led him to take up the subject at this time.

In the great Epistle to the Ephesians we have the first-hand information on the subject of the Church. In keeping with this main feature, Metzger says, "The theme of this treatise is the glory of Christ in the Church"⁷ The purpose of this paper, then, is to make a study of the important aspects of the Church in this Epistle.

Delimitation of the Paper: Just as other epistles in the New Testament, the Ephesian Letter has many problems. Who was the author?⁸ Was it Paul or an unknown admirer of Paul, as

6. K.L. Schmidt, The Church, trans. by F.R. Coates ("Bible Key Words from Gerhard Kittel's Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament"; London: Adam and Charles Black, 1938), p. v.

7. Bruce M. Metzger, "Paul's Vision of the Church," Theology Today, Vol. VI (Apr. 1949 - Jan. 1950), p. 49.

8. The present writer holds Pauline authorship.

Goodspeed says? Or was it a writer who used Paul's Colossian Letter, as Holtzmann believes? Where was the place of writing? Was it Rome or Caesarea or Ephesus? When was it written? How is it related to Colossians and other New Testament epistles? Truly these are real problems. However, this paper will not deal with all these problems. It aims to treat only the problems having direct bearings upon important aspects of the concept of the Church in the Letter.

Method of Approach: To accomplish the purpose, the paper is divided into two parts: (1) Part One is introductory. It seeks for an answer to the question whether the Ephesian Letter deals with a local church or one universal Church. (2) Part Two is the main body of the paper. The paper will deal with important aspects of the Church in the Letter. After the study in Part Two, the conclusion of the whole study will be drawn.

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PART ONE

A LOCAL CHURCH OR ONE UNIVERSAL CHURCH

In the New Testament the word "church" can comprehend only two basic meanings: "(1) the local congregation whether called at one place for worship or not, and (2) the Church 'Universal', whether comprising all local congregations on earth or comprising also the company of the redeemed in heaven."¹

These two -- the local congregation and the universal Church -- are inseparably related as each individual student is related to a particular school. However, just as a student can never be a whole school, a local congregation can never be the whole one universal Church. Problems or characteristics of a local church are not necessarily the problems or characteristics of the one universal Church.

Therefore, it is very important to determine at the outset whether the Letter to the Ephesians is dealing primarily with a local congregation or with the one universal Church. To do this two things shall be considered. First, the destination of the Epistle will be considered. And second, the term *ἐκκλησία* in the Epistle will be studied.

1. Bruce M. Metzger, "Paul's Vision of the Church," Theology Today, VI (Apr.-Jan., 1949-50), p. 53.

CHAPTER ONE

THE DESTINATION OF THE EPISTLE

The destination of the Epistle can give a clue as to whether a local church or the one universal Church is being addressed. To find out what the destination is, two things shall be considered: (1) The textual problem of ἐν Ἐφέσῳ and (2) Other internal evidences.

I. The Textual Problem of ἐν Ἐφέσῳ :

Although the King James Version mentions the destination of the Epistle uncritically as "at Ephesus" in verse one, there is, along with the traditional view, a textual problem as to whether ἐν Ἐφέσῳ should be included in the salutation or not. By recognizing this problem, various versions take different stands. The American Standard Version of 1901 puts "at Ephesus" in the main text, but says in the footnote, "some very ancient authorities omit 'at Ephesus'."² James Moffatt's translation omits the words from the text, but says in the footnote, "Omitting ἐν Ἐφέσῳ."³ The Revised Standard Version of 1952 omits the words from the text and explains in the footnote, "Other ancient authorities read 'who are at Ephesus and faithful'."⁴ J. B. Phillips' translation of 1958 says in the text, "to all faithful Christians at Ephesus (and other places

2. The Holy Bible, American Standard Version (New York: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1901), p. 213.

3. The Bible, A new translation by James Moffatt (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1922), p. 241.

4. The Holy Bible, Revised Standard Version (New York: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1952), p. 1220.

where this letter is read)."⁵ Thus, modern translators of the Bible recognize the problem of ἐν Ἐφῆσῳ .

In order to face the issue justly, one cannot consider only the various opinions of versions. How do these words stand in various existing manuscripts? According to the readings given in the apparatus of Nestle's Text, the following manuscripts include ἐν Ἐφῆσῳ: A (The Codex Alexandrinus of a fifth century manuscript. It gives the rather poor "Syrian" type of text in the gospels, but in the other books it is one of the primary witnesses for the purest type of text, the "Neutral");⁶ D (The Codex Bezae of a sixth century uncial. It is "our chief manuscript of the Western type of text . . . is a very peculiar and erratic type");⁷ Δ (The so-called Koine, i.e., the text recension which in Antioch and later in Constantinople attained general circulation. It includes K.L. 0142 and other minor manuscripts);⁸ and, G (Boernerianus, which is the ninth century manuscript).

Over against the above witnesses, the following manuscripts omit ἐν Ἐφῆσῳ: P⁴⁶ (The third century "Chester Beatty" papyrus, containing the text which is far closer to the Neutral than to the Western and is not Syrian in the least); B (The Codex Vaticanus, which is the most important fourth

5. The New Testament in Modern English, translated by J.B. Phillips (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1958), p. 411.

6. Samuel A. Cartledge, A Conservative Introduction to the New Testament (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan Publishing House, 1951), p. 22.

7. Ibid., pp. 21-22.

8. Novum Testamentum Graece, ed. by Eberhard Nestle (Stuttgart: Württ. Bibelanstalt, 1952), p. 68*

century Greek uncial manuscript, presenting the Neutral type of text); χ (The Codex Sinaiticus, which is an early fourth century Greek uncial manuscript, is a leading witness to the Neutral text); and the Greek cursive, 1739.

According to the classification of Hort, the Neutral family is the purest and the closest to the originals, because it has "come down in relative purity without editorial revision."⁹ Therefore, the Neutral witness is the best for determining the purity of the text.

In the case of $\acute{\epsilon}\nu\ \acute{\epsilon}\phi\acute{\epsilon}\sigma\psi$, as it can easily be seen from the above descriptions of the nature of manuscripts, more Neutral manuscripts witness for omitting $\acute{\epsilon}\nu\ \acute{\epsilon}\phi\acute{\epsilon}\sigma\psi$ than inclusion. While three Neutral texts, P⁴⁶, B, and χ witness for omission of the words, only one Neutral text, A, witnesses for inclusion of the words. Moreover, the manuscripts for omitting the words are older than the ones for inclusion. And this too is a witness for omitting those words.

The complete Latin tradition and the Syrian versions include $\acute{\epsilon}\nu\ \acute{\epsilon}\phi\acute{\epsilon}\sigma\psi$. But this fact seems to indicate that the words must have been inserted later in the place where other epistles have the destinations written. It is not easy to see how they could have been omitted if these words were included originally.

The words are not found in the text used by Origen in

9. Frederic Kenyon, The Text of the Greek Bible (London: Gerald Duckworth & Co. Ltd., 1953), p. 167.

A.D. 253. Westcott says that Origen "interprets τοῖς οὖσιν absolutely in the sense of I Cor. 1:28, as he could not have done had he read ἐν Ἐφέσῳ."¹⁰ Marcion included this epistle in his edition of the Pauline Epistles under the title, not "to the Ephesians," but "to the Laodiceans." But such a thing he could hardly have done, if the words had been in the salutation of the Epistle.¹¹

Thus a careful study of the textual apparatus of Nestle's Text seems to indicate that originally ἐν Ἐφέσῳ was not included in the Epistle.

II. Other Internal Evidences:

Usually New Testament scholars do not take the authorship of any of the epistles for granted, even if it is indicated in a salutation of an epistle. They further seek for internal evidences from style, grammar, vocabulary, etc. to ascertain the authorship. The same thing can be applied to the problem of a destination of an epistle. The probable truth that the destination of ἐν Ἐφέσῳ was not written in the original Epistle alone, is not quite enough to conclude hastily that this Epistle was not addressed to any particular local church. What are the internal evidences? Is there anything in the Epistle which gives a clue that it was written to a certain local congregation?

In the Epistle to the Romans, Paul deals with what he

10. Brooke F. Westcott, Saint Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1906), p. 19.

11. J. Armitage Robinson, St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1903), p. 293.

considers to be the most important truths of the Christian faith, thinking that he might never get there in person. There are internal evidences that it was addressed to Christians in Rome (Rom. 1:7, 13-15, etc.). In his Corinthian correspondences, Paul deals with many local problems that came up for the young Corinthian Church caused by its immaturity and pagan contacts, such as divisions, immorality, marriage, worship, spiritual gifts, the resurrection, Christian giving, etc. Concerning the Epistle to the Galatians, there is a problem as to which Galatia (ethnic Galatia or the Roman province of Galatia) Paul wrote this. But there is no doubt that it was addressed to Galatian Christians who had a specific problem of mingling grace and the Jewish legalism. In the Epistle to the Philippians, Paul directly addresses the Philippians (4:15) and reveals local color. In Colossians Paul warns them against the gnostic form of philosophy which was about to spoil them (2:8f.). The Thessalonian correspondences definitely reveal local problems concerning the Second Coming of Christ and the moral application of the doctrine. But strangely enough, in the Ephesian Letter Paul deals with no particular individual or local problem or situation. No place is mentioned in it. No local color is revealed. The discourse is written in general terms as far as any direct reference to locale is concerned.

There are two things which may suggest some clue to the destination of the Epistle. One is the fact that Tychicus was sent with this Epistle to a certain destination. The other is that twice in the Epistle the readers are called "Gentiles."

In 2:11, 12, Paul says, "Therefore remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called the uncircumcision by what is called the circumcision, which is made in the flesh by hands -- remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise" In 3:1, Paul addresses the readers, "For this reason, I, Paul, a prisoner for Christ Jesus on behalf of you Gentiles" But these are too weak to establish anything definitely local.

According to the account given in Acts, Paul had spent three years in Ephesus (Acts 20:31), and had a very intimate relationship with the church there. This was the place where he stayed longer than in any other place during his three missionary journeys. Certainly it seems Paul would have put some personal greetings at the end, as he does in other epistles, if the letter was addressed to Ephesus. But strangely, there is no personal greeting at the end.

Not only that, but the Letter closes with a very impersonal third person plural; while all other epistles of Paul close with the benedictions to the second person (Rom. 15:30-33, 16:25; I Cor. 16:21-24; II Cor. 13:14; Gal. 6:18; Phil. 4:21-23; Col. 4:18; I Thess. 5:28; II Thess. 3:16; I Tim. 6:21; II Tim. 4:22; Titus 3:15; Phlm. 25). The closing of the Ephesian Letter is "Peace be to the brethren and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, Grace be with all who love our Lord Jesus Christ with love undying" (6:23,24).

Conclusion:

By sifting the evidences given above, the following conclusion may be derived. Since the textual witness for the omission of ἐν Ἐφέσῳ is stronger than for the inclusion of the words, and since there is nothing in the Epistle to indicate any local color of Ephesus, the Epistle was not necessarily addressed to Ephesus or to Ephesus alone. Moreover, the use of the third person plural in the benediction, and the silence of any local problems may indicate that it was intended to be a circular letter. J.A. Robinson says, "There are good reasons for believing that the epistle was intended as a circular letter, an encyclical, to go the round of many churches in Asia Minor."¹² J.A. Mackay calls it "an Ecumenical Letter" and says "it was addressed to no church in particular, but to all the churches and to all Christians in general, wherever these were to be found throughout the whole 'oikumene,' that is the 'inhabited earth.'"¹³

12. Ibid., p. 11.

13. John A. Mackay, God's Order (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1956), p. 13.

CHAPTER TWO

THE TERM *ἐκκλησία*

Suppose that a minister was invited to preach in a union meeting of all the protestant churches in a certain city, and that his audience was made up of people from many denominations. Further suppose that during the course of his speech, not a single time did he reveal any particular denominational color, and that the subject on which he spoke was of interest and enriching spiritually to all the people. What would he most likely have spoken about in that meeting? Most probably he would have spoken on a universally accepted truth of the Christian faith.

In Chapter One of this thesis, it was pointed out that the Epistle to the Ephesians was probably a circular letter, or to use Mackay's words, "an Ecumenical Letter." One of the reasons for this conclusion was that there was no particular local color in the Letter. No particular individual or local problem was mentioned. And if it is "an Ecumenical Letter," it is more probable that Paul would not deal with the subject of a particular local congregation in the Epistle. Most likely he would deal with the subject directly related to churches to which the Epistle was to be circulated, even one universal Church.

However, this argument is not conclusive. It is only a probability. In facing the question of a local church or the one universal Church, one does not need to stay on the level of probability. A clear answer can be obtained by looking into the term *ἐκκλησία* in relation to the Epistle. Three things

shall be studied in this chapter: (1) The meanings of the term, (2) The use of the term, and (3) conclusion and its contribution to the emphasis on the Church.

I. The Meanings of the Term:

In Classical Greek, *ἐκκλησία* sometimes denoted the legislative assembly of the citizens regularly summoned, which was opposite to a mere *σύλλογος* (e.g., Thucydides 2:20). In this meaning the word was applied to the Homeric assembly (Herodotus 3:142), to Spartan (Thucydides I.37), and to the meeting of the Amphictyons at Delphi (Aeschin. 71.8). *ἐκκλησία* was also used for the political assembly of all the citizens at Athens to make decrees (*ψηφίσματα*) with the Senate (*βουλή*).¹

In Biblical Greek, the translators of the LXX used *ἐκκλησία* for *edah* (which comes from a root meaning 'to appoint,' hence, 'a company assembled together by appointment') and *gahal* (which comes from a root meaning to 'call' and originally meant the assembling of the community for counsel, or the mustering of men of military age for war), and later *συναγωγή* for *edah* (e.g., I Kings 12:20) and *ἐκκλησία* for *gahal* (Job 30:28; Lam. 1:10, etc.).²

In the New Testament *ἐκκλησία* is used both for the whole body of believers and a local congregation. There is a question as to which one (local or universal church) started

1. H.G. Liddell and R. Scott, A Greek-English Lexicon, 8th ed. (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1901), p. 435.

2. R.H. Fuller, "Church," A Theological Word Book of the Bible, ed. by Alan Richardson (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1958), pp. 46-47.

first. Some say local churches and others the universal Church. Even as to how the name *ἐκκλησία* began to be used for the New Testament Church, there are two schools of thought. For instance, Deissmann says,

The first scattered congregations of Greek-speaking Christians up and down the Roman Empire spoke of themselves as a '(convened) assembly'; at first each single congregation was so called, and afterwards the whole body of Christians, everywhere was spoken of collectively as 'the (convened) assembly.'³

They called themselves *ἐκκλησία*, because they believed that they were called out (*ἐκλέγω*) of the world to be an assembly of God. Johannes Weiss in his book, The History of Primitive Christianity, takes the opposite view from that of Deissmann. He says that the expression *ἐκκλησία* doubtless designates first the totality of all Christians and finally becomes a particular designation for the organized local church.⁴ Truly this is a big problem in itself. But since this is not an immediate problem for the purpose of the paper, it will not be dealt with in this paper. However, whichever position one may take, all agree that the word *ἐκκλησία* in the New Testament can mean either a local church or the universal Church. And therefore it is also true in the case of the Letter to the Ephesians.

II. The Use of the Term:

The plural of *ἐκκλησία* is used thirty-five times in the

3. Adolf Deissmann, Light from the Ancient East, 2d ed. (New York: Hodder and Stoughton, 1909), p. 112.

4. Johannes Weiss, The History of Primitive Christianity, Vol. II, tr. by F.C. Grant (New York: Wilson-Erickson, 1937), p. 619.

New Testament.⁵ It appears in Acts, Romans, First and Second Corinthians, Galatians, First and Second Thessalonians, and the Revelation. Since the universal Church is one and cannot be plural, it is quite easy to recognize that the plural usages are referring to local churches. In Ephesians there is no plural usage of the term.

Among the singular usages of ἐκκλησία, there are cases which define the term by mentioning certain locales (e.g., I Cor. 1:2 - "the church of God which is at Corinth;" I Thess. 1:1 - "to the church of the Thessalonians," etc.). In these cases, it is easy to recognize that the passages are dealing with local churches. But in Ephesians no name is mentioned along with the word, ἐκκλησία.

In Matthew 16:16-18, Jesus is using a singular term ἐκκλησία. No locale is mentioned in the context. However, no one argues whether the Church that Jesus is describing here is the one universal Church or a local church, even though one may differ from others in the interpretation of the word "rock." Why is this? It is simply because the context definitely provides a clue. Even so in Ephesians, the context will provide clues to the question of the universal Church or a local church.

The word ἐκκλησία is used nine times in the Epistle to the Ephesians; once in chapter one, twice in chapter three, and six times in chapter five. Since these passages will be dealt

5. Consult, W.F. Moulton and A.S. Geden (eds.), A Concordance to the Greek Testament (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1897), pp. 416-417.

with more fully in Part two, the treatment here will be very brief, i.e., to the extent of looking into the issue of local or universal Church.

The first appearance of the word in the Letter is in 1:22. In the preceding verses Paul prays that God may give to the recipients of the Letter "the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation." And he directly declares the power of God in raising Christ from the dead and seating Him at His right hand. And in verse 22 he introduces the new order. Christ was not only exalted in the heavens, but is invested with universal sovereignty (vs. 21,22a), and He is even the Head of the Church (22b), the Church which is His Body. The image of the Head and the Body is used here to describe the relationship of Christ to the Church. The relation is not merely an external relation or simply superior and inferior relation, but one of life and incorporation. Apart from the Head the Body cannot exist. Apart from the Head, there is no way of conceiving in mind the life of the Body. Such an intimate and inseparable relation exists between the Head and the Body. Certainly this relation is not meant to be only one small part of the Body, but the whole Body. Since it is referring to the whole Body in this context, the Church which is Christ's Body also is the universal Church.

The second appearance of the word in the Letter is in 3:10. Paul has been dealing with the marvellous truth that the Gentiles are with the Jews equally fellow-heirs of the inheritance, members of the same body and partakers of the promise of God in Jesus Christ through the Gospel. This truth was hidden

from former generations, but has now been revealed to the apostles and prophets. And Paul himself, though unworthy, has been given the special privilege of preaching Christ to the Gentiles and of making known to all men this mystery. And in 3:10 which follows, Paul says, "that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places." According to this verse, the church is said to be the means through which the Divine wisdom of the mystery is made known to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places. The church in this context means the whole body of believers in the unity in which the Jews and the Gentiles are made one. Certainly this cannot mean a local church or churches alone. It must mean the universal Church.

The third appearance of the word in the letter is in 3:21. Paul has been praying to the Father that the recipients of the letter may be given spiritual strength in the inner man: that Christ may dwell in their hearts through faith, and that they may be well grounded in love, may learn to know the love of Christ, which actually surpasses knowledge (3:14-19). Humanly this is impossible, but with God this is possible. He can do more than we ask or think. So Paul burst into a doxology, and he praises God saying, "to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations for ever and ever, Amen." (3:21) The conjunction καί is omitted by \mathfrak{L} and other minor witnesses after τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ. But stronger textual witnesses (\mathfrak{H} , D, G) are given for the inclusion of καί in the text.

So the best reading is, "in the church and in Christ Jesus." The Church in this context is the domain in which the praise that belongs to God is to be rendered. This cannot be limited to some local congregations alone. It must mean the Church universal including all the believers in Christ Jesus. Salmond says that "the idea is that praise is to be given to God and His glorious perfections shown forth both in the Church which is the body, and in Christ who is the Head -- in the Church as chosen by Him, and in the Christ as given, raised, and exalted by Him."⁶

In 5:23-32, the word is used six times in the context where special injunctions to husband and wife are illustrated by the relation of Christ to the Church. (1) "Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior" (v. 23). Christ is the head of not only a local congregation but of the universal Church. (2) "The church is subject to Christ" (v. 24). The whole Church is subject to Christ. (3) "Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her" (v. 25). Christ's love and giving up of Himself cannot be confined to a local church, but the universal Church. (4) The sanctification and the cleansing of the Church with a view to its final presentation in perfect holiness in the last day cannot be confined to a local church alone, but is definitely the universal Church (vs. 26, 27). (5) Christ's nourishing and cherishing of the Church (v. 29)

6. S.D.F. Salmond, Ephesians, Vol. III of The Expositor's Greek Testament, ed. by W.R. Nicoll (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1956), p. 318.

is meant to be the whole Church. (6) Christ's union with the Church cannot be partial, but with the whole Church.

To confine these cases to a local congregation means to limit Christ's work and his relation to the Church universal. But to take these cases as the universal Church is to be consistent with the teaching of the Epistle and the rest of the New Testament. In each case a singular *ἐκκλησία* is used with a definite article "the," and the context has definitely shown that the Church in the Ephesian Letter always means the universal Church.

