

“One Body in Christ”: The Organic Union in the Epistle to the Romans

by Ron Kangas

In studying the revelation in the Scriptures concerning the relationship between God and humankind, it is crucial to avoid extremes, for these often lead to heretical teachings or aberrant practices. Extremes can readily be avoided if, in our study, we apply the principle of the twofoldness of the divine revelation—the principle that the truths in the Word of God have two sides, or aspects, and that this twofoldness need not be, and actually cannot be, systematized. God is one, yet He is triune; salvation is by grace, not works, yet the reward of the kingdom is according to works; God is absolutely sovereign, yet human beings have at least some degree of genuine freedom to make decisions. In keeping with the twofold nature of divine truth, we may assert that the believers’ relationship with Christ has two sides. On the one hand, our relationship with Christ is objective, for He is the Lord of all, transcendent, sitting at the right hand of God in the heavens. On the other hand, our relationship with Christ is subjective, for He indwells the believers in a deep, spiritual way, seeking to have one life and one living with them in a relationship of coinherence, mutual indwelling. Such an indwelling involves a union in life between the resurrected Christ and the regenerated believers. Christ as the life-giving Spirit dwells in the believers’ regenerated spirit, thus becoming one spirit (1 Cor. 6:17), a mingled spirit. In describing this union, this being one spirit with the Lord, we use the term *organic union*.

The Organic Union

Central to the genuine spiritual life of the believers in Christ is an organic union with Christ. As used here, *organic* implies and indicates life, and *union* denotes oneness in life and of life, a joining of two lives as one. God desires that the human life and the divine life be joined together to become one life. This oneness is an organic

union, a union in life, as seen in the true vine (Christ) with the branches (the believers), joined in an organic union to be a corporate living entity to carry out the purpose of God the Father and to glorify Him (John 15:1, 4-5). Because this was God’s will and good pleasure (Eph. 1:5, 9), He created humankind for the purpose of entering into human beings to be one with them and to make them one with Him for His corporate expression (Gen. 1:26; 2:7).

The more we are enlightened by the Lord and know the good pleasure of God’s will, the more we will in our study of the Bible exercise a crucial principle—the principle that God desires to make Himself one with His chosen and redeemed people. For the fulfillment of His eternal purpose (Eph. 3:11), God wants to make Himself one with the believers in Christ and to make them one with Him in spirit and in life. With this in view, we testify that the central theme in God’s economy is to make God and redeemed humanity one organic entity, with the two having one living by one life with one nature. In His incarnation Christ brought God into humanity, and in His resurrection He brought redeemed humanity into God, thereby producing an organic union, a life union, between the children of God (John 1:12-13; 1 John 3:1) and the Triune God in Christ. As believers in Christ, we may be assured that we are in Christ, and Christ is in us; He and we have become one, a profound reality in both the individual Christian life, in which we are one spirit with the Lord, and in the corporate church life, in which we are one Body in Christ (Rom. 12:4-5).

The relationship that God desires to have with His chosen, redeemed, and regenerated people is that He and they, the believers in Christ, be joined together and become one in an organic union (6:3-5). In order to fulfill this intention, a longing deep within His being, God created man with a human spirit to contact Him and as a vessel to contain

and express Him. Upon entering into man, the breath of life became the spirit of man (Gen. 2:7), the human spirit (Prov. 20:27; Zech. 12:1). As part of our God-created tripartite person, the spirit is neither the same as the Spirit of God, nor is it the life of God. To say that created human beings have anything divine in them by nature is utterly erroneous; there is no “divine spark” in humankind that is part of God or divine in any way. However, the human spirit is similar to the Spirit of God, and the human life is similar to the life of God; for this reason it is possible for the Spirit of God, through regeneration, to be joined to the human spirit and for the divine life to become one with the human life, without the loss of distinction between what is human and what is divine.

Whereas the potential of an organic union between God and His chosen and redeemed people exists by virtue of our being created as vessels with a human spirit, the organic union actually takes place through our experience of regeneration. When those who believe into the Son of God are regenerated (John 3:16), born of God to be children of God with the life and nature of God, the

A Grafted Life

To live in the organic union is to live a grafted life, as illustrated by Paul’s word concerning branches from a wild olive tree being cut off from that tree and then grafted in a cultivated olive tree (Rom. 11:16-17). The merging of our being in Christ with the Triune God is the grafting of the human life with the divine life. The oneness that God desires to have with His redeemed and regenerated people is that, through grafting, the divine life and the human life be joined together in an organic union; this union of life is a grafted life. The concept of the divine life and the human life being grafted into one is mysterious and far beyond natural or religious thought regarding the relationship between human beings and the Triune God.

In grafting, two similar lives are joined and grow together organically as one. Grafting is effective only if the lives being grafted are similar, as is the situation with the human life and the divine life. Because our humanity was created in the image of God and according to the likeness of God, it can be joined to the divine life. Our human life

resembles the divine life, and for this reason the divine life and the human life can be grafted together and grow together organically. The principle is the same with the human spirit, which was created when the breath of God entered into the human body and became the spirit, the lamp of the Lord. Just as the human life is not identical to the divine life but similar to the divine life, the human spirit is not the same as the divine Spirit but similar to the divine Spirit. Because of this similarity, in the action of regeneration the divine Spirit enters

the human spirit, enlivens the human spirit, and is mingled with the human spirit to become one. “He who is joined to the Lord is one spirit” (1 Cor. 6:17). That which is born of, regenerated by, the Spirit is spirit—the enlivened human spirit joined to and mingled with the Spirit. This is grafting, a union of life in the regenerated spirit of the believers.

