COGMA

Church of God Mission Academy

STUDY GUIDE 74

Ordinances Fulfilled in Jesus Christ

STUDY GUIDE 7 OF 12:

Of Twain One New Man

An overview of how Christ's new life unites all believers as one.



Equipping and empowering for effective service

2 Timothy 2:2

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE STUDENT

My Study Plan

Preparing a Study Plan before starting this Study Guide will assist you in completing it within a designated timeframe. It also helps in developing the discipline required for studying God's Word effectively.

Proverbs 16:3:

> *Commit thy works unto the LORD, and thy thoughts shall be established.*

My Study Guide Journal

Keep a record as you progress through your Study Guide, including the Personal Responses for each section, for future reference and goal setting.

Content

PREFACE

INTRODUCTION

THE FORMER COVENANT SEPARATED NATURAL ISRAEL

THE MIDDLE WALL OF PARTITION

THE LAW OF COMMANDMENTS CONTAINED IN ORDINANCES

OF TWAIN ONE NEW MAN

IN HIMSELF

BOTH RECONCILED UNTO GOD

IN ONE BODY

ONE SPIRIT INTO ONE BODY

THE BODY IS THE CHURCH

THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST IS THE IDENTIFYING REALITY

THE ONE NEW MAN IS NOT CREATED BY OUTWARD ORDINANCES

WHY THIS MATTERS TO THE ORDINANCES

CONCLUSION: CHRIST IS ALL, AND IN ALL

Important Points

- COGMA does not claim to be infallible or the authority.
- Infallibility and authority belong only to God and His Word.

COGMA therefore strongly advises that you prayerfully study the content of each Study Guide with the heart of a Berean (**Acts 17:10–12**).

Contact and Links

Website: cogma.com.au

Email: admin@cogma.org.au

Radio COGMA: radiocogma.com

YouTube: youtube.com/@COGMAChannel

Facebook: facebook.com/profile.php?id=61585399471540

SEARCH THIS STUDY GUIDE

Windows: Ctrl + F | Mac: Cmd + F | Phone or tablet: use Search in your PDF reader.

PREFACE

BACK TO CONTENTS

The book of Acts records how God brought His people beyond the former covenant boundaries. The Gospel moved from Jerusalem to the nations, Gentiles were received directly through Jesus Christ, and Peter declared that God had *"put no difference between us and them."* This raises an important question: If the former covenant separation between Jew and Gentile had been removed, what did God establish in its place?

Paul gives the answer clearly. Jesus Christ *"hath made both one,"* broke down *"the middle wall of partition,"* and made *"of twain one new man."* He reconciled both *"unto God in one body."*

God did not preserve one spiritual order for Jewish believers and establish another for Gentile believers. Neither did He require Gentiles to become part of natural Israel before they could belong to Him. Both were brought into one New Covenant reality in Jesus Christ. The central question of this Study Guide is therefore: What is the one new man, where is this unity found, and how are Jew and Gentile brought into it?

This question is essential to our later study of the ordinances. If God has already created one spiritual people in Jesus Christ, no outward ordinance can be allowed to create a second entrance, a second identity or a new spiritual division within the body Christ has already made one.

God did more than remove the former separation. He made both one in Jesus Christ.

Personal Response

Key Truth

What did Christ establish when He removed the former separation between Jew and Gentile?

Personal Reflection

How does one new man in Christ challenge your understanding of separate spiritual classes? Is there a familiar expectation of yours that now needs reconsidering?

Action Step

What do you want to understand more clearly about belonging to the one people Christ has made? Identify one personal response you will make, trusting in Jesus Christ rather than your own religious effort.

INTRODUCTION

BACK TO CONTENTS

As the Gospel moved beyond the former covenant boundaries, Peter declared that God had *"put no difference between us and them."* This raises an important question: If the former separation between Jew and Gentile had been removed, what did God establish in its place?

Paul wrote in **Ephesians 2:14-16**:

> *"For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby:"*

These verses establish the direction of this Study Guide. Jesus Christ:

- "Hath made both one";
- "Hath broken down the middle wall of partition";
- Made "of twain one new man";
- Reconciled both "unto God in one body."

God's purpose was not to preserve two covenant peoples side by side. Neither was the Gentile required to become part of natural Israel before coming to God. Both Jew and Gentile were brought into one New Covenant reality in Jesus Christ.

The words *"in himself"* are especially important. The place of unity is not natural Israel, the Temple, circumcision, the Law of Moses or an outward ordinance. The place of unity is Jesus Christ Himself.

This truth is essential to our study of the ordinances. If God has already made both one in Christ and reconciled both in one body, then an outward ordinance cannot become a second entrance into that body or a new mark that divides those whom Christ has already made one. To understand this properly, we must first look back at the real separation that existed under the former covenant.

Personal Response

Key Truth

Why are Paul's words about making both one in Himself important to New Covenant unity?

Personal Reflection

What difference does unity being found in Christ make to your view of religious identity? What does this reveal about an assumption you have held?

Action Step

How could you reconsider an outward boundary in the light of Christ reconciling both in one body? Identify one attitude or assumption towards other people that you need to correct, and explain how you will treat them differently.

THE FORMER COVENANT SEPARATED NATURAL ISRAEL

BACK TO CONTENTS

The Introduction established that Jesus Christ *"hath made both one."* Before we can fully understand that statement, we must first recognise that under the former covenant there had been a real separation between natural Israel and the Gentile nations.

That separation was more than cultural or national. God Himself had given natural Israel a distinct covenant position for an appointed purpose.

The LORD said to Israel in **Exodus 19:5-6**:

> *"Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel."*

Israel was described as *"a peculiar treasure unto me above all people"* and *"an holy nation."* This was a genuine covenant distinction. God had separated natural Israel from the surrounding nations and had given them a covenant order through which that distinction was expressed. Paul later described the privileges that had belonged to natural Israel.

Paul wrote in **Romans 9:4-5**:

> *"Who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen."*

Paul does not deny Israel's former covenant privilege. He identifies it clearly.

To them pertained:

- The covenants;
- The giving of the Law;
- The service of God;
- The promises.

These privileges were real and had been given by God.

The Gentiles Stood Outside That Covenant Order

Paul described the former position of the Gentiles in **Ephesians 2:11-12**:

> *"Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:"*

Paul describes a real distinction between:

- Circumcision and uncircumcision;
- Israel and the nations;
- Those within the covenant order and those outside it.

The words *"in time past"* are important. Paul is describing the former position of the Gentiles. They had been *"aliens from the commonwealth of Israel"* and *"strangers from the covenants of promise."*

Paul refers to *"the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands."* Circumcision was a visible covenant sign. It marked in the flesh the distinction between natural Israel and the nations.

The Law also contained requirements concerning food, ceremonial cleansing, sacrifice, priesthood, Temple worship, holy days and other outward ordinances. Together, these things helped maintain Israel's distinct covenant identity. The former separation was therefore real, visible and God-appointed.

We must not treat the former covenant separation as though it had been a mistake. God had given it for an appointed purpose. Natural Israel had been separated as the covenant people through whom the promises, the Scriptures and ultimately Jesus Christ according to the flesh would come.

The question is not whether that separation had once been right. The question is whether it was intended to remain after Jesus Christ had fulfilled its purpose.

"But Now in Christ Jesus"

Paul immediately shows that the former condition was not God's final spiritual arrangement.

Paul wrote in **Ephesians 2:13**:

> *"But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ."*

The contrast is decisive. *"In time past"* they were far off. *"But now in Christ Jesus"* they were made nigh. The Gentile was not made nigh by becoming naturally Jewish, receiving circumcision, entering Temple worship or coming under the Law of Moses.

The Gentile was made nigh in Jesus Christ. Gentiles did not have to enter Judaism before coming to Him. They came directly to Jesus Christ, without first becoming part of the former Jewish covenant order.

The Former Boundary Had to Be Removed

If God's purpose had been to preserve Jewish and Gentile believers as two continuing covenant peoples, the former wall of separation could have remained. But His purpose was: *"For to make in himself of twain one new man."* Therefore, the former covenant boundary could not remain as the governing spiritual distinction.

Under the former covenant, natural Israel had genuinely been separated from the nations. But Jesus Christ came to bring those who were far off nigh and to make Jew and Gentile one in Himself.

