

**Demonstration of Errors in the New Teaching  
as affording opportunity for presenting the Truth.**

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## 15: THE 'CHRIST'S BODY' OF THIS SYSTEM NOT A BODY AT ALL.

That, for its author, "body" no longer meant body in 1895 is perfectly certain from the following :

"The one body does not present the idea of union, it presents to us the thought of unity, that is, that where there had been two bodies, Jew and Gentile, now there is only one body." (Christianity, p. 65).

Is it possible that one, who had ever truly apprehended what the "one body" taught in Scripture really is, could write or speak like this? "Two bodies" before, only "one body" now! When was there a body at all before? Never. Again, if the one body that is now, be like either of the two said to "have been" before, then it is *no* "body," but a collection of individuals. It annihilates the very conception of a body of many *members*.

You have here the exclusion of *union* from the body (being the first year he rejected that truth, and repudiated it also at Newcastle) which need surprise no one from the moment "body" meant no more for him than this. Observe he starts with the expression the "one body" as if speaking of body in a Scriptural sense, *i.e.* according to the figure of a man, but at once passes to a different kind of body having no such meaning—is, in fact, no more than a "company" or set of people like Jews or Gentiles, or what is understood when we say "a body of troops." Truly enough such a body "does not present the idea of union," being destitute of the faintest trace of anything of the kind in its composition. But it is not so with the "one body" of God's Word as found in Paul's epistles, for that could not exist without union, and anyone, who supposes it could, has never known what it is. Think of bringing in body in a sense that does not contain union, and using such to deny it with respect to a kind of body in which union is essential to its very existence! It is this that trips up souls, off their guard, before they are aware of it.

Then to say there had been "two bodies" previously, instancing Jews as a sample of *this* "body" and Gentiles of *that*, and then compare either of these with the "one body" of the mystery, shows that the one, who did so, had lost the divine thought of body in "He is the Head of the *body*, the Church," if he ever had it. The Spirit uses the term "body" in various significations in the New Testament, *e.g.*, Jn. 11, 31; Rom. vi, 6; Rom. vii, 24; and in three other different senses in Col. 11, *viz.*, ver. 11, ver. 17, and ver. 19; but *never* once does He employ it to mean a company of individuals, or a set of people, as in the foregoing quotation. There is no such acceptation of "body" from Genesis to Revelation, and yet it is with this inexcusable perversion of it that the New Teaching manages to deceive so many of the saints.

Nor is it "body" only that is thus taught away, but the *unity* characteristic of it besides, for see all that the "thought of unity" which the "one body" is said to present—amounts to. It is merely that it is one, not two, in other words, it is the non-plurality of the body, not the special unity that body itself *is*, as the result of union. It is perfectly true that there is only one body, not two, or more. But it is surely recognized how in that case it is singular in contrast with plural. That is a truth, yet one that the body has in common with *other* things. But is "one" in the sense of *singleness* all that the *unity* of the *body* means? Whoever confines it to *that*, and lays all the emphasis on the numeral "one," has never seen it. The unity proper to body is bound up with what "body" itself *is*, irrespective of the addition of "one." You have to look at the instances where "one" is not used, such as, "Christ's *body*;" "the church which is *His body*;" "He is the Head of *the body*, the Church;" "For *His body's* sake which is the Church;" in order to get the true force of "body" and the "unity" that is special to it, and is to be found in nothing else. It is that unique kind of *unity*, which a body like yours or mine *is*, formed of many members, in the sense of an unbroken entire *whole*, which results from the *union* of all its parts. That is what "body" by itself conveys. Then, when you say "one body," that signifies, over and above, that there are not *two* such, only *one*. These two thoughts are quite distinct, "body" and "one body," that is, it is not merely *one* body, but also *one body*. This system sees only the former, but has lost the latter.

Other statements reveal the same thing, for they crop up at every turn. This is an example.

"It is one body down here composed of all those 'many sons' whom God is bringing to glory." (Christianity, p. 71).