In speaking of the organic union with the Triune God through the grafting of the divine life with the human life, we need to make a crucial distinction between God in His immutable, eternal Godhead and God in His economy with the processes through which He passed in Christ to make it possible for Him to make Himself one with His redeemed people and make them one with Him. In order for believers in Christ to be grafted into Him, it was necessary, in the divine economy, for Him to pass through the processes of incarnation, crucifixion, and resurrection (John 1:14, 29; 20:22; 7:37-39). Christ became flesh to be the seed of David, the branch of David, so that we may be grafted together with Him (Matt. 1:1; Zech. 3:8; Jer. 23:5; 33:15). As human beings, we are branches, pieces of

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human spirit is born of the divine Spirit. “That which is born of the Spirit is spirit” (v. 6), and now the Spirit witnesses with our spirit that we are children of God (Rom. 8:16). When the spirit is born of, regenerated by, the Spirit, a union in life of the human life with the divine life takes place, and the regenerated human spirit is mingled with the Lord Spirit as one spirit (2 Cor. 3:17; 1 Cor. 6:17). This organic union through regeneration is an issue of our faith in Christ, our believing into Him as the Son of God, who is the embodiment and expression of the eternal, indestructible life of God. “Everyone who believes into Him may have eternal life” (John 3:15). Here *Him* refers to the Son of God (v. 16) who by incarnation became the Son of Man, who was lifted up on the cross as the fulfillment of the type of the bronze serpent in Numbers 21:4-9. According to John 3:15-16, we not only believe *in* the Son—we believe *into* the Son, thereby entering into Him and into an organic union with Him. “This implies that the believer has an organic union with Christ through believing into Him. To believe into Christ is to have our being merged into His that we two may be one organically” (Lee, Recovery Version, Phil. 1:29, note 1).

wood. Christ came as the branch of David to become the same as we are in our humanity, making it possible for Him and us to be grafted together. Since the grafting of a branch into a tree requires the cutting of both the tree and the branch, Christ had to be “cut” so that God could put us into Him (1 Cor. 1:30). He was “cut” when He was wounded for our transgressions and died for our redemption on the cross, and we were “cut” when, under the conviction of the Spirit of reality, we repented, believed into the Lord, the Son of God, and received Him into our spirit. After such a cutting of both the tree (Christ) and us (the branches), a joining in spirit through an organic union took place. From this we see that in grafting we have cutting, joining, and organic union. After the Lord was crucified and His being was opened for us to be one with Him, He was resurrected to become the life-giving Spirit, the holy breath breathed into the disciples on the day of His resurrection (15:45; John 20:22). Although Christ was put to death in the flesh, He was resurrected in the Spirit, and as the Lord Spirit (2 Cor. 3:18), He was ready for grafting. When a sinner is enlightened by the seeking and convicting Spirit and repents and believes into the Son of God, confessing that God has raised Jesus from the dead (Rom. 10:9-10), Christ as the life-giving Spirit enters into the spirit of him or her, dispensing the divine, eternal life into that newly saved one. The human spirit is born of the divine Spirit, grafting takes place, and the two spirits become one in a marvelous, mysterious organic union.

This organic union through grafting is altogether a matter of faith and in faith, the faith of the Son of God. According to the proper translation of the Greek text of John 3:15, those who believe into the Son of God have eternal life; they receive another life—the divine life—in addition to their natural, created human life, and this divine life, eternal life, is imparted to them, dispensed into them, through regeneration. To believe into the Son of God is to enter into union with Him in spirit. The faith by which we believe into Christ does not originate with us; human effort cannot generate saving faith. On the contrary, the resurrected and ascended Christ is the Author and Perfecter of our faith, infusing into us the God-given capacity to believe into Him and thereby enter into an organic union with Him. The “faith in Jesus Christ” (Gal. 2:16) is actually (and literally) “the faith of Jesus Christ”—Christ Himself dispensed into us to be the faith by which we believe into Him. Such faith is intrinsically related to our appreciation of the surpassing worth of Christ:

Faith in Jesus Christ denotes an organic union with Him through believing. This is related to the believers’ appreciation of the person of the Son of God as the most precious One. The believers are infused with the preciousness of

Christ through the gospel preached to them. This Christ becomes in them the faith by which they believe and the capacity to believe through their appreciation of Him. This faith creates an organic union in which they and Christ are one. (Lee, Recovery Version, v. 16, note 1)

Through faith in Christ we have been grafted into Christ, and through this process of grafting, two lives—the divine and the human—are grafted together and become one.

Once we see that we and the resurrected Christ have been grafted together to form an organic union, a life union, and that we and He are one spirit, we need to learn to live a grafted life. This is truly what Watchman Nee calls “the normal Christian life.” Like Paul, who was set forth as a pattern for all believers in Christ (1 Tim. 1:16), we may declare, “The life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith of the Son of God” (Gal. 2:20).

Contrary to the notion of some Christian teachers, the grafted life is not a so-called exchanged life, the exchange of the human life for the divine life; rather,

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the grafted life is the mingling of the human life with the divine life in a union of two lives becoming one life, a divine-human life. The Lord does not require us to renounce our poor human life in exchange for His superior divine life; that is, He does not expect us to yield our human life to Him so that He may replace it with His divine life. If we would be faithful to the Word of God, we must assert that the Christian life is not an exchanged life but a grafted life, a mingled life—the mingling of the human life with the divine life. Instead of exchange or replacement, there is the dispensing of the divine life into the human life and the mingling of the divine life with the human life. It is a wonderful reality in the Christian experience that believers in Christ are united organically with Christ in the way of life! Whatever Christ is and whatever He has accomplished are for this one thing—that He and we would be organically united and live a grafted life.

As we live a grafted life with Christ, our human life is not eliminated but is strengthened, uplifted, and enriched by the divine life that is continually dispensed into it. Referring again to the branch of a wild olive tree being

grafted into a cultivated olive tree, we may say that our “wild” natural life is permeated and subdued by the “cultivated” divine life. The branch, the redeemed human being, retains its essential God-created characteristics, but its life is uplifted and transformed by having been grafted into the divine life. First, the divine life subdues the “wild” human life, and then the divine life enriches, uplifts, and transforms the human life (Rom. 12:2; 2 Cor. 3:18). As this process takes place, there is a twofold result. On the one hand, the divine life works to discharge the negative elements in the fallen human life, eliminating all defects, weaknesses, and infirmities. On the other hand, in the grafted life the divine life resurrects God’s original creation, which Christ redeemed through His death on our behalf. This means that far from giving up His original creation, God reclaims it and restores it by the resurrection power of the divine life, by Christ Himself as resurrection (John 11:25; Phil. 3:10). While the divine life is discharging the negative elements, it works to resurrect God’s original creation. As a result, the abilities and functions bestowed on us by creation are not only restored but also resurrected to become part of the new creation in Christ

The goal of the divine revelation in Romans is the Body of Christ, but before we can be in the Body and function as members of the Body, we must first be in Christ, having an organic union with Him and living a grafted life.