Under the former covenant, natural Israel was genuinely separated from the Gentile nations by a God-appointed covenant order. That separation served its appointed purpose, but it was not God's final spiritual destination. Jesus Christ came to bring both Jew and Gentile into a new relationship in Himself. The next question is therefore unavoidable: What happened to the covenant barrier that had separated the two?

Paul gives the answer: *"Hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us."*

That brings us to the next section:

Personal Response

Key Truth

Why must Israel's former covenant separation be recognised as God-appointed without treating it as permanent?

Personal Reflection

How does the contrast between being far off and being made near in Christ clarify your understanding of access to God? Which part of your own understanding does it challenge?

Action Step

What would help you distinguish a former God-given requirement from what now defines your relationship with Christ? Name one choice in your own life that should change because of this truth, and explain why.

THE MIDDLE WALL OF PARTITION

BACK TO CONTENTS

The previous section established that under the former covenant, natural Israel had genuinely been separated from the Gentile nations. That separation was expressed through circumcision, the Law, Temple worship, sacrifices, ceremonial distinctions and outward ordinances. We must now ask: What happened to that separation when Jesus Christ came?

Paul wrote in **Ephesians 2:13-16**:

> *"But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby:"*

Paul does not say that the former separation was only weakened. He says that Jesus Christ *"hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us."*

"But Now in Christ Jesus"

Paul begins with a contrast. The Gentiles had formerly been:

- Aliens from the commonwealth of Israel;
- Strangers from the covenants of promise;
- Far off.

Then Paul says, *"But now in Christ Jesus."* Those words mark the change.

The Gentile was not made nigh by becoming a natural Israelite, receiving circumcision or entering the Temple system. The Gentile was made nigh in Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ Himself Is Our Peace

Paul continues with the words *"For he is our peace."* His declaration goes beyond teaching about peace.

He says *"He is our peace."* The peace is found in the Person.

The unity of God's people is therefore not created by human agreement, shared ceremony or external organisation. Jesus Christ Himself is our peace.

Paul then says that Jesus Christ *"hath made both one."* The word *"both"* refers to the two groups already identified in these verses:

- Jew and Gentile;
- Circumcision and uncircumcision;
- Natural Israel and the nations.

Under the former covenant, they had stood on opposite sides of a real covenant distinction. But Paul says that Jesus Christ *"hath made both one."*

This is more than improved relations between two continuing covenant peoples. Christ made the two one.

If God's purpose was to make Jew and Gentile one, then the former covenant barrier could not continue as the governing spiritual distinction. A partition exists to separate.

Under the former covenant, the separation had served a God-appointed purpose. But the New Covenant purpose was different.

Jesus Christ came *"for to make in himself of twain one new man."* The wall therefore had to come down.

The Wall Was Broken Down, Not Moved

This distinction is important. Paul does not say that Jesus Christ moved the wall somewhere else or that the former wall was rebuilt around the Church.

He says *"hath broken down the middle wall of partition."* The former covenant boundary was removed as the governing spiritual distinction.

Therefore, we must be careful not to assume that another outward ceremony automatically became the new wall separating those who belong to God from those who do not. If such a claim is made, Scripture must establish it clearly.

The removal of the wall does not mean that the former distinction had always been wrong. God had appointed Israel's separation for an appointed purpose.

Circumcision, the Law and ceremonial distinctions had genuine authority within that covenant. The question is not whether the wall had once been right, but whether it should remain after Jesus Christ had fulfilled its purpose. Something can be right in its appointed time and cease to govern when fulfilment has come.

The contrast is clear. The former wall represented separation, while the one new man represents unity.

The wall distinguished Jew from Gentile. The one new man brings both together in Jesus Christ. Therefore, the New Covenant cannot be understood by rebuilding distinctions that Jesus Christ removed.

The Goal Was One New Man

Paul tells us exactly why the wall was broken down: *"For to make in himself of twain one new man."* Jesus Christ did not remove the wall so that Jew and Gentile could remain spiritually separate on opposite sides. He removed the wall because His purpose was unity in Himself.

The former covenant wall separated natural Israel from the Gentile nations. Jesus Christ broke down that wall because the New Covenant would no longer be governed by the former outward covenant distinctions. Jew and Gentile were to be brought into one spiritual reality in Christ. The wall had to come down because God's purpose was *"of twain one new man."*

Paul now explains what was connected with that former separation. He calls it *"the law of commandments contained in ordinances."*

That brings us to the next section:

Personal Response

Key Truth

Why did the middle wall of partition have to be broken down for Christ to make both one?

Personal Reflection

How does the difference between removing a wall and moving it challenge your view of religious boundaries? What difference should this make to your own response?

Action Step

Is there an outward distinction you need to reconsider before using it to judge another believer's belonging? Explain. Consider someone whose background differs from yours. What change in your thinking or treatment of that person is needed?

THE LAW OF COMMANDMENTS CONTAINED IN ORDINANCES

BACK TO CONTENTS

The previous section established that Jesus Christ broke down the middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile. Paul now explains more specifically what was connected with that former separation.

Paul wrote in **Ephesians 2:14-15**:

> *"For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace;"*

These verses must be handled carefully. Paul is not saying that everything God had commanded under the former covenant was evil, nor that God had made a mistake by giving Israel laws, commandments and ordinances.

The former covenant was God-given and right for its appointed purpose. The question is: What role did those commandments and ordinances play in maintaining the separation between Israel and the Gentile nations?

Under the former covenant, Israel's covenant life included outward distinctions such as:

- Circumcision;

- Dietary requirements;
- Ceremonial washings;
- Sanctuary worship;
- Feast days;
- Priestly regulations;
- Sacrifices;
- Other outward ordinances.

These things belonged to the covenant order God had given to natural Israel and helped distinguish Israel from the surrounding nations. The separation was therefore more than social or geographical. It was built into the covenant order itself.

Circumcision Is a Clear Example

Circumcision provides one of the clearest examples. Paul had already referred to *"the Circumcision"* and *"the Uncircumcision."* Under the former covenant, circumcision was a God-given outward sign connected with covenant identity.

Paul wrote in **Galatians 5:6**:

> *"For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love."*

Notice the words *"In Jesus Christ."* Circumcision had once possessed genuine covenant meaning, but Paul now says that in Jesus Christ *"neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision."* The former outward distinction could no longer determine spiritual standing.

The former ordinances were not meaningless while that covenant stood. They had a real function. They helped maintain Israel's covenant identity, taught through outward forms and marked Israel as distinct from the nations.

The issue is therefore not whether God once gave those ordinances. He did. The issue is whether their former covenant function should continue after Jesus Christ fulfilled the order to which they belonged.

"Having Abolished in His Flesh"

Paul uses strong language. He says that Jesus Christ had *"abolished in his flesh the enmity."* Something had genuinely changed.

The former order that maintained the separation between Jew and Gentile was not simply adjusted and carried forward unchanged. It had reached its fulfilment in Jesus Christ. Paul uses similar language in his letter to the Colossians.

Paul wrote in **Colossians 2:13-14**:

> *"And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;"*

Notice the expressions *"Blotting out"* and *"Took it out of the way."* Again, Paul does not describe the former ordinances as continuing beside Jesus Christ with equal covenant authority. The greater reality had come.

We must keep the balance clear. The former covenant was not sinful, and its ordinances were right for the purpose God had appointed, even though they later ceased to govern.

They had been given by God for an appointed purpose. Something can be right within its appointed covenant and still cease to govern after fulfilment has come. The problem would arise only if we attempted to preserve the former separating order after Jesus Christ had fulfilled it and created something greater.

Under the former covenant, the order distinguished:

- Jew from Gentile;
- Circumcision from uncircumcision;
- Israel from the nations.

But the New Covenant purpose was *"for to make in himself of twain one new man."* The former order could separate. Jesus Christ makes one. Therefore, the order that had maintained the former distinction could no longer remain the governing basis of spiritual identity.

An Outward Sign Cannot Govern the One New Man

If Jew and Gentile are made one in Jesus Christ, then an outward physical mark that once distinguished one from the other cannot remain the basis of spiritual identity. The wall has been broken down. The one new man cannot be governed by the same outward distinction that once maintained separation. New Covenant identity must therefore be understood spiritually and in Jesus Christ.

The law of commandments contained in ordinances belonged to the former covenant order that distinguished natural Israel from the Gentile nations. Jesus Christ brought that separating order to its fulfilment so that Jew and Gentile could no longer stand before God as two covenant peoples, but could be made one in Him.