The dictionary of Arndt and Gingrich categorizes the usage of *ἐκκλησία* in Ephesians under the Church universal to which all believers belong. This is because they see the usage of the word in Ephesians as different from a church meeting (e.g., I Cor. 11:18), the congregation as the totality of Christians living in one place (e.g., Acts 5:18), or house church (Phlm. 2, etc.).⁷ By seeing in 1:23 the idea of the Church far beyond the limited conception of a concrete institution or outward, visible organization, Salmond witnesses that the conception of the church which pervades the Epistle is the Church "which is one under all varieties of external form and constitution in virtue of the presence of Christ's Spirit in it, and Catholic as embracing all believers and existing wherever any such are found."⁸

7. William F. Arndt and F.W. Gingrich, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1956), p. 240.

8. Salmond, op. cit., p. 281.

Conclusion and Its Contribution to the Emphasis on the Church:

Thus the study of the destination of the Epistle in Chapter one of this thesis provided a probable answer; and the study of the word ἐκκλησία in this chapter provided a definite answer that the Epistle is dealing with the universal Church. This does not mean that one should completely separate the local from the universal Church in his mind. A local church is a part of the universal Church, and it is inseparably related to the universal Church.

However, it has been made clear that Paul is not dealing with any particular situation or problem of a local church. The concept of the Church written in the Letter is universally true for all Christian communities past, present, and in the future everywhere.

In interpreting other epistles, one must distinguish between the eternal principles underlying a passage and the application of those principles to temporary situations. For instance, in the United States there is no problem of eating meat offered to idols in this day, because there is no such thing being sold here. But underneath the eighth chapter of the First Corinthians, one must see an eternal principle to be applied today -- Christian freedom to be used not to tear down but to build up others, or Christian freedom in relation to the conscience of his brother. But in the case of the concept of the Church in Ephesians, one does not need to be bothered with such a problem of finding out temporal situations and eternal principles, because everything that the Epistle says concerning the Church is

true at all times and everywhere.

Thus the Ephesian Letter is an "Ecumenical Letter" and deals with the subject of the universal Church, and the concepts of the Church which will be studied in Part two are the facts which are universally true.

PART TWO

IMPORTANT ASPECTS OF THE CHURCH IN THE EPISTLE

In Part one, the study of the textual evidences of ἐν Ἐφείῳ in the salutation, and other evidences in the Epistle brought about a probable conclusion that the Epistle was written to no one particular local church, but was a circular letter or an "Ecumenical Letter." Further, the study of the term ἐκκλησία in relation to the Letter definitely has indicated that the Epistle is dealing with the one universal Church.

In Part two, the main study will be concerned with important aspects of the Church in the Epistle. The following five chapters will deal with (1) The sphere of the Church, (2) Imagery descriptive of the Church, (3) The unity of the Jews and the Gentiles, (4) How unity of the Spirit in the Church is maintained, and (5) The ministry of the Church.

CHAPTER THREE

THE SPHERE OF THE CHURCH

If the Epistle had been addressed to Corinth, it would be important to study its geography, culture, and everything connected with Corinth to obtain a good understanding of the teaching of the Epistle. If the Letter had been directed to Rome, it would be necessary to know about Rome to get insight into the Letter. So also in order to understand the concept of the Church in the Ephesian Letter, it is very important to understand the

sphere in which the Church is found. Where does the Church find itself? In seeking the answer to this question, it is very helpful to keep in mind what Mackay says on the subject. He says, "there was no systematic Christian view of the universe in the first century, and we should not look for a fully elaborated world-view in St. Paul."¹

From the foregoing chapters it is clear that the universal Church is not confined to any one particular location on the earth. Therefore, the issue cannot be solved by studying some Bible atlases or history books. The only place the answer can be found is in the Bible itself. Its sphere, according to Paul, is *ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις* (Eph. 2:6, 3:10, 6:12). This is where the Church is found. So, in order to understand the sphere of the Church, the phrase *ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις* must be examined carefully. To do this, first the word *ἐπουράνιος* will be studied. And, second, the phrase *ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις* will be examined in the context of Ephesians.

I. The Word *ἐπουράνιος*:

An adjective *ἐπουράνιος* is used by Homer and Plato in the classical Greek. Homer used it only in connection with the gods in heaven (e.g., *Odyssea* 17.484), but later Plato used it for the phenomena of the heavens (*Apologia* v.1, 19b).²

In the New Testament the word is used nineteen times:

1. John A. Mackay, *God's Order* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1956), p. 26.

2. Hermann Cremer, *Biblico-Theological Lexicon of New Testament Greek*, 4th ed., trans. by William Urwick (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1954), p. 468.

once in John (3:12), five times in I Corinthians (15:40,40, 48,48,49), five times in Ephesians (1:3,20, 2:6, 3:10, 6:12), once in Philippians (2:10), once in II Timothy (4:18), and six times in Hebrews (3:1, 6:4, 8:5, 9:23, 11:16, 12:22).

In these passages the word is used sometimes in reference to locality and other times in reference to things. In reference to locality, the dictionary by Arndt and Gingrich says, the word is used "with reference to heaven, the place where God dwells with the beings and things that pertain to him: they may actually be there with him, or they may belong there by nature, or come from there."³ The passages that are cited to illustrate this are: II Tim. 4:18 (heavenly kingdom), Heb. 3:1 (a heavenly call), Heb. 6:4 (the heavenly gift), Heb. 8:5 (the heavenly sanctuary), Heb. 12:22 (heavenly Jerusalem), etc. It is also used for the literal heaven where the sun, the moon and the stars are located (I Cor. 15:40). In reference to things in heaven, the following passages illustrate the usage: John 3:12 (contrast is made between heavenly things and earthly things), Heb. 8:5 and Heb. 9:23 (heavenly things).⁴

Now since this adjective is used with the preposition ²ἐν in the Ephesian Letter, it must be considered together with this preposition. According to Dana and Mantey, ²ἐν is used

3. William F. Arndt and F.W. Gingrich, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1956), p. 305.

4. Ibid., p. 306.

either with the instrumental case or locative case.⁵ In the case of the phrase in Ephesians, it is never used with the instrumental case, for that does not make any sense. By taking *ἐπουρανίους* in the locative sense, it cannot refer to a literal locality where heavenly bodies are, because that would exclude all local churches which are part of the universal Church and are upon the earth. It seems that the first definition in reference to locality by Arndt and Gingrich fits better than any other for the phrase in Ephesians. Even this, the word "place" is not a happy description. J. Armitage Robinson uses the word, "sphere,"⁶ in dealing with the passages in Ephesians, and this seems to be the best for describing the true meaning contained in the passages. Therefore, in dealing with the topic of this chapter, the words "heavenly sphere" will be used.

II. The Phrase ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις:

The phrase *ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις* is not used anywhere in the New Testament except in Ephesians, and that five times in the Letter. This is not found even in the Colossian Letter which was written about the same time, and there are so many similarities. So it is imperative that the meaning of the phrase be examined in the context of Ephesians.

Five passages which use this phrase are: 1:3, 1:20, 2:6, 3:10, and 6:12. We shall examine each passage in the

5. H.E. Dana and J.R. Mantey, A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1927) p. 105.

6. J. Armitage Robinson, St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1903), p. 21.

light of its context, and at the end a conclusion will be drawn.

PASSAGE 1. Ephesians 1:3: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly sphere."

(Place in the Epistle): After a brief salutation, Paul immediately blesses God for spiritual blessing in Christ (1:3-14). Verse 3 is the introduction to this section.

(Textual Problem): There is only one problem as far as 1:3 is concerned. B omits *καί πατήρ* from the text, following *ὁ θεός*. In so far as the purpose of this present paper is concerned, this does not affect the result in any way. Therefore, it shall not be dealt with here.

(Body): In English the verse is usually translated as "Blessed BE God" But in Greek there is no verb used in this verse. However, we can safely assume that "be" is implied in the sentence. It is true that God was to be praised in the past. And God should be praised in the future. But it seems that Paul is not saying "Blessed was God," or "Blessed will be God," implying past or future. He implies present: "Blessed BE God"

Now the tense of the participle *εὐλογήσας* is the first aorist. Concerning the time element of the aorist participle, Machen says, "the tense of the participle is relative to the time of the leading verb, whether the action denoted by the

leading verb is past, present or future."⁷ Relating this truth about an aorist participle εὐλογῆσας to the supposed-present tense verb "be," the blessing that Paul is praising God, took place in the past. Further, the aorist tense implies once-for-all action, and not continual or repeated action.

The verse says that God blessed once for all "with every spiritual blessing." MacPherson says, "This phrase indicates directly the agency by which the blessing is produced, and by consequence, the character of the blessing."⁸ But Paul's main emphasis is not the source of blessing, but the nature of it. Calvin along with Chrysostom interprets "every spiritual blessing" in contrast to the blessings in the old covenant to the new.⁹ But there is no indication of contrast in the context. It simply states that the blessings are in Christ. And "in Christ" excludes all the merits of man's works. The aorist tense (once for all) participle seems to indicate that every spiritual blessing that Paul is talking about here is directly related to the salvation experience of a Christian. By the grace of God a sinner believes in Christ. In that moment he actually once-for-all becomes a recipient of God's blessing -- even every spiritual blessing which God purposed before the foundation of the world. Every spiritual

7. J. Gresham Machen, New Testament Greek for Beginners (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1923), pp. 116-117.

8. John MacPherson, Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1892), p. 119.

9. John Calvin, Commentaries on Galatians and Ephesians, trans. by W. Pringle (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm.B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1957), p. 197.

blessing certainly includes election, redemption, sealing of the Holy Spirit, etc. (1:4-14).

Now the heavenly sphere in which every believer received such spiritual blessings is introduced in this verse as *ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις*. The phrase is adverbial and directly related to the participle *εὐλογήσας*. Simply, then, *ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις* is the heavenly sphere where God blessed in Christ every believer with every spiritual blessing.

PASSAGE 2. Ephesians 1:20: ". . . which he accomplished in Christ when he raised him from the dead and made him sit at his right hand in the heavenly sphere."

(Place in the Epistle): The immediate context is Paul's prayer for the saints to know the immeasurable greatness of God's power that raises the believers from spiritual death. God operated with the same power when He raised Christ from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly sphere.

(Textual Problem): There are five textual problems in 1:20. But for the immediate purpose of the paper, with the exception of one, they are not important. Therefore, we will deal with only one of them. A substitute reading *οὐρανοῖς* is given by B (Codex Vaticanus) and a few other manuscripts of no special importance. Against this, *℣*, D, and G support the use of *ἐπουρανίοις*. Although B is one of the best Neutral witnesses, equally good manuscripts are included in *℣*. And even from the quantity of textual evidences, *ἐπουρανίοις* seems to be the right reading.

In Ephesians the plural of *οὐρανός* is used four times

(1:10, 3:15, 4:10, 6:9), but not a single time is it used as a phrase *ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς*; while four times other than 1:20 the phrase *ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις* is used in the Epistle. Therefore, we can safely conclude that the phrase *ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις* is the correct reading in 1:20.

(Body): Now the verse speaks of the risen Christ sitting at the "right hand of God." God's right hand is the highest place described in the Old Testament.¹⁰ For that matter, no creature has ever been associated with that place of honor. Even from angels that place of honor is withheld (Heb. 1:13). Further, the words in verse 21 emphasize the exaltation of Christ by saying, "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 that which is to come." These titles in verse 21 are used by Paul to denote spiritual forces both for good and evil. Here nothing is said about the nature of the spiritual forces. It seems that the main emphasis of Paul is to show the exaltation of Christ above all other powers -- good and evil, present or future. The exalted Christ is said to be seated at the right hand of God (a figurative expression of the highest place in the heavens) in the heavenly sphere. Therefore, this verse (1:20) teaches that *ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις* is the sphere where the risen Lord Jesus Christ is enthroned above all other powers of the universe.

10. Robinson, op. cit., p. 21.

PASSAGE 3. Ephesians 2:6: "And raised us up with him, and made us sit with him in the heavenly sphere in Christ Jesus."

(Place in the Epistle): In this context Paul is showing the grace and mercy of God in His saving lost sinners.

(Textual Problem): There is no textual problem in 2:6.

(Body): In 1:20 Paul spoke of Christ seated at "the right hand of God," but here he does not mention that believers are seated on the right hand of God. Such honor is not for any creature. However, he identifies believers with Christ. In 1:20 Paul said that God raised Christ and seated Him in the heavenly sphere. Concerning the believers, he says here that God raised and seated them together in the heavenly sphere in Christ Jesus. Two compound verbs (*συνήγειρεν* and *συνκάθισεν*) are used. These verbs echo the *ἐγείρας* and *καθίσας* of 1:20, meaning that they were once for all raised together and seated together with Christ.¹¹ All this takes place in Christ, and apart from Him such spiritual blessings are impossible.

What truth concerning *ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις* can be derived from this verse? Two things are seen in this verse. First, the sphere is a spiritual sphere. Paul is speaking in this context in spiritual language. Before God's salvation came to men, they were "dead by the trespasses and the sins" (2:1), and they "walked . . . following the course of this world" (2:2). They were at that time certainly physically alive, but spiritually dead. "But God . . . made us alive . . .

11. Ibid., p. 156.

(by grace you have been saved)" (vs. 4,5). Since they were spiritually dead, when the Scripture says that God made them alive, it can mean only spiritually. They have been saved from their sins which caused them to die spiritually. And in verse six *συνήγειρεν* and *συνεκάθισεν* certainly mean spiritual and not physical resurrection or exaltation. And the sphere connected with such spiritual activities can mean only spiritual. This truth concerning *ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις* is very consistent with the truth that we saw in 1:3, namely the sphere where God blessed believers in Christ with every spiritual blessing.

Second, this verse (2:6) teaches that all the children of God are brought into this sphere by God's grace and power and is invisible. No persons outside of Christ, namely "the sons of disobedience," are said to be in this spiritual sphere. But at the time of their regeneration, the sons of disobedience are made children of God by grace through faith, and once for all they are brought into this sphere. So it can be said that all the believers in Christ are in this sphere. The transaction is all spiritual, and nothing particularly visible takes place in believers. Therefore, the sphere is not something a man can see with his eyes, but is invisible.

PASSAGE 4. Ephesians 3:10: "that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the principalities and powers in the heavenly sphere."

(Place in the Epistle): Paul has been writing about the unification of the Jews and the Gentiles in Christ. This mystery had been hidden in other generations, but was now re-

vealed to apostles and prophets, and Paul himself has been made a minister to preach to the Gentiles and to make all men see the mystery. Paul says that the manifold wisdom of God is now to be made known by the Church to "the principalities and powers in the heavenly sphere."

(Textual Problem): There is one textual problem in the verse. G (ninth century Boernerianus), Latt (Vulgate and some of the old Latin manuscripts), Sy^P (Peshito, the Revision of the Bible by Bishop Rabbula of Edessa, 411-435),¹² Marcion and Origen omit the word $\nu\tilde{\upsilon}\nu$ from the text. However, the textual witness for the inclusion of $\nu\tilde{\upsilon}\nu$ is stronger, being supported by \mathfrak{S} (including \mathfrak{X} , B, A, etc.) and D. The word $\nu\tilde{\upsilon}\nu$ is used in the sentence in contrast to "hidden for ages" in 3:9.

(Body): The passage in 3:10 teaches that $\tau\alpha\tilde{\iota}\varsigma \acute{\alpha}\rho\chi\alpha\tilde{\iota}\varsigma$ and $\tau\alpha\tilde{\iota}\varsigma \acute{\epsilon}\xi\omicron\upsilon\tilde{\rho}\iota\alpha\tilde{\iota}\varsigma$ are in the heavenly sphere. And the universal Church is the means through which the manifold wisdom of God in the mystery is now to be made known. The study of 2:6 showed that the universal Church is in the heavenly sphere, and there is no question as to its activity in this sphere. But there is a question as to who are the $\tau\alpha\tilde{\iota}\varsigma \acute{\alpha}\rho\chi\alpha\tilde{\iota}\varsigma$ and $\tau\alpha\tilde{\iota}\varsigma \acute{\epsilon}\xi\omicron\upsilon\tilde{\rho}\iota\alpha\tilde{\iota}\varsigma$. Abbott mentions a view held by some of the older expositors (no name is mentioned). They say that $\tau\alpha\tilde{\iota}\varsigma \acute{\alpha}\rho\chi\alpha\tilde{\iota}\varsigma$ and $\tau\alpha\tilde{\iota}\varsigma \acute{\epsilon}\xi\omicron\upsilon\tilde{\rho}\iota\alpha\tilde{\iota}\varsigma$ refer to "earthly powers in general or Jewish rulers in particular or heathen priests, or church

12. Novum Testamentum Graece, ed. by Eberhard Nestle (Stuttgart: Württ. Bibelanstalt, 1952), p. 72*.

authorities."¹³ With the exception of "church authorities," ταῖς ἀρχαῖς and ταῖς ἐξουσίαις can never refer to these people, because according to the passage in 3:10 ταῖς ἀρχαῖς and ταῖς ἐξουσίαις are in the heavenly sphere. And we have noted in 2:6 that as far as human beings are concerned, only Christians are in that spiritual sphere. In the light of this truth, this view cannot be maintained, even though the same words are used for those people (earthly rulers, Jewish leaders, etc.) in other passages of Scripture. As to the view that the words refer to "church authority," the Scripture never calls church authority by these words. Moreover, the text says that the Church universal is the agent to make known to ἀρχαῖς and ἐξουσίαις the manifold wisdom of God. Certainly the words cannot mean Church authority, because Church authority is included in the universal Church.

Salmond gives a reason as to why he cannot believe that they refer to demoniac powers whether by themselves alone or as part of the angelic world. He says, "This would scarcely be consistent with the mention of the church, and further the Divine power would be in that case more in point than the Divine wisdom."¹⁴

I Peter 1:12 says that the angels long to look into the things of the gospel preached to the recipients of the

13. T.K. Abbott, Epistles to the Ephesians and to the Colossians ("The International Critical Commentary"; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1916), p. 88.

14. S.D.F. Salmond, Ephesians, Vol. III of The Expositor's Greek Testament, ed. by W.R. Nicoll (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1956), p. 309.

Epistle with the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. Since seemingly, as Salmond believes, these words in Ephesians 3:10 are not referring to demoniac powers, they would most probably refer to angels. This would be consistent with I Peter 1:12. Both Salmond and Hodge take this view.¹⁵

By taking the above conclusion, it seems that the angels are in the sphere called ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις, and they are learning the manifold wisdom of God through the mystery revealed in the history of the Church.

PASSAGE 5. Ephesians 6:12:

(Place in the Epistle): From 6:10-20, just before the conclusion of the Letter, Paul gives the final admonition to the church in the Epistle. He says, "Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil" (6:11). The reason conjoined to this command is 6:12: "for we are not contending against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this present darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly sphere."

(Textual Problem): There are four textual problems in this verse. But only two of them which have direct bearings upon the purpose of this paper will be dealt with here. A substitute reading μεθ' ὁδίας is given in the place of ἀρχάς, πρὸς τὰς ἐξουσίας, being supported by P⁴⁶. P⁴⁶ is a very important third century manuscript, and is in the "Neutral" family. But

15. Charles Hodge, Ephesians (New York: Robert Carter and Brothers, 1858), p. 173. Hodge does not reason out. He takes it for granted.

the weakness here is that this witness stands alone, while the reading given in Nestle's text is supported by \S (representing B, δ , C, etc.), D, and G. It seems that it is best to take the reading of the Nestle text here.

The phrase *ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις* is not found in p⁴⁶. For the same reason given for the above problem, it is best to include the phrase in the text. This can be further supported by the following reason. It is easy to take such a phrase as this from the context of 6:12. But it is hard to conceive of the inclusion of this phrase, if it were not originally there.

(Body): In describing the wrestling in which Christians are engaging, verse 12 approaches from the negative side. The wrestling is not against "blood and flesh." Although the order is "flesh and blood" in other places in the New Testament (I Cor. 15:50, Mt. 16:17, etc.), Heb. 2:14 and here, the order is "blood and flesh." The meaning is essentially the same. It refers to humanity. No matter how strong a human being may be, he is still a human and limited.

In contrast to a weak, limited humanity, the opponents for the wrestling are introduced. They are "the principalities," "the powers," "the world rulers of this darkness," and "the spiritual hosts of wickedness." And their domain is in the heavenly sphere.

The fact that believers have to put on the whole armor of God to fight against them clearly indicates that *ἀρχαί* and *ἐξουσίαι* in this context refer to powers of evil. *κοσμοκράτορας τοῦ σκότους* is "the world-rulers of this darkness" which means

powers dominating everywhere in this sinful world. τὰ πνευματικά is neutral, but to interpret it as "hosts" is preferable to "element" because it suggests personal adversaries.¹⁶ The whole tone of the verse indicates that all these expressions refer to all the wicked spiritual foes against believers.

And the phrase ἐν τοῖς ἑπουρανίοις defines the domain of these spiritual foes against believers. Since all other verses (1:3,20, 2:6, 3:10) indicate the sphere to be the sphere of spiritual blessing, it seems strange to find this phrase in this context of spiritual war. But a close examination of the relation between the other verses containing the phrase sheds a light upon it. Believers in Christ are in this sphere (2:6). And the fact that they are believers does not mean that they are free from spiritual warfare. In fact, a real spiritual warfare begins when men become Christians. Before they were "following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air" (2:2), but when they became Christians, they became enemies to them. Therefore, it is not strange to find such a spiritual warfare in this sphere. And the fact that spiritual warfare exists in the lives of Christians shows that these evil spiritual forces have their domain in this sphere.