Jesus (2 Cor. 5:17). All God-created faculties are uplifted to the highest level, producing in the believers a highly developed character and the highest standard of morality, the living of a divinely human child of God and brother of Christ. The unsearchable riches of Christ (Eph. 3:8) are worked into our inward parts, causing our inner being to be constituted with Christ and causing us to be renewed in our mind, emotion, and will (4:23). Christ as life, even as resurrection, enriches and saturates our entire being (Rom. 8:11), producing a metabolic change of genuine transformation (not self-improvement). Eventually, we will be transformed into the image of the glorious resurrected Christ, the Lord Spirit, and be conformed to the image of Christ as the firstborn Son of God (2 Cor. 3:18; Rom. 8:29) so that He might be the Firstborn among many brothers for the corporate expression of Triune God, first in the Body of Christ and ultimately and consummately in the New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:10-11). Although the divine life is able to carry out such a tremendous work within us, we nevertheless need to cooperate with His inner working by exercising our spirit to contact Him (1 Tim. 4:7), abide in Him, and live in the organic

union with Him for the building up of the Body of Christ. To see more concerning our being “one Body in Christ” (Rom. 12:5), we may now consider the organic union as it is revealed in the book of Romans, concentrating on the expression *one Body in Christ*.

The Gospel of God—from Sinners to Sons for the Body

The central theme of the Epistle to the Romans is that, through His complete salvation, God is making sinners into sons of God for the building up of the Body of Christ expressed as local churches. The goal of God’s economy—His plan and arrangement to fulfill His eternal purpose—is the organic Body of Christ consummating in the New Jerusalem (Eph. 3:11; 1:22-23; 4:16; Rev. 21:2, 9-10). In order for sinners to become sons of God (Rom. 8:14), they must first be redeemed through the blood of Christ, justified by faith in the person and work of Christ, reconciled to God through the death of His Son, and born of God in spirit to be His children (v. 16) and experience every aspect of God’s organic salvation in life (5:10)—

regeneration, sanctification, renewing, transformation, conformation, and glorification, all of which are revealed in the Epistle to the Romans. The goal, the high point, of the divine revelation in Romans is the Body of Christ, but before we can be in the Body and function as members of the Body, we must first be in Christ, having an organic union with Him and living a grafted life. Apart from this union, we cannot touch the reality of the Body of Christ, because apart from our being one spirit with the Lord, the Body is nothing more than an

empty doctrine concerning which we may discourse and debate but not experience.

The Christ experienced by the apostle Paul and unveiled in Romans is not only the objective Christ interceding for us at the right hand of God (8:34) but also the subjective Christ, the indwelling Christ, Christ as the Spirit with our spirit (vv. 4, 16). It is with the indwelling Christ that we have been grafted and with whom, as members of His Body, we may live in a union of life. As the gospel of God, Romans emphasizes the Christ who lives in us for our experience and enjoyment in our union with Him in spirit:

The gospel of God, as the subject of this book [Romans], concerns Christ as the Spirit living within the believers after His resurrection. This is higher and more subjective than what was presented in the Gospels, which concern Christ only in the flesh as He lived among His disciples after His incarnation but before His death and resurrection. This book, however, reveals that Christ has resurrected and has become the life-giving Spirit (8:9-10).

He is no longer merely the Christ outside the believers, but He is now the Christ within them. Hence, the gospel in this book is the gospel of the One who is now indwelling His believers as their subjective Savior. (Lee, Recovery Version, 1:1, note 9)

If we are to have an accurate and balanced understanding of the organic union revealed in Romans, we need to be clear about five matters—the objective basis of the organic union in God’s judicial redemption, the divine transfer that effects the organic union, the experience of living in the organic union in the mingled spirit, and the issue of the organic union in the Body of Christ expressed as local churches.

The Objective Basis of the Organic Union

Righteousness is the foundation of God’s throne, upholding His government in the universe (Psa. 89:14), and Christ as our righteousness (not the righteousness of Christ) is the foundation of our entire Christian life. The gospel is the power of God unto salvation because the righteousness of God is revealed in it (Rom. 1:16-17):

In John 3:16 God’s love is the source and motive of God’s salvation. In Eph. 2:5, 8 God’s grace is the means of God’s salvation. Here righteousness is the power of God’s salvation. God’s righteousness, which is solid and steadfast, is the foundation of His throne (Psa. 89:14) and the base on which His kingdom is built (Rom. 14:17). Legally, both love and grace can fluctuate, but righteousness cannot. It is even more so with God’s righteousness. It is God’s righteousness, not ours, that is revealed in the gospel of God. Hence, the gospel is the power of God unto salvation to everyone who believes. (Lee, Recovery Version, Rom. 1:17, note 1)

“Everyone who believes”—this is most crucial. God’s unique requirement in this age, the age of grace and of mystery, is that we believe into His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. Everyone who believes into Him will be saved. The faith by which we believe into the Son and have in His propitiating blood (3:25) does not originate with us, for fallen human beings dead in trespasses and sins cannot will themselves to believe. Faith originates with God who, as the God of glory (Acts 7:2), infuses His element into us, and this element becomes our faith, our ability to believe in Him. “The righteousness of God is revealed in it [the gospel] out of faith to faith, as it is written, ‘But the righteous shall have life and live by faith’” (Rom. 1:17). Through the exercise of our God-infused faith, we believe into Christ, and we believe in the gospel of God, the power of which is the righteousness of God. The result is that Christ as righteousness is accounted to us, and Christ

becomes righteousness to us for our justification and for us to have the divine life.

Justification by faith is intrinsically related to our organic union with Christ, for we are justified in Him, not apart from Him. Because Christ through His redemptive death has fulfilled all the requirements of God’s righteousness, holiness, and glory and because God has given Christ to us as our righteousness (1 Cor. 1:30), as the robe of righteousness covering us in the presence of God the Father, God is able, without violating His righteousness, to forgive our sins, reconcile us to Himself, and justify us, declaring us righteous in Christ before Him. The fact that God has accepted Christ’s death on our behalf is proved by His raising Christ from the dead (Rom. 4:25). Now as we believe into Christ and are one with Him, we are justified in Him, and the righteousness of God is manifested to us.

