

# Church

by John Follette

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of the Body of Christ and the need for believers to understand their role as members of the Body, rather than trying to be the Head.*

**Scripture:** Matthew 16:18, Acts 2:42, Ephesians 2:21, Ephesians 4:11-12

**Topics:** "Body Of Christ", "Church Growth"

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## Description

John Follette emphasizes the main objective of God's manifestation throughout history, which is the Body of Christ. He highlights the burden of Paul's prayers for the growth and development of believers, focusing on bringing people into salvation and gathering them in the Body of Christ. Follette stresses the importance of Christ being the Head of the Church and the Body, directing all activities and programs from Him. He encourages believers to function as members of the Body, allowing God to work through them for the edification of the Church.

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## Transcript

There has always been a main objective towards which every manifestation of God moves. Each dispensation shows this. Today it is the Body of Christ.

What was the burden of Paul's prayers? It was for the growth and development of believers -- the Body. It was not bringing in the kingdom and getting this world set straight, nor was this the object of Jesus' prayer. His burden was bringing out of the world as many as possible into salvation. "Go ye to the ends of the earth with the gospel message;" not to Christianize the world, but to evangelize the world. And having evangelized the world, to gather them together in what He calls the Body of Christ. So we should spend our effort and time on this group. This is brought out in Ephesians 4:11-13: "And he gave some apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the Body of Christ; Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." -- The Spirit, and even all of the personality gifts relate to the edification of that unique, strange, mystical group of people -- the Body of Christ.

I am so glad that all direction is in the Head. Here is my body, He does not expect my hands to be my brains; He expects them to serve what my mind directs. And we forget that Christ is the Head of the Church. Christ is the Head of the Body and, therefore, there should be nothing originating in us; only receptivity to perform and do that which is actuated and directed from the Head. We move around and that

is why I think the church or Body is so feeble, because it doesn't know how to live from the Living Head. We try to produce what the Head wants to produce. The Head wants to make the program. He only asks us to function as members, not as the Head!

It takes us a long time to find that out. We are so used to directing from our own natural self -- our own head directing what our body is to do, but God says, "No, not that any more. You will become just a member in My Body, for I am the Head." All direction; all programs; anything that is worthwhile at all should originate in Him. He has to have us as a Body through whom He executes and moves. What a burden that would take off of our hearts and lives if we could ever believe it and learn it.

Churches in the book of Revelation have a work complex, instead of a worship complex.

Ephesians 2:21: "In Whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord." This verse has to do with the things of God in the holy temple. It has to do with prayer, outpouring intercession, worship, adoration; all that pertains to God. It is all Godward -- all that is going on in the temple. He says, "I am building you into a temple; each of you is a stone in the temple, so that ye may be a habitation for God; for all that goes on in the temple." The stones take hours to chip off and hammer, but by and by He fits them into the temple. "You looked like a mountain when I first got you, but this little stone is all you are, and I am fitting you into this temple."

The idea of meeting together in an informal mood --receptivity -- is really apostolic. That was the mood, the approach the early disciples-had. They had no form. They didn't have singing books with jingle bells in them! What were they singing? .They were singing the Psalms from the Old Testament, and many of the tunes were in minor key under the pattern of the old Jewish synagogue worship. Now that is all they knew, and God recognized it. You see when they came out of Judaism there was nothing formed as a pattern that was left for its development. God never gave any orders as to the form or shape their worship should take. He allowed them to shape it in accordance with what they felt in their hearts to do. The only two ordinances He let us are those of Baptism and the Lord's Supper; these are the only two that He instituted, He didn't institute all the ordinances we have now, but they have come up with the church, because if we don't have anything beside what the Lord instituted we are possessed to have something; so we will invent a form of worship. This isn't wicked or bad, and may be a means of helping some weaker soul towards God. So, I am not too critical, but I don't want that, I don't need it.

In God, and in the Spirit there is originality and spontaneity, but we have lost track of it; I remember in the earliest days of the outpouring of the Spirit that those were the two characteristic marks of the moving of the Spirit -- a spontaneity and an originality in His movings. Nothing was programmed or fixed. But you know, when we slip away from that into a stereotyped fashion, the Spirit isn't always pleased to follow us in our little pattern.

Speaking of persecution in the early Church, it was the impact of truth that caused them to move as they did -- to take the persecution. It was this strange impact of life that possessed the early Church, and made them different.

The Church was founded on the testimony; not on Peter, but on his testimony of to who Jesus was.

There are five personality gifts: apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers. (Eph. 4) He placed them in the Body. Even evangelists, Whose ministry is out in the world and darkness, have the Body as a home base for inspiration and direction. For the Body is controlled by The Head. My head has no business

planning anything. My head was made to execute what The Head planned. We are the members; we are not The Head, and members of His Body can only serve as The Head directs. Stop shoving evangelists out into the world with artificial objectives such as trying to bring the world to the Lord, clearing up politics, and getting everything in shape. Where did that come from? From religious tradition.

It is so much easier to do something than to become something. So, in the Church, it is easier to do programs and activities than to abide, evolve, and become. God is after the becoming, and so He says, "I have placed all the personality gifts in the Church." Don't ~project them out into the world. The evangelist functions to the ends of the earth! That's his field -- but he has to come back. Why? Because he is getting the material out there to make the Body, and he brings it back into the Body. What is the Body made of?. The Body is made of raw material; redeemed humanity. God's emphasis is upon building a Body, and not upon redeeming the world. He has placed the personality gifts there, "FOR the perfecting of the saints, FOR the work of the ministry, FOR the edifying of the Body of Christ."

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