Here again it is manifest that what is called "body" is not a body at all, the very meaning of such being rendered *null* by this way of speaking. Who ever heard of a body like the human body being composed of "many sons?" The "one body" of Scripture is composed of "many *members*," not "sons." What is *that*, which is composed of many sons? A *family* of course, not a body, Family is thus confounded with body, the consequence of which is to teach away "body" in its true acceptance, for sons are not *united* to God, the Father, nor are they to one another. This how souls are deprived of the truth which the Lord in mercy recovered to us.

A third instance of how the late chief of this New Teaching departure exposes himself, and unwittingly lets out his real whereabouts, is in what follows:—

"And there shall be one flock and one Shepherd. I can understand some-one saying, But you are confounding the flock with the one body. I reply, No, they are parallel truths, it is a different idea, but there is no difference substantially between the one body and the one flock." (The Spirit's Day, pp. 2-3).

This is the old story, so interwoven into the web of the system, of using one truth to deny another. Flock is employed to teach away the reality of "body." It is so covertly managed too, as to appear otherwise. Nevertheless he does *confound* the one flock with the one body at the very time he denies he is doing it. His reply, "No they are

parallel truths" is no reply but an evasion, for no charge of confounding is ever made as to their being "*parallel truths*." That is to acknowledge they are apart and *different*, not in "idea" merely, but in *kind* and *position*, running concurrently at the same *time* and in the same *direction*.

The charge of confounding is made with respect to his saying "there is *no difference*," and rightly so, for that means that they are the *same*. Any one, who could say "there is no difference substantially between the one *body* and the one *flock*," cannot have realised what a body in its Scriptural meaning truly is, since a body, that is substantially the same as flock, is not a body at all. The two are *essentially* different. A flock is composed of *sheep*: a body is composed of *members*. The sheep of a flock are all *separate* and distinct from each other: the members of a body are all *united* to one another. *No* sheep of a flock is united to its *shepherd*, every member of a body is united to its *head*. Is there no substantial difference in all that? To say so is to be destitute of the very thought of what differentiates and marks off 'body' from all besides. The Spirit of God intended to convey to your soul and mine, by selecting the figure of the human body, a *special* something that flock does not contain and cannot give us. One of the sad effects of this New Teaching is to take the blessed reality of that from us, if listened to, by slyly substituting something else, which is *not* it, as if it *were*. And it is systematically persisted in, too, again and again as well as in various ways which spoil it utterly. Is a multitude of separate persons massed together as *nations*, like Jews and Gentiles, a *body* like yours and mine? Is a number of distinct individuals living together, like the children and sons of a family, a body? Is an aggregation of sheep as found in a flock, a body? No, and when applied to the body of Christ, and such things are brought in as if they were its equivalent, the divine significance of the figure is lost. The result is, this system calls something Christ's body which is *not* His *body*, and sees nothing beyond a "company" a "family," or a "flock." It has given up and denied all that constitutes a body, except the retention of the word, which does nothing but mislead.

This is singularly conspicuous in the oft repeated statement,

**"The one body is Christ's body."**

This *sounds* perfectly correct as far as the terms go, and, you naturally take for granted, it means what it says. "Body" occurs twice in a sentence of six words, and at first sight there is nothing that would lead you to suspect it was being used in any other sense than the Scriptural one. When it was given out and pressed as of so much importance, especially with such emphasis laid on the "*Christ's*," giving the impression of some fresh discovery or new light, you could not help putting this question, "Whose body did they think it was before? or "How could Christ's body be any one else's body but Christ's?" One wondered, also, why they had been so slow to recognize a fact so patent, and had not found it out sooner, for J.N.D. had stated it long ago in his Synopsis *in loco* on 1 Cor. xii, though he never

dreamt of such a construction of "Christ's body" as this New Teaching invents for it. Would you believe it, when they said "The one body is Christ's body," they actually *meant*, Christ's body is *not* a *body* at all! Read what follows:—

"People go back upon the Scripture 'By One Spirit we are all baptized into one body;' but that is not the moral truth as to the body; the moral truth is that the body is Christ's body—it is derived from Christ." (Newcastle Notes, p. 147).

