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In this pamphlet, John Davis takes the reader through a lengthy discussion of the Apostle Paul's analogy in 1 Corinthians 12:14–30. According to Davis's explanation, the members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are the parts of the body of Christ referred to in verse 27. He gives particular emphasis to verse 20 ("But now are they many members, yet but one body") and declares that the "one body" means there is only one true Church, the one he represents.

At the end of the treatise, Davis puts an exact date, 10 May 1850, something he rarely did with his publications.

THE BODY OF CHRIST,

OR

THE CHURCH.

“There is one body,” and it is the church of Christ. There are many other bodies, but Christ is not the “head” of any of them, rather he is the head of the “body of the church.” “For the body is not one member, but many;” and by so being it is similar to the human body. It is the same God who created both, and it must be that divine wisdom is to be seen in the one and the other.

Man was created in a glorious way, namely in the likeness and image of God. Look at him. Who of all the creatures is like him? Count his members, and try to judge whether any one of them is too many or too few. Is any member put in the place of the other? Observe from the crown of the head to the souls of the feet, and point out any deficiency. Where is the being that can improve it? Notice him as he walks, moving his arms, and raising his head. He accomplishes his purposes in such a splendid way! He gives an internal and silent command, and see all the members immediately ready to obey. The toe, though distant, is just as quick as the quickest; and each member receives its direction as wished. Such a glorious machine, then, is the body—such unity is within it! Oh, how the members sympathize one with the other. One feels no desire to cut the other off; no, for each one feels a need for the other. The most uncomely parts are just as useful as the others; and the service of each one is a service to all of them, namely to the body. Who could imagine

that God could, from material so lowly as the dust of the earth, put together such a glorious body? But thus he did; and he breathed in his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being. The devil has shown great animosity toward this body ever since its inhabitant transgressed; and he frequently strives to deprive it of its different members: but despite that, the body knows its worth, for not one of its members says to another, "I have no need of you." The body can rejoice, despite the devil, because Christ has come to the world to undo the works of the devil, yes, even on the body.

But what have we to do with the human body? Because the body or the church of Christ is one similar to it also; "for as the body is one," says Paul, "and hath many members, of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ." The Creator who designed the body of Adam is also the one who designed the body or the church of Christ; and inasmuch as the human body was made of matter, the body of Christ was also made of matter. An account is given of John the Baptist, sent from God, going out to gather matter or "prepared people," so the great Creator could put together a body or a church for his beloved Son, and place him as the head of it, as the man is the head of the woman. We can imagine seeing John on the shores of the Jordan, and in Aenon, where there was much water, diligently selecting the materials for God to put together the body of the church. There he gathers them together, and takes them to the water to wash away the sins in their midst which they had, and behold them becoming ready material immediately, to be molded into a body. By the time he had somewhat of a fulness of material *ready*, behold the Son of God directing his footsteps toward the Jordan, according to the will of his Father and also wishing to be washed by John the very first thing, not because there was any sin or fault in him, but because he saw fit to fulfill all righteousness. He humbled himself as material to be washed; and while he, as one ready, was coming up out of the water, behold his Father from heaven breathing on him the Holy Ghost, proclaiming, "Behold my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Then Jesus became qualified to be the head on the body or the church that was shortly to be put together. Christ was, as we have already observed, to be a head on the church, in the same way that a man is the head of his wife. He had a head on his own body,

and he intended for the church to have a head also, besides himself; for in the account of the formation of the body or church of Christ, it is not said that he was ever to be placed in the body, as it is said about every other member of it. That which proves this is the words of Paul, in 1 Cor. xii, 28:—“And God hath set some in the church, *first* APOSTLES, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.” By this we see that apostles were the first member that God set in the body, and after that prophets, teachers, &c. Had Christ been a member of the body, no doubt he would have been named first; but it is clear that he was not, for “All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made,” even the church, or the body under examination, although Paul says that God made it. After John the Baptist testified that He was the Lamb of God, we find out that Christ soon, in obedience to his Father, called twelve, and ordained them apostles in the body of Christ, or the material that John had prepared. This is the beginning of the church of Christ, or his body. After that the other members were set in place, namely prophets, teachers, miracles, gifts of healings, helps, governments, tongues, &c. On the day of Pentecost, God breathed on the body, as if a rushing mighty wind, until he filled it with the Holy Ghost, or with the “breath of life;” and the whole body “became a living being,” so that its members could be witnesses for God throughout the whole world.

Now, this is a complete body, immersed and baptized by the same Spirit. God formed the members; and from the material or the men who had been baptized, “he gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors, and teachers.” (Eph. iv, 11). These members were gifts from heaven; and God desired that one part of the washed material receive the apostleship, and that another part receive the prophesying, &c.; and thus they were made apostles, prophets, teachers, &c., so as to be members of the body, or of the remainder of the material. If men are the members that are in the body or the church, as the denominations of this age believe, it was not God who placed them there, but they themselves; for that which He placed as members in the body came from on high as “gifts unto men,” as we see from the previous scripture.