We are “justified freely by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus” (3:24). “Justification is God’s action in which He approves us according to the standard of His righteousness. God can

We believe in the person and work of Christ, but this faith is actually the faith of Jesus Christ infused into us and operating in us, by which we believe into Him for our justification.

do this on the basis of the redemption of Christ” (Lee, Recovery Version, v. 24, note 1). This redemption fulfilled all the righteous demands of the law of God. Because Christ paid the price for our sins, suffering death on our behalf, fulfilling God’s requirements on us, and because God is righteous, not having His claim both on His Son, our Redeemer, and on us, He can, and even must, justify us freely. Such a glorious justification is not by our works but by the grace of God. As God justifies us in this way, His righteousness is manifested “through the faith of Jesus Christ to all those who believe” (v. 22). We believe in the person and work of Christ, but this faith is actually the faith of Jesus Christ infused into us and operating in us, by which we believe into Him for our justification, and Christ becomes righteousness to us. In this way we experience righteousness through the gospel that is the power of God unto salvation “to everyone who believes” (1:16). As verse 17 explains, “The righteousness of God is revealed in it out of faith to faith, as it is written, ‘But the righteous shall have life and live by faith.’”

As God justifies us through faith in Christ Jesus, Christ as

righteousness is accounted to us, reckoned to our account. This is the objective, legal, forensic side to our justification, but there is another side, which, sadly, is often neglected in discussion of justification.

This other side—our being justified in Christ—is presented in Paul’s preaching of the gospel recorded in Acts 13: “From all the things from which you were not able to be justified by the law of Moses, in this One everyone who believes is justified” (v. 39). *This One* is the resurrected Christ announced as the gospel by the apostles, the Holy One who could not see corruption, the One who, in His resurrection, was begotten to be the Son of God in His humanity, thereby becoming the firstborn Son in addition to His being, in the Godhead, the only begotten Son. *In this One* indicates that in order to be justified by God, we must be in the resurrected Christ by believing into Him. Apart from our being in this One, having an organic union with Him through faith, Christ cannot become our righteousness. According to a merely doctrinal understanding, Christ, the just One, is enthroned in the heavens, and when we believe in Him, God accounts

The believers are now “in this One” through believing into Him and, being in Him, they are justified by God and have Christ as their righteousness.

Contrary to a widely held notion, justification is neither an end in itself nor the goal of God’s salvation. God gave His only begotten Son, that those who believe into Him may have eternal life, the indestructible life of God. The Son came that we might have this life and have it abundantly, declaring that He Himself is life (John 10:10; 11:25; 14:6). “This is the testimony, that God gave to us eternal life and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life” (1 John 5:11-12). That “the life” and not justification is God’s goal is revealed in Romans 5:18: “So then as it was through one offense unto condemnation to all men, so also it was through one righteous act unto justification of life to all men.” *Justification of life*—is this not an utterance of great importance? Paul’s word here indicates that far from being an end in itself, justification is a means, a procedure, that leads believers to God’s goal—the life that is in the Son, the life that the Son Himself is:

Justification is not merely a matter of position but also an organic matter. Through the faith of Christ we believe in Christ and enter into Him to be one with Him, and in this union God accounts Christ as righteousness to us.

Life is the goal of God’s salvation; thus, justification is “of life.” Justification is not an end in itself; it is for life. Through justification we have come up to the standard of God’s righteousness and correspond with it, so that now He can impart His life to us. Justification changes our outward position; life changes our inward disposition. Justification unto life indicates that life is the focus of this chapter [Romans 5]. (Lee, Recovery Version, v. 18, note 2).

Christ to be our righteousness strictly in a legal and forensic manner. This concept is accurate to a limited degree, but it is shallow. In order for us to be justified by God, we need to be “in this One” by believing into Christ with the God-imparted faith that enables us to be one with Him, being organically united to Him. It is by means of our organic union with Christ that the righteous God can account Christ as our righteousness. Justification, therefore, is not merely a matter of position but also an organic matter, a matter in life. Through the faith of Christ we believe in Christ, the Son of God, and enter into Him to be one with Him, and in this union God accounts Christ as righteousness to us, clothing us with Christ as the father in Luke 15 clothed the returned son with the best robe.

The thought in Acts 13:39 is reinforced by Paul’s word in Galatians 2:16: “Knowing that a man is not justified out of works of law, but through faith in Jesus Christ, we also have believed into Christ Jesus that we might be justified out of faith in Christ and not out of the works of law.” Paul speaks of faith in Jesus Christ and of faith in Christ, obviously emphasizing a matter of the greatest importance.

In the judicial procedure of justification through faith in Jesus Christ, the righteousness that is the foundation of God’s throne becomes the foundation of our entire Christian life. God cannot impart Himself in Christ as life to those who have not been redeemed, forgiven, cleansed, reconciled to God, and justified by the faith that is both in Christ and of Christ. First, redemption must be applied to us so that we may be forgiven and cleansed; then God in Christ can enter into us not only to enliven our spirit but even to cause our spirit to be life itself: “The spirit is life because of righteousness” (8:10). Through justification Christ is accounted to us as righteousness. Because justification is “of life,” having “the life” as the goal, our spirit, having been born of the Spirit (John 3:6), is life. Justification is the procedure; life is the goal.

A Divine Transfer

As those who have obeyed the gospel of God concerning His Son and have believed into Him to have the obedience of faith (Rom. 1:3-5; 10:16), we have experienced a divine transfer. The organic union between Christ and

the believers is based on this divine transfer—a transfer out of Adam into Christ, out of death into life, out of darkness into light, and out of the authority of darkness into the kingdom of the Son of His love.

We, the believers in Christ, have been transferred out of Adam into Christ (1 Cor. 15:22; Rom. 5:12, 17, 19). In the sight of God there are only two men in the universe—Adam and Christ. In Adam we inherited sin, we were constituted sinners, we were under the reign of death, and we were under God’s condemnation (vv. 12, 14, 19; 1:18). As the result of being transferred into Christ, we have grace with righteousness, we have been justified and reconciled to God, and we have eternal life (v. 17; 3:24, 26; 5:17). Adam, the first man, the father of the entire human race, brought in death through sin: “Through one man sin entered into the world, and through sin, death” (v. 12). In contrast to Adam is Christ, the second man (1 Cor. 15:47), who brought in life through righteousness: “If by the offense of the one, death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ” (Rom. 5:17). Through the one—Adam—death reigned, and through the One—Christ—those who receive grace and righteousness will reign in life. In verse 18 Paul goes on to say, “So then as it was through one offense unto condemnation to all men, so also it was through one righteous act unto justification of life to all men.” The use of the word *life* in these verses implies regeneration, through which we were born of the Spirit in our spirit and received the divine, eternal life.