Now where did he get this? Certainly not from God or His Word. It has nothing to support it, but his own imagination and is the reversal of "The one body is Christ's body," or tantamount, in fact, to saying, Christ's body is *not* the one body, and that you must *not* go to the very scripture that tells you how the one body was formed. You are to adopt his baseless "moral" theory of it, not what was brought into existence by the baptism of the Holy Ghost—not members of Christ and one another—but something merely "derived from Christ," which if that were all, would not be a "body." We *naturally* are all "derived" from our first parent Adam, but that does not make us Adam's *body*; so, though the saints individually have *spiritual* life, *i.e.* are derived *spiritually* from the last Adam, that does not constitute them Christ's *body*. How could that be the "moral," or any other, "truth as to the body?" If it consisted only in that, there would be *no* "body" of Christ, but many brethren, He being firstborn. It is an entirely different thing from Christ's body and to make it that is to lose it. In short, it is to mistake derivation for membership and the union it implies. It would verily be the disintegration of Christ's body and would mean its dissolution into a number of spiritually derived units!

But we get another version of Christ's body, for there is no consistency in error.

"There is one body existing here upon earth; but when that is seen there is another truth to be learnt, which is almost a more important one, that that body is Christ's body. It is the *vessel* in which Christ is *displayed*. (The Spirit's Day, p. 3).

All the "one body" or its "unity" he saw, he had just told us in these words "We learn that there is *one* body, and it is the knowledge of that which separates christians from *all* the great religious *bodies* about us." It is the non-plurality of the body merely, in contrast with "all the religious bodies about us," laying all the stress on "one" numerically, like one, two, three; but the *unity* proper to *body* is a blank in his mind. "One body" meant no more for him than "one flock" or "one family." That being so, what is his notion of the other truth, which he avowed, "is almost a more important one" namely "Christ's body?" He said "It is the vessel in which Christ is displayed." Is that all "Christ's body" means? Has it no closer relation to Christ than a "vessel?" Does it consist in nothing but "display?" Would either or both constitute a body any more than "derivation?" Besides "display" is inapplicable to anything that could be shown here. Display will only be in *glory*. Even if you combine "derivation" with "display," could a number of separate individuals having derived their spiritual life from Christ and feebly expressing certain Christ-like qualities be called Christ's body? It

would not be a body at all. Christ's body is so in union with Christ that He can say of it "Me." His body is Himself, so to speak, and He calls it that. You could not say that of a "vessel." The "mortal body" of the individual christian is called an "earthen vessel" holding a "treasure" and the "life of Jesus" is what comes out, but, like Gideon's pitchers, it has to be broken for that. There is no such thought connected with Christ's body of many members. That coming out of the saints *individually*, which enables others to take knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus, cannot be designated Christ's body, and even if you take what answers to that *collectively*, Scripture uses another figure, namely, Christ's *epistle*, not His body. Why not adhere to God's Word? It is there you get, not only what is "descriptive" (the usual phrase), but what is *transcriptive* of Christ. Then the vine and its branches is the figure for what is *reproductiae* of Christ as regards traits of character by the saints individually or collectively. Do not spoil the "body" of Christ by mixing it up with what is proper to these other metaphors. It has that peculiar to itself which no other possesses.

There is a further definition still.

"It is in the Divine Nature that we are one body in Christ and members one of another." (The Spirit's Day, p. 60).

Where does Scripture say anything of the kind? Being partakers of the divine nature has its place, but that is not what constitutes us "one body in Christ," or "members one of another." God's Word tells us it is the baptism of the Holy Ghost, not the divine nature. It is those who *individually* are already partakers of the divine nature and already quickened together with Christ, that are baptized into one body *corporately*. Such language unmistakably shows for the one who could use it, the total absence of what Christ's body, or a body at all, consists in. The very thought essential to "body" is wanting, hence all this System can do, whenever it refers to it, is to teach it away. See the writings.