The former order could separate. Jesus Christ makes one. The question now becomes: What exactly is the *"one new man"* that Jesus Christ created?

That brings us to the central section of this Study Guide:

Personal Response

Key Truth

How could ordinances be right within the former covenant and cease to govern after fulfilment?

Personal Reflection

What does circumcision no longer determining spiritual standing help you understand about outward signs? Is there a familiar expectation of yours that now needs reconsidering?

Action Step

How would you assess an outward religious requirement for yourself without denying its former God-appointed purpose? Explain one boundary you will stop using to judge spiritual belonging, and what you will do differently.

OF TWAIN ONE NEW MAN

BACK TO CONTENTS

We have now established two important truths. First, under the former covenant, natural Israel had genuinely been separated from the Gentile nations. Second, Jesus Christ broke down the covenant barrier that had maintained that separation. We must now ask why He removed it.

Paul wrote in **Ephesians 2:15-16**:

> *"Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby:"*

The purpose is stated plainly: *"For to make in himself of twain one new man."* This is the central truth of this Study Guide.

The word *"twain"* means two. Paul has already identified the two groups in the surrounding verses:

- The Circumcision;
- The Uncircumcision;
- Natural Israel;
- The Gentiles.

Under the former covenant, these groups stood on different sides of a God-appointed covenant distinction. Israel possessed the covenants, the Law, the promises, the service of God and the outward covenant signs. The Gentiles were described as *"aliens from the commonwealth of Israel"* and *"strangers from the covenants of promise."* That was the former position.

Paul does not say that the two would remain spiritually separate while learning to cooperate. He says *"one."* The movement is therefore from two to one.

This is deeper than improved relations between two continuing covenant peoples. God was creating one spiritual people in Jesus Christ. There cannot be two continuing saving covenant peoples and, at the same time, one new man.

"One New Man"

The word *"new"* is equally important. God did more than improve the former covenant arrangement; He established a new spiritual identity in Jesus Christ.

He did not leave natural Israel as one permanent covenant people and then attach Gentile believers to it. Neither did He broaden the Mosaic order so that the nations could enter it.

Paul says *"one new man."* The one new man is not natural Israel enlarged. It is not Judaism opened to the Gentiles. It is not a mixture of Jewish and Gentile religion.

It is something new in Jesus Christ.

The One New Man Exists in Christ

Paul says *"for to make in himself of twain one new man."* The words *"in himself"* are decisive. The place where the two become one is Jesus Christ.

The Jew does not become one with the Gentile by becoming naturally Gentile, and the Gentile does not become one with the Jew by becoming naturally Jewish. Neither natural identity becomes the spiritual standard for the other. Both must come into the same Person: Jesus Christ.

A naturally Jewish person remains Jewish by ancestry, and a Gentile remains Gentile by ancestry. Those natural distinctions may continue as ordinary facts of human life, but they no longer determine spiritual covenant standing.

Paul wrote in **Galatians 5:6**:

> *"For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love."*

The important words are *"In Jesus Christ."* Circumcision had once possessed genuine covenant meaning, but Paul now says that neither circumcision nor uncircumcision determines spiritual standing in Christ. The former outward distinction cannot define the one new man. If God's New Covenant people contain both Jew and Gentile, then the identifying spiritual reality must be something both can possess equally.

Natural Jewish ancestry cannot identify the whole body. Physical circumcision cannot identify the whole body. Temple association cannot identify the whole body.

But both Jew and Gentile can:

- Be born again;
- Receive the Spirit of Christ;
- Be justified by faith;
- Become new creatures;
- Belong to Jesus Christ.

The identity of the one new man is therefore spiritual. Unity can sometimes mean cooperation between groups that remain separate, but that is not Paul's language. He does not say that two covenant peoples continue side by side while cooperating.

He says *"one new man."* The two are brought into one spiritual identity in Jesus Christ.

Neither is the one new man a compromise between two religious systems. God did not combine part of the Law of Moses with part of Gentile religion.

Jesus Christ is not a middle point between two traditions. He is the reality into which both must come. Therefore, the one new man must remain completely Christ-centred.

"Christ Is All, and in All"

Paul gives another powerful description of the new man.

Paul wrote in **Colossians 3:10-11**:

> *"And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all."*

Again, Paul speaks of *"the new man."* Then he removes the former defining distinctions: *"Neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision."*

What remains central? *"Christ is all, and in all."* That is the spiritual identity of the New Covenant people.

Paul does not say that Christ is most. He says *"Christ is all."*

Paul wrote in **Colossians 2:9-10**:

> *"For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:"*

All the fulness is in Jesus Christ. The believer is complete in Him. There is no missing spiritual part that must be supplied by an outward ordinance.

Paul then says *"And in all."* The unity of the Church is not created because every believer performs exactly the same outward ceremonies.

The deeper unity is that the same Christ dwells within His people. The one new man therefore has one spiritual life. That is much deeper than outward uniformity.

God's New Covenant purpose was not to preserve Jew and Gentile as two continuing covenant peoples. Jesus Christ made of the two one new spiritual man in Himself. The identity, righteousness, salvation and unity of that new man are found in Jesus Christ, not in natural ancestry or outward covenant signs.

Paul has told us what God created. Now we must look more closely at where that unity exists. He says *"in himself."*

That brings us to the next section:

Personal Response

Key Truth

Why is the one new man more than two covenant peoples cooperating or natural Israel enlarged?

Personal Reflection

What does unity in Christ mean to you when natural ancestry and culture remain different? What does this reveal about an assumption you have held?

Action Step

What response do you want to make to the truth that spiritual identity is found in Christ rather than ancestry? Identify one conviction or attitude that this teaching challenges. What specific response will you make?

IN HIMSELF

BACK TO CONTENTS

Paul does not only tell us that Jew and Gentile are made one. He tells us where that unity is found.

Paul wrote in **Ephesians 2:15**:

> *"Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace;"*

The words *"in himself"* are central to these verses. The one new man does not exist in natural Israel, the Law of Moses, an earthly Temple, circumcision or an outward ordinance. The one new man exists in Jesus Christ.

The New Covenant Position Is Found in Christ

Paul had already described the Gentile's new position.

Paul wrote in **Ephesians 2:13**:

> *"But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ."*

The Gentile is made nigh *"in Christ Jesus."* Then Paul says that the two are made one *"in himself."* The repeated emphasis is clear: The New Covenant position is found in Jesus Christ.

The Gentiles were not made nigh by receiving circumcision, entering natural Israel, adopting the Mosaic ceremonial order or participating in Temple worship. They were made nigh in Christ.

The same principle applies to the Jewish believer. The Jew was not intended to remain permanently in the former covenant shadows while simply adding Jesus Christ alongside them.

The Gentile did not have to enter Judaism. The Jew did not have to remain spiritually defined by the former covenant order. Both had to come fully into Jesus Christ.

The movement was not:

Gentile → Judaism → Christ

nor:

Jew → Christ plus the former covenant

The movement for both was: Into Jesus Christ.

The Jew could not rely upon natural ancestry, and the Gentile could not rely upon natural background. Neither could stand before God on the basis of:

- Ancestry;
- Ceremony;
- Outward covenant marks;
- National privilege.

Both needed the same Person. This is why Paul says *"in himself."* The unity is not created by one natural people absorbing another. It is created by both being brought into Jesus Christ.

The New Covenant is not natural Israel plus Jesus Christ. Neither is it Gentile religion plus Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ is not an addition to an already complete spiritual identity. He is the identity.

Paul wrote in **Colossians 3:10-11**:

> *"And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all."*

Paul says *"Christ is all, and in all."* That helps us understand exactly what *"in himself"* means.

Paul expressed the same New Covenant unity in **Romans 10:12-13**:

> *"For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."*

There is *"the same Lord over all."* The Jew does not have one Lord and the Gentile another. Both come to the same Person.

There cannot therefore be two spiritual centres. There is one Lord, one salvation and one New Covenant reality.

Personal Response

Key Truth

Why must both Jew and Gentile come into Christ rather than one natural people absorbing the other?

Personal Reflection

How does Christ being the identity, rather than an addition to it, challenge your own understanding?

Action Step

What would help you consider your own standing before God in relation to Christ rather than religious background? Name one choice in your own life that should change because of this truth, and explain why.

The Spirit of God Is the Spirit of Christ

This unity also connects directly with the indwelling Spirit.