We were regenerated in Christ in His resurrection (1 Pet. 1:3), at which time we became His brothers, and His Father became our Father (John 20:17). In this rebirth the divine transfer took place, and we were transferred out of Adam into Christ. Once, in the old creation, we were in Adam; now, as a new creation, we are in Christ. From God’s perspective we were transferred in Christ’s resurrection, but from the point of view of spiritual experience we were transferred out of Adam into Christ by believing into Christ and by being baptized into Christ (3:15; Rom. 6:4). When we believed in Christ, the Son of God, we believed *into Him*, actually believing ourselves into Christ, becoming one with Him. When we were baptized by being immersed into the Triune God, we were baptized into Christ. God has transferred us out of Adam and into Christ. Of Him, God, we are in Christ Jesus (1 Cor. 1:30), and we should fully believe and boldly testify that we have been transferred into Christ and now are in Christ. This is both a divine fact and our personal experience through faith. With this transfer as the basis, and through this transfer as a process, we have been grafted together with Christ to live in Him for the Body.

When we were transferred out of Adam into Christ, we were transferred out of death into life: “Since through man came death, through man also came the resurrection of the dead. For just as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive” (15:21-22). Adam brought in death through sin, and Christ brought in life through righteousness.

The death brought in by Adam works in us from our birth by our parents until the death of our body. The life of resurrection brought in by Christ operates in us, as signified by baptism (Rom. 6:4), from our regeneration by the Spirit of God (John 3:5) until the transfiguration of our body (Phil. 3:21). (Lee, Recovery Version, 1 Cor. 15:21, note 2)

Whereas the source of death is the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, the source of life is the tree of life (Gen. 2:9, 17). Thus, to pass out of death into life is to change the source of our living. By repenting and believing into the Lord Jesus, we received the divine life into us and were transferred out of death into life. In His mercy God has

When we believed in Christ, the Son of God, we believed *into Him*, actually believing ourselves into Christ, becoming one with Him. God has transferred us out of Adam and into Christ.

given us “repentance unto life,” the life of God (Acts 11:18), and also the ability to believe. In our experience, therefore, the Lord’s word in John 5:24 has been fulfilled: “He who hears My word and believes Him who sent Me has eternal life, and does not come into judgment but has passed out of death into life.” Faith in the Lord Jesus is the way for us to pass out of death into life, and love toward the brothers is the evidence that we have passed out of death into life: “We know that we have passed out of death into life because we love the brothers” (1 John 3:14).

Because death is related to darkness, and life is related to light, to pass out of death into life is to simultaneously pass out of darkness into light. Through the gospel God has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light (1 Pet. 2:9). Formerly, when we were in Adam and in death, we not only were in darkness—we were darkness; now, having experienced the divine transfer, we are not merely in the light—we are light: “You were once darkness but are now light in the Lord” (Eph. 5:8). Paul could write these words because he was once darkness, but after the glorified Christ shined into him and he

repented, he became light in the organic union with Christ. Furthermore, the Lord charged Paul to turn others from darkness to light: “I have appeared to you for this purpose, to appoint you as a minister...to open their eyes, to turn them from darkness to light and from the authority of Satan to God” (Acts 26:16, 18). Darkness is the expression and sphere of Satan in death, and light is the expression and sphere of God in life. Hence, to be transferred out of darkness into light is to be transferred out of Satan’s realm of death into God’s realm of life (1 John 1:5-7). Formerly, we were in darkness and even were darkness under the authority of Satan, but God in Christ has transferred us out of darkness and the authority of Satan into light and the authority of God.

Paul reveals more regarding this in Colossians 1:13, where he assures us that the Father has “delivered us out of the authority of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of the Son of His love.” The Father has delivered us out of darkness into His marvelous light. The authority of darkness denotes the authority of Satan (Matt. 12:26); darkness is Satan as death, and light is God as life. To be

union with Christ for God’s goal—the building up of the Body of Christ.

Living in the Organic Union

Throughout the Epistle to the Romans Paul refers to many different aspects of the living of a grafted life in the organic union with the Christ who is in us and in whom we are, and any attempt to consider them all is beyond the scope of this essay. What follows is a brief summary of certain necessary and vital experiences the believers have as they live in the organic union with the resurrected Christ.

The Spirit witnessing with our spirit. Because our spirit has been born of the Spirit and we are one spirit with the Lord Spirit (1 Cor. 6:17; 2 Cor. 3:18), we may experience the Spirit with His multifarious functions. “The Spirit Himself witnesses with our spirit that we are children of God” (Rom. 8:16). Here we have two crucial points. First, this verse reveals that the Spirit and our spirit are bearing witness, the Spirit with our spirit and our spirit with the Spirit; this witness of the two spirits functioning as one

is an issue of the mingling of the divine Spirit and the regenerated human spirit to become one spirit, the mingled spirit, which is both human and divine. The other crucial point is that the Spirit and our spirit bear witness to the fact that we are children of God, not sons of God. Through regeneration all believers in Christ have been begotten of God to become children of God with the life and nature of God, and the two spirits testify of this reality. Having been born of the Spirit in our spirit, we have a life relationship with God as His children.

The Spirit witnesses with our spirit that, as God’s children, we have such a relationship; however, in order to be designated sons of God, we need to grow in the divine life and be led by the Spirit as He lives within us.