For *it*, as we have *already* seen, Christ's body means no more than a "company" or mass of individuals like Jews or Gentiles, no more than a "family" of many sons, no more than a "flock" of many sheep, all separate from each other, and *here* also we have been finding that "body" is confounded with "derivation," with "display," and with "divine nature." There is not in any of these, nor in all of them together, anything the least like a body with its many members indissolubly united to Christ, and united together, according to the figure chosen by the Spirit. They are utterly short of the truth of the body, and to imagine them equivalent, or to present them as such, proves that one who can do so, has not the sense of what God means to teach him by that figure at all. Suppose you came across one who declared that something you knew to be *sweet* like sugar, was another thing altogether, at one time *bitter*, or again *sour* etc., not by mistake, but iterated and reiterated, what would that mean? That the man had lost the *taste* of what was *sweet* or never had it. He might deny it, but the more he did so, the lack of the taste was the more made manifest. So, if you find one, no matter who, calling something Christ's body that is not a body at all, not as a slip, but half a dozen times, what is the

inevitable conclusion? That he has lost the sense of what body is or never had it. There is no escape. He might deny and protest against the certain fact, but it would be in vain. On his own showing "body" is no more for him than "family," "flock," or "company." His own repeated statements demonstrate that it is so. The New Teaching even pretends to allege that the *spiritual reality* of the "body" figure, as God intended, is too "material." And what are *their* false substitutes? Is "family," "flock" or "company," any less material than "body?" Nay, verily. It is a subtle wile of the enemy to cheat souls out of the blessedness of that which belongs to them as members of Christ and part of His body, under the delusion that what is formed by the *Spirit* of God and *animated* by that Spirit throughout, could possibly be material! Whoever can so speak, has never known what it *is* in the apprehension of his inner being. His "speech bewrayeth" him.

Now that we have the full development of all this before us, it is not difficult to trace it where it began.

### A strange blunder the origin of the System.

After reading Col. ii: 16-18; the lecturer said:—

"I want you to bear two points in mind, because they are exceedingly important. The body is of Christ. You say, Of course, the body is of Christ. Well, but the body is of the Head. My body is of the head, and my body corresponds to the head. And so, as to the body of Christ, the body must correspond to Christ, else it would not be the body of Christ. He warns them against shadows, because in following shadows they were in great danger of losing the substance. The words "body" and "substance" are the same, and you might read it "substance," but that would mar the sense, because I have no doubt the *idea* is that "the body" is of Christ. The moral thought it conveys to my mind is that the body is of the same kind and character; and must be, or it would not be of the Head. Then, on the other hand, comes out the other truth that the Head is for the body." (Lectures on Colossians, pp. 51-2).

Just think of one professing to *teach*, first falling into, and then espousing, an egregious *mistake*, which you would scarcely expect even a child to make who was only learning the English language, namely, to suppose that "body" in the sense of *substance* contrasted with shadow, meant "body" in the sense of the body of Christ, the Church! Nay, the *double* mistake, for "Christ" is also misconceived to be Christ as *Head* of the body, instead of Christ as Antitype in whom all the shadows of the law are taken out of type and put into *reality*! You have only to read verses 16 and 17 of Col. ii to be convinced of this as to both blunders. "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of a new moon, or of the Sabbaths, which are a *shadow* of things to come, but the body (substance) is of Christ." Is not the true meaning here self evident, *viz* "body" in the acceptation of *substance* in contrast with shadow, not Christ's mystical body, and "Christ" as Antitype in whom the shadows have their fulfilment, not as Head relative to the body at all? Speaking for oneself, could you have confidence in the teaching of the man who could so misconstrue the proper force of that God-breathed statement "A shadow of things to come but the body is of Christ?" Assuredly not, especially when you perceive that this is the germ of his whole false "moral" theory. It is all the more inexcusable that he did it with his eyes open. He says "you may read it substance," so that he had

the right meaning before him, yet he deliberately adopts one of his own not in the passage at all, but imported into it out of his own head, and then upon this wrong interpretation he builds the elaborate system of error for which he is responsible,

He said to read it *substance* "would mar the sense." Whose sense? Not that of the Spirit, for "substance" is just His sense. How could reading it *rightly* mar the sense? The "sense" it "would" and does "mar" is the one *he* gives it. Nevertheless he persists in his own "idea" in defiance of Scripture, that "the body is of Christ" means "body" in the sense of Christ's mystical body. On this palpable misconstruction his "moral thought" is confessedly founded, and he tells you what it "conveys to his mind," so that there is no question as to its being the origin of the scheme that since then has become fully developed and bears his stamp.