Paul wrote in **Romans 8:9**:

> *"But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."*

Paul moves directly from *"the Spirit of God"* to *"the Spirit of Christ."* The believer belongs to Christ because the Spirit of Christ dwells within. This is the inward identifying reality of the New Covenant believer.

Paul also wrote in **2 Corinthians 3:17**:

> *"Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty."*

There is one Lord. The Lord is that Spirit. The same Jesus Christ who makes Jew and Gentile one is the Spirit who dwells within His people.

The One New Man Has One Indwelling Life

The unity of the one new man is therefore deeper than shared beliefs, meetings, traditions or ceremonies. The same Spirit of Christ dwells within every born-again believer.

That is the common spiritual life. A Jewish believer possesses the same Christ. A Gentile believer possesses the same Christ.

Therefore, the one new man has one indwelling life.

People may perform the same ceremony and still not possess Jesus Christ. They may be water baptised, receive bread and a cup, or wash one another's feet.

Yet none of those actions, by themselves, place Jesus Christ within the heart. Therefore, outward uniformity cannot be the foundation of the one new man. The foundation is Christ within.

The opposite is also true. Believers may come from different nations, cultures, languages and backgrounds, yet if the same Spirit of Christ dwells within them, they belong to the same spiritual people.

Their unity is not created by outward sameness. Their unity is spiritual.

The unity of the one new man is not confined to a doctrine believers acknowledge. Because Jesus Christ dwells within every born-again believer, His life is expressed as they receive, love, care for and serve one another.

Jew and Gentile do not become one by attempting to imitate unity through outward conduct. They are already one in Christ, and the life of Christ within them gives expression to that spiritual reality. Their fellowship does not create the one body; it reveals the shared life that Christ has already given.

The one new man exists in Jesus Christ. Jew and Gentile are not united by entering the same natural nation, observing the same outward covenant signs or performing the same ceremonies. They are united because both are brought into the same Person and share the same indwelling Spirit of Christ.

Paul now takes the argument one step further. If both Jew and Gentile are made one in Jesus Christ, what is their relationship to God?

Paul says that Jesus Christ would *"reconcile both unto God."*

That brings us to the next section:

Personal Response

Key Truth

How does the same indwelling Spirit of Christ give the one new man one spiritual life?

Personal Reflection

What does the difference between shared ceremonies and shared life in Christ mean for your understanding of fellowship? What difference should this make to your own response?

Action Step

How could you receive or care for a believer from another background in a way that recognises the shared life Christ gives? Consider someone whose background differs from yours. What change in your thinking or treatment of that person is needed?

BOTH RECONCILED UNTO GOD

BACK TO CONTENTS

Paul does not stop by saying that Jew and Gentile are made one in Jesus Christ. He explains why both needed Him.

Paul wrote in **Ephesians 2:16**:

> *"And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby:"*

The word *"both"* is important. The Gentile needed reconciliation, but so did the Jew.

Natural descent from Abraham, possession of the Law, circumcision, the Temple and the ordinances did not remove the Jewish person's need for Jesus Christ. Both needed reconciliation unto God.

The Jewish people had received great covenant privileges. They had received:

- The Law;
- The covenants;

- The promises;
- The service of God;
- The Scriptures;
- The covenant signs.

Those privileges were real, but they did not create a separate way of salvation apart from Jesus Christ.

Paul says that Christ would *"reconcile both unto God."* Not only the Gentile. Both.

One Reconciliation Means One Saviour

If both Jew and Gentile needed reconciliation, then both needed the same Saviour.

There cannot be one saving covenant for natural Israel and another saving covenant for the Church. There cannot be one route to God through the Law and another route through Jesus Christ. There is one way of reconciliation, and it is Jesus Christ.

Paul says that Christ would *"reconcile both unto God."* The ultimate problem extended beyond the separation between Jew and Gentile. Both needed reconciliation with God.

This means that the one new man is more than a social arrangement designed to improve relations between two groups. It is a spiritual reality created through reconciliation unto God.

Both come to the same God, both need the same grace, and both receive the same salvation.

Paul wrote in **Romans 3:29-30**:

> *"Is he the God of the Jews only? is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also: Seeing it is one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith."*

Paul asks *"Is he the God of the Jews only?"* Then he answers *"Yes, of the Gentiles also."* Why? Because *"it is one God."*

The same God justifies both Jew and Gentile through faith.

Paul says that the one God *"shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith."* The wording differs slightly, but the basis is the same. Both are justified through faith.

Therefore, there cannot be one righteousness for the Jew and another for the Gentile. There is one righteousness, and it is found in Jesus Christ.

Natural Jewish privilege could not replace the need for Him. The Jew needed Christ. The Gentile needed Christ. Both needed the same Saviour.

Personal Response

Key Truth

Why did both Jew and Gentile need reconciliation despite Israel's genuine covenant privileges?

Personal Reflection

What does needing the same Saviour help you recognise about religious privilege in your own life?

Action Step

What personal response do you want to make to the truth that religious privilege cannot replace reconciliation through Christ? Identify one personal response you will make, trusting in Jesus Christ rather than your own religious effort.

One Lord, One Complete Salvation

Paul also wrote in **Romans 10:11-13**:

> *"For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."*

Paul says plainly *"There is no difference between the Jew and the Greek."* Then he explains why: *"The same Lord over all."*

There is one Lord. The same Jesus Christ saves Jew and Gentile.

The same Lord over Jew and Gentile is Jesus Christ. He is not one part of a divided divine arrangement, because in Him dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.

The same Jesus Christ saves both Jew and Gentile. Therefore, the unity of the one new man rests in one Lord and one complete salvation in Him.

Paul then says *"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."* The word *"whosoever"* includes Jew and Gentile.

There is one salvation. It is not a partial salvation for one group and a fuller salvation for another. Neither is it salvation that becomes complete only after outward ceremonies are added. Salvation is found in the Lord Himself.

Paul says that both are reconciled *"by the cross."* The cross did not bring Jew and Gentile part of the way to God and then leave an outward religious system to finish the work.

The reconciliation is accomplished through Jesus Christ. Therefore, the believer's standing before God cannot be made dependent upon a later outward act.

Both Are Reconciled "In One Body"

Paul also tells us where this reconciliation places them: *"in one body."*

The result is not:

- One Jewish body and one Gentile body;
- Natural Israel as one spiritual body and the Church as another.

There is *"one body."* The pattern is consistent:

- One God;
- One Lord;
- One reconciliation;
- One salvation;
- One body.

If both Jew and Gentile are reconciled in one body, natural ancestry cannot create a superior covenant class within that body.

The Jewish believer does not possess a higher spiritual standing because of natural descent. The Gentile believer does not possess a lesser spiritual standing because of uncircumcision.

Both are equally dependent upon Jesus Christ and equally reconciled through Him.

The Basis of Belonging Must Be Shared Equally

If the Church is one body, then the basis of belonging must be something Jew and Gentile can share equally. It cannot be:

- Natural ancestry;
- Circumcision;
- Temple identity;
- Former covenant privilege.

But both can:

- Believe;
- Be born again;
- Receive the Spirit of Christ;
- Be justified by faith;
- Be reconciled to God;
- Be brought into one body.

New Covenant identity must therefore be spiritual.

Both Jew and Gentile needed reconciliation unto God. Neither natural Jewish privilege nor Gentile background provided a separate spiritual standing. Both were reconciled through the same Jesus Christ and brought into one body. Therefore, there is one God, one Lord, one righteousness, one salvation and one spiritual people.

This now raises the next important question: If both are reconciled *"in one body,"* how are they actually brought into that body?

Paul gives a direct answer: *"For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body."*

That brings us to the next section:

Personal Response

Key Truth

How do one Lord, one salvation and reconciliation in one body rule out separate spiritual ranks?

Personal Reflection

How does equal dependence on Christ influence the way you regard believers from different backgrounds? What does this reveal about an assumption you have held?

Action Step

How could you respond when ancestry or an outward mark is used to claim greater spiritual standing than yours? Identify one practice or belief you will test against the Bible, and explain what you are prepared to change.

IN ONE BODY

BACK TO CONTENTS

The previous section established that both Jew and Gentile needed reconciliation unto God, and that both were reconciled through the same Jesus Christ. Paul now tells us where that reconciliation brings them.

Paul wrote in **Ephesians 2:16**:

> *"And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby:"*

The words *"in one body"* are extremely important. The result of reconciliation is not two spiritual bodies.

There is not one body for Jewish believers and another for Gentile believers. There is not natural Israel as one saving body and the Church as another. There is one body.