Walking according to the spirit. “That the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the spirit” (v. 4). The law’s righteous requirement is not fulfilled *by us*, that is, not by our will power, natural strength, fleshly energy, or vain attempts at self-improvement; it is fulfilled *in us*, that is, by another person with another life, the highest life, living in us and doing in us what we cannot do. This other person is the resurrected Christ who, as the life-giving Spirit, dwells in our regenerated spirit. We simply walk according to the spirit. The Greek word for *walk* here denotes the general walk in our daily living, and the spirit according to which we should walk is not merely the divine Spirit nor merely the human spirit but the mingled spirit, the union of these two spirits. The essence of the New Testament is the two spirits—the divine Spirit and the human spirit—mingled together as one spirit. This

The spirit according to which we should walk is not merely the divine Spirit nor merely the human spirit but the mingled spirit, the union of these two spirits, which have been mingled together as one spirit.

delivered out of the authority of darkness is to be delivered from the devil, who has the might of death (Heb. 2:14; John 17:15). We have been delivered from the devil, Satan, by the death of Christ and by the life of Christ in resurrection (Col. 2:14-15; John 5:24) and transferred into the kingdom of the Son of God’s love. To be sure, the kingdom of the Son is the authority of Christ (Rev. 11:15; 12:10); however, His authority in His kingdom today is exercised in a most pleasant way. The Son is the embodiment and expression of the divine life (1 John 5:11-12). To be transferred into the kingdom of the Son of the Father’s love is to be transferred into the Son, who is life to us (Col. 3:4). The Son in resurrection is now, in our experience of Him, the life-giving Spirit (1 Cor. 15:45), and He rules us in His resurrection life with His love. When we live by the Son as our life in resurrection (John 6:57), we are living in His kingdom, experiencing and enjoying Him in the Father’s love. The kingdom in which we find ourselves now through regeneration is a realm full of life, love, and light, where we are ruled in love with life under the shining of the divine light. Here in the kingdom of the Son of the Father’s love we may live in the organic

union of the Spirit of God and the spirit of man is the deepest mystery in the Bible, and it is the focus of God's economy, His plan and arrangement to dispense Himself in Christ as the Spirit into us to be our life and life supply, making Himself one with us and us one with Him for the fulfillment of God's desire to produce and build up the Body of Christ. If we would live a grafted life in the organic union with Christ, we must know that the Lord Jesus today, as the embodiment of the Triune God, is the Spirit dwelling in our spirit and mingled with our spirit as one spirit. Ultimately, what the Bible requires of us is that we walk according to this mingled spirit.

Serving God in our spirit. "God is my witness, whom I serve in my spirit in the gospel of His Son" (1:9). The spirit in this verse is not the Spirit of God but the apostle Paul's regenerated spirit (cf. John 3:6). In Romans Paul strongly emphasizes that whatever we are, whatever we have, and whatever we do toward God must be in this spirit, and he presents himself as a pattern of serving God in his regenerated spirit by and with the indwelling Christ, the life-giving Spirit, not in his soul by the ability and power of the soul. Soulish service is displeasing to God, who longs for His people to serve Him in their spirit. In order to serve God in our spirit, we need to know the spirit, sense the spirit, be burning in spirit, and discern the difference between soul and spirit (8:2, 6, 10-11; 12:11; Heb. 4:12). That this service is actually worship is indicated by the significance of the Greek word *serve* in Romans 1:9, a word that means "serve in worship." Paul regarded his proclamation of the gospel as a service in which he worshipped God. As he served and worshipped God in his spirit, Paul surely fulfilled the Father's longing expressed by the Son in John 4:23-24: "An hour is coming, and it is now, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and in truthfulness, for the Father also seeks such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truthfulness." According to the context, true worshippers drink of the living water, which becomes in them a fountain of water springing up into eternal life (v. 14). The worship that satisfies God the Father, the worship in spirit and truthfulness, is the worship in the divine dispensing of the Divine Trinity by our drinking and flowing the water of life in resurrection—the fountain, the spring, and the river. When we drink of the living water, this water becomes a fountain springing up and flowing, and in this flowing we serve God in spirit by worshipping Him in truthfulness, in the revealed divine reality wrought into us to become our sincerity and genuineness. We drink of the Spirit (1 Cor. 12:13), and the Father drinks of our spirit, the mingled spirit.

Being saved in life and reigning in life. In Romans 5 Paul

speaks of being saved in Christ's life and of reigning in life: "If we, being enemies, were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more we will be saved in His life, having been reconciled" (v. 10). God's complete salvation is both judicial and organic. Judicially, we have been saved objectively through Christ's redemptive death and have been forgiven, cleansed, justified, and reconciled; this is objective, and it is the foundation of the Christian life. But many believers do not realize that we need to be saved "much more" in, by, and through the divine life; this is subjective, and it is the progression of the Christian life. The term *organic salvation* denotes the believers' subjective experiences of being saved from all manner of negative things in their fallen being, not by outward action but by the inward operation of Christ as life. This operation, as Paul goes on to teach us, involves sanctification, renewing, transformation, conformation, and glorification. Through sanctification we are saturated with the divine nature to be holy even as God is holy. Through renewing, the old element is discharged, and a new, divine element is imparted to make us new even as God is new. Through transformation we undergo a metabolic change in our soul

Organic salvation denotes the believers' subjective experiences of being saved from all manner of negative things in their fallen being, not by outward action but by the inward operation of Christ as life.

by being renewed in the spirit of the mind (12:2) and by beholding the glory of the Lord (2 Cor. 3:18). Through conformation the many sons of God, who are the brothers of Christ, are conformed to the image of the firstborn Son of God (Rom. 8:29). Through glorification the Christ of glory who dwells in us as our hope of glory (Col. 1:27) gradually saturates our entire tripartite being—spirit and soul and body (1 Thes. 5:23)—until our body is transfigured to be like the glorious body of the resurrected Christ (Phil. 3:21).

The life that saves us "much more" is the life by which we reign. "If, by the offense of the one, death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ" (Rom. 5:17). Grace here is not mere unmerited favor—grace is the Triune God dispensed into us for our supply and enjoyment. In verse 21 we see that this grace (which is actually a person) reigns "through righteousness unto eternal life." Presently, this reigning is inward and subjective, not the reigning of the overcomers as co-kings of Christ ruling over the

nations in the coming millennial kingdom. Those who, by the mercy of God, are learning what it is to be saved in life and to reign in life can testify that the more they live a grafted life in the organic union with Christ, the more they experience the “much more” in Romans 5:10 and 17. As we live in the mingled spirit, enjoying the nearness and availability of the Lord Jesus, we realize that in the Christian life there truly is more than elementary judicial redemption and objective reconciliation and justification.

