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Eternal Purpose Transcriptions  
Class 6 – 130922

## The Glorious Body

Last time we were talking about the birth, or the creation of the church. We spent a week or so looking at the fact that the church is a corporate body of Christ. That's what it's always been about. **It's always been about God making for Himself a living body for the increased glory of Jesus Christ.** That's really how I can best describe the eternal purpose of God. That's what He wants and that's what He has accomplished.

We looked at the fact that Israel is God's old covenant version—a type and shadow version—of this reality, of the corporate body of Christ. That's how we need to understand Israel and that's why God, I believe, said to Moses, "Israel is my son, even my first born." I say it all the time, but this just really the key: to understand Israel as the corporate picture of what it means to be joined to Christ, to relate to God in Christ, to have Christ as the relationship with God that you have. Everything about that relationship is some aspect of what it means for us to be in Jesus Christ and for us to experience Christ, and grow in Christ, and to know Christ as our relationship, and know Christ as the purpose of God, and the thing that is acceptable to God, etc. All of that is there.

So, the church is not (nor has it ever been) a group of people that believe something, or where all believe the same thing. The church is not a group of people. No, that's the earthly view. When people think about the church, they usually think about people that come together because they believe the same thing. But, though there is that effect in the earth, and people do come together and they do end up believing the same thing, that's still not what the church is. A gathering of people is what you see with your eyes, but that's also what you can see with your eyes if people just want to get together and have a tennis club. The coming together of people that have the same ideas in their head is not the church. The church, from God's perspective, has a completely different reality behind it. This is what we started talking about last week.

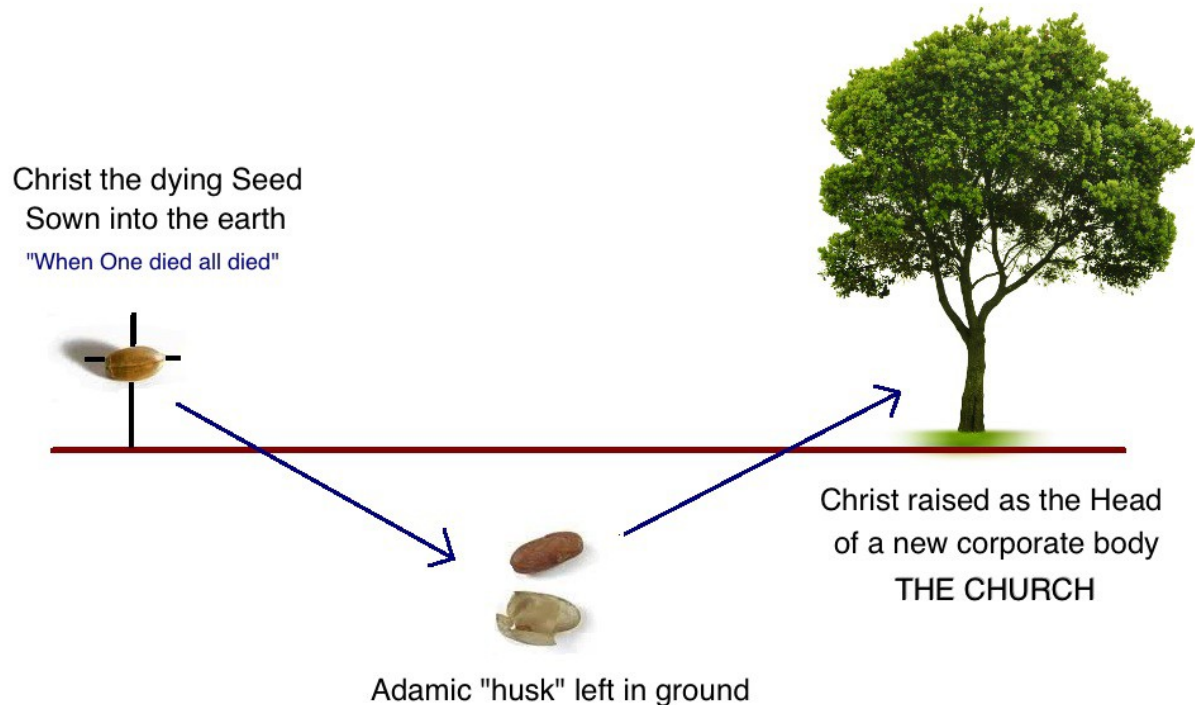
We said that the way that God created the church is by starting with a seed form of something, (the Seed which is Christ), and doing something to that seed, that (through death) gives it a bigger body. God gives it a larger more glorious body. What does glorious mean? Well, I always