Paul has already said *"hath made both one."* He has also said *"for to make in himself of twain one new man."* Now he says *"reconcile both unto God in one body."*

The language is consistent. The two are not simply placed beside one another. They are not preserved as two covenant peoples who happen to worship the same God. They are brought into one body.

One Body Means One Spiritual People

A body is not two bodies joined loosely together. It is one living whole.

Therefore, Paul's language cannot support the idea that natural Israel continues as one saving covenant people while the Church exists beside it as another.

Both Jew and Gentile must come to God through Jesus Christ. Both are reconciled through Him. Both are brought into the same body. The New Covenant direction is always from two to one.

Natural ancestry cannot define the one body. A person may be naturally Jewish, while another may be naturally Gentile.

Those natural distinctions remain as ordinary facts of human life, but they do not determine spiritual membership in the one body.

The one body must therefore be identified by something greater than ancestry.

Neither can physical circumcision define the body. Under the former covenant, circumcision distinguished natural Israel from the nations.

But Paul had already written in **Galatians 5:6**:

> *"For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love."*

What once distinguished the two cannot become the basis of the unity Christ has created. The one body cannot be defined by the former outward covenant mark.

If Jew and Gentile are both reconciled in one body, then the basis of belonging must apply equally to both. It cannot be something one group possesses naturally and the other does not.

Both Jew and Gentile can:

- Believe on Jesus Christ;
- Be born again;
- Receive the Spirit of Christ;
- Be justified by faith;
- Be reconciled unto God;
- Belong to the one body.

The basis of belonging is therefore spiritual. If both are reconciled into one body, natural Jewish descent cannot create a higher spiritual class within that body. Neither can Gentile background create a lower one.

Both stand before God on the same basis. Both need the same Jesus Christ. Both receive the same salvation. Both are reconciled in the same body.

No natural distinction can create a superior covenant standing within the one new man. This truth also protects the completeness of salvation. The Jewish believer is not complete in Christ plus the Law. The Gentile believer is not complete in Christ plus an outward ordinance.

Both are complete in Jesus Christ. If one group required an additional spiritual entrance after the other had already been accepted through Christ, then the one body would be divided by two different standards of belonging. Paul's teaching does not allow that.

The One Body Must Have One Spiritual Entrance

If there is one body, there cannot be one spiritual entrance for the Jew and another for the Gentile. There cannot be one way into God's people through natural covenant privilege and another through faith in Christ. One body requires one common spiritual entrance.

Paul identifies that entrance in the next section.

The Body Is a Living Reality

The one body is not created by shared ceremony. Many people may perform the same outward action and still not possess spiritual life.

A body is living. The New Covenant Church is one because the same Jesus Christ gives life to His people.

Therefore, the unity of the body is not organisational or ceremonial. It is living and spiritual.

Jesus Christ reconciles both Jew and Gentile unto God in one body. The result is not two covenant peoples, two saving arrangements or two spiritual bodies. There is one body, and the basis of belonging must therefore be shared equally by all who are in Christ.

The next question is now unavoidable: How are believers brought into that one body?

Paul gives the answer directly: *"For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body."*

That brings us to the next section:

Personal Response

Key Truth

Why must the one body have one common spiritual basis of belonging?

Personal Reflection

What does the body being a living reality help you understand about the limits of organisation and ceremony? Which part of your own understanding does it challenge?

Action Step

How would you reconsider a belief that some born-again believers are only partly members until a ceremony is added? Name one inherited expectation you will reconsider and explain how Christ's fulfilment changes your response.

ONE SPIRIT INTO ONE BODY

BACK TO CONTENTS

Paul has shown that Jew and Gentile are both reconciled unto God and brought into *"one body."* The next question is therefore: How are believers brought into that one body?

Paul wrote in **1 Corinthians 12:13**:

> *"For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit."*

This is one of the clearest New Covenant statements concerning entrance into the body of Christ. Paul says *"By one Spirit are we all baptized into one body."* The work is spiritual, the body is one, and the same Spirit brings all believers into it.

The first words we must notice are *"By one Spirit."* Paul does not say that a person enters the body by natural descent, circumcision, Temple participation or another outward covenant mark.

He says *"By one Spirit."* This places the emphasis upon the inward work of God.

The Same Spirit Brings Jew and Gentile Into the Body

Paul specifically names the groups we have been studying: *"Whether we be Jews or Gentiles."* The Jew does not enter one way and the Gentile another.

There is:

- One Spirit;
- One body;

- One spiritual entrance.

This agrees perfectly with Ephesians chapter 2. Jesus Christ made *"both one,"* and Paul now says *"By one Spirit are we all baptized into one body."*

Ephesians speaks of *"one new man"* and *"one body."* First Corinthians says *"By one Spirit are we all baptized into one body."*

These statements belong together. The one new man is the spiritual people of God brought together in the one body of Christ.

Paul also wrote in **Ephesians 4:4–6**:

> *"There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."*

Paul brings together three important truths: one body, one Spirit and one baptism. These agree with his teaching in **1 Corinthians 12:13** that believers are baptised by one Spirit into one body. Jew and Gentile do not require different baptisms or separate spiritual entrances into the Church of Jesus Christ.

Natural birth cannot place anyone into the body of Christ. A person may be naturally Jewish, but natural Jewish birth does not place that person into the one body.

A person may be naturally Gentile, but Gentile birth does not prevent that person from entering the one body. The entrance is spiritual.

Both Jew and Gentile must be brought in by one Spirit.

Personal Response

Key Truth

How do Ephesians 2 and **1 Corinthians 12:13** *agree about Jew and Gentile entering one body?*

Personal Reflection

What does one Spirit and one spiritual entrance clarify about your understanding of Church membership? What difference should this make to your own response?

Action Step

What do you want to understand more clearly about the Spirit's work in bringing a person into the body of Christ? Consider someone whose background differs from yours. What change in your thinking or treatment of that person is needed?

The Spirit Performs the Baptism Into the Body

Paul uses the language of baptism: *"Baptized into one body."* This is important because the baptism described in this verse places the believer into the body, but the agent is clearly identified: *"By one Spirit."*

Therefore, the baptism that places the believer into the one body is spiritual. We must not assign to an outward act the function Scripture gives to the Spirit.

If Paul says *"By one Spirit are we all baptized into one body,"* then physical water cannot be the spiritual agent that places the believer into that body.

Water can touch the physical body. The Spirit brings the believer into the spiritual body.

These are not the same thing. This principle will become especially important when water baptism is examined in detail.

This truth also protects the completeness of salvation. The believer is not partly brought into Christ by the Spirit and then completed by an outward ceremony.

Paul does not say that the Spirit brings the believer part of the way into the body. He says *"By one Spirit are we all baptized into one body."*

If the Spirit brings the believer into the body, the believer is not waiting for physical water to complete entrance into that body.

There is one body, one Spirit, one Lord and one salvation. The New Covenant does not give one entrance for the Jew and another for the Gentile.

Neither does it give one spiritual entrance and then require another outward entrance to complete it. The inward work of God is decisive.

The Spirit of God Is the Spirit of Christ

This connects directly with another foundational truth.

Paul wrote in **Romans 8:9**:

> *"But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."*

Paul moves directly from *"the Spirit of God"* to *"the Spirit of Christ."* The believer receives the Spirit of Christ.

Paul says *"If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."* The Spirit of Christ is therefore the inward identifying reality of belonging.

Paul also wrote in **2 Corinthians 3:17**:

> *"Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty."*

There is one Lord. The Lord is that Spirit. The same Jesus Christ who makes Jew and Gentile one is the Spirit who dwells within His people.

Therefore, the one new man has one indwelling life.

One Spirit Means One Spiritual Life

The unity of the Church is deeper than shared religious practice. It is not created by everyone attending the same meetings, believing the same doctrines or performing the same ceremonies. The same Spirit of Christ dwells within every born-again believer.

A Jewish believer possesses the same Christ. A Gentile believer possesses the same Christ. Therefore, the one body has one spiritual life.

People may all perform the same religious ceremony and still not possess the Spirit of Christ. They may be water baptised, receive bread and a cup, or wash one another's feet.

Yet none of those outward actions can place Jesus Christ within the heart. Therefore, outward uniformity cannot create the one body.

The opposite is also true. Believers may come from different nations, languages, cultures and backgrounds, yet if the same Spirit of Christ dwells within them, they belong to the same body. Their unity is spiritual.