We can ask now concerning this body, as we asked about the human body. Does anyone see anything lacking in it? Look at it from the crown to the soles, does anything appear out of place? How many members did God set needlessly? and how many are necessary? But why do we even ask; there is no one but the fool who would see any deficiency in the work of his Creator. The body of the church is a glorious composition. Although it was only like a baby at this time, it had all the members it would need at middle age, and in its old age. It has a head, eyes, ears, arms, feet, &c.,—every member in its place, and just as it was placed by God. To show this Paul wrote, in 1 Cor. xii, 14—30:—“For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. And if they were all one member, where were the body? But now are they many members, yet but one body. And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. Nay, much more than those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary; And those members of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness. For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked: That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues. Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles? Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?”

The foregoing quote shows the indispensable necessity of the con-

tinuation of all the members in the body; not the continuation of some of them, but a continuation of all of them. It needs a head, eyes, ears, arms, feet, &c., on the body not only in its youth, but in its older days also. The body of Christ was not something to see, hear, walk, &c., for just one day, but to do that continually, as long as the need continued. What good was it for Christ to be the head of the church, unless it had ears to hear, eyes to see, feet to walk, and arms to hold so that it could do everything he commanded it to do? Is the church the Bride of the Lamb? If so, who would want to see the bride without a head, eyes, ears, arms, or feet? She would not be a bride, but something else claiming the name. Jesus Christ did not claim any church as his bride, except the one his Father formed, namely a church with apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers, miracles, gifts of healings, faith, wisdom, knowledge, discernment of spirits, tongues, &c.

It seems very reasonable that the apostles were the head which the church had on its own body, and that some of them also were the eyes, ears, mouth, &c., since those members are contained in the head. All the other offices and gifts also are members of the body somewhere; but it is not up to us to determine in which part, for our job is to prove that they are somewhere in it, and that they have special tasks to perform in the body continually.

Since we have shown from the scriptures that in his church God gave "some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers," we shall say now that their purpose was "*for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.*" (See Eph. iv, 11, 13.) Many are surprised that *saints* need perfecting, because they have been taught to believe that saints are heavenly beings that have already been perfected. The truth is that the early saints were quite imperfect, and even their apostles fell short in many things. Therefore, God set in the church apostles, prophets, &c., for the perfecting of the saints, together with carrying forth the work of the ministry, and the edifying of the body of Christ. Now, there was no way to perfect the saints, perform the work of the ministry, or edify the church, without apostles, prophets,

teachers, &c. What good was it to establish the various churches, unless there were apostles and others to watch over them? The writings of the apostles themselves prove that they were to experience a general falling away very soon, even though the apostles themselves were planting and teaching those churches. Who but the apostles saw their danger and perfected them? What would become of the work of the ministry if the churches heaped to themselves teachers, instead of putting men like Timothy and Titus to choose some for them? And how could the church be edified without the officers that God appointed to do that? It is difficult to answer; but one could imagine that the churches would be like children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive. The body of Christ must have all the members that God placed in it; not having some of them, but all of them. If teachers are enough now “for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ,” then it was something totally unnecessary to place apostles, prophets, miracles, gifts of healings, &c., in the church in the first place. It would have been better for God to have allowed men to make the body in his place, than for him to have placed so many needless members in it. But we think that the scriptures are to be believed before anyone else, and that God knows best.

Having proved the placement of all the members in the body, and having shown their various offices, and the necessity for them, we shall go on to prove further that some were to be apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, and for the edifying of the body of Christ, “*till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a PERFECT MAN, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.*” (Eph. iv, 13). It is necessary to show that all have come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, before one can say that there is no need for all the previous officers in the church at present; and not only that, but it is necessary to show also that the church has come unto a “*PERFECT MAN, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.*” What is similar to a perfect man in any of the churches of our country? Nothing in the least measure. All the modern-

day bodies or churches recognize themselves as being far more imperfect than was the early church in its infancy. Who will be so foolish any longer to maintain that there is no need for all the offices and gifts in the church now as before, when the scriptures show otherwise?

Perhaps many are ready to acknowledge by now that God placed all the aforementioned members in the body at the beginning, and that there was a genuine need for them at that time; but they fail to comprehend what has become of them over so much time. If they fail to comprehend this, how can they comprehend that anyone can become perfected in this age? and if no one can be perfected, how can the church or the body become a perfect man? In light of things like this, men should believe the scriptures thoroughly, and search with all their might for a church according to the description of the New Testament, namely one that has in it apostles, prophets, and every other thing that God placed in it from the beginning; and if they cannot find a church like that, God cannot condemn them for failing to claim it; for what good are scriptures, if something else is believed before them? We did not claim any church that was not exactly like the church that is portrayed in the scriptures: it would be the height of foolishness to do that, while we pretend to believe the Bible. No society can be a church or a body, without having all the members that pertain to the body of Christ, as God placed them: every one that has no head, arms, or feet is a monster; and all prudent men run away from such creatures.