Conclusion:

Thus, according to Ephesians, ἐν τοῖς ἑπουρανίοις is that invisible spiritual sphere where the risen Christ is enthroned over all powers of the universe; and the children of

16. Robinson, op. cit., p. 214.

God are spiritually blessed in Christ. In here both the good and evil forces are at work. Angels are learning the manifold wisdom of God through the mystery of the Church, and all the evil spiritual forces of the universe are waging spiritual warfare against the Church.

Metzger observes two extreme spiritual situations that the Church meets in 1:3 and 6:12, or the first and the last mention of the phrase. He says,

In the first passage the Church is said to possess every spiritual blessing *ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις*, and in the last it is pictured as being involved in a fearful conflict with the cosmic and evil spiritual powers of that realm. 17

Thus, according to Ephesians, the Church is existing in the sphere called *ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις* being blessed by God and fighting its spiritual warfare.

17. Bruce M. Metzger, "Paul's Vision of the Church," Theology Today, VI (Apr.-Jan., 1949-50), p. 54.

CHAPTER FOUR

IMAGERY DESCRIPTIVE OF THE CHURCH

Communication through a language is communication through symbols, for language consists of symbols of thoughts, actions and things. Therefore, it is not an exaggeration to say that a man can communicate to others only through symbols. And how true this is when a man tries to communicate spiritual things to others.

Divine communication often took place through the use of imagery in Biblical times. The prophet Amos conveyed the mind of God through locusts, a man with a plumb-line, a basket of summer fruits, etc. The prophet Zechariah spoke through imagery of the horses, smith, measurer, etc. Like Daniel in the Old Testament, the Revelation of John is full of images (e.g., lamb, seals, horses, trumpets, etc.).

In the Ephesian Letter Paul represents through imagery one of the most important aspects of the Church, namely the union of Jesus Christ with the Church. Three images of the Church are outstanding. They are the Body, the Building, and the Bride. Less recognized is the image of the Church as a Community of Slaves to Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ is all sufficient, and He is complete in Himself. He is not dependent for His existence upon anyone or anything. It is an unmistakable fact that "He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together" (Col. 1:17). However, as far as His relation to the Church is concerned, He is

nothing without His Church, just as the Church is nothing without Him. This is said with all reverence.

Nygren brings this out in a forceful way in his book, Christ and the Church. To say in wholly abstract fashion that Jesus is the Savior in and for Himself is utterly meaningless. He must be the Savior of someone or something. There is no "Good Shepherd" apart from the sheep. Jesus is "the Good Shepherd" precisely because He "lays down His life for the sheep" (John 10:11,15). To speak only of the sufferings that Jesus endured on the cross makes the cross merely a symbol of human heroism or courage, and that is all. This misses the most important point. The sufferings of Christ on the cross become meaningful only when one recognizes that His suffering was for our transgressions and iniquities.¹

In the same way, Christ and the Church are correlative. Christ cannot be Christ apart from the Church, and the Church cannot be the Church apart from Christ. All the images used in the Ephesian Letter show this clearly. The Head cannot be the Head apart from His Body; the Cornerstone is meaningless apart from the Building; the Bridegroom cannot be the Bridegroom without His Bride; and the Master cannot be the Master without the Slaves. Similarly the Body, the Building, the Bride and the Slaves are meaningless apart from the Head, the Cornerstone, the Bridegroom, and the Master. The one is never without the other.

1. Anders Nygren, Christ and His Church, trans. by Alan Carlsten (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1956), pp. 90, 91.

This chapter is divided into four sections, and each section will deal with one of the four images of the Church: (1) The Body, (2) The Building, (3) The Bride, and (4) A Community of Slaves.

I. The Body of Christ:

In the Ephesian Letter the universal Church as the Body of Christ is a very important image. To understand this image better, the following three matters will be discussed: (1) The word *σῶμα*, (2) The Texts in Ephesians, and (3) The Church as the Body of Christ.

A. THE WORD *σῶμα*:

The word *σῶμα* has a wide variety of usage and meanings. According to Arndt and Gingrich, sometimes it is used for the dead body or corpse, and even for material substances (e.g., Mt. 27:59 - "dead body," Aristotle - *σῶμα τοῦ ὕδατος* or the whole mass of water, etc.). It is also used for living bodies (I Cor. 6:18, etc.). The word may even mean reality against shadow (Col. 2:17).² It is also used for a living or organic body.

It suggests the idea of a whole and even that of an artificial whole, a collection. A volume consisting of books is a "soma"; the contents of a letter or document can be contrasted with single phrases as its "soma"; a corporation is a "soma." One may speak of a "soma" of men, a body of soldiers, an army-corps.³

2. W.F. Arndt and F.W. Gingrich, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament (Chicago; The University of Chicago Press, 1956), pp. 806-807.

2. J. de Zwaan, "Another Approach to the Idea of the Ecclesia in the New Testament," Nederlandsch Theologisch Tijdschrift, vol. I (Oct. 1946 - Aug. 1947), p. 20.

It is the last meaning that Paul has in mind in describing the communities of believers in Christ as the *σῶμα* (Rom. 12:4,5, Eph. 1:23, etc.). The word is used for a living, organic body before Paul's time by others (e.g., Menenius Agrippa),⁴ but it was primarily Paul who took this up and applied it to the Church and elaborated the concept.

Thus the word *σῶμα* is applied to the Church by Paul, but what was behind this? Was it a Greek influence that Paul received? It seems most probable that the image of the Body came to Paul from the characteristic Hebrew idea of personification. How can all the believers, the countless Christians scattered over the face of the earth be considered as the Body of Christ? This notion seems unintelligible to our way of thinking. But to Paul, who was born a Jew and educated as a Jew, it is not quite so strange. In the Hebrew thought-forms one man often represents or even embodies a group of people. Adam, Abraham, Moses, Elijah to the Jews are not merely individuals.⁵ They are individuals, but also represent some groups of people. This is clearly seen in Romans 5 where Adam represents the whole fallen human race. Against such a background, it is quite natural for Paul to use the word *σῶμα* for the Church.

B. THE TEXTS IN EPHESIANS:

There are eight passages in Ephesians in which the word

4. Ibid., p. 20.

5. J. Robert Nelson, The Realm of Redemption, 4th ed. (London: The Epworth Press, 1957), p. 71.

σῶμα is used. One of these definitely refers to human bodies (5:28), but the others refer to the Church (1:22,23, 2:16, 4:4, 4:12, 4:15,16, 5:23,30).

Textual Problems in these verses: 1:22,23 has no problem. There are two problems in 2:16. (1) Westcott and Hort's small edition of 1895 omits the comma after σταυροῦ. (2) G, Vulgate and some of the old Latin manuscripts have a substitute reading ἐαυτῶ in the place of αὐτῶ. But this substitute is slenderly supported in comparison to the witness for αὐτῶ by 5, B, etc. In 4:4a there is no problem. There are two problems in 4:12. (1) The King James Version and even the Revised Standard Version put a comma after ἀγίων, but there should not be a comma there. No manuscript supports the comma there. (2) The first edition of B. Weiss omits a comma after διακονίας; but with a majority of witnesses for the inclusion and from the standpoint of the sentence structure, it is best to retain a comma there. There are six problems in 4:15,16. (1) G has a substitute reading ἀληθείαν δὲ ποιοῦντες in the place of ἀληθεύοντες δέ. The witness of G is not strong enough in the face of the witnesses of 5 and D. (2) The definite article ἡ before κεφαλῇ is omitted by D*G 1739, and Clement of Alexandria. But it is best to keep the article in the text because of the better witness given for its inclusion by 5. (3) After κεφαλῇ, 8 D, Gpl have the interpolation ὁ before χριστός. Since the κεφαλῇ definitely refers to Christ and to none other, it does not change the meaning of the text. (4) After ἐπιχορηγίας the following witnesses omit κατ' ἐνέργειαν

from the text: G, a number of old Latin witnesses, and Irenaeus. The witness by ζ and D, for the inclusion of the words, is preferred. (5) *μέρους* is substituted by *μέλους* by A, Cpc., Vulgate, Peshito, and Hort. The meanings implied in both words are about the same. (6) A substitute reading *αὐτοῦ* is given by ζ D*Gal, Tischendorf in the place of *ἐαυτοῦ* before *ἐν ἀγάπῃ*. On the witness of ζ , *ἐαυτοῦ* is preferred. There are two problems in 5:23, but they have no direct bearings upon the subject at this time. An obvious interpolation is given in 5:30 after *αὐτοῦ* by \mathcal{R} D, Gpl, latt., sy., Irenaeus from Genesis 2:23. It is treated later in this study. Thus, in proceeding to the discussion of the next section, the reading given in Nestle's text will be taken as reliable.

C. THE CHURCH AS THE BODY OF CHRIST:

In Paul's thought, sometimes the Church is the Body of Christ and Christ is the Head (1:22, 4:15, 5:23, etc.); but at other times Christ is the whole Body and the believers are the members of His Body (2:16, 5:30, etc.). In accordance with this truth, this section is divided into two parts: (1) The Head and the Body, (2) The Body and Its Members.

1. The Head and the Body:

In studying this image, it is well to observe what Nygren says about the importance of thinking of the Body and the Head together:

To designate the Church as the body of Christ and Christ as the Head of the Church is not to imply that one part is allocated to Christ and another to the Church; on the contrary, it emphasizes their indissoluble relationship and unity. Christ is not the head pure and simple,

but he is the head of His Church.⁶

Since this is so true, the Head and the Body cannot be considered as entirely separate entities. Therefore, in order to proceed further in this section, first the Head in relation to the Body is considered, and, second, the Body as the *πλήρωμα* of Christ.

a) The Head in Relation to the Body: Although the word "Head" is not used in Romans 5 and in I Corinthians 15, the Headship of Christ is clearly seen in these chapters. Jesus, as "the Second Adam" represents the Head of the New Humanity over against the first Adam who represents the sinful, natural human race. To be in Adam means to stand under the headship of death. But to be in Christ means to stand under the Headship of life. Christ is the Head of the New Humanity, the Church which is His Body. And in Ephesians 1:22,23, "the headship of Jesus is the most vital and far reaching character. There is no questioning or passing beyond His authority, for He is the head 'over all things' to the Church."⁷

The Headship asserts the sovereignty over the Body. Since the directing force is in the Head, the Body must be guided and controlled by it. Hebrew idiom, with which undoubtedly Paul was familiar, makes this plain.

The head is used as representative of the whole personality - 'your blood be upon your own heads' (Josh. 2:19, I Sam. 1:16, Ac. 18:6); cf. the Proverb that kindness to an enemy heaps coals of fire on his head (Prov. 25:22, Rom. 12:20). When the Apostle speaks of the headship

6. Nygren, *op. cit.*, pp. 95, 96.

7. J. Scott Lidgett, God in Christ Jesus (London: Charles H. Kelly, 1915), p. 249.

of Christ, he is using Heb. psychology and proclaiming the unity of purpose which must be a feature of the life of the Church.⁸

b) The Body as The πλήρωμα of Christ: In relation to the Headship of Jesus Christ, the Church is introduced in 1:23 as τὸ πλήρωμα τοῦ τὰ πάντα ἐν πᾶσιν πληρουμένου. Here a question is raised among the expositors of the Word of God whether πλήρωμα has an active or passive meaning, and πληρουμένου in this verse middle or passive (e.g., Abbott, pp. 34-38; Robinson, pp. 255-259; Hanson, pp. 127-129). It is difficult just by comparing arguments given by both schools of thought to decide which is really right. Both sides are quite convincing. Piper takes a different approach to the meaning of πλήρωμα from these expositors. While they are concerned about grammar and Greek origin, Piper points to the Old Testament meaning. He says:

All attempts to consider the pleroma as the grammatical subject of this sentence (Col. 1:19) are based upon a complete misunderstanding of the meaning of this word. In the Bible pleroma is usually employed as a nomen actionis and designates the act of "filling" and then also that which does "fill." In the Old Testament "filling" is frequently used in a dynamic sense, in the way in which we speak of filling or charging an electric battery. Thus in Exod. 32:29 the ordination of the Levite is described as "filling his hands," that is, imparting to them the power to perform a valid sacrifice. Hence pleroma in this context is the power which makes the things to be what in God's purpose they were destined to be.⁹

8. F.J. Taylor, "Body," A Theological Word Book of the Bible, ed. by Alan Richardson (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1959), pp. 35-36.

9. Otto A. Piper, "The Saviour's Eternal Work; An Exegesis of Col. 1:9-29," Interpretation, III (January 1949), p. 297.

By accepting this interpretation of the πλήρωμα in Ephesians 1:23, we see that the Church receives from Christ the power to perform her duties, and that in the Church's performing of her duties Christ is being filled. As it has been made clear in the introduction, this does not mean Christ lacks something in His Person. It is only in respect to His relation to the Church that He may be said to be in any sense lacking. He is not complete without the Church.

It is truly a startling thought that Christ is depending upon the Church for the fulfillment of His Christhood. The image employed here by Paul shows the interdependence of the Head and the Body. The function of the Head is fulfilled only through the Body; therefore, the Church is the fulness of Christ. "The Church at present is the organ of his self-expression, the instrument whereby he works. Jesus' feet and hands no longer move or work in our midst, as they once moved and wrought in Palestine. But, through the Church which is his body, and not something separate from him, he still lives and moves among men."¹⁰

The startling fact introduced in 1:23 that Christ is dependent upon the Church for the fulfillment of his Christhood is further understood by the metaphor used in Ephesians 5:30: "We are members of his body." According to this figure, Christ is the whole body, including the Head and the Body; the members of His Body are the Church. Without the members, the Body can-

¹⁰. Bruce M. Metzger, "Paul's Vision of the Church," Theology Today, VI (Apr.-Jan., 1949-50), p. 57.

not be complete. Calvin, commenting on 1:23, says:

What consolation is it for us to learn, that, not until we are along with him, does he possess all his parts, or wish to be regarded as complete! Hence, in the First Epistle to the Corinthians, when the apostle discusses largely the metaphor of a human body, he includes under the single name of Christ the whole Church.¹¹

c) The Growth of the Body: The Church is not something static. We have already seen in 1:22,23 that the Church is the instrument through which Christ works on the earth. In 4:15,16 the growth of the Body of Christ is mentioned. "Rather speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every joint with which it is supplied, when each part is working properly, makes bodily growth and upbuilds itself in love." C. H. Dodd says:

If Christ is thought of as an "inclusive personality" in whom the church lives and grows (2:21) and in whom the whole universe is ultimately to be "summed up," then there is a sense in which he is not complete until this process is finished. Thus it would be possible to understand the whole verse as meaning "the church, as being his body, expresses the totality of Him who is everywhere and in all respects growing complete."¹²

As each member learns that he is a part of the whole, and contributes his appropriate share towards the good of the whole body, the growth of the body is realized. The source comes from Him, and the growth takes place in Him. In other words,

11. John Calvin, Commentaries on Galatians and Ephesians, trans. by W. Pringle (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1957), p. 218.

12. C.H. Dodd, "Ephesians," The Abingdon Bible Commentary, ed. by F.C. Eiselen, E. Lewis, and D.G. Downey (New York: Abingdon Press, 1929), p. 1228.

the origin is in Christ, and the goal for which is it moving is "into Christ."¹³

2. The Body and Its Members:

In 2:11-22 Paul deals with the fact that Jesus Christ broke down the dividing wall of the hostility which existed between the Jews and the Gentiles and created in Himself one New Man.¹⁴ Ephesians 2:16 says, ". . . might reconcile us both [Jews and the Gentiles] to God in one body through the cross, thereby bringing the hostility to the end." Here the reference to "the cross" makes it certain that "in one body" refers to the Incarnate Person of Christ. It parallels "in Himself" in verse 15, and the context shows that the phrase "in one body" also includes reference to the Church. The phrase is the same as "one body" used in I. Cor. 12:12,13 where Paul says, "For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body -- Jews or Greeks, slaves or free -- and all were made to drink of one Spirit." Ephesians 5:30 presents the same image. Christ is the whole body and all the believers are members of His Body, both the Jews and the Gentiles. Thus, in this image, to be the members of His Body means the same as to be "in Christ."

Thus, according to the Ephesian Letter, and in all the

13. This idea of growth will be further discussed under the Relation between the Body and the Building at the end of the Section II in this chapter.

14. For further information on this unity, see Chapter Five, "Unity of the Jews and the Gentiles."

Pauline Epistles as well, the image of the Church as the Body of Christ can mean two things according to the context. The Church is the Body of Christ and Christ is the Head, or Christ is the whole Body and the Church constitutes the members of His Body. While the Head is over the Body and the Body is subordinate to the Head, both are in an indissoluble relationship and unity. There is only one Body of Christ, and its growth takes place in Him and toward Him.

II. The Building:

Very closely connected with the image of the Body of Christ, the image of the Building is introduced in the Ephesian Letter (2:20-22, 4:12,16). In dealing with this image, three things will be discussed in this section: (1) The Context and the Text, (2) The Church as the Building, and (3) The Relation Between the Images of the Body and the Building.

A. THE CONTEXT AND THE TEXT:

Beginning with 2:11 Paul shows how the separation which existed between the Jews and the Gentiles is broken down by the work of Jesus Christ. In verse 19 Paul begins a long sentence in which he introduces the image of the Building:

So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built into it for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.
(2:19-22)

In the fourth chapter the Apostle speaks of the ascended

Lord giving gifts to men in order that some may be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers. The main purpose of their ministry is introduced in verse 12 as "for building up the body of Christ." The same sentence which began in 4:11 still continues, and the end of the ministry is described as the attainment of the "unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." This mature manhood is described from the negative side in verse 14, and from the positive side in verses 15 and 16. And verses 15 and 16 have a direct bearing upon the subject of the Building:

Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every joint with which it is supplied, when each part is working properly, makes bodily growth and upbuilds itself in love.

Since the textual problems of 4:12 and 4:15,16 have been already treated in the previous section of this chapter, they will not be considered here. The first text for this section, 2:20-22, has two problems. (1) in verse 20, after ἀκρογωνιαίου some manuscripts such as D*G, latt. have λίθου. Against this Ɀ*, Origen, etc. omit the word. As far as the meaning of the sentence is concerned, there is no difference whether λίθου is there or not. Nestle's text classifies the word as an interpolation. (2) In verse 21 there is a question of the text which is extremely important. Ɀ³ACP support for πᾶσα ἡ οἰκοδομή. But better evidence is decidedly in favor of πᾶσα οἰκοδομή (B Ɀ* DGKL, etc.).

B. THE CHURCH AS THE BUILDING:

In studying this image, the main emphasis will be placed on the text, 2:20-22. Other passages, 4:12 and 4:16, will be treated mainly in relation to the image of the Body in the following section (i.e., C).

From the meaning contained in οἰκέτοι in verse 19, Paul makes an easy transition to the image of the Building in verse 20. Concerning the image of the Building, four things will be considered: (1) Foundation, (2) Cornerstone, (3) Growth, and (4) The Unity.

1. Foundation:

The Building is said to be built upon the foundation of the "apostles and prophets." As to "the apostles" there is no question who they are. But a question is raised as to whether "prophets" refer to the Old Testament prophets or the New Testament prophets.

Just before this verse Paul brought out the fact that the Jews and the Gentiles were united together in Christ Jesus. From this it is taken by some¹⁵ that the prophets here refer to the Old Testament prophets who represented the Old Israel. But if this is so, why does not Paul write "Prophets and apostles"? Moreover, in 3:5 and 4:11 the New Testament prophets are mentioned in the same order as in 2:20, together with the revelation that they received the gifts for their ministry. The omission of the article τῶν before the προφητῶν may indicate

15. E.g., J.B. Cowden, Saint Paul on Christian Unity (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1923), pp. 86-87.

that they belong to the same class with ἀποστόλων.¹⁶ Therefore, it seems best to take "Prophets" here to mean the New Testament prophets.

But what is meant by the "foundation of the apostles and prophets"? The genitive τῶν cannot be the genitive of apposition, because they as persons cannot be the foundation of the Building. If they were the foundation, the Building could not be stable, for they too were fallible men. Therefore, it is best to take the genitive as the genitive of cause, which would mean "the foundation laid by them," namely, the Gospel of Jesus Christ preached by them. This is what Paul is saying also in I Cor. 3:10. He says that he has laid the foundation "according to the commission of God given" to him. And it is evident that he was commissioned to preach the Gospel (Acts 9:15). Thus the foundation of the Building is laid by the Apostles and prophets of the New Covenant through their preaching of the Gospel of Christ.

2. Cornerstone:

The cornerstone of the Building is Jesus Christ according to 2:20: ὄντος ἀκρογωνιαίου αὐτοῦ Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ. Notice the emphatic use of αὐτοῦ. No other person but Jesus Himself is the cornerstone of this Building. The Old Testament writers called the Messiah, "Cornerstone" (see cross reference in R.S.V. on Isa. 28:16 and Psa. 118:22 in the New Testament parallels).

16. S.D.F. Salmond, Ephesians, Vol. III of The Expositor's Greek Testament (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1956), p. 299.