The one new man is brought into one body by one Spirit. Jew and Gentile do not enter through separate covenant systems or through an outward ceremony. The Spirit of Christ brings every born-again believer into the same body and is the identifying reality of belonging to Jesus Christ.

This immediately raises the next question: What is this one body?

Paul gives a direct answer: *"The body, the church."*

That brings us to the next section:

Personal Response

Key Truth

Why must the spiritual function given to the Spirit not be assigned to physical water?

Personal Reflection

What difference does the indwelling Spirit of Christ make to your understanding of spiritual unity? Is there a familiar expectation of yours that now needs reconsidering?

Action Step

How would you examine your own understanding of baptism without assigning an outward action the work the Bible gives to the Spirit? What will you change in your understanding or practice so that the saving work belongs to Jesus Christ alone?

THE BODY IS THE CHURCH

BACK TO CONTENTS

The previous section established that Jew and Gentile are brought into one body by one Spirit. Paul now identifies what that body is.

Paul wrote in **Colossians 1:18**:

> *"And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence."*

Paul identifies *"the body, the church."* Therefore, when Scripture says that believers are baptised by one Spirit into one body, it is describing entrance into the Church of Jesus Christ.

Paul does not describe one spiritual body for Jewish believers and another for Gentile believers. There is *"one body,"* and that body is *"the church."*

This agrees directly with everything we have established concerning the one new man. Jew and Gentile are not preserved as two covenant peoples standing beside one another. They are brought into the same spiritual body in Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ Is the Head of the Body

Paul says that Jesus Christ is *"the head of the body, the church."* The Church is therefore centred in Him.

Its life does not come from natural ancestry, an earthly nation, the Temple, human organisation or an outward ordinance. Its life comes from its Head: Jesus Christ.

Paul concludes the verse with the words *"that in all things he might have the preeminence."* No outward practice can be allowed to take the place that belongs to Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ must have the preeminence.

The Church is not defined by religious organisation. It is the living spiritual body of Jesus Christ, and its life comes from Him.

Human beings can create organisations, membership lists and rules of admission, but human beings cannot create the body of Christ.

Paul has already told us how believers are brought into that body: *"By one Spirit."* Therefore, the Church is formed by the inward work of God.

Jesus said in **John 3:3**:

> *"Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."*

Spiritual life comes from God through the new birth. An outward action cannot produce that life.

A ceremony may be performed correctly while the person performing it remains spiritually dead. Therefore, true membership in the body cannot ultimately be defined by an outward action that does not produce the new birth.

Personal Response

Key Truth

How does Christ being Head of the body explain the source of the Church's life?

Personal Reflection

What does the new birth show you about the difference between joining an organisation and receiving spiritual life? What does this reveal about an assumption you have held?

Action Step

What would help you keep Christ's place as Head central when considering your own relationship to the Church? Identify one conviction or attitude that this teaching challenges. What specific response will you make?

The Spirit of Christ Identifies Those Who Belong

Paul wrote in **Romans 8:9**:

> *"But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."*

Paul does not say that a person belongs to Christ because the correct ceremony has been performed. He says *"If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."*

The identifying reality is the Spirit of Christ. A person belongs to Christ because Christ dwells within.

Paul wrote in **1 Corinthians 12:13**:

> *"For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit."*

The body is formed by one Spirit. Jew and Gentile enter by the same Spirit.

The Church is therefore not a natural body. It is a spiritual body.

If the Spirit has brought the believer into the body, then the believer is in the body. Another ceremony cannot provide a second spiritual entrance into the same body.

Because the body contains both Jew and Gentile, the Church cannot be identified with one earthly nation.

Natural Israel remains a natural people, and Gentile nations remain natural peoples. But the Church is a spiritual people drawn from all nations. Its identity is in Jesus Christ.

The Church Is God's Spiritual Habitation

Paul wrote in **Ephesians 2:19–22**:

> *"Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."*

Notice that Paul describes those who were formerly strangers and foreigners as *"fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God."* Jew and Gentile are no longer separated by the former covenant boundary but belong to the same spiritual household in Jesus Christ. They are built together upon the same foundation, with Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone. This is the one new man, united in Christ and established as God's spiritual habitation through His Spirit.

Notice the expressions *"in the Lord"* and *"through the Spirit."* Under the former covenant, worship was centred around a physical sanctuary.

In the New Covenant, God's people are *"an habitation of God through the Spirit."* The movement is again from outward structure to inward spiritual reality. Jesus Christ dwells within His people.

The one body is the Church, and Jesus Christ is its Head. Believers are brought into that body by one Spirit, and the indwelling Spirit of Christ identifies those who belong to Him. Therefore, no outward ordinance can create spiritual life or complete entrance into the body.

This brings us naturally to the next question: If the Spirit of Christ identifies those who belong to Him, what is the true New Covenant mark of belonging?

That brings us to the next section:

Personal Response

Key Truth

How are God's spiritual household and temple formed through the Spirit?

Personal Reflection

How does belonging to the same household in Christ challenge the way you regard believers from other nations? Which part of your own understanding does it challenge?

Action Step

How could you welcome or serve another believer in recognition of the spiritual household Christ creates? Name a real relationship in which this truth should change your attitude or conduct. What response will you make?

THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST IS THE IDENTIFYING REALITY

BACK TO CONTENTS

The previous section established that the body is the Church, that Jesus Christ is its Head, and that believers are brought into that body by one Spirit.

This brings us to the identifying question: How does Scripture determine who belongs to Jesus Christ?

Paul wrote in **Romans 8:9**:

> *"But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."*

The decisive words are *"If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."* Paul does not place the identifying reality in an outward ceremony. He places it in the indwelling Spirit of Christ.

Paul's language is clear. If the Spirit of Christ dwells within, the person belongs to Him. If the Spirit of Christ does not dwell within, Paul says *"He is none of his."*

This is a spiritual test of belonging. It is not based upon natural ancestry, membership in an earthly nation or an outward act performed by human hands.

The Spirit of God Is the Spirit of Christ

Notice the wording of **Romans 8:9**. Paul first says *"The Spirit of God dwell in you."* Then he says *"The Spirit of Christ."*

Paul is not describing two different Spirits. The Spirit of God is the Spirit of Christ.

Paul wrote in **2 Corinthians 3:17**:

> *"Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty."*

The Lord is that Spirit. Therefore, when the Spirit of Christ dwells within the born-again believer, Jesus Christ Himself dwells within. The identifying reality is the Person within.

The True Mark of Belonging Is Inward

Under the former covenant, outward marks had a real place. Circumcision could be seen in the flesh, ceremonies could be performed, and Temple association could be observed.

But the New Covenant identifying reality is greater. It is inward.

The true identifying reality is not:

- Circumcision;
- Water;
- Bread and a cup;
- Feet washing;
- Another outward religious ceremony.

The true identifying reality is the Spirit of Christ within.

This agrees perfectly with the one new man. If God's New Covenant people include both Jew and Gentile, then the identifying reality must be something both can possess equally.

Natural Jewish ancestry cannot identify the whole body. Physical circumcision cannot identify the whole body. Temple association cannot identify the whole body.

But both Jew and Gentile can:

- Be born again;
- Possess the Spirit of Christ;
- Be justified by faith;
- Become new creatures;
- Belong to Jesus Christ.

Therefore, the identity of the one new man is spiritual.

Being "In Christ" Is the Decisive Reality

Paul wrote in **2 Corinthians 5:17**:

> *"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."*

Notice the words *"If any man be in Christ."* Then Paul says *"He is a new creature."*

The New Covenant reality is new creation. It is not new ceremony. It is the work of God within.

This distinction must be stated plainly. Water baptism cannot place the Spirit of Christ within a person. Bread and a cup cannot place Jesus Christ within. Feet washing cannot give spiritual life.

Only God can give that life. A person may perform all of those outward actions and still lack the Spirit of Christ. If so, Paul says *"He is none of his."*

Therefore, the ceremony cannot be the identifying reality.

Born-again believers from different nations and backgrounds may possess the same Spirit of Christ before they ever participate in a common outward ceremony.

Their unity already exists because they are already one in Jesus Christ. The spiritual reality comes first.

This is why the one new man cannot be created by common ritual.

The True Distinction Is Spiritual

This does not mean that there is no distinction between those who belong to Christ and those who do not. There is a real distinction, but Scripture places that distinction in a different place.

