

THE UPWARD CALL

*Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet;
but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead,
I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God*

IN CHRIST JESUS.

(Philippians 3.13-14 NASB)

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THE COMPLEMENT OF THE ONE #2

And subjects all under His feet, and gives Him, as Head over all, to the ecclesia which is His body, the complement of the One completing the all in all (filled by him who fills the entire universe). (Ephesians 1.22-23 CV [JMT])

As stated previously, the key to the above verses is that Christ is the Head over all, which means that nothing is left out. Simply, His Headship encompasses everything. God subjects all under the feet of Christ, making Him Head over all. In other words, He is the universal Head over, all who fills the entire universe.

This is great news, but it does not stop here, for in the capacity of Head over all, God gives Christ to the *ecclesia* (*ekklesia*), which is His body. Of course, most people prefer to use the word *church* for *ecclesia*, but given the distorted view of what the *church* means in our day, I prefer to use the Anglicized transliterated form *ecclesia*. In the Greek, *ekklesia* is made up of *ek*, which means “out of,” and *klesis*, which means “a calling.” Thus, the *ekklesia* means “out-called” or “a calling out of,” and it refers to those called out to be the body of Christ with Christ as their head. After all, a body cannot exist without a head, and a head cannot exist without a body.

But there is much more to the revelation unfolded by Paul than the ecclesia being the body of Christ, and it has to do with the words *fullness*, *complement*, and *completion*, as used in various translations.

The church, which is His body, the fullness (*pleroma*) of Him who fills (*pleroo*) all in all. (Ephesians 1.22-23 NASB)

The ecclesia which is His body, the complement (*pleroma*) of the One completing (*pleroo*) the all in all. (Ephesians 1.22-23 CV)

The church is Christ's body and completes (*pleroma*) him as he fills (*pleroo*) everything in every way. (Ephesians 1.22-23 GW)

The church is Christ's body, the completion (*pleroma*) of him who himself completes (*pleroo*) all things everywhere. (Ephesians 1.22-23 GNB)

The Greek word translated as *fullness*, *complement*, or *completion* is *pleroma*, which means “repletion or completion.” *Repletion* means “to be full or too full”; *replete* means “to be well filled; plentifully supplied; stuffed as with food; gorged.” The word *complete* (*completion*) means “lacking none of the parts; full, whole, entire,” “ended; finished; concluded,” or “thorough, perfect.” *Pleroma* comes from the verb *pleroo*, which means “to make replete, that is, (literally) to cram.”

When all these definitions are reviewed together, we are presented with the picture of something that is not merely full or barely full but crammed full, as if no more can be put into it. This is the picture Paul painted of the ecclesia, which is the body of Christ. We could say that the body of Christ is stuffed full of Christ and lacks nothing of Christ. In the next eon, it will be a perfect body!

Each of the above translations captures this thought. The body is the fullness of Christ. If we could see the body as God sees the body, we would see Christ in all His glory. The very essence of Christ is found in His body. It is vital that we realize that Paul was not merely using some sort of symbolic

language. Just as Eve was taken from the body of Adam and was bone of his bones and flesh of His flesh, so is the ecclesia. Eve contained Adam's DNA, and, in like fashion, we could say that the body of Christ contains Christ's spiritual DNA.

The ecclesia, which is the body made up of all who are born from above, is made from the same stock as the Son of God. Each individual member of the body has the seed of Christ abiding within that is growing and maturing until the day of resurrection and transfiguration when this treasure in each earthen vessel will burst forth to become a glorified, spiritual, celestial body in the image of the Son of God.

But, Paul saw beyond the individual to the whole body together as the fullness of Christ. He cannot manifest His fullness through just one vessel. It will take the entire body of glorified believers to be His exact image and likeness; and this is what is meant by the use of the word *complement*, which refers to something that fills completely. In other words, the body is to be full of Christ and to be so full that it is the very image of Christ, just as Christ is the image of God. He fills His body with His very Life—His resurrection and conquering life. As such, the body is the exact representation of the Head.

Paul used the same imagery in reference to the relation of the Father to the Son.

For it was the Father's good pleasure for all the fullness (*pleroma*) to dwell in Him....
(Colossians 1.19 NASB)

For in Him all the fullness (*pleroma*) of Deity dwells in bodily form.... (Colossians 2.9 NASB)

Consequently, just as the Son is the fullness of the Father, so is the body of Christ the fullness of the Son of God. We could also say, although it is difficult to see this in our day, that, just as the Son is the visible image of the invisible God, so is the body of Christ the visible image of the invisible Christ, at least in our present eon. The good news is that a day is coming soon in which the world will see the Head, the glorified Christ, and the body, the glorified sons of God in the image of the Son.

However, there is even more to this revelation as revealed in the use of the phrases *completes Him* and *the completion of Him*. Not only is the body of Christ full of Christ and His fullness, but it also does something for Him, and that is, it completes Him. In other words, a head by itself is not complete any more than a body without a head is complete. The two, a head and a body, cannot exist without the other. In fact, the Head must have His body if He is to complete the mission that His Father has given Him to subject all to Himself and become **all in all** so that at the consummation of the eons the Father may be **all in all**.

This is the most amazing good news for all who have been called out to Christ. The ecclesia, which is the body, has been joined with the One who is not only their Head but also the Head of the universe, and, as such, they are His complement and will participate with Him as He completes **the all in all**. He must have a body that is His complement if He is to fill **all in all** or to complete **the all in all**. He will start with His body as His life is "stuffed" into His body until it is all of His life, and then, in concert with His body in the next eon, He will begin to subject all things to Himself and fill all creation with His life until His life is "stuffed" into all creation, everywhere.

Many are talking about the purpose of God in their lives while they occupy bodies of death, but what about God's purpose for the eons? Whatever we are called to do in this life is not an end unto itself. If it is of God, then it must relate to His purpose.

Dear beloved in Christ, if you believe and trust in Jesus and are obeying Him, clinging to Him, loving Him, and conquering through His life, this is your destiny in the next eon when He comes to reign over this earth. Hallelujah!