Isa. 28:16, "Behold, I am laying in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone, of a sure foundation: 'He who believes will not be in haste'." Psalm 118:22, "The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone." A New Testament writer quotes these verses as referring to Jesus Christ (e.g., I Pet. 2:6,7). About the cornerstone, Kitto's Cyclopaedia says:

'The Cornerstone' was a large and massive stone so formed as when placed at a corner, to bind together two outer walls of an edifice Sometimes it denotes those massive slabs which being placed towards the bottom of any wall, serve to bind the work together, as in Isa. 28:16. Of these were often two layers, without cement or mortar. This explanation will sufficiently indicate the sense in which the title of 'chief-cornerstone' is applied to Christ.¹⁷

Upon the cornerstone, the stability of the whole building depends; therefore, it is the most important stone in the structure. And the fact that infallible Jesus Christ is the Cornerstone makes the Building stable. Moreover, as the Head determines the character of the Body, so also the Cornerstone determines the nature of the Building.

3. Growth:

In verse 21 the growth of the *πᾶσα οἰκοδομή* is mentioned. To introduce this idea, Paul is very careful not to attribute the growth to the human realm. Jesus Christ is not only the Cornerstone (v. 20) in relation to the Building, but also the

17. John Kitto, "Cornerstone," A Cyclopaedia of Biblical Literature, Vol. I, 3d ed., ed. by W.L. Alexander (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott and Co., 1866), p. 564.

Person in whom the growth of the Building takes place (v. 21): "grows . . . in the Lord." Lidgett says at this point, "He [Jesus] is essential to the unity of the whole. He is both its ground-plan and its cement. Still more, He is the living ideal through and in which the Church comes to realization."¹⁸

To understand the idea of the growth in this verse, two things shall be considered: the substance of growth (*πᾶσα οἰκοδομή*), and the nature of growth (*αὕξει εἰς ναὸν ἅγιον ἐν κυρίῳ*).

a) The substance of growth: There is a question raised by expositors as to whether *πᾶσα οἰκοδομή* means "every building" or "the whole building." Various versions and translations are divided about these two opinions. While Moffatt and the R.S.V. translate the words as "the whole structure"; the A.S.V. translates the words in the text, "each several building" and in the footnote, "every building." Phillips' translation gives the reading of the verse as "In him each separate piece of building properly fitting into its neighbor." But the most important question is what *πᾶσα οἰκοδομή* means. Hanson personally takes the words to mean "the whole building," but he recognizes that the words without the definite article *ἡ* mean "every building" or "everything that is built."¹⁹ Since it is a well accepted fact that the definite article *ἡ* should not be in the text (Robinson, Salmond, etc.), it seems

18. Lidgett, *op. cit.*, p. 254.

19. Stig Hanson, The Unity of the Church in the New Testament ("Uppsala Universitet Nytestamentliga, Acta 14"; Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksells Boktryckeri, 1946), p. 132.

that "every building" is what Paul had in his mind.

This interpretation of the words does not exclude the idea of the universal Church from the verse. The relative which definitely means "in Christ Jesus" (ἐν ᾧ refers naturally to the nearest subject, which is not ἀκρογωνναίου, but Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ) is related to both πᾶσα οἰκοδομή and συναρμολογουμένη. If a man says, "every student in the junior class is in this room," this does not exclude any one in the junior class. So also "every building" related to ἐν ᾧ does not exclude any that are in Christ.

Now every building is said to be συναρμολογουμένη. This word does not occur in non-Biblical writings. It occurs only in Christian writings, and that only in this verse (2:21) and 4: 16. It means to "fit or join together."²⁰

b) The Nature of Growth: It seems strange to say each building grows (αὕξει). Seeing this problem, Hanson thinks that because the Building and the Body are so closely connected in this Epistle, the idea of growth may have been used here in 2:21.²¹ But to understand the nature of growth, the phrase following αὕξει must be considered together with it.

Here the growth is said to be "into a holy temple of God," or εἰς ναὸν ἅγιον. In considering this phrase together, one faces another problem. Is not the Church already a temple of God? Paul said to the Corinthians previously: "You are a temple of God" or ναὸς θεοῦ ἔσθε (I Cor. 3:16a). He also said

20. Arndt and Gingrich, op. cit., p. 792.

21. Hanson, op. cit., p. 133.

in II Cor. 6:16, "We are a temple of living God" or *ἡμεῖς γὰρ ναὸς θεοῦ ἐσμεν ζῶντος*. These verses indicate that the Church is already the temple of God now. Then what does it mean to grow "into a holy temple of God"? The Church is already a temple of God, so it does not need to grow to be a temple of God. Therefore, it seems that the growth meant here is qualitative. The universal Church which is already a temple of God grows to be holy. It is interesting to note that the two verses which call the Church a "temple of God" (I Cor. 3:16a and II Cor. 6:16) do not use the adjective *ἅγιος*. This does not mean that the temple of God is unholy. It is holy. But it is also an accepted fact that the Church has room to be holier, just as each Christian has room to be holier. Therefore, the temple of God has room to be holier. And the growth which is taking place now (notice the present tense of *αὐξελ*) achieves this end in God's own appointed time. Since the cornerstone is Jesus Christ, and the foundation is laid by the apostles and prophets by their preaching of the Gospel of Christ, and since the process of growth is *ἐν κυρίῳ*, it seems natural for the temple of God to grow holy. Thus it is not strange for Paul to say, "Every building being fitted together in him grows into a holy temple in the Lord."

4. The Unity:

Ephesians 2:22, "In whom you also are built into it for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit." Paul has not forgotten the theme he began to develop in 2:11. He related the image of the Building to the unity of the Jews and the Gentiles. Lidgett

interprets this transition as Paul's turning from "the universal and impersonal aspects of the subject to the more practical and personal."²² But in giving this interpretation, he is missing what Paul is saying. The word *ὑμεῖς* in this verse unmistakably refers to the Gentiles. Notice the way Paul has been using the word "You" in the preceeding context and the following (i.e., 2:11 - "you . . . at one time . . . Gentiles"; 3:1 - "on behalf of you Gentiles"). Thus it is evident that the Apostle brings in the Gentiles to the image of the Building. Gentiles are built into the temple of God. God dwelt before in Mount Zion, but He now dwells in the Church, His temple.

The last phrase *ἐν πνεύματι* has been interpreted in various ways: (1) It has been taken to refer to the mode of God's presence in the Church, i.e., God is present through His Spirit; and by virtue of this presence the Church is God's dwelling-place. (2) It has been understood as the instrument of the verb *συνοικοδομεῖσθε*. (3) It has been interpreted as referring to the nature of the dwelling-place (*κατοικητήριον*) itself, i.e., it is a spiritual dwelling-place. All these three are Biblical, and it is hard to say which is the right one. So we might say that God dwells in His Temple (the Church) by His Spirit, and the Spirit is the instrument through which the Gentiles are built together into the Temple (or the habitation of God); and since it is the work of the Spirit, the Temple is spiritual.

22. Lidgett, op. cit., p. 253.

So according to 2:20-22 the image of the Church as the Building carries with it the following ideas: (1) The foundation is laid by the apostles and prophets of the New Covenant through their preaching of the Gospel of Christ; (2) Jesus Christ Himself is the Cornerstone in whom the stability and the nature of the Building lie; (3) Every building being fitted together in Christ, which is the temple of God, is now growing holy in Christ; (4) Into this temple, which is the habitation of God in the Spirit, the Gentiles are built together by the Spirit.

C. THE RELATION BETWEEN THE IMAGES OF THE BODY AND THE BUILDING:

The fact that the images of the Body and the Building are very closely connected can be seen clearly by the language used and the nature of both images in 2:20-22 and 4:12,16.

First of all, the expressions used are closely connected in 4:12 and 4:16 with the Building and the Body idea: i.e. (4:12) "for building of the body of Christ" or εἰς οἰκοδομὴν τοῦ σώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ, and (4:16) "makes the growth of the body for building of itself in love" or τὴν αὔξησιν τοῦ σώματος ποιεῖται εἰς οἰκοδομὴν ἑαυτοῦ ἐν ἀγάπῃ.

Second, as it has been noted before the verb συναρμολογέω is used only here and nowhere else in relation to the Body (4:16) and for the Building (2:21). It is interesting to note that the word is used as present passive in both instances:

2:21 - πᾶσα οἰκοδομὴ συναρμολογουμένη.

4:16 - πᾶν τὸ σῶμα συναρμολογούμενον.

Third, the idea of growth is related. Both images are said to grow. 2:21 - *πᾶσα οἰκοδομὴ . . . αὐξέει*; 4:16 - *τὴν αὐξησιν τοῦ σώματος ποιεῖται*.

Fourth, the growth is determined by Jesus Christ. In the case of the Body, Jesus is the Head and unto Him it grows. In the case of the Building, Jesus is the Cornerstone, and the growth takes place in Him (*ἐν κυρίῳ*).

Hence, there is a close relation between the images of the Body and the Building in the Ephesian Letter. Both images are inseparably united with Christ, and in Him and unto Him the growth is taking place now.

III. The Bride:

In Ephesians 5:22-33, the third image of the Church is found, i.e., the universal Church as the Bride of Jesus Christ. Claude Chavasse sees in this image a far richer meaning than the image of the Body. He says:

It cannot express the fundamental and original apartness of Man and the Word of God, nor the astounding love which impelled the Bridegroom to come down from heaven, to humble himself to the level of his creation, that, in uniting himself to humanity, he might raise humanity to the heaven from which he came. A Body is a unity which was always one. A Marriage is the union of two which grows into perfect unity through love.²³

Three things shall be considered in this section in respect to the image of the Bride of Christ: (1) The context

23. Claude Chavasse, The Bride of Christ; An Enquiry into the Nuptial Element in Early Christianity (London: Faber and Faber Ltd., 1939), p. 17.

and the text, (2) The Church as the Bride of Christ, and (3) The relation of the image to other parts of the Bible.

A. THE CONTEXT AND THE TEXT (5:22-33):

One may mistakenly think that here Paul is explaining the union of Christ and the Church by a human marriage. But on the contrary, he is trying to explain a human marriage from the relation of Christ and the Church. Two reasons support this.

In the first place, in this particular context of the Epistle, Paul's main emphasis is on Christian duties in relation to others. The duties of wives, husbands, children, fathers, slaves, and masters are the main themes. In the parallel passage of Colossians there is no mention of Christ and the Church at all (Col. 3:18,19).

In the second place, the language of the text teaches that Paul's method is to use Christ's union with the Church as an example for human marriage, i.e., to show how wives and husbands should behave. Notice the way Paul introduces the Church and Christ in the text:

WIVES, to your husbands as to the Lord (main statement),
for husband is the head of the wife (reason)
as (ὡς) Christ is the head of the Church, his
Body (example)
as (ὡς) the Church is subject to Christ (example)
so let wives also be subject in everything . . .
(command)
HUSBANDS, love your wives (main command)
as (καθὼς) Christ loved the Church and . . .
(example)
no man ever hates his own flesh, but nourishes and
cherishes it,
as (καθὼς) Christ does the Church . . . (example)

Thus both the context and the language of the text show

that Paul is concerned about a human marriage here, and this is illustrated by the union of Christ and the Church.

To Paul human marriage must reflect the union of Christ and the Church. And even the best relationship between a husband and wife is merely a reflection of that wonderful union of Christ and the Church.

As the Fatherhood of God revealed in Christ has become the archetype of all true fatherhood, so the Headship of Christ supplies the permanent ideal of the headship of the husband in the relationship of marriage.²⁴

Hence, the study of a human marriage cannot give a proper picture of the image of the Bride of Christ. On the other hand, the study of the union of Christ and the Church can give light upon Christian marriage. Here, the main concern of the paper is to study the image of the Bride in relation to her Bridegroom.

Textual Problems (5:22-33): There are thirteen textual problems of substitutions, interpolations, omissions and transposition according to the apparatus of Nestle's text, but none of them is important enough to affect the meaning for our present study.

B. THE CHURCH AS THE BRIDE OF CHRIST:

The word "Bride" (*νύμφη*) is not found in the text. But no question is raised concerning the fact that the Ephesian Letter gives an image of the Church as the Bride of Christ, because in the text (5:22-33) the relation of the Church to Christ

24. Lidgett, op. cit., p. 267.

is used as an example of the duties of husbands and wives. Here Christ's position and the work of love are the examples to husbands, and the Church's subordination to Christ is the example for wives. Thus, the image of the Church is the Bride of Christ in her relation to Him. In treating the topic, this section will be divided into two considerations: (1) The Subordination of the Bride (5:22-28), and (2) The Bride of Christ in Relation to Genesis 2 (5:29-33).

1. The Subordination of the Bride (5:22-28):

The subordination of the Bride to Christ is not something commanded in order to get the Church to become subject to Christ, as in the case of wives to husbands. It is the state in which the Bride finds herself. The present tense of *ὑποτάσσεται*, shows the continual action, the passive voice of the verb shows the way the Bride was made, and the indicative mood shows the state of the Bride. The Bride is subject to Christ -- this is the way she was created, and is now existing, and will continue to exist.

But why is the Bride subject to Christ? Two reasons can be found in the text: First, Christ's relation to His Bride, and, second, Christ's work of love in behalf of His Bride.

a) Christ's Relation to His Bride: In 5:23 Christ's relation to the Church is recorded as the head of the Church and is Himself a Savior.

Christ is the head of the Church. "It is the function of the head to plan the safety of the body, to secure it from danger and to provide for its welfare . . . the responsibility

to protect is inseparably linked with the right to rule: the head is obeyed by the body."²⁵ Thus the position and the function of the Head calls for submission of His Body. And the Body is never degraded by being submissive to its own Head. It rather honors itself in so doing.

Since a husband is the head of his wife, the above truth can be applied to any human relation. But there is one thing that a husband can never be to his wife, and that is to be the Savior of his wife. Jesus Christ is not only the Head of the Church, but also the Savior of the Body (σωτήρ τοῦ σώματος). Apart from Christ there is no salvation, and consequently no existence of the Body of Christ. It is only because Christ became the Savior of those who by grace believe on Him that there exists His Church, or His Bride. Surely such an inseparable relationship of Christ to the Church as the Head and as the Savior calls for the submission of the Church to Him.

b) Christ's Work of Love in Behalf of His Bride: By use of an imperative verb, Paul commands husbands to love (ἀγαπάτε) their wives. But Christ's love for the Church is stated in verse 25 in the indicative mood (ἡγάπησεν). Everything that Christ has done, is doing, and will do for the Church is based upon His love. He loved the Church and gave Himself up in behalf of her. His act of nourishing and cherishing the Church is based upon His love.

Christ's love that led Him to give Himself up for the

25. J.A. Robinson, St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1903), p. 124.

Church is designed to gain the Church as His own object of delight. The Church is an object of His love, and she belongs exclusively to Him. This relation is so intimate that the Church is expressed as Christ's "own flesh." He is to present her to Himself as His own peculiar joy. It is the wonderful destiny of the Church; and Christ's death was to create for Himself a Bride prepared to sit with Him.

A question is raised at this point as to the time when Christ presents the Church to Himself. One interpretation is that the Church is now already presented to Christ "without spot and wrinkle." However, this cannot mean that the Church is now actually perfect, that is, sinless. The plain facts point to the contrary. What is meant is that the Church is "without spot or wrinkle" in the sense that her sins have been expiated and the righteousness of Christ imputed to her. She is reckoned sinless.

The other interpretation is that the Church is now in the process of being prepared to be presented to Christ. The design of the death of Christ was to render His Church a perfect holiness, and this will be accomplished in His own time. The fact is that the Church is not completed yet. God is still calling His elect from all over the world. In His time the Lord Jesus Christ will come back again. At that time, the Church will be presented in perfect holiness (I John 3:2, I Cor. 15:51-54). It seems that this interpretation is better, because it explains verse 27 by pointing to the completion of the Church. It is then that the Church will be "as a bride adorned

for her husband" (Rev. 21:2).

But this does not mean that the Church is not the Bride of Christ now. It is even now the Bride of Christ, being prepared to be presented in perfect holiness at His coming. Therefore, He is nourishing and cherishing the Church as a man does his own body.

In the light of such care by Jesus Christ for His Church, and also on account of His relation to the Church as the Head and the Savior, it is natural that the Church should be submissive to Him. Christ is the Bridegroom, and the Church is His Bride.

2. The Bride of Christ in Relation to Genesis 2 (5:29-33):

In his unusual book, The Bride of Christ, under the title of "St. Paul and the New Eden," Claude Chavasse mentions that Paul finds the type of the Bride of Christ in Genesis 2 from the story of the first man and woman. To him Christ corresponds to Adam and the Church to Eve, and the union of Christ and the Church relates to the union of Adam and Eve.²⁶

It is true that Paul pictures Jesus as "the Second Adam" in two of his epistles (I Cor. 15:21,22; Rom. 5:14-19). Jesus is the Head of the redeemed humanity, the Church. But as to the relation of the Church to Eve, there is no clear-cut passage in the Pauline corpus such as we find in the case of the relation of Christ to Adam. The only passage that mentions the name of Eve and relates her to the New Testament Church is in

26. Chavasse, op. cit., pp. 66-85.

II Corinthians 11:2,3, where Paul uses Eve as an illustration for the sinning Corinthian Church. But this is not quite enough to say that Eve is a type of the universal Church.

However, the question for us is not what other Pauline writings say about this, but how Adam and Eve are related to Jesus and the universal Church in Ephesians. First, there is an expression that is used in 5:28,29 which is similar to Genesis 2:23. According to Genesis, after God made a woman out of one of Adam's ribs, the man said, "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh" Ephesians 5:28,29 implies the meaning that Christ loves the Church as "his own body," and nourishes and cherishes it as "his own flesh." In Ephesians 5:30 there are some manuscripts that insert the phrase from Genesis 2:23: *ἐκ τῆς σαρκὸς αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐκ τῶν ὀστέων αὐτοῦ*. after "because we are members of his body." Those which witness for the insertion of these words are *Q*, D, Gpl, latt., sy, and Irenaeus. Taking the quotation from Genesis 2:23 as an interpolation, as does Nestle, this shows that already in the second century there were those who related this passage to Genesis 2. And further, Ephesians 5:31 is definitely a quotation from Genesis 2:24 (LXX text).

The context of the Genesis passage is the account of God's making woman to be man's wife, and the context of the Ephesian passage is Paul's illustration of the duties of husbands and wives from the union of Christ and the Church. Certainly Paul must have had the Genesis account in mind, as he wrote these verses. But is he directly relating the union of

Adam and Eve to that of the Church and Christ?

Ephesians 5:32 gives a certain clue. Here it says, "This is a great mystery, and I take it to mean Christ and the church." If one takes "this" to refer to the spiritual meaning of Genesis 2:24 and "man" to refer to Christ and "the woman" to the Church, then their union in "one flesh" is the type of Christ and the Church.

But this interpretation poses some serious questions. What does it mean for Christ to "leave his father and mother"? Who is Christ's "mother" that is placed side by side with His "father"? Hanson answers these questions:

It seems to us that the text must not be allegorized in this way, but the author makes use of this passage in Genesis to express only one fact: the union between Christ and the Church. In other words, it is only the latter part of the quotation that is of interest to the author: *ἐσονται ὡς δύο εἰς σάρκα μίαν*.²⁷

By taking "this" in 5:32 to refer to the spiritual meaning of Genesis 2:24, we may understand "this" to be a "great mystery." The term *μυστήριον* in Ephesians does not mean what one usually means by "mystery." It usually means "a secret," of "something hidden and not disclosed." But in Pauline thought it means "truth disclosed or revealed." In this context Paul seems to have in his mind the relation between Christ and the Church. In Genesis 2 the verse is meant to be taken literally as referring to a normal husband and wife relationship. But in

27. Hanson, op. cit., pp. 139-140.

Ephesians 5:31 the Genesis passage is quoted to show a Messianic prophecy contained in it. This is indeed a mystery (truth hidden but revealed now) in the Pauline sense of the word.²⁸ And this revealed truth is said to be μέγα. The word does not mean "great" in the sense of intensity, but in the sense of magnitude.²⁹

By looking at 5:32 as a whole, Paul must have meant this: In quoting from Genesis, I mean to lead you to think on the union of Christ and the Church -- this truth concerning the union of Christ and the Church as one flesh is a revelation of magnitude. Thus Paul must have had Genesis 2 in his mind as he wrote concerning the union of Christ and the Church. Thornton expresses the relation of the union of Christ and the Church to Genesis 2 as follows:

In the story of the first creation we are told that because Woman was 'taken out of Man' therefore a man leaves his home and cleaves to his wife, 'and they become one flesh.' In the new creation the Son of God left his heavenly home to cleave to his earthly bride. The creator became the Bridegroom, not from affection arising out of a common nature, but because of the undeserved love which the creator has for his sinful creatures. In the first creation Adam became one flesh with her who was taken from his flesh. In the new creation the Son of God 'became flesh' that he might be the second Adam the second Adam is Head of his Body and Bride . . . in loving her, the incarnate Saviour loves himself (as the Head in loving the Body); 'for no man ever hated his own flesh' (5:29).³⁰

28. For further information on "Mystery," see Chapter Five, Section IV.

29. T.K. Abbott, Epistles to the Ephesians and to the Colossians ("A Critical and Exegetical Commentary"; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1916), p. 174.

30. L.S. Thornton, The Common Life in the Body of Christ (Westminster: Dacre Press, 1942), p. 226.

C. THE RELATION TO OTHER PARTS OF THE BIBLE:

We have seen the spiritual meaning contained in Genesis 2 in the foregoing section. But actually it was in Hosea's time that the imagery of marriage first began to be used in prophetic writings. It is definitely a Hebrew concept developed through the centuries, and brought to a fuller meaning in the Church's relation to her Bridegroom Jesus Christ. Paul, who was first trained as a Pharisee, certainly knew this image in the Prophetic writings.

