*Body of Christ**

Hebrews 1:1-2 (1) God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,
(2) Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;
From the time of Moses until Christ, God gave, in addition to circumcision, many laws and commandments, too numerous to mention, which were to be observed by the nation of Israel. These consisted in manifold sacrifices, oblations, purifications, etc., for the performances of which holy times were set apart, such as the Passover, Pentecost, Feast of Tabernacles, New Moons, and fast days; together with sacred places, such as the Tabernacle of Moses, the Temple; Shiloh, Mizpah, Moriah, etc.; also holy persons, such as Prophets, Priests, Levities, Singers, and Doorkeepers. The books of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy attest to the many religious ceremonies involved. One can readily see the difficulty as Peter observed;
Acts 15:5-10 (5) But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying, That it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses.
(6) And the apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter.
(7) And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe.
(8) And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us;
(9) And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith.
(10) Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the

neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?
Peter made it readily seen that the yoke had been taken off the people and a new way had begun, which verification had already been stated in the very first verse of Mark, "The **beginning of the gospel** of Jesus Christ." *From the time of Christ to the end of the world, God, through Christ, has taken away the ceremonies of the Mosaic law as well as the signs by which it is sealed; and, to the acknowledgment of the grace in Christ, commanded the observance of other ceremonies and signs, which is baptism for remission of sin, the Lord's supper and worship upon the first day of the week which were sealed by the blood of Christ. These external commandments, together with faith, the Lord has very strictly enjoined upon all members of the Church of Christ, and are enforced by the gospels and the epistles,* For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth (Romans 10:4).
Now turn with me to;
Colossians 2:16-17 (16) Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days:
(17) Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.
Meaning; Don't let anyone criticize you for not observing the Sabbaths; the jubilee sabbath, which was one year in fifty; the sabbath of the land, which was one year in seven; and the seventh day sabbath which were all peculiar to the Jews (Ex.31:13-17,Lev. 25). Eusebius, 260 AD-339 AD, wrote the first church history known, he had this to say; For the name means that the Christian, through the knowledge and teaching of Christ, excels in self-control and righteousness, in discipline and virtue, and in the confession of the one and only God over all, and in all this they showed no less zeal than we. They had no interest in bodily circumcision, nor do we; nor for keeping the Sabbaths, nor do we. *Seeing the first Christians did not*

keep the sabbaths, why should we?
There is no condemnation for not observing ordinances and Sabbaths of the law. Christ redeemed them that were under the law, and gave us power to become sons of God that believe on His name.
In antiquity the sons of God should have rendered obedience to the Spirit of God; which injunction they failed to heed in the days of Noah. In what respect did they fail seeing the law had not been given? They had the knowledge of good and evil from the time of Adam and Eve. What did they choose? Turn with me to;
Genesis 6:5-8 (5) And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.
(6) And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart.
(7) And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them.
(8) But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD.
As a result of wickedness, God caused a great flood to cover the entire earth, only Noah and his family were saved. How were they saved? Many will say, in the Ark. It is true the saved were in the Ark, but what saved them? What does the Bible say? Turn to;
1Peter 3:18-21 (18) For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:
(19) By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison;
(20) Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water.

(21) The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:
The 'saved by water' were in the Ark, today the saved are added to His body which is the Church (Acts 2:47), and baptism is the method by which salvation is effected. Now Christ not only came to fulfill the law, but also the prophets, turn to;
Acts 8:32-38 (32) The place of the scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth:
(33) In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth.
(34) And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man?
(35) Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus.
(36) And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?
(37) And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.
(38) And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.
The Eunuch was reading from Isaiah chapter 53. Now Luke says Philip began at that same scripture and preached unto him Jesus. What did Philip say that caused the Eunuch to desire baptism? Well, we do not know the exact wording Philip chose to convince the Eunuch to be baptized, but we do know Philip taught baptism as the method to put on Christ. How else would the Eunuch have known? And we can be confident Philip was teaching an apostolic doctrine, turn your Bibles to;