Paul does not say:

- Water baptised and unbaptised;
- Communion participant and non-participant;
- Feet washer and non-feet-washer.

He says *"If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."*

The true distinction is therefore between those who possess the Spirit of Christ and those who do not. That distinction is inward and spiritual.

"Christ Is All, and in All"

Paul wrote in **Colossians 3:10-11**:

> *"And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all."*

The final words are decisive: *"Christ is all, and in all."*

If Christ is all, an ordinance cannot become the missing spiritual part. If Christ is in all His people, their unity is already inward.

The Spirit of Christ is the identifying reality of New Covenant belonging. A person belongs to Jesus Christ because Christ dwells within through His Spirit. Therefore, outward ordinances cannot create, replace or complete the inward spiritual identity God has already established.

This brings us to the next major question. If the one new man is created in Christ, brought into one body by one Spirit, and identified by the indwelling Spirit of Christ, what role can outward ordinances have in creating that new man?

The answer now becomes unavoidable.

Personal Response

Key Truth

How does **Romans 8:9** *identify those who belong to Christ?*

Personal Reflection

What does the distinction between inward spiritual life and outward ceremony mean to you personally?

Action Step

What do you want to consider about your own relationship with Christ rather than relying on a religious ceremony? State one specific conclusion you need to correct or confirm in the Bible, and how it will affect your conduct.

THE ONE NEW MAN IS NOT CREATED BY OUTWARD ORDINANCES

BACK TO CONTENTS

We have now established several important truths concerning the one new man. Jesus Christ made Jew and Gentile one in Himself. Both are reconciled unto God through the same Saviour, both are brought by one Spirit into one body, and the Spirit of Christ is the identifying reality of belonging.

This brings us to an unavoidable question: What part do outward ordinances play in creating this one new spiritual people?

The answer from the verses we have examined is clear: The one new man is not created by outward ordinances. It is created in Jesus Christ.

Paul says that Jesus Christ would *"make in himself of twain one new man."* The source and location of the unity are therefore found in Jesus Christ Himself.

The unity does not come from:

- Water;
- Bread and a cup;
- Feet washing;
- Circumcision;
- Another outward covenant sign.

Those outward acts cannot produce the spiritual life that makes God's people one. The one new man is formed by shared life in Jesus Christ.

The Entrance Comes Through the Spirit

Paul wrote in **1 Corinthians 12:13**:

> *"For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit."*

The spiritual entrance into the one body comes *"by one Spirit."* Therefore, an outward ordinance cannot be given the function Scripture assigns to the Spirit.

If the Spirit brings the believer into the body, a ceremony cannot become the true spiritual entrance into that same body.

Paul wrote in **Romans 8:9**:

> *"But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."*

The identifying reality is *"the Spirit of Christ."* If the Spirit of Christ dwells within, the person belongs to Him. If the Spirit of Christ does not dwell within, Paul says *"he is none of his."*

The test of belonging is spiritual, not ceremonial.

Outward Ordinances Cannot Place Christ Within

Water baptism cannot place the Spirit of Christ within a person. Bread and a cup cannot place Jesus Christ within a person. Feet washing cannot create the life of Christ within the heart.

Only God can give spiritual life. Therefore, none of these outward acts can create the one new man or produce the inward reality by which a person belongs to Jesus Christ.

A group of people may all perform the same ceremony and still not possess the Spirit of Christ. They may all be water baptised, receive bread and a cup, and wash one another's feet.

Yet if the Spirit of Christ does not dwell within them, their shared ceremony has not made them part of the one body. Outward sameness is not spiritual unity.

The opposite is also true. Born-again believers from different nations and backgrounds may possess the same Spirit of Christ before they ever participate in a common outward ceremony.

Their unity already exists because they are already one in Jesus Christ. The spiritual reality comes first.

If the believer has already been brought into the one body by the Spirit, another ceremony cannot make that person more fully a member. The believer is not partly in the body and waiting for ceremonial completion.

Paul wrote in **Colossians 2:9-10**:

> *"For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:"*

The believer is *"complete in him."* Therefore, an outward ordinance cannot become the missing spiritual part required to complete the believer.

Outward Ordinances Must Not Become New Covenant Walls

Jesus Christ broke down the former wall of covenant separation. We must therefore be careful not to create new spiritual walls through outward ordinances.

If water baptism, communion or feet washing is made the dividing line between born-again believers who are spiritually inside God's people and those who are considered outside, that claim must be established clearly from Scripture. The New Covenant must not rebuild outward walls where Christ has established spiritual unity.

"Christ Is All, and in All"

Paul wrote in **Colossians 3:10-11**:

> *"And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all."*

The final words are decisive: *"Christ is all, and in all."* If Christ is all, the ordinance cannot become the missing spiritual part. If Christ is in all His people, the unity is already inward.

The one new man is not created by outward ordinances. It is created in Jesus Christ. The one Spirit brings born-again believers into the one body, and the Spirit of Christ is the identifying

reality of belonging. Therefore, outward ordinances cannot create, complete or define the spiritual unity God has already established in Christ.

We have now established the New Covenant reality. Because this entire module concerns the ordinances, we should now gather these truths together and apply them directly.

That brings us to the next section:

Personal Response

Key Truth

Why can common outward ordinances neither create the one new man nor complete its spiritual life?

Personal Reflection

How could a shared ceremony become a new wall between believers who possess the same Spirit of Christ? Is there a familiar expectation of yours that now needs reconsidering?

Action Step

Is there a religious boundary you want to examine in relation to your treatment of other believers? Explain. Explain one boundary you will stop using to judge spiritual belonging, and what you will do differently.

WHY THIS MATTERS TO THE ORDINANCES

BACK TO CONTENTS

We have now established the spiritual foundation of the one new man. Jesus Christ broke down the former covenant wall of separation, made Jew and Gentile one in Himself, reconciled both unto God in one body, and brought believers into that body by one Spirit.

The Spirit of Christ is the identifying reality of belonging. These truths bring the ordinance question into sharp focus: If God has already created one spiritual people in Jesus Christ, what spiritual function can an outward ordinance legitimately be given?

Under the former covenant, outward distinctions had a genuine covenant function. Circumcision distinguished Israel in the flesh, ceremonial requirements separated Israel from the surrounding nations, and the former covenant contained visible boundaries.

But Paul says that Jesus Christ *"hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us."* The wall was removed because God's purpose was *"for to make in himself of twain one new man."*

We must therefore be careful not to remove one outward covenant wall and automatically construct another. If an outward ceremony becomes the dividing line by which one born-again believer is considered spiritually inside God's people while another is considered outside, we must ask: Has Scripture actually given that ceremony such authority?

The New Covenant Boundary Is Spiritual

There remains a real distinction between those who belong to Jesus Christ and those who do not, but Scripture places that distinction inwardly.

Paul wrote in **Romans 8:9**:

> *"But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."*

The decisive question is not first *"Has this person performed an outward ceremony?"* The decisive question is: *"Does this person possess the Spirit of Christ?"*

If the Spirit of Christ dwells within, that person belongs to Him. If the Spirit of Christ is absent, an outward act cannot create that belonging.

Paul also tells us how believers enter the one body.

Paul wrote in **1 Corinthians 12:13**:

> *"For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit."*

The language is clear. The believer is brought into *"one body"* by *"one Spirit."*

Therefore, an outward ordinance cannot be given a second spiritual entrance into the same body. If the Spirit has brought the believer into the body, the believer is in the body.

Personal Response

Key Truth

Why does the spiritual boundary of belonging remain real even though the former outward wall was removed?

Personal Reflection

How does the Spirit of Christ as the identifying reality challenge or confirm your own understanding of belonging?

Action Step

How would you respond to a claim that an outward ceremony gives you a second entrance into the body? Identify one practice or belief you will test against the Bible, and explain what you are prepared to change.

Water Baptism Cannot Provide a Second Entrance

This principle becomes especially important when we examine water baptism. If water baptism is said to place a person into the Church, that claim must be compared directly with Paul's statement: *"By one Spirit are we all baptized into one body."*

The baptism identified here as bringing the believer into the body is the baptism by the Spirit. This does not mean that verses concerning water baptism should be ignored. They must be examined carefully in their proper Scriptural setting.

But we must begin with the spiritual reality already established. If the born-again believer already possesses the Spirit of Christ and has already been brought into the one body by that Spirit, we must ask: What spiritual entrance remains for physical water to provide?

That question must be answered from Scripture, not assumed from tradition.