From his own painful married life, Hosea illustrated the relation between God and Israel. In Jeremiah 3 the Northern kingdom of Israel is pictured as a faithless wife, and as a result she is said to have received a bill of divorcement from the Lord (Jer. 3:8). During the exile, the same idea was further used. In chapter 16 Ezekiel vividly portrays Jerusalem's idolatry under the imagery of a Bride. In chapter 23 of the same book both the Northern and Southern kingdoms under the names of Oholah and Oholibah are portrayed as going after alliances with other nations to commit adultery. Thus the marriage idea of Israel to the Lord God had been pictured in quite a gloomy way before and during the exile, because of the unfaithfulness of Israel. But brighter examples are cited after their return from the exile (Isa. 54:5ff., 61:10, 62:4,5, etc.).

The image used in the Old Testament prophets to show the relationship between God and Israel is applied to Christ and the Church in the New Testament. John the Baptist pictured Christ as the "Bridegroom" in John 3:29. Although Jesus did

not use the figure of marriage as a central theme in any of his teachings, he used it often to explain other truths (as Paul did in Ephesians). He used the figure in his parables of the marriage feast (Mt. 22:2-14, Lk. 14:16-24) to show the gospel invitation, of the ten virgins (Mt. 25:1-13) to show the importance of watchfulness for the Second Coming. (See also Mk. 2:19,20, Lk. 5:34,35).

In Romans 7 under the figure of marriage, Paul shows the bondage to the law and subsequent emancipation from it. It is clear from this that in Paul's mind marriage had a permanent place in setting forth the relationship between Christ and His Church. In Ephesians we have seen that Paul used this very image of the marriage of Christ and His Church in order to set forth an example to husbands and wives. Later in Revelation, the Church is pictured as the Bride of Jesus Christ (19:7-10, 21:2,9, etc.).

The images of the Body, and of the Building do not show personal relationships. But the image of the Bride to the Bridegroom shows the personal relation of the most intimate kind. And this relationship is established because of the love of Jesus Christ for His Bride, the Church.

IV. A Community of Slaves:

In Ephesians the image of the Church as a community of slaves is not recognized in as significant a way as the images of the Church as Body, Building, and Bride. Nevertheless, such an image of the Church is found in 6:5-9. Three things shall

be considered in this section: (1) The Context and the Text, (2) The Imagery in the Other New Testament Books, and (3) The Church as a Community of Slaves.

A. THE CONTEXT AND THE TEXT:

Three things that shall be dealt with in this section are: (1) The context, (2) Textual Problems, and (3) The Imagery of Slaves in the Text.

1. The Context:

The context of the Scripture passage is the same as in the previous image (the Bride of Christ), where Paul is explaining Christian duties to one another: Husband to wife, wife to husband, children to parents, and fathers to children. And in this context Paul mentions the duties of slaves to masters and of masters to slaves.

2. The Textual Problems:

According to the textual apparatus of Nestle's text, there are five problems in the text (6:5-9): (1) In 6:5 there is a transpositional problem. P⁴⁶ R DGal, etc. support a sequence: *κυρίοις κατὰ σάρκα*. However, the better witnesses of

ABP, etc. support the sequence: *κατὰ σάρκα κυρίοις*. (2) Also in 6:5 some witnesses such as ξ 1739a1, etc. omit *τῆς* before *καρδίας*. But the witnesses are too slender for the omission of the article. (3) In 6:6 Westcott and Hort place a comma before *ἐκ ψυχῆς* and connect this phrase to modify *δουλεύοντες*, while Nestle prefers to place the comma after *ἐκ ψυχῆς* to let it modify *ποιοῦντες*. This is a matter of interpretation. Most of the translations (e.g., A.S.V., Moffatt,

R.S.V., etc.) go with Nestle's interpretation. (4) In 6:7 KLpm (or Koine) omit ὧς before τῷ κυρίῳ, but the inclusion of the word by better witness, such as δ DG, is preferred. (5) In 6:8 ADGP, etc. support a reading ὁ ἰάν in the place of ἰάν T1. The latter is supported by B, and Westcott and Hort, and Nestle prefer this reading.

3. The Imagery of a Community of Slaves in the Text:

At first glance it may be difficult to see in our text the image of the Church as a community of slaves, because it is not the primary purpose of the author to teach this image. The theme of Paul in this section, as we have already seen, is to teach the duties of the slaves and the masters. However, a close examination of the text will shed light upon the image.

The meaning of δούλος, according to Arndt and Gingrich, is predominantly "slave," e.g., slave in contrast to the master, slave in contrast to free men, etc. The cognate verb of δούλος, namely δουλόω, means "to make someone a slave, enslave, subject, etc."³¹ Calvin says, "The servants (δούλοι) whom he [Paul] immediately addresses were not hired servants, like those of the present day, but slaves, such as were in ancient times . . ."³² By considering the type of society in which Christianity began to spread in the first century, we see that Calvin must be right in saying that δούλοι refer to slaves.

In such a society it is most probable that many slaves

31. Arndt and Gingrich, op. cit., pp. 204-205.

32. Calvin, op. cit., p. 329.

became Christians as well as many masters. Questions must have arisen with regard to their Christian duties as masters and slaves. So Paul deals with this practical problem of the Church. But as elsewhere in the New Testament, he is here neither condemning or approving the institution of slavery; but, rather, he is accepting it as an existing institution.

Paul begins, "Slaves, be obedient to those who are your earthly masters." The manner of obedience is to be "with fear and trembling, in singleness of heart" (6:6). The expression "fear and trembling" is used by the same author three times in other epistles: I Cor. 2:3, II Cor. 7:15, and Phil. 2:12. From these instances one can see that this expression should not be taken literally. As Salmond well expresses it, it must mean "solicitous zeal in the discharge of duty."³³ While "the fear and trembling" refers to the manner of performing duty, "in singleness of heart" refers to the spirit or inner attitude in which the obedience is to be rendered. The expression means not to pretend, but to be sincere and to have an undivided heart. Thus, Christian slaves are to be obedient to their masters, just as they are to Christ.

Paul then adds "singleness of heart" from the negative side and says, "not in the way of eye service." "Eye-service" means pretended obedience rendered under the eyes of the master only to impress him -- but when the master is absent, doing otherwise. Eye-service means obedience as men-pleasers.

33. Salmond, op. cit., p. 378.

But over against men-pleasers, Christian slaves are to obey as slaves of Christ. A distinguishing characteristic of slaves of Christ is to be their obedience to Christ by "doing the will of God from the heart, rendering service with a good will to the Lord and not to men."

And these earthly masters are commanded to do "the same" to the slaves. For the masters to do the same does not mean that they are to be obedient to the slaves. That would not make any sense. Rather it means that the masters too "as slaves of Christ do the will of God." Salmond comments upon this by saying, "the masters were to act to their servants in the same Christian way as the servants were called to act to them -- in the same spirit of consideration and goodwill."³⁴

The reasons or encouragements to act in a Christian way which are given both to slaves and masters are introduced by εἰδότες ὅτι. For the slaves, Paul says, "knowing that whatever good any one does, he will receive the same again from the Lord, whether he is a slave or free." And for the earthly masters, he says, "knowing that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and that there is no partiality with him."

Two things can be observed from the previous paragraph. In the first place, the Lord is the rewarder of both bond men and free men. In the second place, Jesus Christ is the Master for both Christian slaves and Christian masters. In other

34. Ibid., p. 380.

words, in relation to the Master in heaven, both bond and free, both slaves and masters are slaves. In Christ they are standing on equal ground. In Christ one's status in society does not make any difference. All are slaves of Christ, and under this title, all Christians are standing on common ground to serve the Master, Jesus Christ.

Thus, in Ephesians 6:5-9 there is an image of the Church as slaves of Christ. And although the Epistle does not explicitly state that the universal Church is a company of slaves, the meaning is definitely implied there.

B. THE IMAGERY IN OTHER NEW TESTAMENT BOOKS:

This image of the Church as a company of slaves is not anything new in this Epistle. In fact, this is a very important image of the Church in all the New Testament.

In His parables, Jesus often used the relation of slaves to masters as a good and fitting analogy of the relation of his followers to Himself (e.g., "Servants Watching" - Lk. 12:35-40; "Unprofitable Servants" - Lk. 17:7-10; "The Pounds" - Lk. 19:11-27, etc.).³⁵ The New Testament authors often described themselves as slaves of Jesus Christ in their writings (e.g., Rom. 1:1; Phil. 1:1; Titus 1:1; James 1:1; II Pet. 1:1; Jude 1:1; Rev. 1:1). They addressed the readers of their epistles as slaves (Rom. 6:22; 14:18; I Cor. 7:22; I Thess. 1:9; I Pet. 2:15, Rev. 7:3, 11:18).³⁶ These Scripture references show that

35. In all these parables the word for "servant" is δοῦλος.

36. Paul Minear, "Images of the Church in the New Testament," The South East Asia Journal of Theology, 1:2 (October, 1959), pp. 7, 12.

not only in Ephesians but also in the New Testament as a whole, the Church is a community of slaves to Jesus Christ, the Lord.

C. THE CHURCH AS A COMMUNITY OF SLAVES:

It does not sound good to twentieth-century minds to say that the Church is a community of the slaves of Jesus Christ. The word "slave" carries with it some meanings people despise. Is it not true that people everywhere are longing for more freedom? Is it not true that the greatest desire of individual and nation is freedom? Is it not true that Jesus Christ Himself came to "proclaim release to the captives" (Luke 4:18)?

Why then is the Church a company of slaves? What does it mean that the Church is a community of slaves? Does it not contradict the freedom the Christian Gospel proclaims? To understand the answer to these questions, one must keep in mind an important truth, i.e., for a man to become a slave of Christ does not mean that he loses a previous freedom. He does not have freedom to begin with. He is a slave to fear, to the world, to lust, and to the devil. He is a slave to many masters. And in becoming a slave of Jesus Christ, he actually receives freedom from these former masters. Filson says:

Man is not free when he is a slave of sin and evil habits. When Christ sets him free (Gal. 5:1), he is free from guilt, from sin, from bondage to rules and rites; he is free to do right. This is the great freedom which the Gospel offers -- freedom to do willingly and well what is right.³⁷

And in this sense a Christian man is free, and it is true that

37. Floyd V. Filson, Opening the New Testament (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1952), p. 110.

Christ came to proclaim freedom. But at the same time, he becomes a slave of one Master, Jesus Christ. In other words, to become a Christian means to change his master. He becomes free from his former masters, and becomes a slave to his new Master. Romans 6:17-22 brings this out as a change from "slaves of sin" to "slaves of righteousness."

There is a passage in Paul's writing where he seems to deny the image of the Church as a community of slaves. In Gal. 4:7 he writes, "so through God you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son then an heir." But a close examination of the context in which this verse is found indicates that Paul is not denying the image which has been discussed. Here in contrast to the sonship, Paul is discussing the slavery to the yoke of Jewish law. By saying "you are no longer a slave" (Gal. 4:7), Paul actually means that Galatians were emancipated from "slaves to the elemental spirits of the universe . . . bondage to beings that by nature are no gods" (4:3b, 8b). Is this not precisely that which has been discussed just before? To say that one has become a slave of Christ is the same as to say that he is no longer a "slave to the elemental spirits of the universe." And thus, this passage in Galatians does not oppose the image of the slaves to Jesus Christ in Ephesians.

The image of the Church seen in Ephesians 6:5-9 as a community of slaves of Christ is further supported by the meaning implied in the passage Ephesians 1:7: "in whom we have the redemption (*τὴν ἀπολύτρωσιν*) through his blood."

The word *ἀπολύτρωσις* originally meant "buying back a

slave or captive, making him free by payment of a ransom (λύτρον).³⁸ In the Old Testament the dominant idea is "emancipation," and the redemption from Egypt is the ground of the conception throughout. And in the New Testament also the idea of emancipation is dominant.³⁹ In Ephesians 1:7 ἀπολύτρωσις is an apposition to "forgiveness of our trespasses," and it shows the freedom, or release from the former master of sins. And the freedom from the former captivity or slavery implies also the change of the master. In its original meaning, when a slave is bought with a ransom price, he became free from his former master, but he became a slave of the one who bought him. Likewise in the Old Testament, when the children of Israel were emancipated from slavery in Egypt, they became the servants of God. God claimed to be their only God and Master on the ground of what He did for them. God repeatedly claimed, "I am the Lord thy God which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage" (e.g., Ex. 20:2, etc.). So also in the New Covenant, Jesus Christ paid the price of "His blood" on the cross, through which those who believe on Him are set free from the slavery of sin and become slaves of Christ. Thus, Jesus taught his disciples that "no one can serve two masters." The Church is a community of the slaves of Jesus Christ.

Conclusion:

The present study has treated one of the most important aspects of the Church in the Ephesian Letter -- namely, the re-

38. Arndt and Gingrich, op. cit., p. 95.

39. J.A. Robinson, op. cit., pp. 147-148.

lationship of the Church to Christ revealed in imagery. Each image has shown the inseparable relationship of the Church to Christ. The Church cannot exist apart from Christ, for in Him she was born, and moves, and grows and has her being. She is the Body of Christ, the Building of which Christ is the Cornerstone, the Bride whose Bridegroom is Christ, and the slaves whose Master is Christ. The images have also shown the earthly vocation of the Church: as the Body, she is to be subject to the Head; as the Building, she is to be in conformity with the Cornerstone and have harmony with other members of the Building for growth; as the Bride, she is to be subordinate to the Bridegroom; and as the slave, she is to be obedient to her Master. Each member has his function in the Church, and the individual exists for the sake of the whole to the glory of Christ. The central element in these images is the idea of the unity between the Church and Christ.

CHAPTER FIVE

UNITY OF THE JEWS AND THE GENTILES

In this mid-twentieth century it is an accepted doctrine in Christendom that "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:28). To Christians of this present day the distinction between Jews and Gentiles in the Church is not as decisive an issue as in Paul's day, because this issue was settled for us nineteen hundred years ago, and we do not now feel the impact of it.

But in Paul's day this was one of the most important issues in the Christian Church. For instance, some of the stricter Jewish Christians taught that a person must become a Jew before he could become a Christian. And to become a Jew, they insisted that a man must submit to the rite of circumcision, and that he must keep the Mosaic law, moral as well as ritual. Some of these men misled the Galatian Christians, and Paul's Galatian Epistle had to attack this false teaching. The Jerusalem Council treated this very problem (Acts 15). Paul had Timothy circumcised (Acts 16:3) in order to avoid problems which would be raised by the Jewish Christians. Once Peter was eating with the Gentiles, but when the "circumcision party" came, he "drew back and separated himself" because he was afraid of them (Gal. 2:12). And even Barnabas was carried away with "the circumcision party" at that time (Gal. 2:13). So Paul stood alone and opposed Peter to his face (Gal. 2:11).

As Robinson says, truly at that time the Christian Jew was prepared to allow a little place to the Christian Gentiles. "He might be like 'the stranger in the gates'; but he could not be as the true born child of privilege, unless indeed he were prepared to abandon his Gentile position and by circumcision identify himself with the Jew."¹

So the message of the unity of the Jews and the Gentiles in the Church is a very important aspect of the Church indeed. In fact, to the Gentiles to whom Paul addressed his Ephesian Epistle, the abolishment of this distinction was almost everything. In this chapter, the following aspects of Jew-Gentile relations in Christ will be considered: (1) The Text (2:11-19), (2) Disunity, (3) Unity, and (4) Meaning of *μυστήριον*.

I. Text (Ephesians 2:11-19):

According to the textual apparatus of Nestle's text, there are nine textual problems in Ephesians 2:11-19. (1) In 2:11 the apparatus recognizes the fact that some commentators separate the word *Διό* into two words: *δι' ὅ*. But it is best to take *Διό* as one word, because no manuscript supports the separation of the word. (2) Westcott and Hort place the comma after *Χειροποιήτου* in verse 11. (3) In verse 12 Weiss omits the comma after *Χριστοῦ*. (4) Westcott and Hort take the comma after *ἔχθραν* and put it after *σαρκὶ αὐτοῦ* in verse 14. (5) In verse 15 *℞* DG and Marcion support a reading *ἐν ἑαυτῷ*.

1. J.A. Robinson, St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1903), p. 55.

But the better witnesses of P⁴⁶ and F¹ give support to ἐν αὐτῷ. (6) Westcott and Hort omit a comma after σταυροῦ in 2:16. These questions concerning the comma, i.e., (2), (3), (4), and (6), are matters of one's interpretations of the text. So they will be treated later in this chapter when we are dealing with interpretation, if the necessity arises. (7) In the same verse Gpc, lat. read ἐν ἑαυτῷ. But the reading ἐν αὐτῷ is preferred, being supported by δ ABFP etc. (8) In 2:18 the second εἰρήνην is omitted by \mathcal{R} pm, sy, Marcion and Origen, but whether the word is there is not, the meaning is definitely implied in the sentence. However, better manuscript witnesses such as \mathcal{X} ABDEFGP etc., support the inclusion of the word. (9) In 2:19 \mathcal{R} pm, sy, and Marcion omit the second ἔστε, but there is no change in the meaning of the sentence. For the same reason given above, the inclusion of ἔστε is preferred.

In this text (2:11-19), Paul reminds his readers of their previous condition and the new position they gained through Jesus Christ.

II. Disunity (Ephesians 2:11,12):

Therefore remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called the uncircumcision by what is called the circumcision, which is made in the flesh by hand -- remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. (2:11,12)

In these two verses, six facts of disunity which existed between the Jews and the Gentiles are mentioned.

In the first place, the Gentiles were τὰ ἔθνη ἐν σαρκί.

ἔθνη without the definite article means "nation, people, etc." but with the article it means "heathen, pagan, or Gentiles."² ἐν σαρκί can mean the former carnal state of the Gentiles or even their physical origin. But here it seems best to take it as referring to uncircumcision, because in the latter half of this verse (v. 11), circumcision in the flesh is dealt with. The circumcised Jews had pride in themselves and looked down upon the uncircumcised Gentiles as not belonging to God. And they even "nicknamed"³ them as ἀκροβυστία. Thus a ritual disunity existed between the two.

Second, the Gentiles were τῷ καιρῷ ἐκείνῳ χωρὶς Χριστοῦ. τῷ καιρῷ ἐκείνῳ refers to ποτέ in verse 11 or their pre-Christian days. They were (notice the imperfect tense of ἦτε -- past continual) at that time χωρὶς Χριστοῦ, that is, they had no connection with Christ. While the Jews were waiting for Christ, the Messiah, the Gentiles had no knowledge of Christ.

Third, they were ἀπαλλοτριωμένοι τῆς πολιτείας τοῦ Ἰσραήλ. The verb ἀπαλλοτριόω usually means "to estrange, to alienate, etc." But here according to Cremer, "the emphasis must not be placed upon the preposition prefixed to the verb, because it is not estrangement, but simply strangership that is meant -- a use of the word not elsewhere to be found."⁴ The word

2. W.F. Arndt and F.W. Gingrich, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1956), p. 217.

3. Walter Lock, The Epistle to the Ephesians ("Westminster Commentary"; London: Methuen & Co., Ltd., 1929), p. 30.

4. Hermann Cremer, Biblio-Theological Lexicon of New Testament Greek, trans. by W. Urwick (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1954), p. 95.

πολιτεία can mean "the relation in which a citizen stands to the state, the condition and rights of a citizen, etc."⁵ Here the author undoubtedly has the theocratic government in his mind, because the name Ἰσραήλ implies such a meaning.⁶ Thus the Gentiles were strangers from the rights of a citizenship of the theocratic government. They were aliens from the privilege. Here another disunity existed between the Jews and the Gentiles.

Fourth, they were ξένοι τῶν διαθηκῶν τῆς ἐπαγγελίας. This phrase strengthens the former clause. ξένος means "stranger or foreigner," and here it has the particular meaning of one who is a stranger to the covenants of the promise. The phrase τῶν διαθηκῶν τῆς ἐπαγγελίας must refer to the covenants God made through Abraham in Genesis 17, through Jeremiah (31: 31-33), etc., but the Gentiles were strangers to the covenants.

Fifth, they were ἐλπίδα μὴ ἔχοντες. The fact that there is no definite article may indicate that ἐλπίδα can include not only the Messianic hope but every hope in the future. They were utterly without hope. Robinson says:

The Jews had a hope: the Gentiles had none.
The golden age of the Gentile was in the past:
his poets told him of it, and how it was gone.
The Jew's golden age was in the future: his
prophets told him to look forward to its coming.⁷

5. H.G. Liddell and Robert Scott, A Greek-English Lexicon, 8th ed. (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1901), p. 1240.

6. T.K. Abbott, The Epistles to the Ephesians and to the Colossians ("The International Critical Commentary"; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1916), p. 58.

7. Robinson, op. cit., p. 57.

The condition of the Gentiles already described in verses 11 and 12 can show that the Gentiles were really without hope.