But what, says someone, became of the primitive church? Well, soon after that body was formed, and began to show itself, who but the devil was the first to attack it? He had before that caused the crucifixion of its glorious proprietor; and his objective after that was to destroy the church or the body that it had remaining. But yet, Christ arose a second time; for he who kills the body cannot kill the spirit; and if the *body* of the church were killed, in spite of that, its *Spirit* could not be killed, or any of that which it received from on high by way of "gifts to men." Now, as the church increased in size, knowledge, and perfection, the enemy became more and more angry, until finally he attacked the body, aiming to deprive it of its eyes, its ears, &c., until truly he succeeded to a great extent; and the body would have soon gone to destruction, except that Christ undid a few of the works of the devil, by putting members

in their place. Oh, how the apostles, the prophets, the evange-lists, the teachers, and the saints were persecuted. Everyone despised the body of Christ, and was desirous of wiping it from off the face of the earth. And, truly, in the end, the enemy achieved his objective; the apostles were destroyed one after the other, until the body became deprived of a head, eyes, &c.; and then soon it was extinguished, even though some of the other members were half alive for some time after that. The Spirit that was in it, together with the "gifts" from on high, returned back to the One who gave them; for there was no one else who could receive them. Now, the spiritual part of the church was still alive; it had the apostleship, the prophesying, the doctrine, and every other gift; and all that was needed was new and *ready* material, for the church to take on an earthly tabernacle in which to dwell again. But such was the persecution of the dragon, that "to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent." True was that which Paul prophesied, that that day would not come in which the saints could be gathered to Him, "except there come a *falling away* first." (See 2 Thes. ii, 1—3.) The church went away, and left its earthly flesh and bones to decay and to break into pieces in every way; and it was nurtured in a place out of the grasp of the dragon, until a "ready people" was found in the last days to be an earthly tabernacle to the church as at first. The church was a body while it was in the "wilderness," for it took its spiritual members with her; but yet it did not have "flesh and blood," as it did before going away, and as it will again after getting its new body.

During the time the church flew into the wilderness, the devilish enemy had an opportunity to form a new body for himself, in some things similar to the body of Christ, and present it to the attention of the world, by the name of the body of Christ, for that was the best name that it could have in order to deceive. He took a part of the dead material of the old body, and molded it together with other materials, until it became a handsome body, having a Pope as its head. A head like this looked more attractive than the poor and unlearned fishermen of Galilee, and the world, flesh, and the devil came to delight themselves in it especially. The godly letters the true church possessed came into

the possession of the new Papist body, and they were sufficient for it forever afterwards instead of new letters, and they contain the good *news* until this day for this body, even though they are as old as they can be. They suffice instead of all the spiritual gifts, through which Christ revealed his will to the primitive church; for the Papist church never professes to hear the word from God as revelation, but only from the Pope.

There is no reason to portray the members of this Papist body, for our nation knows that this is not the body of Christ; the members are not similar in anything. In the body of Christ, no member said to the other that he had no need of him; but thus it was in this body; for before hardly any time had passed, behold some of the members began to quarrel with one another, until they had to cut some off, lest they destroy the whole body. Then those pieces began to gather materials to them, until in the end they became bodies themselves. Pieces like that from the Papist church were Peter Waldo, Martin Luther, Melancthon, John Calvin, &c. Henry the Eighth wrote a book against the new body of Luther, while he was a member of the Papist body, and he was called by Pope Clement a “defender of the faith;” but it was not long after that before Henry himself became angry at the Pope, because he refused to give him a letter to divorce his wife, so that he could marry Anne Boleyn. The result was that he opposed the Roman church, and set himself up as the head of the Church. That was the beginning of the Church of England; for soon after that Thomas Cranmer (a Catholic priest) was appointed Archbishop for the Church. In this manner all the present visible bodies came into existence—one coming from the other, and all originating from the body of the Catholic church, which is said to be the mother whore of the earth, although it is not said by anyone who her daughters are. All the religious bodies of our country must acknowledge that they came from the womb of the old mother. It was she who reared them, and they are all unruly and wild children. Not one of their bodies is similar in the least degree to the body of the church of Christ. Only teachers and deacons are what compose the bodies of the greatest part of them; but of course they have quite good materials; but they are not bodies, rather monsters; “and if they were all one member (or two), where were the body?” says Paul. Before being one body, there must be

many members; but despite it all, these monsters without heads, eyes, ears, feet, or practically anything else, except for "Reverends" and deacons, dare say that every one of them, or all of them together (no matter which one), are the body of the Church of Christ! Poor things! what else can be expected from creatures of the work of men in the midst of the kingdom of "the prince of the power of the air?"