Acts 2:36-38,47 (36) Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.
(37) Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?
(38) Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.
Verse (47) Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.
Therefore Christians are they who are members of His body, which is the Church. As Paul so eloquently stated in the epistle to the Ephesians: For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. (Eph 5:30). *The law was not intended to discover a way of justification different from that made known by the promise, but to lead men to see their need of the promise, by showing the sinfulness of evil, and to point to Christ, through whom alone they could be pardoned and justified. Hence the law could not be designed to set aside the promise. The great design of the law was, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ, might be given to those that believe; being convinced of their guilt, and the insufficiency of the law to effect righteousness for them they might be persuaded to believe on Christ, and so obtain the benefit of the promise.* For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ,.... *Not that it is to be imagined that these Churches of Galatia, or any of the primitive churches, consisted of baptized and unbaptized persons; for this would be acting contrary to the commission of Christ and the order of the Gospel. For they are not merely baptized in His name, and by His authority, and according to His command, and into His doctrine, and a profession of Him; but also into a participation of the blessings of grace which are in Him, and*

through His sufferings and death; for they that are baptized into Christ are baptized into His death and resurrection from the dead; they are led by faith to behold the cleansing of their souls, and the remission of their sins by his blood. But no outward forms or profession can secure these blessings; for if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His. In baptism we put on Christ; therein we profess to be His disciples. Being baptized into Christ, we are baptized into His death, that as He died and rose again, so we die unto sin, and walk in newness and holiness of life. The putting on of Christ according to the gospel, consists not in outward imitation, but in a new birth, an entire change. Faith leads to obedience. The believer is baptized into Christ, and being found in Him has put on Christ. Being then in Christ, a member of His body, a part of the Son, the believer becomes a child of God. For the just comprehension of the Apostle's meaning, it is of the utmost consequence to note that he introduces this reference to baptism for the purpose of justifying his declaration, that in Christ Jesus those whom he is addressing were sons of God through faith in His word; He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved*, and is therefore a member of His Church by addition to it, and subjects of grace through the faith that is in Jesus Christ. By voluntarily offering themselves to be baptized in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, they were consciously obeying His own instructions: they were manifesting their desire and their resolve to become themselves His disciples; to be thenceforth people of His, as by Him redeemed, and as expecting at His hands spiritual life here and perfected salvation hereafter. Seeing how long this description is, the purpose is to describe a saved member in the Church of Christ.*

How satisfying and glorious are the words of our Lord Jesus Christ: I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live (John 11:25)*.*

There is but one eternal life. There is but one source of

eternal life; God's only begotten Son. He was sent by His father, but rejected by His own. He is rejected today by atheists, Islam, and others. To be a child of God, in this life, is not always a bed of roses. There will be trials and tribulations. Observe Joseph; he was sent by His Father, but was rejected by His own. After being sold into slavery, Joseph was falsely accused before Potiphar, who essentially washed his hands of someone that he knew to be innocent to save his own honor in the eyes of his wicked wife. Turn with me to;
Genesis 39:19 and 20 (19) And it came to pass, when his master heard the words of his wife, which she spake unto him, saying, After this manner did thy servant to me; that his wrath was kindled.
(20) And Joseph's master took him, and put him into the prison, a place where the king's prisoners were bound: and he was there in the prison.
Jesus was falsely accused, He was sent before Caesar's representative Pilate, who literally washed his hands of an innocent man. When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it. (Matt 27:24). *I have wondered what Potiphar may have thought when Joseph became 2nd in command, being subject only to Pharaoh. Did Potiphar fear having been surpassed in rank by Joseph, whom he put into the prison? I have wondered if Potiphar's wife may have felt fear knowing Joseph could retaliate should he so desire. There is no record of Potiphar's wife after she lied to her husband, but she must have carried guilt and fear the rest of her life after Joseph advanced to Vice Pharaoh. I surmise both were fortunate that Joseph was of good character and personality traits that undoubtedly worked toward their benefit as also his own brothers. Through his trust and obedience to God, even in the midst of unjust shame and suffering, as well as through his wisdom and gifting to*

correctly interpret prophecy, Joseph was raised to the right hand of Pharaoh. Through His trust and obedience to God, even in the midst of unjust shame and suffering, as well as through his wisdom and gifting to correctly interpret all Scripture, Jesus was raised to the right hand of God. Through his wisdom, Joseph fed the world bread in the midst of a great famine. Through His wisdom, Jesus feeds the entire world the Bread of Life, in the mist of great desolation. Joseph sold grain to all who came unto him. Jesus gives life to all who come unto Him. Joseph was sold into slavery at the suggestion of his brother Judah. Jesus, of the tribe of Judah, came to save the world, and He hath a Kingdom which shall never be destroyed; turn with me to;

Matthew 16:15-18 (15) He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am?