use the example of a diamond or a jewel or a ruby or something. If I had a diamond wrapped up in black paper, it's still a diamond, but it's not very glorious. What do you do to make the diamond glorious? How do you cause the glory that's in the diamond to be seen a little? If you put sunlight into that diamond and take off the paper, then the things that are already there—in the diamond—get put on glorious display. So the glory changes, but the diamond doesn't. And, in a sense, that's what happened to Christ's body. Christ had one form of a body for 33 years in the earth. Well, He obviously existed before the incarnation too, but **He came into the earth, and the purpose of His coming is really to be planted in death. That's really why He came.** We talk about the purpose of Christ's coming from a lot of angles. Usually we say it's to forgive us our sins and to teach us what God is like, and there is some truth in those things if you understand them correctly. **But, really, the purpose of God in coming down into the earth was to plant a seed that would return to him in a more glorious form.** That's something of what was on the Lord's heart.

So, Jesus the Nazarene, (this is what I was trying to communicate last time). When I say Jesus, the Nazarene, or Jesus the Lord, you know I'm not talking about two different Jesus'. I am talking about Jesus in the form that was given to die. He came with a certain kind of body and it was a body that the scripture says was not glorious. He actually laid aside his glory and He came in this form that wasn't recognized to be anything. He was the person of glory; He was the radiance of the Father's very being; but He was in a natural shell that did not display very much of this glory at all. Sure he did miracles. And, yet, the people still didn't recognize the glory. He spoke words out from that reality and people didn't understand them. He was expressing what He was and yet He did not have a body that truly knew Him...a body that really experienced His glory. And, so, God has always had a plan to take that one perfect Seed and put it in the earth in such a way that it then comes out in a greater form, a greater body, a greater expression.

This was the plan in His heart before He even created the earth, before He made things like seeds that fall off trees, die, go into the ground and come back. It wasn't that first there were trees and seeds and growth, and then God said, "You know what? That's a little bit like my eternal purpose". No, FIRST He had the purpose, and then creation was made to point back to that reality. And I say that because, before Jesus went to the cross...we read this verse last time. He said, "Unless a grain of wheat goes into the earth and dies, it remains alone, but if it dies, it bears much fruit". That's the story that was, I believe, burning in the Lord's heart when He came. And, when he spoke of the cross, it was almost like a farmer speaking of the time to sow his seed. Instead of saying, "the hour has come for the Son of Man to be crucified", **He said, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified"**. He talked about that mission, that purpose, in a number of ways and a number of places.

So that's kind of what I drew on the board here. I put a little seed on the cross. It is like a little seed then goes into the earth, and like all seeds there's something that stays in the earth. There's something that remains part of the earth. There's something that just lies there forever, because it can't come out. We usually call that the husk or the shell. But it stays in the earth and then just the thing that's the LIFE of it, comes out in a greater form. The greater form is not a different life than you had at the beginning. It's just a different form. It's a different body.



Again, I am talking about the church here. I am not talking about farming. **You can look at that new people and say, "That's the church!"... but it's not because of what we are in coming to Him, but rather what He is, living in us.** That's a really important distinction. From God's point of view, this is what God did. He put a whole people into the death of that seed. He brought them all. He put everyone there. He put the whole world into that seed, believers or not, and they all were baptized into Christ's death. They were all put into that death. They were all crucified with Christ and they were all adjudicated in the righteousness of God and crucified with Christ and buried. **Now all of them go into the earth, but not all of them comes out.**