Last, they were ἄθεοι ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ. This is the only passage in the New Testament where the word ἄθεοι occurs. It does not mean that the Gentiles were without any belief in gods, since they believed and worshipped many gods. But they were ignorant of the only true God, and what they worshipped were by nature no gods (cf. Gal. 4:8). The phrase ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ can mean either the world of men or the evil world. However, the latter may be preferred on the ground of contrast with the previous πολιτεία τοῦ Ἰσραήλ.⁸

Thus, the disunity which existed between the Jews and the Gentiles can be summed up as follows: The Jews were circumcised, but the Gentiles were uncircumcised in the flesh; the Jews were waiting for their Messiah, but the Gentiles had no knowledge of Christ; the Jews had the right of citizenship in the theocratic government, but the Gentiles were strangers; the Jews knew the covenants of the Promise of the Messiah, but the Gentiles were strangers; the Jews had future hope, but the Gentiles did not have future hope in their knowledge; Jews believed in the only true God, but the Gentiles did not. Hence, there was no unity between these two groups. From this we can partly understand why the Jewish Christians did not readily mingle with the Gentile Christians in the early Christian Church

8. S.D.F. Salmond, Ephesians, Vol. III of The Expositor's Greek Testament, ed. by W.R. Nicoll (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1956), p. 293.

(i.e., from about A.D. 30 to 48).

III. Unity (Ephesians 2:13-19):

But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near in the blood of Christ So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God.

In verse 13, the position of the Gentiles described in verses 11 and 12 is completely changed. *ὑνύ* is contrasted to *τῷ καιρῷ ἐκείνῳ*. At that time they were without Christ, but now in Christ they were brought near. But what does it mean to be brought "near"? In verse 17 the same word *ἐγγύς* is used, and it clearly means "the Jews." But here in verse 13 it can hardly mean that the Gentiles have become Jews, for that would not go along with the context, nor with the whole teaching of the New Testament. It rather means that the distance of the separation which had existed for the Gentiles was annihilated. Before they were *ἀπηλλοτριωμένοι* and *ξένοι*, but in Christ they that were "far off" were brought near, which means that they both became members of the theocratic government. They now had in Christ the circumcision of the heart, the covenants of promise, hope for the future, and relation to God. This is unity! They that were once far off are now united together with those who were near, because they were brought near in Jesus Christ.

And this unity was the result of Christ's atonement -- *ἐν τῷ αἵματι τοῦ Χριστοῦ*. Christ's atonement has brought two kinds of peace: Peace between the Jews and the Gentiles in Him, and peace between man and God in Him.

A. PEACE BETWEEN THE JEWS AND THE GENTILES:

In verses 14 and 15 the peace between the Jews and the Gentiles is treated. Emphatically Christ Himself (αὐτός) and no other person is ἡ εἰρήνη ἡμῶν. He has made once for all both (Jews and Gentiles) one. But the question is how did He accomplish this? Two things can be seen in verses 14 and 15, one negative and the other positive. Negatively, Christ has broken down the dividing wall of hostility, and, positively, He has created in Himself one new man in place of two.

Negatively, Christ has broken down the dividing wall of hostility. But what is "the dividing wall"? Markus Barth brings out four possible interpretations of it in his book, The Broken Wall.⁹ But among them, it seems that the best interpretation is, "allusion to the wall between the outer and inner courts of the Temple in Jerusalem which kept the Gentile visitors away from Jewish worshipers."¹⁰ This is the best, because the other three interpretations have to do with some barriers men have with God, while here the main concern of the apostle is clearly with the relation between the Jews and the Gentiles. The meaning the apostle tries to put across is evident. By Christ's atonement that which formerly separated the two groups was once for all done away.

A question is raised among expositors concerning τὴν ἔχθραν: should it refer to λύσας or to καταργήσας? For instance, while Robinson takes it to refer to καταργήσας

9. See Markus Barth, The Broken Wall (Philadelphia: The Judson Press, 1959), pp. 40-42.

10. Ibid., p. 40. See also, Robinson, op. cit., p. 160; Lock, op. cit., p. 32.

(p. 161); Salmond (p. 295), Hanson (p. 144), etc. take it to refer to λύσας. Whichever interpretation one may take, the actual sense is obvious: the enmity which existed between the Jews and the Gentiles has been put to an end.

And this was accomplished because Christ in His flesh "abolished the law of the commandments in decrees." "In his flesh" can mean the incarnation of Jesus Christ taken as a whole experience, but most likely here it refers to His atoning work on the cross. The apostle was very careful to use the verb καταργέω with τὸν νόμον, because the verb means to "make ineffective, abolish, wipe out, etc."¹¹ He twice limits τὸν νόμον with the words τῶν ἐντολῶν and ἐν δόγμασιν, and then employs the verb. According to Matthew 5:17 Christ did not come to abolish the law and the prophets, but He came to fulfill them. And according to Christ Himself, all the commandments of the law were swallowed up in the new commandment of love (Mt. 22:37-40).

[But the law] in so far as it was petrified in enactments, and especially in those external ordinances which guided all the details of the Jew's daily life and were meant above all things to keep him distinct from the outside Gentile -- just in that sense and in that measure it was annulled in Christ The law, so far as it was a 'law of commandments' and was identified with external 'ordinances,' was abolished by Christ.¹²

Thus, Christ Himself has made peace between the two groups who were separated by these distinctions (the law of commandments in ordinances), because in His atoning work He included both

11. Arndt and Gingrich, op. cit., p. 418.

12. Robinson, op. cit., p. 64.

the Jews and the Gentiles.

Positively, Christ's atonement has accomplished a creation of the two groups into one new man, or as the apostle expresses it: *ἵνα τοὺς δύο κτίσῃ ἐν αὐτῷ εἰς ἓνα καινὸν ἄνθρωπον*. This clause shows that the negative and the positive accomplishments of Christ's atonement are inseparably related. The negative side was accomplished in order that He might accomplish the positive side -- He might create in Himself once for all the one New Man. The object of *λύσας* and *καταργήσας* was the creation of one New Man.

But what is *ἓνα καινὸν ἄνθρωπον* ? From the verse (2:15) it is clear that this one New Man is created from the Jews and the Gentiles which were formerly separated. It is also clear that one New Man is "in Christ." In one New Man there is no longer the old distinction between the Jewish group and the Gentile group, but it is one new community in Christ. What else can this be than the Universal Church? Along with E. F. Scott,¹³ Hanson is right in saying that *ἓνα καινὸν ἄνθρωπον* refers to the New Race incarnated in Christ as the Second Adam.¹⁴ *ποιῶν εἰρήνην*-- "Peace" in this verse (v. 15) is still between the Jews and the Gentiles. Christ in His atoning work made peace between them.

So the old hostility is ended, and the new order emerges

13. E.F. Scott, The Epistles of Paul to the Colossians, to Philemon and to the Ephesians ("The Moffatt New Testament Commentary"; New York: Harper & Brothers publishers, 1930), p. 172.

14. Stig Hanson, The Unity of the Church in the New Testament ("Uppsala Universitet Nytestamentlige, Acta 14"; (Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksells Boktryckeri, 1946), p. 145.

upon the history of God's people -- One New Man, or the Universal Church, made up of Jews and Gentiles, a community in which there is no difference between the Jews and the Gentiles before God.

B. PEACE BETWEEN GOD AND MAN (2:16-19):

Whereas in the previous two verses Paul treated the peace between the Jews and the Gentiles, beginning with verse 16 he expressly points out that the atonement is primarily between sinful mankind and God. While in verse 14 he spoke about breaking down *τὴν ἔχθραν* which existed between the Jews and the Gentiles, here he speaks about killing (*ἀποκτείνας* -- notice first aorist tense -- once for all action) *τὴν ἔχθραν* which existed between God and man "through the cross." So it is clear that in the atoning work of Christ He accomplished two things: peace between the Jews and the Gentiles, and peace between God and man. "In the New Covenant which was made 'in the blood of Christ' not only were the two sections of humanity brought nigh to one another, but both of them in the same moment were brought nigh to God."¹⁵

Now verse 16 says that through the cross the reconciliation of *τοὺς ἀμφοτέρους* was made to God in *ἐνὶ σώματι*. *ἐνὶ σώματι* seems to be the same as *ἐν καινῷ ἀνθρώπῳ* having a reference to Christ as well as the Church. When Christ wrought atonement on the cross, He did not do it as an isolated individual, but as a representative of the New Humanity. As Adam represents

15. Robinson, op. cit., p. 65.

the fallen human race, Christ as the Second Adam represents the New Humanity, His Church.¹⁶

Εἰρήνη mentioned in verse 17 is peace between God and man. Because in Christ both the Jews and the Gentiles are equally reconciled in the same Body to God, they have no distinctions. They both have access to the Father in one Spirit.

In verse 19 Paul sums up what he brought out in verses 11 and 12. In verse 12 he pictured the Gentiles as *ἀπηλλοτριωμένοι τῆς πολιτείας* or *ξένοι* from the covenants of the promise. In other words, they had no rights of citizenship. But in verse 19 he pictures the Gentiles in the Church as no longer *ξένοι* or *πάροικοι*, but as *συμπολῖται* of the saints and *οἰκέται* of God. They are now equally part of God's consecrated people. They are equally members of God's family. They have now all the rights and privileges of the sons of God. Hence, Christ's atonement wrought wonderful reconciliation between God and man, and reconciliation between two hostile groups. And the Church universal is made up of both Jews and Gentiles who are redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ.

IV. Meaning of *μυστήριον*:

The word *μυστήριον* is used twenty-seven times in the New Testament, six of which times the word is found in the Ephesian Letter (1.e., 1:9, 3:3, 4, 9, 5:32, 6:19).¹⁷ Since the

16. Hanson, op. cit., p. 146.

17. J.B. Smith, Greek-English Concordance to the New Testament (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1955), p. 237.

word has a vital relation to the subject of this chapter, a study of this word is here included. After a definition of the word, the main emphasis will be placed on its meaning in Ephesians 3:6.

A. DEFINITION OF THE WORD:

According to Webster's Dictionary, the word "Mystery" means:

Something that has not been, or cannot be explained; hence, something beyond human comprehension. A profound secret; an enigma. . . . Classical Religion - A secret religious rite to which none but duly initiated worshipers were admitted. . . . Theology - An article of faith beyond human comprehension, as the doctrine of the Trinity. Synonyms -- problem, enigma, riddle, puzzle, etc.¹⁸

As the dictionary says, the word is used in our day as something strange, mysterious, and incomprehensible. And indeed, in the same sense the word was used in classical Greek as "secret, secret rite, secret teachings religious and political in nature, concealed within many strange customs and ceremonies (e.g. Herodotus 2,51,2; Diodorus Siculus 1,29,3; 3,63,2; etc.)"¹⁹ And even in the New Testament occasionally the word is used for things not clear to the understanding (e.g., I Cor. 13:2, 14:2).

But in the most distinctive sense in the New Testament, the word is used for something hidden once, but which is now revealed. Romans 16:25,26 is a good example: "Now to him who

18. Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary (Springfield, Mass.: G. & C. Merriam Co., 1953), p. 557.

19. Arndt and Gingrich, op. cit., pp. 531-532.

is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which was kept secret for long ages but is now disclosed and through the prophetic writings is made known to all nations. . . ." (See also, I Cor. 2:7-10, Col. 1:26, I Tim. 3:16, etc.). In other words, in this sense the word *μυστήριον* means exactly the opposite of the definition given in Webster's Dictionary. It is "the open secret, a supremely important Divine truth, which God had before held secret but which He had now made known."²⁰

And in this distinctive sense the word is used in Ephesians. Notice the way the word is used in the Letter: 1:9 "making known (*γνωρίσας*) to us the mystery"; 3:3 "the mystery was made known (*ἐγνωρίσθη*) to me . . ."; 3:4,5 ". . . the mystery of Christ, which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed (*ἀπεκαλύφθη*) to . . ."; 3:9 "to make all men see (or more literally, *φωτίσαι* - to bring to light) what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God . . ."; 5:32 "a great mystery"; 6:19 "to proclaim (or more literally, *γνωρίσαι* - to make known) the mystery" Thus it is clear that in the Ephesian Letter the *μυστήριον* is something which was once hidden in God but is now revealed.

B. EPHESIANS 3:6:

With this understanding in mind, Ephesians 3:6 is now

20. John A. Mackay, God's Order (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1956), p. 59.

briefly examined. This is still the continuation of the theme that Paul began to develop in 2:11, namely the unification of the Jews and the Gentiles in Christ. The "mystery" that was not made known to the sons of men in other generations is now revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit. And in 3:6 Paul mentions that this mystery is: "how the Gentiles are fellow-heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel."

εἶναι does not express the purpose, because the "mystery" or secret revealed is a fact. So it is best to translate it here: "The Gentiles are" In Christ, through the Gospel three things are true about the Gentiles: They are said to be συγκληρονόμα, σύσσωμα, and συμμετέτοχα. In the English language it is very difficult to bring out the three reiterated compound (-) words of the original Greek, but the meaning implied in these words can be understood by studying each word.

συγκληρονόμα means "heirs inheriting together with," or fellow heirs. The sense implied here is that the Gentiles are co-heirs with the Jews.

σύσσωμα is a rare word. σύσσωμος occurs only here in the New Testament and is unknown in classical Greek except in Aristotle's use of συσσωματοποιεῖν in De Mundo, iv., 30. Salmond feels that Paul constructed the word to express what he had in his mind.²¹ Robinson sees a difficulty in rendering

21. Salmond, op. cit., p. 305.

the meaning of the word into current English. He says:

"Concorporate," a loan from the Latin, and analogous to "incorporate," is the word we want; but, though it has been used in this connexion, it is not sufficiently familiar to take its place in a rendering of the passage. In relation to the Body the members are "incorporate": in relation to one another they are "concorporate," that is, sharers in the one Body.²²

συμμέτοχα :- μέτοχος means partner, champion, or one who is sharing or partaking in something. So συμμετοχος means one who shares something with someone. The English translation "fellow-partner" or "joint-sharer" seems to be better than mere "partaker" as in the Revised Standard Version. The genitive τῆς ἐπαγγελίας is related to only συμμετοχα. The promise is not specifically mentioned or defined, but ἐπαγγελία with the definite article seems to mean the Messianic promise with all that is included in it.

Hence, in Christ through the Gospel the Gentiles are now co-heirs with the Jews, and more particularly equal members of the same Body, sharing equally all the blessings of the Messianic promise. This is the mystery once hidden but now revealed. It was for this that Paul was in bonds.

Conclusion:

Thus once disunity existed between two groups of humanity: the Jews and the Gentiles. But Christ in His atonement on the cross broke down this disunity and created in Himself a unified humanity, which is called "one New Man," "One Body,"

22. Robinson, op. cit., p. 78.

or "the Universal Church." In the Church there is no difference between the Jews and the Gentiles, for they are co-heirs, members of the same Body and co-sharers of the Messianic Promise. This is the mystery which Paul proclaims in the Ephesian Epistle. Truly old hostility is ended in the Gospel, for "there is neither Jew nor Greek . . . for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:28).

CHAPTER SIX

HOW UNITY OF THE SPIRIT IN THE CHURCH IS MAINTAINED

We have seen the inseparable unity of the Church with Christ through four descriptive images of the Church (i.e., the Body, the Building, the Bride, and a Community of Slaves). We have also seen the unity of the Jews and the Gentiles in the Church. But what does this unity mean for daily life? If the sinners alienated from God are brought into unity with Christ in the Church, and if the two hostile races (Jews and Gentiles) are now brought into unity through Christ in the Church, then certainly this ought to be manifested in the daily Christian walk.

In this chapter three things shall be considered to show how the unity of the Spirit in the Church is maintained: (1) Place in the Epistle, (2) Main Injunction, and (3) Practical Application.

I. Place in the Epistle:

In Ephesians 4:1 the apostle begins: "I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beseech you to walk worthily of the calling wherewith ye were called" (A.S.V.).

The inferential conjunction "therefore" or $\text{o\ddot{u}v}$ denotes that what it introduced is the result of, or an inference from, what precedes.¹ What is that which precedes this verse? It is

1. W.F. Arndt and F.W. Gingrich, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1956), p. 597.

an accepted interpretation that chapter one to three of the Epistle is the doctrinal section. This conjunction οὐν then introduces the practical section of the Epistle by drawing an inference from the doctrinal section.

The Church needs both sound doctrine and sincere walk. The Church with only doctrine is like a head without a body. Paul knew this. So he moves from the theological discussion of the unity of the Church in chapters one to three to the practical application of the doctrine in chapter four.

Objectively looking at the history of the Church, it is clear that the Church has been really concerned with doctrine. Many splits occurred in the Church because of doctrinal differences (e.g., Chalcedon Council, 451, Split of Eastern and Western Churches in 1051; Reformation in the sixteenth century, etc.). In our day, in order to join a local church, a man is asked what he believes. To become a member of a presbytery, a candidate is asked to state his belief. To be sure, one's doctrine is important, but it is so often over-emphasized at the expense of the Christian way of life. Being subjectively involved in the life of this type of Christian society, people often mistakenly think that the doctrinal part of the Epistle is of utmost importance, and the practical part is something like an appendix to the Epistle. Brunner sees this danger and brings out the importance of the practical section in his commentary on Romans. He has commented in the first eleven chapters on that which is doctrinal, and now he begins the practical section of that epistle in chapter twelve. The

following remark is made at this transition:

What follows now must not on any account be looked upon as a mere postscript which does not carry the same weight as what preceded it. Quite the contrary. One may say in a certain sense that the entire letter has been directed at this practical goal. Paul does not forget for a moment that God claims not only the thinking, but also the will and action of men As the fruit grows from the sap of the tree, so this instruction for the true Christian life grows out of what has been previously told2

The remark of Brunner is made about the Epistle to the Romans, but the same comment is also true concerning Ephesians. The practical section is very important, and with this truth in mind, we shall proceed.

II. Main Injunction:

I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beseech you to walk worthily of the calling wherewith ye were called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; giving diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as also ye were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all.

(Ephesians 4:1-6, in A.S.V.)

Prior to 4:1 Paul, as we have seen, has been dealing with the idea of unity. Now he shifts to a hortatory note, beseeching the Christians to "walk worthily of the calling" wherewith they were called. As we see in the verses following (especially vs. 2,3), this is tantamount to an exhortation to maintain the unity of which he has been speaking. In verse 3 particularly Paul specifies in exact terms what it means to walk

2. Emil Brunner, The Letter to the Romans, trans. by H.A. Kennedy (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1959), pp. 101-102. Italics added.

worthily of our calling. It is the definition of the "Christian walk." "To walk" in plain terms is to give "diligence to the unity of the Spirit." The Christian walk to which we are called is essentially the life of unity which is the main theme of the practical section. Kuist calls this section (ch. 4-6) "Unity Exhibited in Christian Life,"³ and Filson calls it, "Unity in Christian Living."⁴ To understand this main injunction for unity, first the meaning of 4:3 will be studied, and then the series of seven "one's" in 4:4-6 will be discussed.

A. THE MEANING OF 4:3:

The verse will be divided into three phrases in order to consider each part separately. Then each will be considered in relation to the whole: (1) "the unity of the Spirit," (2) "giving diligence to keep," and (3) "in the bond of peace."

1. τὴν ἑνότητα τοῦ πνεύματος:

There are differing opinions concerning this phrase. Calvin takes the words to denote "the harmony" or the human spirit of concord among the Christians.⁵ But the fact that it is the Spirit of God who is operating in the believers and creating the unity in the Christian community seems to indicate that the πνεύματος in this verse has reference to the Holy Spirit instead of the human spirit.

3. Howard T. Kuist, "Work Sheet on Ephesians," 115, New Testament Book Studies (Princeton Theological Seminary, 1957).

4. F.V. Filson, Opening the New Testament (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1952), p. 153.

5. John Calvin, Commentaries on the Epistles of Paul to the Galatians and Ephesians, trans. by W. Pringle (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1957), p. 268.

Among those who hold the opinion that the Spirit here refers to the Holy Spirit, there are two different interpretations of the usage of the genitive: one takes *τοῦ πνεύματος* as the subjective genitive (Dodd, Abbott, Hodge, etc.), and the other takes the words as the qualitative genitive (Hanson). If it is taken as the qualitative genitive, then the phrase would mean the spiritual unity.

The fact that more expositors take the former interpretation than the latter may give preference to the subjective genitive. But there is no inconsistency between the two opinions as far as the meaning is concerned. Since the Spirit of God has brought the unity, the unity existing in the Church is spiritual (cf. Eph. 2:22).

2. σπουδάζοντες τηρεῖν:

This phrase consists of two words coming from two verbs: The present participle *σπουδάζοντες*, comes from the verb *σπουδάζω*; and the present infinitive *τηρεῖν*, from the verb *τηρέω*. The first verb *σπουδάζω* has two kinds of meaning: first, it means to "hasten or hurry," and second, to "be zealous or eager, take pains, make every effort, etc."⁶ In the context of 4:3 certainly it is used as the second meaning. Through personal experiences, Paul knew that unity in the churches is not easily kept (e.g., the Corinthian Church). It takes every effort of the members of the church. Because of this, it seems Paul has employed this word here. The second

6. Arndt and Gingrich, op. cit., p. 771.

verb, *τηρέω*, never has the meaning "to create," or "to produce." It means "to preserve, keep, reserve, etc."⁷ Certainly this verb cannot be used here for "the unity of the Spirit" if that unity is not an existing reality. But since it is a present reality, this verb can be used, denoting as it does in the present tense continuation: "to keep continually the unity of the Spirit by making every effort."