Walking in newness of life. “We have been buried therefore with Him through baptism into His death, in order that just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so also we might walk in newness of life” (6:4). In spiritual experience the death of Christ and Christ Himself are one. Because we have been baptized into Christ, we have been baptized into His death and, in spirit, discover that the effectiveness of His death is the Spirit. This opens the way for us to know the power of His resurrection and live a life of resurrection in Him and to be “in the likeness of His resurrection” (v. 5). Christ’s history, with His death and resurrection, now becomes our

resurrection. It is in this realm of resurrection and by Christ as resurrection that we no longer live to ourselves but to Him who died for us and has been raised (2 Cor. 5:14-15).

Living to the Lord. “None of us lives to himself, and none dies to himself; for whether we live, we live to the Lord, and whether we die, we die to the Lord. Therefore, whether we live or we die, we are the Lord’s” (Rom. 14:7-8). Fallen human beings live in the self, for the self, and to the self, whereas Christ-loving believers, realizing that they are not their own but the Lord’s, no longer live to themselves but to the Lord. Living to the Lord is different from living for the Lord. If we only live for the Lord, we and the Lord are not one; rather, we, acting independently, are doing something for the Lord. If we live to the Lord, we and the Lord are one in an organic union. To live to the Lord is to take Him as the unique aim of our living and being and to remain under the leading and constraining love of the Lord to satisfy the desire of His heart and accomplish His purpose according to His eternal will. To live to the Lord is to rejoice in being His possession and belonging to Him now and forever. When we are in the self with the natural life and thus, experientially, are not living a grafted life, we live to the self, under the direction of the self and to satisfy the self, but when we live in the mingled spirit with the flow of the divine life in the divine dispensing, we live to the Lord and for His will to produce and build up the Body of Christ.

“One Body in Christ”

For many commentators and theologians the central truth, the focus, in Romans is justification by faith, but this view of the book is contrary to the content of this Epistle as a whole. The focal point in Romans is not justification; it is the Body of Christ, the organic corporate expression of Christ, the means for Him, the Head, to carry out God’s administration and the channel through which Christ continues His ministry from the heavens (Eph. 1:22-23). This marvelous divine-human organism is the goal of God’s economy, for it fulfills God’s purpose in this age and will issue in the New Jerusalem as the ultimate consummation of God’s plan and the fulfillment of the desire of His heart. If we neglect the Body of Christ, concentrating instead on the necessary procedures, processes, and experiences that lead to the producing and building up of the Body, we lose the focus of the Christian life and do not have the God-ordained goal, aim, and direction for the Christian life. When we arrive at chapter 12 in our study of Romans, we arrive at the peak, the summit, of the divine revelation in this Epistle.

“Just as in one body we have many members, and all the members do not have the same function, so we who are many are one Body in Christ, and individually members

As we live in the mingled spirit, enjoying the nearness and availability of the Lord Jesus, we realize that in the Christian life there truly is more than elementary judicial redemption and objective reconciliation and justification.

experience because we are in Him; in the organic union the history of Christ becomes the experience of the Christian. To walk in newness of life is to live in resurrection. “After baptism we become a new person in resurrection. Resurrection is not only a future state; it is also a present process. To walk in newness of life means to live today in the realm of resurrection and to reign in life” (Lee, Recovery Version, v. 4, note 4).

To walk according to the spirit is to walk in newness of life. Both newness and life are God Himself, the eternal, ever-new Divine Being. Furthermore, newness is intrinsically related to the resurrection life of Christ, which is forever new, can never become old, stale, or moribund, and in which all things are made new (2 Cor. 5:17; Rev. 21:5). The link between Christ’s being raised from the dead and our walking in newness of life indicates that to walk in newness of life is to live in Christ as the resurrection life (John 11:25) and to walk in Him as the realm of resurrection. As we walk according to the spirit and in newness of life, we are gradually renewed in our tripartite being by the renewing capacity of the divine life in

one of another" (vv. 4-5). To be one Body in Christ is to be in the organic union with Christ, and we live and function in the Body by living a grafted life in the mingled spirit. We need to be deeply and lastingly impressed that Romans 12, an unveiling of God's goal, speaks of the Body of Christ from the angle of the organic union, from the uniting life, from the life that unites us together not only with Christ but with all the other members of Christ. The Body is not an organization or a society but is altogether as organism produced by the union in life that we have with Christ. This organic Body is held together in the organic union with Christ, and the actuality of the Body is in our remaining in the organic union with Christ. If we do not see the organic union that we have with Christ in our spirit, we cannot understand what the Body of Christ is, for if we are not in Christ, we cannot be in the Body of Christ. In order to live in the reality of the Body of Christ and not merely discourse about the Body in an empty, doctrinal way, we need to fully experience the organic union with Christ, with a thorough realization that we are organically one with Christ in life. We then must go on to see that living the Body life in the organic union with Christ involves our entire tripartite being. For the Body life, we need to present our body as a living sacrifice to God (v. 1), be renewed in the mind for the transformation of our soul (vv. 2-3), and be burning in spirit with God as the fire (v. 11; Heb. 12:29). If we do not live in the organic union and if we do not have our body offered to God as a sacrifice, our soul transformed by the renewing of the mind, and our spirit burning with the divine fire, then, in practicality and actuality, we are outside of the Body and live apart from the Body.

In Romans 12:2 Paul says, "Do not be fashioned according to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of the mind that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and well pleasing and perfect." As the context makes clear, the will of God is to obtain a Body for Christ to be His fullness, His expression (Eph. 1:5, 9, 22-23; 5:17); this is the will, the eternal, unchanging will, because of which God created all things (Rev. 4:11). The will of God is for the believers in Christ to be mutually members one of another, coordinating to be the Body of Christ and living the Body life (Rom. 12:4-5). If we care for God's will and live in and for His will, we will coordinate and serve together in the Body of Christ for the building up of the Body in order to carry out God's New Testament economy for the fulfillment of His eternal purpose (vv. 6-11; Eph. 4:16; 1:10; 3:9; 1 Tim. 1:4; 2 Tim. 1:9). Instead of doing what God allows, thereby not obeying the Father's will and losing the kingdom as a reward, we should do what God intends, and for this we should present our body to Him as a living sacrifice.