I recently got an email about this from somebody who said, "they all went in and they all came out". In other words, the whole world is saved! **That is just not true. The crucifixion is universal. The resurrection is by faith.** All die in Christ, but if you want to come to live in Christ, then you have to make a journey. You have to leave behind the thing that Christ left

behind and go with Him where He is. And the thing He left behind is the thing that you've called your life. It's the entire Adamic man. There's something that's left in the grave. I want you to picture Christ's resurrection like a seed, like God putting a husk on the seed and then putting that thing down in the ground and then leaving the husk in the ground because that's where it belongs. It's in the earth where God doesn't relate to it. That's where the earthly dust is. It came from dust and to dust returns. And then something else, something which is of the same life that was crucified, all of a sudden it starts coming up. And like I said a week ago, when it first starts popping up from the ground, you don't really realize how different it is. You don't really realize how different that body is from the body that went in because they are both little, small, etc. But if you watch it grow, pretty soon you have something that doesn't resemble (in terms of body or form) the thing that went down into the ground.

I say all this because that's what happened with Christ. Christ returned from the dead and people could say, "Oh, look, it's Jesus". They could kind of say that because it was indeed the same Christ that was crucified... but, then again....no one naturally recognized Him. No one really saw the same thing that they saw go into the tomb. It was the same Jesus. And, I am not doubting that in any way! That's the foundation of what we are talking about. The same Jesus came out and it was His body, and yet, **God had risen up from among the dead the first fruits of what was going to be a harvest. It was a head of a new man. The head of that which was attached to a body. But the witnesses of the resurrection had to see that head with different eyes or they couldn't really know Him. And when they tried to see Him with the same eyes that they saw Him with before, they didn't recognize Him.** You see what I'm saying? If that sentence could just hit everyone's heart, that would be enough for this morning because even the ones that did see the resurrected body of Jesus Christ weren't truly seeing the resurrected body of Jesus Christ. I mean, even the ones who saw it with their natural eyes weren't necessarily the ones who believed. And that's the point of what Jesus was doing after the resurrection for 40 days. He was trying to show them a different kind of seeing! And even when Doubting Thomas wanted to see the proof that it's the same Seed that died... Even when Jesus condescends to let him do that, He makes this statement, "You believe because you see, but from now on, blessed are those who have faith without seeing." And in all the rest of the cases, Jesus pops up and no one recognizes Him. The road to Emmaus with the two disciples, Mary in the garden, Peter and John in the boat, whatever. Paul says he appeared before 500, and some doubted. The doubters are the ones who try to keep seeing with the wrong eyes and knowing him in the wrong form. And that is where doubt comes from today too!

I know people... one person in particular comes to mind... that has always struggled with doubt. He's a Christian and yet his biggest struggle is doubt. He doesn't like to even get too close to reading the Bible because all these doubts come to his mind when he reads things he doesn't

understand . It's just been this big plague for him for years and years, and yet his relationship with the Lord is mostly based in trying to imagine the invisible Nazarene walking around with him during the day. It's so easy to doubt when your whole relationship is based on natural thoughts. But, my point was that once the natural seed becomes a heavenly man, He wants you to know Him and experience Him as a heavenly man, in a heavenly way, with spiritual senses.

This is actually demonstrated really clearly in the story of Elijah and Elisha. Elisha is following Elijah and they're going around, and these various prophets keep coming up to Elisha saying, "Don't you know that your Master will be taken away from you today?" and Elisha says, "I know, keep quiet." And, it happens three times. "Elisha don't you know your master will be taken from you today?" and he says, "Yes, yes. Quiet down." And then what happens? Elisha crosses over with Elijah, crosses the Jordan with Elijah. And Elijah says to Elisha, "If you can see me when I'm taken up into the heavens, then my spirit will be on you." So Elisha does see him, and sees him in the heavens and holds onto his spirit. In fact, Elisha knew Elijah better when he was gone than when he was there, because he received a double portion of his spirit and began to walk in that spirit. But, what do the prophets do? Immediately after this, the prophets say, "Let's get a group of 50 guys and go looking around the earth to see if we can find where God put Elijah back down". And, Elijah says "No, that's silly. Don't do that". And they beg him, and the verse says "Finally Elisha was so", it says, "embarrassed" or maybe ashamed for them, that he says, "Fine. Then go look for him." And the prophets go out for three days looking on all the mountaintops. This group of 50 prophets were looking to see where God might have put Elijah on the earth, trying to maintain a seeing of Elijah in the way that they knew. And yet, the experience of Elijah was right there in Elisha! It was in a new body. It was in a greater experience of his spirit. It was in a double portion, not a different life, but an increase, a greater glory. And, three days later they come back and they say to Elisha, "We didn't find him", and Elisha was like, "Yeah, well, I told you that you wouldn't." But, why am I talking about that? Well, because that's the church! That's the church pursuing Christ in such a way that it crosses over with Him. The church must cross the Jordan with Him and then see Him in a heavenly view and become and bear in itself that reality, that life. We must see Him, know Him, and relate to Him in Spirit, and not hunt around for Him in the earth.