But a question still persists. What does it mean "to keep the unity"? Two meanings might be derived from the phrase. First, since it is the unity of the Spirit, to keep the unity means to avoid doing anything contrary to the will of God revealed through the Spirit, or, as Hanson puts it, "not breaking loose from the sphere of the Spirit."⁸ This is a negative meaning. On the positive side, the following can be said: since the unity that Paul has in mind is "a unity which is ever enlarging its range and contents: 'until we all come to the unity,'"⁹ to "keep the unity" means to maintain it by performing the will of God, so that ultimately a full, perfect unity may be achieved.

3. ἐν τῷ συνδέσμῳ τῆς εἰρήνης :

Hodge takes ἐν of this phrase as the instrumental ἐν, which means "means by which,"¹⁰ but the whole sentence may be

7. Ibid., p. 822.

8. Stig Hanson, The Unity of the Church in the New Testament ("Uppsala Universitets Nytestamentlige Seminar, Acta 14"; Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksells Boktryckeri, 1946), p. 149.

9. J.A. Robinson, St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1903), p. 92.

10. Charles Hodge, A Commentary on the Epistle to the Ephesians (New York: Robert Carter and Brothers, 1858), p. 201.

better explained by taking it as locative ἐν . It means the sphere in which the unity of the Spirit is maintained. The genitive of εἰρήνης in this verse is ordinarily taken as genitive of apposition (Meyer, Salmond, Abbot, etc.) which means "the bond which is peace." The unity wrought in the Body of Christ by the unifying work of the Spirit "will be theirs in so far as they make peace the relation which they maintain one to another, or the bond in which they walk together."¹¹ This is done when the members of the Body of Christ keep walking with "all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love" (4:2).

B. LIST OF SEVEN ONE'S (4:4-6):

After the apostle admonished the readers "to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," he immediately mentions seven "one's." The transition here is very abrupt. Although translations such as King James, A.S.V., R.S.V., etc. supply "there is" to start a new sentence here, in Nestle's text there is no verb corresponding to "there is." Neither does it have any conjunction or a connecting particle. The text has only the colon in the transition. Abbott says, "We need not even supply ἐστί ; it is rather to be viewed as an abrupt and emphatic reminder of what the readers well knew, as if the writer were addressing them in person."¹² Salmond

11. S.D.F. Salmond, The Epistle to the Ephesians, Vol. III of The Expositor's Greek Testament (Grand Rapids: Wm.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1956), p. 321.

12. T.K. Abbott, Epistles to the Ephesians and to the Colossians ("The International Critical Commentary"; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1916), p. 108.

comments on the connection: "It is a positive statement, made all the more impressive by the lack of *γάρ* or any connecting particle, and giving the objective ground, or basis in fact, on which the walk in lowliness, meekness, longsuffering and loving forbearance is urged, and of which it should be the result."¹³ As the context and the main theme of the section indicate, the main emphasis on these seven "one's" is not on singularity but on unity.¹⁴

In accordance with the language of the sentence and the punctuation in the Greek text, these seven unities can be grouped into three: one Body, one Spirit, one hope; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; and one God.

Concerning the first group, the relation of the three can be said to be "the one Body, vitalized by one Spirit, and progressing towards the goal of one Hope."¹⁵

One Body refers to the Body of Christ, the Church. Since Christ is one and cannot be divided, His Body which is inseparably united to Him cannot be divided. The imagery of the Body itself shows that each part is united in one. The study of this image in a previous chapter on imagery also has shown that the Body is one (see, Chapter four, Section I).

One Spirit - In the Body of Christ, one Spirit of God dwells. He is the seal of the "guarantee of the inheritance" (1:13,14, 4:30), the means of "access" to the Father (2:18),

13. Salmond, op. cit., p. 321.

14. F.C. Synge, St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1941), p. 34.

15. Robinson, op. cit., p. 93.

the source of the "mystery" revealed (3:5), the source of the spiritual power in the members of the Body of Christ (3:16, 5:18), and, above all, the source of the unifying power (4:3). Just as the Church is inseparably united with Christ, so it has an inseparable relation to the Spirit. Apart from the Spirit, there is no unity, no vital power, no life in the Church.

One Hope - "Even as also ye were called in one hope of your calling." Hope here is not something arising from the Christian call, but it is the hope belonging to the call.¹⁶ In this sense, the R.S.V. translation is very good at this point. This idea of hope is also revealed in Paul's great prayer in chapter one. He prays, "You may know what is the hope to which he has called you" (1:18). The hope belongs to the Christian call. But they had no hope before they were called (2:12). "Hope is one since its object is one Christ is the ultimate goal of all, a complete and permanent union with Him being their common aim, and in so far as all Christians are partakers of this hope, it has a unifying influence on the Church."¹⁷

Concerning the relation between the first and the second group, it may be said that the members of one Body of Christ, indwelt by one Spirit and having one Hope, are united to one Lord through one faith and one baptism.

One Lord - In the image of the Church as the Body of Christ, Jesus is the Head, and the Church is subject to Him.

16. Abbott, op. cit., p. 108.

17. Hanson, op. cit., p. 153.

In the image of the Bride of Christ, Jesus is the Bridegroom, the Head of the Bride, and the Church is subordinate to Him. In the image of the Community of slaves, Christ is the Master, and the Church is subject to Him. Christ is the Lord. Since the Body has one Head and the Bride has one Bridegroom, the Lord of the Church is one. As "no man can serve two masters" (Mt. 6:24), the Church serves and gives allegiance to one Lord Jesus Christ.

One Faith - What does "one faith" mean? It seems that there are several communions within the Christian Church. Paul's purpose in writing "one faith" does not deny that there may be various ways of expressing faith. But all Christians are united in the faith that Jesus Christ is the Lord. So it is significant that in keeping with this essential faith, the members of the Body are united to one Lord. By "one faith," Paul must have meant one living faith in the Lord Jesus which all members of the Body of Christ share.

One Baptism - Those who are united with Christ through one faith are admitted into the fellowship of the Church through one rite of baptism.

One God - "One God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all." After the last word of the sentence, $\pi\alpha\sigma\iota\nu$, some witnesses, such as D G K L, Vulgate, Syriac, etc., add $\eta\mu\acute{\iota}\nu$. But this pronoun is not found in A B C P, etc. It must be an interpolation to limit the meaning. The list of seven one's climaxes with "one God." Although it is absolutely true that God is "supreme over all, operative through all, and

immanent in all,"¹⁸ Paul is not here speaking about the universal Fatherhood of God. In this context the members of the Body of Christ are under consideration (Calvin, Carver, etc.). God is supreme over, operative through, and immanent in all the members of the Body of Christ. The Jews confessed one God under the Old Covenant (Deut. 6:4 - "The Lord our God is one Lord"). So under the New Covenant the members of the Body of Christ confess one God, and in Him the unity of the Church converges.

Thus in 4:1-6 the main injunction to the members of the Body of Christ is to walk worthily of the calling of God with lowliness, meekness, etc., that is, to make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit. The list of the seven "one's" gives the objective ground on which such a Christian walk is urged.

III. Practical Application:

In this chapter we have seen first the importance of the practical section (ch. 4-6 of Ephesians), and second, the main injunction for unity. But how can this injunction be carried out in daily living by the members of the Body of Christ? In a more concrete way the apostle illustrates the principle.

In chapters four to six, the following areas of life are dealt with: Christian ministry (4:7-16), Life in the world (4:17-5:20), Domestic life (5:21-6:10), and War-fare in the Spiritual Sphere (6:10-20). Of these, "Christian ministry"

18. Robinson, op. cit., p. 93.

will be treated in the next chapter of this thesis. The other three will be studied briefly in this chapter.

A. LIFE IN THE WORLD (4:17-5:20):

The main plea of this section is to put off the old man and to put on the new man. The figure comes from putting off and putting on of garments. Many of the readers of the Epistle addressed by Paul had a pagan background, and naturally there was constant danger for them to think and act in pagan ways. Before they were regenerated, they walked "following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air . . . lived in the passions of our flesh, following the desires of body and mind" (2:2,3). But now they are Christians, having experienced the love of God through Christ. Paul urges them to put off the old way of life and to put on the new man "created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness" (4:24).

To put away the old man which epitomizes their former manner of life includes: "Putting away falsehood" (4:25); "do not let the sun go down on your anger and give no opportunity to the devil" (4:26,27); "Let the thief no longer steal" (4:28); "Let no evil talk come out of your mouths" (4:29); "Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God" (4:30); "Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, with all malice" (4:31); "Let there be no filthiness, nor silly talk, nor levity" (5:4); "Do not associate with them [the sons of disobedience]" (5:7); "Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness" (5:11); "Do not get drunk with

wine" (5:17); etc.

The positive injunction to put on the new man now follows the negative injunction: "Let every one speak the truth with his neighbor" (4:25); "Let him [thief] labor, doing honest work with his hands" (4:28); "[Let talk] only such as is good for edifying [come out of your mouths]" (4:29); "Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another as God in Christ forgave you" (4:32); "Be imitators of God, as beloved children" (5:1); "Walk in love, as Christ loved us" (5:2); "Let there be thanksgiving" (5:4); "Try to learn what is pleasing to the Lord" (5:10); "Look carefully how you walk . . . as wise, making the most of the time" (5:15,16); "Understand what the will of the Lord is" (5:17); "Be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with all your heart, always and for everything giving thanks in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God the Father" (5:19-20).

To keep on the old man and walk in the darkness creates disunity in the Body of Christ, but to put on the new man and walk in the light preserves the unity of the Spirit in the Church.

B. LIFE IN THE HOME (5:21-6:9):

The main plea in this section is concerned with the duties of Christians in their relations to others in their domestic life.

First the husband and wife relationship is illustrated in the new light of Christ's relationship to the Church. As

Christ is the Head of the Church, the husband is the head of his wife. The wife is to be subject to her own husband as the Church is to Christ. As Christ loved the Church, the husband is to love his wife. When both husband and wife follow this supreme example of Christ and the Church, there can be preserved the true unity in the marriage relationship.

Children are to obey their parents in the Lord. There is a question as to the phrase *ἐν Κυρίῳ* whether it should be in the text. It is inserted by P⁴⁶ K A K L, Vulgate, Syriac, etc., but is omitted by B D* G, etc. From the manuscript evidence it is hard to decide. But many of the translations include the phrase in the text (King James, A.S.V., Moffatt, R.S.V., etc.). Assuming that the phrase is genuine, there is a further question whether it refers to parents who are "in the Lord" or whether it means that children's obedience should be "in the Lord." The latter interpretation seems more natural in the context. They are to be obedient as Christians. And when there is this obedience on the part of children, unity is preserved between children and parents.

Fathers are commanded not to provoke their children to wrath. A father's severity, injustice, inconsistency, etc. to his children can irritate or provoke his children to anger. Where there is wrath, unity cannot exist.

Without saying whether slavery is right or wrong, but accepting it as an existing social institution, Paul exhorts slaves to be obedient to their earthly masters. They are to serve as Christians. Masters are to treat their slaves in the

same Christian way, and forbear all threatening, knowing that they have an impartial Master in heaven with whom they have to do. When both sides act in a Christian way, the unity is maintained.

Thus in domestic relationships, when husband and wife, children and parents, slaves and masters perform their own duties belonging to them in their relation to others, the unity is preserved.

C. WARFARE IN THE SPIRITUAL SPHERE (6:10-20):

In the chapter on "the Sphere of the Church" we have noted that the Church is in the sphere called *ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις*, fighting the spiritual warfare against evil powers. And indeed Satanic power is at work against the Church tending to produce disunity in the Body of Christ. Paul says, "We are not contending against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this present darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places" (6:12). The meaning here is that the foe of the Church is not feeble humanity, but all the conceivable evil forces in the heavenly sphere. The Spirit of God produces unity in the Church, but the evil spiritual foe of the Church is out for disunity. The members of the Body of Christ cannot meet their spiritual foe with their human strength.

So the apostle says to put on the whole armor of God (6:11,13). The main emphasis is not the completeness of the armor, for Paul omits two important portions of the outfit of

the Roman soldier, namely greaves and the spear.¹⁹ The emphasis lies in the phrase "of God." Since the foe is spiritual power, it takes the super-human armor of God to stand against it. Dodd says, "In all these passages [6:11-17], God is the Warrior, and the armor of God (vv. 11,13) here probably starts from the meaning of the armor worn by God."²⁰ All the parts mentioned here are: girdle of truth, breastplate of righteousness, shoes of readiness of the gospel of peace, shield of faith, helmet of salvation, sword of the Spirit which is the word of God; and at the end Paul urges constant watching by prayer and supplication, not only for themselves but for the whole Body of Christ (all the saints).

When the members of the Body of Christ follow this admonition, and fight the spiritual warfare, the unity of the Spirit in the Church cannot be disturbed no matter how powerful and subtle the spiritual foe may be.

Conclusion:

Just as human life is a gift of God which must be preserved by human effort, even so, the unity of the Church is a divine gift which is to be maintained by Christians in their daily walk in life.

In this chapter we have seen, first, the importance of the practical section of the Epistle. The practical section is not an "appendix" or a mere "postscript" of the Letter, It

19. Ibid., p. 133.

20. C.H. Dodd, "Ephesians," The Abingdon Bible Commentary (New York: Abingdon Press, 1929), p. 1237.

is rather the goal toward which the ideas of the doctrinal section of the Epistle are directed. It is like the fruit of a tree. It is faith manifested in works. Second, we have studied Paul's appeal to maintain "the unity of the Spirit" as the main injunction in the practical section. Since "the unity" is an existing reality in the Church wrought by the Spirit, all Christians must make every effort to maintain it. This means, negatively to avoid doing anything contrary to the will of God as revealed through His Spirit, and positively just the reverse -- to make every effort to perform the will of God. The list of the seven "one's" gives the objective ground on which such a Christian walk is urged. Third, we have observed how Christians, in their daily lives, should respond to Paul's appeal for unity in the world, in the home, and in the heavenly sphere.

When Christians respond to the appeal for the maintenance of the "unity" in their daily walk, then that unity which the Spirit brought to reality in the Church is realized in their individual lives. And, most of all, it furthers the enlargement of the range and content of the "unity" of the Church "till we all come to the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God" (Ephesians 4:13).

CHAPTER SEVEN

MINISTRY OF THE CHURCH

In the previous chapter we have noted that the unity of the Church is an existing reality wrought by the Spirit of God. At that same time it has also been shown that it is the duty of the members of the Body of Christ to maintain this unity by making every effort (4:3). Now following the series of seven "One's" (4:4-6), the apostle begins to discuss the ministry of the Church.

Verse 7 teaches that "the grace was given" to each one. This means that everyone in the Church has received the same grace. But the verse continues to say that each one received different measure according to the purpose of Christ. In verse 8 Paul refers to Psalm 68, which shows God as a mighty warrior who gained the great victory by overcoming all enemies. He led away the captives and received gifts from among men (Ps. 68:18). Paul applies this Psalm to the victorious Christ who overcame sin and death, but he pictures Christ as giving gifts, while the Psalm passage says "received." "This is not a conflict," says Carver, "but an extension of the idea. He gave to men the gifts he had gained by his sacrifice and victory."¹ In verses 9, 10 Paul speaks about Christ's descent to "the lower parts of the earth" and ascent to "far above all the heavens." Commenting on this Robinson says, "From its depths

1. W. O. Carver, The Glory of God in the Christian Calling (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1949), p. 147.

to its heights He has compassed the universe. He has left nothing unvisited by His presence."² This was to bring the universe to its divinely destined goal, namely "filling the universe with His presence."³

In order to further this goal of "filling the universe with His presence," the risen and victorious Christ gave the gifts of ministry to the Church (cf. Dodd, p. 1233). On the basis of this truth, Paul develops three important aspects of the Christian ministry from verse eleven to thirteen. They are: (1) Ministers as Gifts of Christ, 4:11; (2) Purpose of the Ministry, 4:12; and (3) Goal of the Ministry, 4:13.

I. Ministers as Gifts of Christ (Ephesians 4:11):

The first two words of the text (4:11) show the character of the Christian ministry as gifts of Christ, and the rest of the verse gives a list of ministers.

A. CHARACTER OF MINISTRY -- GIFTS OF CHRIST:

αὐτὸς ἔδωκεν. There is a substitute reading δέδωκεν given in the place of ἔδωκεν in the Chester Beatty Papyri, P⁴⁶. But the reading ἔδωκεν is preferred on the basis of its support by ζ D G.

The pronoun αὐτὸς is an emphatic use. It is He and no other person who gave gifts. It is the victorious, ascended Christ Himself who gave gifts. The gifts -- namely apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers in the Church --

2. J.A. Robinson, St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1903), p. 96.

3. Ibid., p. 180.

are not something gained by men's own efforts, merits or endeavours. Nor do they come to certain individuals by the appointments of local churches. They come to individuals only from Christ Himself.

The verb ἔδωκεν is not the same as ἔθετο of I Cor. 12:28 where it has the idea of appointment or placement (Abbott, Salmond). Here in verse 11 the main idea is gift. The use of such words as ἐδόθη and δωρεὰς in verse 7, and ἔδωκεν δόματα in verse 8 indicate that the leading idea is gift.

Now it seems natural for Paul to list gifts, but instead he begins to list ministers. Why is this? Calvin answers, "When men are called by God, gifts are necessarily connected with offices. God does not confer on men the mere names . . . but also endows them with gifts . . . the divine command, and the ability to perform it, go together."⁴ Abbott aptly says, "Christ gave the persons; the Church appointed to the office (Acts 13:2, 14:23)."⁵

B. A LIST OF MINISTERS:

Paul mentions a list of ministers Christ gave to the Church: "some apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some shepherds and teachers."

By carefully observing this list, one can notice immediately that there is no mention of elders, bishops and dea-

4. John Calvin, Commentaries on the Epistles of Paul to the Galatians and Ephesians, trans. by W. Pringle (Grand Rapids: Wm.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1957), p. 277.

5. T.K. Abbott, The Epistles to the Ephesians and to the Colossians ("The International Critical Commentary"; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1916), p. 117.

cons who were holding very prominent places of leadership in the local churches of the first century. In Acts 20:17-38 there is an account of Paul's meeting with Ephesian elders who were overseers of the church in Ephesus (20:28). In I. Timothy chapter 3 there is a mention of the qualifications of bishops and deacons. In Titus chapter 1 there is another mention of elders whose function is bishop. In I Peter chapter 5 Peter exhorts elders to "feed the flock of God," and he calls himself a "co-elder." Why is there no mention of these officers of the churches in Ephesians 4:11? This is a very difficult question. "The most intelligible explanation," says Robinson, "is that bishops, presbyters, and deacons were primarily local officers, and St. Paul is here concerned with the Church as a whole."⁶ He continues to say that the first three in the list are gifted men who serve the Church at large, and only "pastors and teachers" have a vague designation if a local ministry is alluded to at all. But certainly this answer does not solve the problem. Why did Peter, who was an apostle of the Church at large, call himself a "co-elder"? If the elders who served the churches through feeding the flock of God by teaching (e.g., I Pet. 5:2, Tit. 1:9, I Tim. 3:2) are not "pastors and teachers," who can be the "pastors and teachers" in Ephesians 4:11? The problem may better be solved if one takes "pastors and teachers" in Ephesians 4:11 to be the same as "elders" and "bishops" mentioned elsewhere, be-

6. Robinson, op. cit., p. 97.

cause their functions are exactly the same as pastors and teachers, and also because there is no mention of elders and bishops in Ephesians at all. The absence of deacons in the list of 4:11 can be accounted for by the fact that their function in the churches was primarily more administrative than the ministry of the other gifted men listed here. However, this answer too cannot be completely free from question (e.g., Stephen in Acts 6,7).

SOME APOSTLES - The word "apostles" immediately brings to one's mind the original Twelve chosen by Jesus Christ, and later Matthias who was included because of the falling away of Judas from the group (cf. Acts 1:23-26). Beside these, Paul, Barnabas (Acts 14:4,14), Silvanus (I Thess. 2:6), and Andronicus and Junia (Rom. 16:7) are mentioned as apostles. In II Cor. 8:23 and Phil. 2:25 the term is used in the sense of "messenger," and in John 13:16 it is used in the R.S.V. translation in the sense of "he who is sent." Robinson points out a wider meaning of the term brought to light through the recovery of the Didache. According to it, a later generation of apostles were what we usually term as "missionaries."⁷ The qualifications of the apostleship in the New Testament seem to be the following three: first, one must have an experience of seeing Christ (I Cor. 9:1); second, one must be a witness of the resurrection of Christ (Acts 1:22); and above all, one must be divinely appointed to one's office (Gal. 1:1).

7. Ibid., p. 98.

SOME PROPHETS - Next to apostles, prophets are mentioned in the list. Although one generally associates the word "prophet" with one who predicts the future (e.g., Agabus in Acts 11:28, 21:10-11, and also many of the Old Testament prophets), a more distinct meaning in the New Testament is "one who forth-tells." This can be illustrated from Acts 15:32, "And Judas and Silas, who were themselves prophets, exhorted the brethren with many words and strengthened them." Also I Cor. 14:3 says, "he who prophesies speaks to men for their upbuilding and encouragement and consolation." Calvin comments:

I would rather define the word prophets . . . to mean distinguished interpreters of prophecies, who, by a remarkable gift of revelation, applied them to the subjects which they had occasion to handle; not excluding, however, the gift of prophecy, by which their doctrinal instruction was usually accompanied.⁸

Thus in Ephesians 4:11 it seems that a prophet is considered more as a forth-teller than a fore-teller.

