



**KING'S
CHURCH** (<http://kingschurchedinburgh.org/>)
EDINBURGH

One Body

Ephesians 4: 4-6

There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

What does it mean to believe in one body?

What is “the body”? It refers to church. Ephesians 1:22- 23 *And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.*

Our experience of church is local, so we need to get our head into this bigger picture. God wants you to see his church as he does. To love your local church. To love his church in this city. To love his church around the world. To love his church in eternity.

This One Body is loved by Jesus

Ephesians 5:25 *...just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her*

i.e. All Christians everywhere that Christ has died to redeem. That body of people that particularly belong to Jesus and are called by his name.

This One Body is known by Jesus.

Hebrews 12:22 *But you have come to Mount Zion, to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven.*

i.e. the names written in heaven. Theologians call this the “Church Invisible”. It’s

invisible to us in its totality, but seen by God. Christians we've never met, from North Korea to Syria, from those of centuries ago and those who will become Christians in the future.

This One Body is the Church Triumphant of all ages

Revelation 7:9 speaks of this glorious picture *After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands.*

The Church is so big that it can't be counted. If you put the churches in Edinburgh together, we could fill a local football stadium. It would feel amazing. Imagine a crowd so vast that it was beyond your own ability to count. It's a church that all sings the same song in unity: "Salvation belongs to God"- This is a picture of Church TRIUMPHANT. On Palm Sunday they waved branches to welcome Jesus. In heaven they do that. On earth the church wages war against the world flesh and devil, it's a messy affair. Theologians call it the "Church Militant". But we are becoming the "Church Triumphant". A church at rest.

This One Body is The Bride of Christ.

This church is getting ready to be joined to Christ in marriage for eternity. Rev 19:7 *Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready.*

Eph 5:25 ... *just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.*

No bride turns up at her wedding unprepared. Every time the bride looks beautiful. The church is the bride that is making herself ready, through diligent study of the word and transformation by Christ.

This One Body is ruled by One Head

Jesus is the head. His body, his church, is the outworking of his decisions, his plans, his will. Ephesians 1:22-23 *And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.*

We derive all of our life and energy from him. A functional body does what the head tells it. The church is led by Jesus.

HOW DO WE APPLY THIS?

1. Love the Wider Body of Christ as Jesus does;

in all its shapes and forms, and all its denominations and styles. Jesus prayed in John 17:20 that his people would be one. It's a prayer God will answer, and we need to not work against him. Let's not work against him!

- Encourage other Christians when you meet them, rather than treat with suspicion! Speak well of them.
- Encourage other Christians with books you've read or messages you've heard that may help them.
- Take a moment to think of a Christian or leader in another church you can give a meaningful encouragement to.
- Don't be deliberately divisive. You only get a hearing when there's relationship, so present truth as best you understand it within that boundary.
- Follow news feeds of other Christian churches and organisations and pray for those being persecuted.

2. Love the Local Body of Christ

The main way we love the Church is by loving our own church family. This is where the Power of One is most demonstrated. Christians in close proximity to us are sometimes the hardest to get along with!

How can we increase our power of one?

1. By loving others more than ourselves.
2. By building life together.

The more you invest the more unified you become. Build memories together.

- Being taught the same and processing teaching together in small groups.
- By making choices to interact rather than separate- attend small groups, show hospitality, serve together.
- By caring- sharing the journeys we face of grief, disappointments and encouragements.

3. By thinking the best of people.

- Eph 4v2 “be completely humble” means don’t arrogantly think your individual judgment is accurate. Value others gifts/perspectives.
- 90% of potential hurts are dealt with in my thinking first. But if you're struggling to forgive someone:
 - Don’t be brash/hard. Be gentle v2.
 - Bear with people who annoy you in love v3.
 - If unsure of your own heart- ask a leader you trust.
 - If someone asks you your opinion- don’t stir it up, promote love and understanding.
 - Make every effort to be reconciled.

i. Gently ask if you’ve misunderstood someone. ii. Express your feeling of hurt. iii. Express willingness to let it go just as Christ let your sins go. iv. Pray together.

Questions:

- **One Body.** What encouragement can we find in knowing there is only One Body?
- **Perspective.** How does the bigger picture: universal, eternal, triumphant, help us in our day to day experience of church?
- **Showing love to the wider body.** What sorts of things can we do to encourage other Christians we know and those we don’t to continue in faithfulness to Jesus?
- **Showing love to brothers and sisters in King’s.** How can we build our individual lives together more? What lessons have you learned in walking in unity with people you don’t always see eye to eye with?



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