This is also what I see when I think of the story of Jacob. Jacob comes out from his father. He comes out from Bethel, the house of God. He goes into this hostile territory and he comes out 20 years later (or whatever it was) as a company of his own increase. I've talked about this story before, and I am not going into all the detail of that again, but the picture that's important is that he goes in as a man with just a staff. He comes out as this huge company of increase. After having wrestled with man there, and after having wrestled with God on his way out, having born all of man on him and dealt with that, and having wrestled with God, having drank the

cup, having experienced the wrath of God, he comes out with His increase. Then God puts a new name on Jacob. He says “from now on you have a new name. You have a new form. You went in in one form. You came out in another form. What’s the name of your new form? Israel. Israel. I am changing your name.” What’s Israel? It’s all of you. It’s you increased. It’s the whole. It’s not just you, your name. It’s the name of all your sons and your wives and everything you have. It’s all Israel because it’s an increase of the one seed that went into the land.

It’s the same thing with Joseph. Joseph goes into Egypt and he dies in Egypt but he says “Don’t leave my bones here when you leave.” But again, when Joseph left Egypt (when his bones were carried out) he was in a form that God called Israel, my son. Joseph was in the midst. He was the bones in the midst of this big corporate people marching out of the land as Israel, my son, the church, the body of Christ. So he goes in in one form, the form that was rejected of his brothers, and rejected of Potiphar, and thrown into jail and all of that. And, there’s another story that emerges there too. But, eventually he dies. He dies in Egypt and comes out as the substance or the life in the midst of a people.

I wanted to say some of that again in some different ways to help us to start thinking of the church in a different way. To start understanding that there are two forms, so to speak, the two forms of the body of Christ. I am not saying that there’s two Jesus’. I could qualify all of these things, but I think you guys are following me. What I am saying is that Jesus came to earth and the Lord gave him a body. “Unto us a child is born” and that child died. He grew up and was crucified. He died and He went into the ground so that “unto us a Son could be given.” Unto us a child is born, but a son was given, and the son was given as the life of His own body. Now we read from 1 Corinthians last time, and I will just read these couple verses again.

*“But some will say, ‘How was the dead raised and with what kind of body did they come? You fool, that which you sow does not come to life unless it dies, and that which you sow you do not sow the body which is to be.’”*

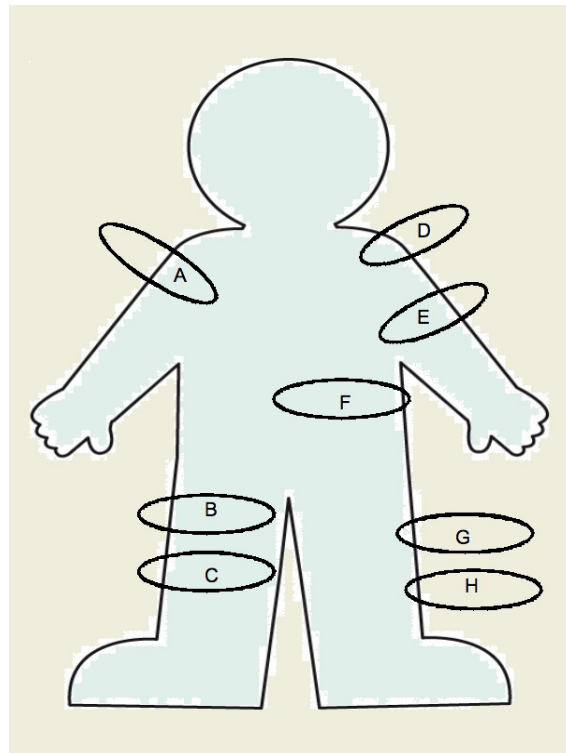
You don’t sow a tree, you sow a seed. You sow, it says, “a bare grain perhaps of wheat or something else. So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown a perishable body. It is raised an imperishable body. It is sown in dishonor. It is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness. It is raised in power. It is sown a natural body. It is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body.” I like the other translation that says, **“Even as there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body”**. So also it is written, **the first man, Adam, became a living soul. The last Adam became a life giving spirit. What does he give life to? He gives life to his own body. You see? He’s the life and what’s in view here are two bodies.**