SOME EVANGELISTS - The word "evangelist," or εὐαγγελιστής occurs only three times in the New Testament. In the first place, Philip, who was chosen as one of the deacons in Acts 6, and who went to preach Christ in Samaria in Acts 8, was mentioned in Acts 21:8 as "Philip the evangelist." Paul commands Timothy to "do the work of an evangelist" (II Tim. 4:5). And the third occurrence is in our present text. Beside these there is no occurrence. The word is closely related to the word "gospel" (εὐαγγέλιον). Although they did not possess

8. Calvin, op. cit., p. 279.

the qualification or the authority of the apostles, and were subordinate to them,⁹ evangelists had the same function to preach the Gospel.

SOME PASTORS AND TEACHERS - The word ποιμήν literally means a "shepherd" or a "sheep-herder" who takes care of literal sheep. In the New Testament Christians are called "the flock of God" (e.g., I Pet. 5:2), "lambs" (e.g., John 21:15), "sheep" (e.g., John 21:17), etc. From these figures one who feeds and takes care of Christians is called ποιμήν which is usually translated as "shepherd" or "pastor," in a spiritual sense.

An important question is raised among the expositors of the Scripture as to whether "some pastors and teachers" denote one class of officers or two classes of officers in the Church.

Calvin definitely takes the latter view (also Mackay, p. 148 in God's Order). He recognizes that teaching is a part of the duty of pastors, but he supports his view by saying, "to maintain sound doctrine requires a talent for interpreting Scripture, and a man may be a teacher who is not qualified to preach."¹⁰ He also says that "there is a distinct class of teachers, who preside both in education of pastors and in the instruction of the whole Church."¹¹ The weakness of Calvin's argument is that it seems to come from his own experience in the society of the sixteenth century in which he lived and not

9. Abbott, op. cit., p. 118.

10. Calvin, op. cit., p. 280.

11. Ibid., p. 280.

from the text in Ephesians 4:11. It is doubtful whether in Paul's day there was a distinct class of people, called "teachers," who devoted themselves solely to the instruction of pastors.

Over against this view, Kuist takes the first view directly from the construction and the grammar of the text itself. First he observes that τοὺς δὲ is not repeated before διδασκάλους, while it is repeated before apostles, prophets, evangelists, and pastors¹² (also Salmond, etc.). It seems that if Paul intended to introduce a distinct class of teachers, he would have put another τοὺς δὲ before διδασκάλους. Second, Kuist supports his view from "the possible use of καί epexegetically."¹³ A typical epexegetical usage of καί can be found in Paul's favorite expression in the salutations of his epistles: ὁ θεὸς καὶ πατὴρ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ (II Cor. 1:3, Eph. 1:3, etc.). God is God, and at the same time He is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. In the same way, the pastors are pastors and at the same time teachers. This does not deny the possible existence of those who were exclusively teachers. It means that not all the teachers were pastors, but all the pastors are at the same time teachers.

II. Purpose of the Ministry:

After listing these four groups of divinely gifted ministers, Paul states the purpose of their ministry in verse 12:

12. Howard T. Kuist, The Pedagogy of St. Paul (New York: George H. Doran Company, 1925), p. 76.

13. Ibid., p. 76.

πρὸς τὸν καταρτισμὸν τῶν ἁγίων εἰς ἔργον διακονίας,
εἰς οἰκοδομὴν τοῦ σώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ.

Some commentators put a comma after ἁγίων, but there should not be a comma there. The reason for this will be given at the time of the exposition of the passage. Weiss omits the comma after διακονίας. Because there is no comma before the first εἰς, he probably omits the comma before the second εἰς. This problem of the comma is actually a matter of one's interpretation, since there is no punctuation mark in the manuscripts.

There are various interpretations of this verse, and here four views shall be critically examined. The main problem lies in the relation of each phrase governed by three prepositions (πρὸς, εἰς, εἰς) whether they are co-ordinated or subordinated.

(1) One interpretation is that all these three phrases governed by the prepositions are co-ordinated. Calvin seems to take this view (see p. 281 of his commentary). This would mean that Christ gave His gifts to ministers for three things: "for the equipment of the saints," "for the work of ministry," and "for building up the Body of Christ." The R.S.V. translation gives exactly this with the comma before the first and the second εἰς. Objecting to this view from the grammatical viewpoint, Kuist gives two reasons: "The change of prepositions and the omission of the article before ἔργον and οἰκοδομὴν does not allow this."¹⁴

14. Ibid., p. 77.

(2) Meyer coordinates the two $\epsilon\acute{\iota}\varsigma$ phrases and directly relates them to $\epsilon\acute{\delta}\omega\kappa\epsilon\nu$. He interprets $\pi\rho\acute{o}\varsigma$ phrase as the aim for which Christ gave divinely gifted ministers of verse 11. The meaning of the sentence in 4:11,12 would be: For the sake of perfecting the saints, Christ gave some apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers for the work of the ministry, for the building up of the body of Christ.¹⁵ The main objection to this is that this interpretation misses the main emphasis of the sentence. "Building up of the Body of Christ" seems to be the ultimate purpose of the ministry, rather than "perfecting of the saints." "The perfecting of the saints" is a means to build the Church!

(3) Another interpretation is that the first $\epsilon\acute{\iota}\varsigma$ section is subordinate to the $\pi\rho\acute{o}\varsigma$ section, and the second $\epsilon\acute{\iota}\varsigma$ section is coordinate to the $\pi\rho\acute{o}\varsigma$ section. But an objection to this view is: what is the use of "perfecting the saints for the work of ministry," if those mentioned in verse 11 are the only ones who build the Body of Christ?

(4) The simplest and the best view is to take each section as successively subordinate to the one preceding (Kuiist, Mackay, Robinson, Salmond, etc.). This would mean: Christ gave some apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers for equipping the saints unto the work of service, unto the building of the Body of Christ. This means that every

15. H.A.W. Meyer, Critical and Exegetical Handbook to the Epistle to the Ephesians and the Epistle to Philemon ("Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament"; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1880), p. 219.

believer participates in the building up of the Body of Christ, which is the ultimate purpose of the ministry.

It was noted on page 119 that some commentators put the comma after the word "saints." To retain the comma means that only some members of the Church will be equipped to do the "work of ministry" to build the Body of Christ. Says Mackay, "Here, without linguistic authority but with undoubted ecclesi-ological bias, the fatal comma after the word 'saints' has been retained [he has direct reference to the R.S.V. translation]. Churchmen balk at sanctioning a New Testament 'ministry' for ordinary Christians."¹⁶ He continues to say that such modern New Testament scholars as Phillips and Weymouth take this passage to mean that "the 'saints' are 'equipped' to serve."¹⁷

Hanson objects to this view by saying, "this contradicts the emphasizing of the ministry in the previous verse."¹⁸ But Hanson is wrong, for this view does not contradict the emphasis of the ministry in the previous verse at all. It rather magnifies the ministry. What can be more challenging than for ministers to equip every saint to be able to participate in the great task of building up the Body of Christ?

Robinson, who holds this view, says, "'the work of ministry' here spoken of corresponds to the 'grace given to every one of us,' which is the subject of this section."¹⁹

16. John A. Mackay, God's Order (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1956), p. 149.

17. Ibid., p. 150.

18. Stig Hanson, The Unity of the Church in the New Testament ("Uppsala Universitets Nytestamentlige Seminar, Acta 14"; Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksells Boktryckeri, 1946), p. 157.

19. Robinson, op. cit., p. 99.

And truly in the images of the Body and the Building in verse 16, every member is participating in building up the whole. Thus we observe that the section on the Ministry of the Church begins with "each one" receiving grace from Christ (v. 7), continues as each saint is being equipped for service (v. 12), and ends with every member participating in the ultimate purpose of the building of the Body of Christ (verse 16). Here is the basic New Testament truth of the universal priesthood of believers.

Hence, the purpose of the ministry is for the ministers to equip the saints for the work of ministry so that all Christians may participate in the great purpose of building up the Body of Christ.

III. Goal of the Ministry (4:13):

In the previous verses we have noted that Christ gave gifted ministers to the Church for the purpose of building the Body of Christ. These ministers are to equip all Christians for the work of ministry, so that all believers may participate in this great purpose of the ministry of the Church. But how long does the provision of the gifted ministers continue to be made in the Church? And how long should the ministry go on? What is the goal at which they should strive to arrive? Verse 13 gives the answer: "Until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."

A Textual Problem (4:13): G, Clement of Alexandria and

Lucifer omit τοῦ υἱοῦ from the text and their verse would read, ". . . the unity of the faith and the knowledge of God . . ." But the witness of these authorities is too slender to omit the words from the text.

After the study of the first clause μέχρι καταστήσωμεν . . . τοῦ θεοῦ, we shall take up the relation between the three εἰς phrases of this verse.

A. μέχρι . . . τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ:

μέχρι suggest the length of time during which the gifts spoken of and the consequent services are to continue in the Church. The fact that μέχρι is without ἄν and is followed by a subjunctive (καταστήσωμεν) seems to show that the event of the unity is not uncertain,²⁰ but is expected to take place in the future. It is not a hypothetical possibility.

οἱ πάντες do not mean all men everywhere. "The definite article gathers all the particulars under one view."²¹ In this context Paul is speaking about "the saints" (4:12). Certainly he refers to believers in totality rather than all people everywhere.²²

The verb κατατίω is used nine times in Acts (e.g., 16:1, 18:19, 20:15, etc.) and each time it is used in the sense of "come to" or "arrive at" a certain place of destination. The preposition εἰς points to the place of destination. Other than the passage before us (Eph. 4:13), Paul uses this verb

20. Abbott, op. cit., p. 120.

21. Robinson, op. cit., pp. 182, 183.

22. Cf. Abbott, p. 120, Salmond, p. 332.

three times in his epistles: "the word of God" came to Corinthians (I Cor. 14:36); coming of "the end of the world" (I Cor. 10:11); and Paul's desire to attain to "the resurrection from the dead" (Phil. 3:11). In each case the verb is used with εἰς which introduces the destination.

In Ephesians 4:11 the goal of the ministry is introduced by the first εἰς: "the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God." In 4:3 the unity was spoken of as being wrought by the Spirit in the Church, and at the same time as being maintained through the efforts of Christians. Here in 4:13 it is mentioned as the goal to be attained.

The fact that there is a definite article before ἐπιγνώσεως as well as before πίστεως, and that both words are expressing two different notions²³ shows that ἐπιγνώσεως is not epexegetical of πίστεως. They are equally related to ἐνότης.

The point of the clause is not any unity between faith and knowledge themselves, to the effect, e.g., of rising from the former to the latter as a higher Christian endowment, but a unity which shall make all the members of Christ's body at one in believing in Him and knowing Him.²⁴

"The Son of God" is the objective genitive of both faith and knowledge. This title here definitely refers to Christ, but is not used anywhere else in the Epistle. Certainly the apostle must have had some reason for using this designation. In Pauline writings the expression, "Son of God," or

23. Kuist, op. cit., p. 80.

24. S.D.F. Salmond, The Epistle to the Ephesians, Vol. III of The Expositor's Greek Testament (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1956), p. 332.

"His Son" seems to refer to the transcendent Person of Christ in relation to God the Father. For example, Galatians 4:4 says, "But when the time had fully come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman . . ." (First Advent). Galatians 1:16 says, "Was pleased to reveal his Son to me, in order that I might preach him among the Gentiles" (Paul's conversion recounted). I Thessalonians 1:10, "And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come" (Second Advent). And here in Ephesians 4:13, when the apostle mentions the object of faith and the knowledge in which our unity will ultimately be realized, he uses this designation which expresses the transcendent Person of the Son in relation to God the Father.

Thus the clause *μέχρι . . . τοῦ θεοῦ* shows that the gifts of the ministry will last in the Church and the consequent service should continue until the Christians as a totality will attain the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God.

B. εἰς PHRASES:

There are at least three interpretations of the relation of these three *εἰς* phrases.

(1) The first interpretation takes the three *εἰς* phrases as co-ordinated and equally related to the verb *κατα-
τήσωμεν*, making each *εἰς* phrase of equal importance. This makes the goal of the ministry the attainment unto three things: "the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God," "mature manhood," and "the measure of the stature of the fulness

of Christ." But it does not seem that the apostle is presenting here three goals. These three are too closely related to be taken as three separate goals.

(2) The second interpretation is that the first $\epsilon\acute{\iota}\varsigma$ phrase is distinct from the last two $\epsilon\acute{\iota}\varsigma$ phrases. The first $\epsilon\acute{\iota}\varsigma$ phrase expresses the goal to be attained, and the last two $\epsilon\acute{\iota}\varsigma$ phrases express the result or consequence of the first $\epsilon\acute{\iota}\varsigma$ phrase. In other words, according to this interpretation, when the Church attains "the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God," it will have automatically attained unto "the mature manhood," and unto "the measure of the stature of the Son of God." This interpretation stresses the unity idea of the first $\epsilon\acute{\iota}\varsigma$ phrase in accordance with the context of the Epistle. This interpretation seems plausible at first, but still it takes the three $\epsilon\acute{\iota}\varsigma$ phrases as three different things -- although it takes them very closely related to each other that the attainment of the first necessarily brings about the attainment of the other two.

(3) The third interpretation is that the second $\epsilon\acute{\iota}\varsigma$ phrase is in apposition to the first $\epsilon\acute{\iota}\varsigma$ phrase, and the third phrase is in apposition to the second phrase, each successively expounding the one before. This interpretation is more in keeping with the apostle's idea, because it places the greatest stress upon the main theme of the unity idea as the goal.

By taking the third interpretation, we shall proceed to a discussion of the meanings of the last two $\epsilon\acute{\iota}\varsigma$ phrases.

$\alpha\acute{\nu}\delta\rho\alpha \tau\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\epsilon\iota\omicron\nu$ is an apposition of the Church which

has attained "the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God." As long as the unity is lacking in the Church, it is still immature (imagery of infants in v. 14 shows the immaturity and lack of the unity). But when the unity is attained, the Church is called *ἄνδρα τέλειον*. The King James Version translates the words, "perfect men;" but in contrast with *νήπιος* in the following verse, the translation "mature manhood" of the Revised Standard Version seems to be better.

The singular *ἄνδρα* is used here instead of the plural. It suggests that the word refers to the Church as a whole instead of the individuals in the Church (see Abbott, p. 120; Robinson, p. 183; Hanson pp. 158-159, etc.). It also suggests the unity of the Church, the main theme of the ministry.

A question may be raised here: Is not the Church already *ἄνδρα* now, having been incorporated with Christ, and being called *ἓνα καὶνὸν ἄνθρωπον* (2:15)? It is. Therefore, the main emphasis here evidently lies on the adjective *τέλειον*, instead of *ἄνδρα*. When the Church attains unto "the unity of the faith and the knowledge," then it can be called "mature manhood."

The last *εἰς* phrase *μέτρον ἡλικίας τοῦ πληρώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ* is an apposition of the second *εἰς* phrase.

According to Arndt and Gingrich, the word *ἡλικία* has references to either of two things: namely, "age" or "bodily stature."²⁵ Its meaning must be determined in relation to the

25. W.F. Arndt and F.W. Gingrich, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1956), pp. 345, 346.

context in which it is found. The use of *νήπιοι* in the following verse may suggest that it has reference to "age," but in the more immediate context of verse 13 the word *μέτρον* is used in direct relation to *ἡλικία*. It seems best to take the word here as having reference to "stature" rather than "age" (cf. King James Version, A.S.V., R.S.V., etc.).

τοῦ πληρώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ - Because in 1:23 the Church is called *τὸ πλήρωμα τοῦ τὰ πάντα ἐν πᾶσιν πληρουμένου*, Hanson takes the phrase *τοῦ πληρώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ* in 4:13 as referring to the Church. And he takes the "measure of stature" as a reference to the complete size the Church is intended to reach. He says, "This can imply that new members are to be incorporated into the Body, so the pleroma becomes total."²⁶ But two objections may be raised to this interpretation.

First, the "measure of stature" does not seem to have any reference to quantitative growth of the Church. It is so evident that in this context the apostle is more interested in the qualitative aspect of the Church than the quantitative aspect. In the same verse he mentioned the "unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God," and the "mature manhood." And in the following verse he says "so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine" Certainly the language employed in the context speaks of quality rather than quantity of the Church.

26. Hanson, op. cit., p. 160.

Second, the phrase τοῦ πληρώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ does not seem to mean "the Church" here. It seems more natural to take the phrase as "the fulness that belongs to Christ, the sum of the qualities which make Him what He is."²⁷ This certainly is the highest goal of quality the Church can ever strive to attain. Just as the object of faith and of knowledge is "the Son of God," the goal of the Church is to reach the measure of stature of the fulness that belongs to Christ. When the Church attains this, it can be said that the Church has arrived at "mature manhood," and "the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God," for in the fulness of Christ there is perfect unity and harmony.

A question is raised as to when the Church will attain this goal. Some have believed that the goal will be realized in the present life (e.g., Chrysostom, Jerome, etc.), and others have believed that it refers to the future (e.g., Theodoret). But the text says nothing about the time. It simply implies that as long as Christ provides the gifted ministers the Church is to strive to attain the goal. Will it be the present or future? It seems that as long as the Church is upon the earth, it continually requires the ministry. On the other hand, it can be questioned: Why should the Church strive to attain the goal, if it can never be reached in the present? Abbott nicely comments:

It would probably be an error to suppose that the apostle meant definitely either one or the

27. Salmond, op. cit., p. 333.

other. He speaks of an ideal which may be approximated to. But though it may not be perfectly attainable it must be aimed at, and this supposes that its attainment is not to be represented as impossible.²⁸

Conclusion:

The ministry of the Church in Ephesians 4:11-13 can be summed up as follows: Christ provided the gifted ministers to the Church for the purpose of building up the Body of Christ. They are to equip all the Christians for the work of ministry, so that all in turn may participate in this great ministry with ministers. This ministry is to continue until the Church attains the goal of "the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God," which is to say, until the Church attains unto "mature manhood," unto "the measure of the stature of the fulness that belongs to Christ."

28. Abbott, op. cit., p. 121.

CONCLUSION

In Part One the study of the destination of the Epistle and the study of the term ἐκκλησία provided the conclusion that the Ephesian Letter was dealing with the one universal Church. And with that conclusion, we proceeded on to the study in Part Two, "Important Aspects of the Church in the Epistle," knowing that whatever truths the study might bring out, they are universally true for all Christian communities past, present and future.

The sphere of the Church is ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις, a phrase which is peculiar to Ephesians and cannot be found anywhere else in the Bible. Five usages of the phrase in various contexts provide clues to show that the phrase has reference to a spiritual and invisible sphere where Christ is enthroned over all the powers of the universe. There the Church by God's grace is blessed with every spiritual blessing in Christ. There "the principalities and powers" are learning "the manifold wisdom of God" through the mystery of the Church, and all the evil spiritual foes are waging warfare against the Church.

Four images descriptive of the Church are: Body, Building, Bride, and a Community of Slaves. Each image shows the inseparable relationship of the Church to Christ. Christ cannot be Christ apart from the Church, and the Church cannot be the Church apart from Christ. Christ fulfills His Christhood through the Church as the Head through the Body, as the Cornerstone through the Building, as the Bridegroom through His Bride,

and as the Master through His Slaves. The life of the Church completely depends on Christ, for in Him, by Him, and for Him she was created, grows and has her being. The central theme common to all these images is the unity of the Church with Christ, and her subjection to Him.

In His atoning work Christ not only made peace between God and man, but also between the Jew and the Gentile. Once a great wall of hostility existed between the two groups, but Christ made peace by abolishing it once for all on the cross. Now in the Church, they are co-heirs, members of the same body, and co-sharers of the Messianic Promise. This is the "mystery" which was once hidden in God, but is now revealed through the Spirit. Thus the Church is not only vertically united with Christ, but within it all believers are united together horizontally.

The Church now enjoys the blessings of the unity. But privilege is always accompanied by responsibility. A very important and urgent injunction is given to the Church to "maintain the unity of the Spirit" by making every effort. Living in the world, the Christian must put off the old man and put on the new man. Unity in domestic life is preserved when each individual assumes his Christian responsibility in relation to others. The unity of the Spirit is maintained in the heavenly sphere when the Christian faces his spiritual foe wearing God's armor.

Christ gave to the Church men with diverse gifts. These gifted men are to equip the saints for the work of ministry so

that all believers may participate in the building of the Body of Christ. The ministry is to continue until the Church attains "the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God," which is to say, until the Church attains "mature manhood" or "the measure of the stature of the fulness that belongs to Christ."

Hence, to sum up this study: it is clear that the theme of the Ephesian Letter is the unity of the Church, namely, the unity of the Church with Christ, the unity within the Church between Jew and Gentile; and this unity, brought into realization by the Spirit, is to be maintained in the Church through practical living, and through ministry until all may attain the unity of the faith.

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