For this Body we should also live a grafted life in the mingled spirit, that is, in the reality of our organic union with Christ. The mingled spirit is the unique organ for God to bring forth and build up the Body of Christ (Rom. 1:9; 7:6; 8:4, 15-16; 12:4-5, 11). In the grafted life we no longer live by ourselves and for ourselves but allow the pneumatic Christ, the Head of the Body, to live in us and through us, thereby saving us from independence, individualism, and divisiveness into the corporate life of the Body of Christ. Through grafting we are united, mingled, and incorporated with Christ to become in Him the organic Body of Christ and to live and function in the Body within our measure and in fellowship with the Triune God. The reality and practicality of the grafted life is the mingled spirit. The Body of Christ is an organism constituted of a group of redeemed and regenerated people who live, walk, and have their being according to the mingled spirit (8:4-5). In the mingled spirit we serve God (1:9). In the mingled spirit we have the source of newness in our service to God (7:6) and realize that the secret of God's organic salvation is the Spirit with our spirit (5:10; 8:16). The mingled spirit is the spirit of sonship. If we are led

In order to live in the reality of the Body of Christ and not merely discourse about the Body in an empty, doctrinal way, we need to fully experience the organic union with Christ.

by the Spirit in our spirit, we are sons of God in reality (vv. 14-15). We need to pray in the mingled spirit. In the mingled spirit we live to the Lord and not to ourselves (14:7-9), we live a life of the highest virtues for the Body of Christ (12:9-21), and we live the kingdom life with righteousness, peace, and joy (14:17). When we live in the mingled spirit, we can be saved from thinking more highly of ourselves than we ought to think (12:3); we can be of the same mind, and with one accord and one mouth we can glorify God (15:5-6).

It is also in the mingled spirit, and only in the mingled spirit, that we can reign in life for the Body of Christ. Apart from the experience of reigning in life in Romans 5, we cannot have the Body life in Romans 12. God's intention in His organic salvation is that we reign in life with grace for the Body life. God's complete salvation is for us to reign in life by the abundance of the grace and of the gift of righteousness. Whereas the gift of righteousness is for God's judicial redemption, grace is for us to experience God's organic salvation. Reigning in life is actually the full experience of the organic salvation

of God. We can reign in life because we have been regenerated with a divine, spiritual, heavenly, kingly, and royal life. In experience, to reign in life means to live under the ruling of the divine life, as Paul did in his life and ministry (2 Cor. 2:12-14; 5:14), living under the ruling, restriction, and limitation of the divine life. Reigning in life is the key to everything in Romans 6—16. Every aspect of the living of the Body life in chapters 12 and 13 requires us to be ruled by the divine life and thereby live to the Lord and not to ourselves. By reigning in life we can live a life of the highest virtues for the Body life, loving one another warmly in brotherly love (12:10), not being slothful in zeal but serving the Lord with a burning spirit (v. 11), enduring in tribulation (v. 12), rejoicing with those who rejoice and weeping with those who weep (v. 15), and living in peace with everyone, as far as it depends on us (v. 18).

The Body of Christ Expressed as Local Churches

The Body of Christ is a unique, universal organic entity, but it needs to be expressed in a practical way on earth.

According to Paul's view, we begin as fallen sinners and end as members of the Body of Christ living in an organic union with Christ and practicing the Body life in the local churches.

The Body of Christ is expressed as local churches, with each local church—one church in each locality—being an expression of the Body. Romans begins with the designation of Jesus Christ to be the Son of God in His humanity for the mass reproduction of the many sons of God as the members of the Body of Christ, and Romans ends with the practice of the local churches as the expression of the universal Body in space and time (1:3-4; 8:29; 12:4-5; 16:1, 16). Although the churches appear in different places, they are not separate, and although they are local, they are still part of the unique, universal Body of Christ. On the one hand, the Body of Christ is expressed in localities city by city as the local churches (Rev. 1:11); on the other hand, because the fellowship of the Body is universal, these local churches are still one, participating in the unique fellowship of the Body. The Body of Christ is the organism of the Triune God, and the local churches are for the fellowship and communication of the Body of Christ. For the practice of the Body life, all the believers in the local churches must receive all other genuine believers unconditionally, according to the way that God and Christ receive them (Rom. 14:1-3; 15:5-7).

Romans 16 displays the real and practical Body life. In this chapter we see that all the churches and all the saints live in the universal fellowship of the Body of Christ. Significantly, in Romans 16 there is a distinct emphasis on the practicality of the organic union with Christ for the Body of Christ: “receive her in the Lord” (v. 2), “my fellow workers in Christ Jesus” (v. 3), “were in Christ before me” (v. 7), “my beloved in the Lord” (v. 8), “our fellow worker in Christ” (v. 9), “who are in the Lord” (v. 11), “labor in the Lord” and “labored much in the Lord” (v. 12), “greet you in the Lord” (v. 22). In addition, Paul speaks of “the firstfruits of Asia unto Christ” (v. 5), “the churches of Christ” (v. 16), “serve our Lord Christ” (v. 18), and “the proclamation of Jesus Christ” (v. 25)—expressions that demonstrate Paul’s consciousness of the indwelling Christ as he himself lived a grafted life in the organic union with Christ for the Body of Christ.

Furthermore, in his greetings Paul unveils some crucial indicators of the genuine church life both in a particular local church and among the churches: serving the church (v. 1), risking one’s life for the church (vv. 3-4), the churches giving thanks (v. 4), having the church in our home (v. 5), acknowledging that the church is the church of Christ (v. 16), and extending hospitality to everyone in the church and being a host to all the churches (v. 23). Like Paul, we should be governed by the vision of the Body of Christ and follow his pattern to bring all the churches into the fellowship and blending life of the entire Body of Christ. As we live the Body life in a genuine local church as an expression of the Body, the result will be God’s crushing of Satan under our feet, our enjoying the grace of Christ and the peace of God, and the giving of glory to the only wise God (vv. 20, 27).

As book of Romans reveals, the believers in Christ have been redeemed, reconciled, justified, transferred, and regenerated so that, by the faith of Jesus Christ, they may be grafted into Christ to live a grafted life with Christ in the mingled spirit for the Body of Christ expressed as local churches. According to Paul’s view, we begin as fallen sinners and end as members of the Body of Christ living in an organic union with Christ and practicing the Body life in the local churches. The more we live in this organic union for the Body of Christ, the more we will join Paul in exclaiming, “To the only wise God through Jesus Christ, to Him be the glory forever and ever. Amen.” **LFC**

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