You know, it's really man centered of us to think that I, Jason, am the one sown in a natural death and a natural body, and I, Jason, come back in a greater body, just because if God wants me to have my own better or more impressive form. In other words, it's pretty self-centered, it's pretty man-centered of me to take this verse and apply it just to my own personal physical death, and somehow, my own personal physical glorification. I know that everyone talks about this verse in that way. But, I think God has a much greater thing in view here. I think he has in view the first man and the Second Man. There is a man that's sown...when was Adam sown into death? At the cross! Christ became a man, became sin on our behalf, became a curse for us. Adam was sown into the ground right here when he was put in the husk, in the body of Christ, and left in the ground. That's when Adam was sown a natural body, sown in dishonor. That's when it's sown. It was absolutely sown in dishonor. There was a time when the Adamic man, the natural body, the perishable body was sown in dishonor and yet raised in glory. It was sown in weakness. Wasn't it sown in weakness and yet it was raised in power? Wasn't it sown a natural body and raised a spiritual body? But the church says, "No. That hasn't happened yet." You see? **Yes it has. It absolutely has. It was sown a natural body. It was raised a spiritual body.** And, even as we have borne the image of the first body, the earthly body, **so we must now bear the image of the heavenly body. And, that's what spiritual growth is. It is all about being transformed in such a way that we bear the image and glory of the second body that we are.** A process that Paul says Christ accomplishes with "the power that He has to submit all things to Himself." So, one seed goes in and another form comes out. One body goes in and another body goes out, and God begins to relate to that body as Israel, my son, the corporate body of Christ--the church.

And you see that right in the beginning of the church. The church came alive together with Christ, they were given His spirit on Pentecost. The one Seed filled many members, and took on a greater body! They became the increase of Him. His Spirit was given to them and it's like Ezekiel 37 when there's a bunch of dry bones laying on the ground and all of a sudden one Spirit, one breath, comes and makes them all come alive and God says, "What is this?" and Ezekiel says, "You know Lord", and then the Lord says, "It is the whole house of Israel, all made alive by one Spirit". And then Saul, in the New Testament, goes around and he is persecuting Christians and when Jesus appears to Saul, (Paul), does He says, "Why are you persecuting Christians?" No, that's not what he says. He says, "Why are you persecuting ME?" That's the Lord's view. "Israel is my son, my first born." What's a first born? It's the one that opened the womb. It's the one that opens the womb of death. It's the first one out of that tomb. It's when the stone is rolled away and the First Born Son comes out. Of course it comes out head first. You know, healthy births come out head first. God designed it that way because his Head came out first too, and then pretty soon at Pentecost all of a sudden... "Whoa. Here comes a body.

There's a body attached to Christ!" And from that point on Jesus speaks of His body and says, "It's me". "Why are you persecuting me, Paul?" Again, let me qualify myself and say, by nature and source and substance, we are not Christ. And yet, we are the body of Him who is the Head.