Hark! "Are all teachers?" asks Paul.

Why did he ask such a foolish question?

There were apostles and prophets earlier,

And miracles and tongues, along their way;

But they fled and have been lost for a long time,—

For now they are ALL *deacons* and *TEACHERS*:

These shall perfect the saints, forward they go to the "work,"

And shall form a "body" with no feet and not even a skull.

While the world is like this, full of church bodies, and each one saying that it is the body of Christ, it is very difficult for many to determine which one it is. The portrayal that is in the scriptures of the primitive body has been soiled so much by commentators, that many are completely unable to distinguish it until someone cleans off a bit of the mud that is on it. This portrayal shows that apostles, prophets, teachers, miracles, gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues, &c., are members in the body of Christ: and unless the other bodies have the same members, it is not possible that they can be the body of the true church; for they will be more similar to the churches of men. But what good does it do to speak of many bodies to Christ, for "there is one body," and that one must be, like its Maker, an unchangeable body with respect to the continuation and work of its members; and if there is a body like that to be obtained, where can it be found? Wherever there is such a body, it is easy to recognize; for it has a head, eyes, ears, a mouth, arms, feet, and every other thing that is seen in the portrayal; and it can be expected that there will be a lively Spirit governing in it, and the body will go forward increasing in all things, so that it will become a "perfect man."

John has been prophesying on the isle of Patmos as follows:—"And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation,

and kindred, and tongue, and people.” It seems clear from these words that the earth had been deprived of the everlasting gospel; and if it was deprived of the everlasting gospel, it must be that the body of Christ was not on the earth either. But it is seen just as clearly that that which was missing on the earth has been restored, and that the gospel is to be preached again to every nation and tongue; and if so, material must be gathered and washed, as it was done earlier by John the Baptist, to compose a new body for Christ on the earth. Indeed, I say to you, thus it is; an angel was sent to Joseph Smith, in this age, to proclaim that the church of Christ was to be organized on the earth once again, and that the Spirit and the primitive gifts were restored back, to whoever wished to become a “prepared people” to receive them. In the year 1830, the body of Christ made its appearance in the world; and whoever has looked at it has seen apostles, prophets, teachers, miracles, gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues, &c., as members in it. It is the only body that corresponds to the correct portrayal of the scriptures. Who can doubt this? It can be understood from this body that it communicates with Christ, the heavenly Head, for frequently it declares, “Thus saith the Lord.” Christ began to communicate with the church in the primitive time, and the communication now increases instead of diminishing, since the wedding day, and the marriage supper of the Lamb, are quickly drawing nigh. The words of eternal life are the food the church has received from the beginning, for it to increase, and edify itself in love. The devil is as jealous now as he was earlier, if not more, because Christ does not claim his church, namely “the great whore,” or the “woman who was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold,” &c. That one will pretend to be the Bridegroom of the Lamb, because she has the letters in her possession; but if Christ loved her, she would have heard something from him before now, since the wedding day is so close at hand. But she is not the one that Christ intends to marry, although thousands affirm that; for she is the “mother whore of the earth.” Christ must have a church that is not anyone’s mother in that way—a chaste and pure church, otherwise it will not be accepted by him; He would not claim it after she has played the harlot with the kings of the earth.

The body of the church of Christ is on the earth at present, and it

is being proclaimed throughout the world. It is not very big yet, but it is increasing more than ever, until it is causing the devil to tremble. The members of every other body become enraged upon seeing it, and spread all manner of lies about it; but they are destroying themselves. God will not allow his wife to be chased into the wilderness ever again; for only one "falling away" was prophesied, and that for a wise purpose. The apostles and the other officers, together with the spiritual gifts, are all doing their part now for the "perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ;" for it is expected that soon we will "all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a PERFECT MAN, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." We have received the privilege of being baptized in this glorious body, and of becoming aware of the Holy Ghost that is in it, which is guiding it to every truth, and bringing to mind that which has gone past, and telling of things to come.

Now, whoever wishes to come to a knowledge of this glorious body, namely the only body accepted by Christ, let him believe the witness of the scriptures, let him repent of his sins, and let him receive his baptism for forgiveness, from one of the Latter-day Saints; and then we say that he will receive the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands, and he shall come to know that he has come in contact with the body of the church of Jesus Christ; "but the *manifestation* of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal," so that there is no need for anyone to doubt in whatever body he may be, until all will be able to say with the apostle John, "We know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness," and with Paul, that "there is one body."

J. DAVIS.

Merthyr, May 10, 1850.