(16) And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.

(17) And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.

(18) And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

Where God builds a temple, says the old proverb, there the devil builds another in opposition. This has been apparent ever since the beginning of the world. For at the same time that Abel became a martyr of God, and therefore a good leader of the children of God, Cain made himself a murderer, and became a leader of the children of satan, who belong to an ungodly and false church as members of one body. Many people of the first world universally, with the exception of eight before the flood, followed in the footsteps of Lamech in wickedness; they exercised tyranny, violence, and oppression, and would not be governed by the Spirit of God. All these who have been mentioned, from Cain on, succeeded one

another in regular order, and may be considered as members of the church of satan; since they have neither in generation, nor in faith, nor in worship, nor in manner of life, nor agree with the principle of God, but opposed it in every respect. Even when Paul knew and was fully assured through the revelation of the Holy Ghost that all those among whom he had traveled preaching the Gospel would see his face no more, he thus addressed the elders of the church of Ephesus. Turn to;
Acts 20:29-32 (29) For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock.
(30) Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.
(31) Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.
(32) And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.
How well Paul knew of the troublesome times to come for the Church of Christ. The Church, though never perishing entirely, does not always show herself in her full form, yea, at times she seems to have vanished altogether, yet not in all, but only in some places. After the advent of Christ and the Church under the Gospel, which was composed of Jews and Gentiles; she too, could not always raise her head with safety, but was ofttimes, like the sun behind clouds, concealed from the common sight of men. Even in the beginning the Apostles hid themselves for fear of the Jews, turn with me to;
John 20:19-20 (19) Then the same day at evening, being the **first day of the week**, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for **fear of the Jews**, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.
(20) And when he had so said, he shewed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord.

But if Christ is so firm a foundation that even the gates of hell cannot prevail against that which is built upon it, how very foolish, careless and imprudent are they who forsake this foundation, and build upon, and trust in, the vain things of this world! Certainly everything under the sun, yea, all which our eyes behold, is vain and transitory. But how much more vain are the sinful and evil things which God has forbidden, and concerning which He has warned us in His word, that we should have nothing to do with them! How great will be the fall of those who build upon these forbidden vanities! If we suffer damage, and complain, when a material house or building falls, because its foundation is not firm, how much greater loss will they sustain, and what greater reason will they have to lament, who will fall both in soul and body, without ever being able to rise again! The Church of Christ is based upon authority, and not because of a succession of persons, but on account of the doctrine, since she holds the doctrine the Apostles received from Christ, including the ordinance of baptism for remission of sins and eternal life. So I ask you today, do you believe? Do you have faith that is the effect of belief in Christ and His message of salvation? Have you by faith repented of your sins? If so, will you by faith confess Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and be baptized into Him for remission of your sins? This is the gospel way of salvation. It's invitation is always open. Also prayer requests, but not the popular 'sinners prayer for salvation.' for it cannot take the place of; He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved (Mark 16:16). *Please come while we gently persuade with song.*

This message approved by
Jack Warford
a minister for Christ

Leviticus 25:1-10 (1) And the LORD spake unto Moses in mount Sinai, saying,
(2) Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye come into the land which I give you, then shall the land keep a sabbath unto the LORD.
(3) Six years thou shalt sow thy field, and six years thou shalt prune thy vineyard, and gather in the fruit thereof;
(4) But in the seventh year shall be a sabbath of rest unto the land, a sabbath for the LORD: thou shalt neither sow thy field, nor prune thy vineyard.
(5) That which groweth of its own accord of thy harvest thou shalt not reap, neither gather the grapes of thy vine undressed: for it is a year of rest unto the land.
(6) And the sabbath of the land shall be meat for you; for thee, and for thy servant, and for thy maid, and for thy hired servant, and for thy stranger that sojourneth with thee,
(7) And for thy cattle, and for the beast that are in thy land, shall all the increase thereof be meat.
(8) And thou shalt number seven sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years; and the space of the seven sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years.
(9) Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubile to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month, in the day of atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land.
(10) And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof: it shall be a jubile unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family.

Hosea 2:11 I will cause all her mirth to cease, her feast days, her new moons, and her sabbaths, and all her solemn feasts.

Exodus 31:13 Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know the I am the Lord that doth sanctify you.

Note; the sabbaths were for the children of Israel. jw

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