Now in the little bit of time I have left here, I am going to start talking about something that I'll probably talk about more next time. I need another diagram here. Christ is the life of the body, because **the church is defined by Christ. And if the church is Christ's body and resurrection, then Christ defines it. What do I mean by that? I mean, we can call ourselves "the body of Christ". But, we're only the body in that we bear Him, that we carry this new life, not because of what we are in ourselves.** In other words, we are not the body of Christ because of what we are in ourselves. **We are the body of Christ because and to the degree that He is living in us.**



You remember I did this diagram years ago with the gingerbread man, where this is the body of Christ and I said that we are all like these little ovals. We are all in Christ as soon as we're born again, fully in Christ. And yet, I started drawing some other ovals that were partly in Christ, *not because it is possible to be partly in Christ*, but just to represent the measure of our experience of Christ, or the measure of Christ formed in us, or the measure of light or understanding or spiritual experience of the Christ in whom we are. So, within the boundaries of the man is the measure of Christ that is working in me (the oval), and outside the boundaries is the measure of flesh or Adam or the un-renewed mind that is still working in me. Now again, I don't think it makes sense that someone can be partially in Christ, but there are lots of things that are still



working in me that are not Him. There are lots of things that are very real to me and things that I express that are not reflective of His life or His government. And so what I'm trying to show in these ovals are people that are born again, but have different measures of Christ formed in them, different levels of life, growth, truth working in them. And for the ovals that are mostly *outside* the line (like oval G), what is most real to them is the natural world. And here's another person (oval H) that just got saved the same week, or maybe has been saved for 50 years and hasn't advanced at all in their understanding of what it means to be in Christ. And these people start a knitting club together and they get together and they babysit each other's kids, and they have a lot of personality traits in common, and they go to the same movies, and they have the same morals and they have the same views on politics and whatever, and then they say, "Man, isn't it great to be Christians and have this kind of fellowship?" And yet what they're sharing has nothing to do with Christ. They're sharing the earth as Christians, but, that's not fellowship true fellowship. **Fellowship is the measure to which we share the life of Christ that we are in.** Fellowship isn't when Christians share ideas, beliefs, time, and interests. Fellowship is when Christians share the one life in which we have been placed.

Well, what am I trying to say? I am trying to say that **the church is defined by the body of Christ; by the life of Christ, and it is not, therefore, what I bring to Him, it is the measure of Him that is working in me.** And that's why you can't just point at anything out there that calls itself the church and think you're looking at the church, because the church is defined by the life and you can see this in a number of easy analogies.

If somebody made you a robotic arm that looked exactly like your arm, and somehow programmed it to do all the things that your real arm does, you still couldn't say that it is part of your body. Someone could say, "Hey, I like your third arm. It's a nice improvement of your body". And you would be like, "That's actually not my body". "What do you mean it's not your body? It looks exactly like your other arms. It's doing the exact same thing that your other arms are doing. What do you mean it's not your body?" And the obvious answer from your point of view is, "Well, my body actually has boundaries. That arm is outside the boundaries of my body. It's doing what I do. It's copying what I do. It looks like what I am, but my LIFE is the boundary of my body. My life is my body, and that's not my life no matter how much it looks like me."

Now this is so obvious to us in the natural realm. It's beyond obvious. It's almost silly, but we don't get it with Christ. We think that the things that we do for Him, the ministries we create and put his name on...we stick all this stuff on to Christianity and we call it the church. But someone says, "That's not the church!" And someone says, "What do you mean it's not the church? It looks like the church. It's doing what the church does. I read this here in the Bible

and now that's what we're doing. We're doing these automated movements that we read about in the Bible!" But it's still not the church! "Why not?" "Well, because the church has boundaries and the boundaries of the church are the life of Christ." And the person responds, "Well that's pretty exclusive. That's pretty narrow-minded to limit the church just to those things which come out from the life of Christ, the things that are the movements and expressions of His life." But, you certainly wouldn't think it was narrow-minded if it was a fake arm coming out of your body! You would understand and you would agree with, and you would actually like the fact that life defines your body. Life defines the boundaries of your body and that's going to be so important when we get in a little bit to understanding the way God dealt with Israel in the wilderness. Because God started right away trying to show them the boundaries of life, and they just kept thinking that any old thing they attached to themselves was God, was the covenant, was the relationship. They kept sticking their own ideas and imaginations to the covenant with God and God said, "Oh, that's not me. I am going to cut it off". "What do you mean you are going to cut it off?" "I am going to cut that off, and, just so you don't do it again, I'll tell you exactly where the boundary is." Whack! We'll get to all of that. We'll see how God related to Israel as the corporate body, and how He continually removed all things that didn't operate by His life. The life defines the body. That is my point for today.