There are "two points" which you are asked "to bear in mind," namely, "the body is *of* Christ," and "the Head is *for* the body" (both due to a blunder) and on these, as he conceived them, his whole "moral" system, afterwards so carefully worked out, will be found to depend. In the "of" and the "for," all is there in embryo, and the leaven went on spreading till the circle of collective and coporate truth distinctive of Christianity became leavened with it, not to mention much that is individual, as we have amply shown. The holding of what, he subsequently called "the prevalent idea" of *union* in connection with the body, retarded its undermining effect on what he at any rate *professed* and even *taught* correctly in *words* at least, for some considerable time; but on now analysing the utterances you discern the workings of the evil and the shaping of unsound notions in the Author's mind even at this early stage though then unsuspected. You can watch the leaven slowly but surely insinuating itself and the disintegrating process advancing year by year till it had so displaced what God had graciously recovered to us, that four years after, finding sufficient influence had been gained and a favourable current strong enough for him safely to throw off the mask, he all of a sudden openly refused and turned his back on what had been held, *taught*, and acted on as to the church for sixty years, protesting all the while that nothing was given up, lest souls should take alarm,

But of all this we have here the *seed*, and observe how quickly it began to germinate after obtaining a lodgement. There is *first* the unaccountable misconception of "the body is of Christ," with "body" in the sense of substance imagined to be His body, the Church. *Then*, it is assumed that everyone would say "Of course the body is of Christ." Undoubtedly as it stands in Scripture, but certainly *not* in the sense attached to it by him. This taken for granted however, that he might make it fit his own unwarrantable rendering, the *next* thing done is to *alter* it to "Well, the body is of the *Head*," which is not said at all, either here or anywhere else in Scripture, because it is *not* true of any "body" such as yours or mine, and as for "the body is of Christ" in Col. ii, 17; signifying "the body is of the Head," it is on the face of it a pure hallucination. My body is in union with, and inseparably joined to, my head, just as Christ's body is to Christ (otherwise it would not be His body) not merely something "of" Christ in the sense of

"springing from," and being of the same 'order,' 'kind' or 'character,' which is the theory of this System. Call that a "family" if you will, a *body* it is not. But see what it all starts from and arises out of. An unintelligent blunder! Yet the *fruit* of this was actually hailed as "new and blessed truth," and out of this small beginning a complete school of erroneous teaching became evolved, and is at present in full operation among its founder's followers.

Just as the misinterpreted "body is of Christ" involved the teaching away of Christ's *body* really, so the other point "the Head is for the body" likewise contained within it, the teaching away of *Head* in relation to body, and actually did so when, meanings such as "Chief" and "Head of every man" etc., became substituted instead. My head is of the same piece with my body and not merely "for" it. Were that all, Christ, the Head, in the true relative—to body—sense is gone, and as the System developed, this is just what has come to pass. Headship of the body proper was swamped in other kinds of Headship altogether especially in Headship of race in the same sense as Adam was head of the human family, and this was wrongly supposed to be the "moral thought" of the *body*, though there is not a vestige of body in it.

Strange as it may seem, at the very time he was using the strongest and most decided language he ever did, as to the *body* and *union*, viz :

"When I speak of union. I mean organic union as of the members of a body to the head." (and) "When the Holy Ghost was given, then union was effected, it took place on the Day of Pentecost."

You can perceive from certain tell-tale expressions in the same lectures, how it was destroying the true force of union in his mind thus :—

"The truth and secret of union lies in the fact of a moral being in the saints."

That is not union at all according to the former statement. No one could be united unless a new moral and spiritual being was already there, that is, it is preliminary to union, but union, such as the "Spirit affected on the day of Pentecost," did not consist in that. Again towards the close of the lecture, he lets fall;

"The truth of union lies in that which we have derived from Christ as quickened together with Him."

How could that be union? The "quickened together" took place before the "raised up together," that is, took place out of *death*, and would in that case have to be "effected" in Christ's *grave*, whereas, on his own showing, there could be no union really, till after Christ *ascended* and the Holy Ghost came down at Pentecost. No wonder that he denied *union*, as connected with the *body* at all, a year after.

Why perpetuate a System, in which all the "moral ideas" of Christ's *body* spring from *one* manifest blunder, and the *denial* of the Spirit's presence in the assembly as *distinct* from individuals is due to *another*?

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