The same principle applies to communion. If believers are already one because they possess the same Spirit of Christ, bread and a cup cannot create that spiritual fellowship.

An outward act may be shared by many people, but the outward act cannot produce the Person who creates the fellowship. If Christ dwells within two born-again believers, their spiritual relationship already exists before either receives bread or a cup. Communion cannot become the source of a fellowship already created in Jesus Christ.

Feet washing must be tested by the same principle. An outward act of washing another person's feet may portray humility or service, but the physical action cannot create humility in the heart.

It cannot place the life of Jesus Christ within a person. True service flows from Christ dwelling within. The life comes first.

An Ordinance Cannot Add What Is Already Complete

Paul wrote in **Colossians 2:9-10**:

> *"For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:"*

The believer is *"complete in him."* This gives us another important test.

If an outward ordinance is said to provide something spiritually necessary after the believer has already been born again, received the Spirit of Christ and been brought into the one body, we must ask: What is missing from someone whom Scripture says is complete in Christ?

If nothing is spiritually lacking, the ceremony cannot be made necessary to complete the believer.

The doctrine of the one new man also prevents us from creating separate spiritual classes within the Church. We cannot have one class of born-again believers who possess Christ but are not yet fully members of His body, and another class who become fully members only after an outward ceremony.

Neither can we have one class of believers considered to possess true fellowship because they perform an ordinance, while other born-again believers who possess the same Spirit of Christ are considered outside that fellowship. That would divide what Jesus Christ has made one.

The one new man includes Jew and Gentile. Therefore, the basis of belonging must be something available equally to both.

The common reality is:

- New birth;
- Faith in Jesus Christ;
- The Spirit of Christ within;
- Reconciliation unto God;
- Entrance by one Spirit into one body.

The same Jesus Christ is sufficient for all.

Outward Practice Must Be Interpreted From the Spiritual Reality

This gives us the correct order for the ordinance studies that follow. We must not begin with an outward action and then make the spiritual reality conform to it.

We must first establish what Jesus Christ has already done. Then we ask what Scriptural place remains for the outward action.

The controlling questions must therefore be:

- Does this practice create spiritual life;
- Does it place Jesus Christ within;
- Does it bring the believer into Christ;
- Does it reconcile the believer unto God;
- Does it bring the believer into the one body;
- Does it create spiritual fellowship;
- Does it complete salvation;
- Or does Scripture assign these realities to Jesus Christ and the inward work of His Spirit?

These questions will guide the studies that follow.

No outward ordinance can provide a second entrance into a body the Spirit has already brought the born-again believer into. The one new man is created in Jesus Christ, believers are brought into one body by one Spirit, and the Spirit of Christ is the identifying reality of belonging. Therefore, every claimed ordinance must be understood in the light of the spiritual reality already complete in Christ.

We began this Study Guide by asking what God established when the former covenant separation was removed. We now have the answer:

- One new man;
- One Lord;
- One Spirit;
- One body;
- One Church.

All of these truths bring us back to the same spiritual centre: *"Christ is all, and in all."* That brings us to the conclusion:

Personal Response

Key Truth

How do the truths of one Spirit, one body and completeness in Christ guide the examination of outward ordinances?

Personal Reflection

What does this reveal to you about claims that water, bread and a cup or feet washing supply missing spiritual life? Which part of your own understanding does it challenge?

Action Step

Which claim about an ordinance do you want to reconsider in relation to your own understanding of Christ's sufficiency? Name one inherited expectation you will reconsider and explain how Christ's fulfilment changes your response.

CONCLUSION: CHRIST IS ALL, AND IN ALL

BACK TO CONTENTS

We began this Study Guide with an important question: What did God establish when the former covenant separation between Jew and Gentile was removed?

Paul's answer is clear. Jesus Christ:

- "Hath made both one";
- "Hath broken down the middle wall of partition";
- Made "of twain one new man";
- Reconciled both "unto God in one body."

The direction of the New Covenant is therefore from separation to unity in Jesus Christ.

Under the former covenant, there had been a real distinction between natural Israel and the Gentile nations. That distinction was expressed through circumcision, the Law, Temple worship, covenant privilege and outward ordinances.

It had served a God-appointed purpose, but it was not God's final spiritual purpose.

Jesus Christ fulfilled the former order and brought both Jew and Gentile into one new spiritual people in Himself.

Paul's words *"in himself"* give us the centre of New Covenant identity.

The one new man is not found in:

- Natural Israel;
- The Law of Moses;
- Circumcision;
- An earthly Temple;
- An outward ordinance.

The one new man is found in Jesus Christ. Both Jew and Gentile must come to the same Person. Their spiritual identity is therefore found in Christ, not in former outward distinctions.

"Christ Is All, and in All"

Paul wrote in **Colossians 3:10-11**:

> *"And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all."*

The final words are decisive: *"Christ is all, and in all."*

Paul does not say that Christ is most. He says *"Christ is all."* There is no missing spiritual part that must be supplied by an outward ordinance.

When Paul says *"and in all,"* he reveals the unity of God's people. The same Christ dwells within all who belong to Him.

One Lord, One Spirit, One Body

This unity is consistent throughout the New Testament.

Paul wrote in **1 Corinthians 12:13**:

> *"For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit."*

Jew and Gentile do not enter different spiritual arrangements. Both are brought into:

- One salvation;
- One Spirit;
- One body;
- One New Covenant reality.

The unity is spiritual. Paul wrote in **Colossians 1:18**:

> *"And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence."*

The one body is *"the church."* Jesus Christ is its Head.

Therefore, the Church cannot be spiritually defined by natural ancestry, an earthly nation, a physical Temple or an outward ordinance. It is the spiritual body of Jesus Christ.

The Spirit of Christ Identifies Those Who Belong

Paul wrote in **Romans 8:9**:

> *"But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."*

This gives us the identifying reality of New Covenant belonging. The decisive question is not simply, *"Has an outward ceremony been performed?"* The decisive question is, *"Does the Spirit of Christ dwell within?"*

If the Spirit of Christ dwells within, the person belongs to Jesus Christ. If He does not dwell within, an outward ceremony cannot create that belonging.

The one new man is not created by:

- Water baptism;
- Bread and a cup;
- Feet washing;
- Circumcision;
- Shared ritual;
- Human organisation.

The one new man is created in Jesus Christ. The one Spirit brings believers into the one body, and the Spirit of Christ is the identifying reality of belonging.

Therefore, outward ordinances cannot create, complete or define the spiritual unity God has already established in Christ.

Jesus Christ broke down the former outward covenant wall. We must not establish another outward religious boundary in its place.

The former wall separated. Jesus Christ makes one.

Therefore, any claimed New Covenant ordinance must be examined carefully. It must not become a new boundary separating born-again believers whom Christ has already made one.

The question must always return to the Person.

The Final Principle

We can therefore state the central truth of this Study Guide simply:

God's New Covenant people are one new man in Jesus Christ. Jew and Gentile are reconciled unto God in one body, brought into that body by one Spirit, and identified as belonging to Christ by His Spirit dwelling within.

This is why the conclusion must remain: *"Christ is all, and in all."*

Personal Response

Key Truth

How do one new man, one body and the indwelling Spirit bring together the meaning of Christ being all and in all?

Personal Reflection

Which part of this unity has most clarified or challenged your understanding of God's people? What difference should this make to your own response?

Action Step

What honest personal response do you want to make to the truth that Christ gives His people one spiritual identity and life? What assumption will you examine, and how will your response change if it does not agree with the Bible?

SUBMISSION TO COGMA FOR APPRAISAL

Instructions

Complete this section after you have finished the Study Guide. It must be completed online.

The link is located at the bottom of the online Study Guide — https://cogma.com.au/study-guides/

Your answers should reflect your understanding, your personal response, and how you intend to live by the truth you have studied. Answer honestly and be specific.

1. Main Truth

What does it mean that Christ made of Jew and Gentile one new man in Himself? Explain how this differs from two continuing saving covenant peoples cooperating or natural Israel simply being enlarged.

2. Understanding

How did Israel's former covenant separation relate to the middle wall of partition and the law of commandments contained in ordinances? Use verses to explain why Christ's removal of that wall does not mean God was wrong to appoint it for its former purpose.

3. Personal Reflection

Both Jew and Gentile needed reconciliation to God despite their different backgrounds. What does their equal need for the same Saviour lead you to consider about your own religious background, privileges or sense of standing?

4. Response to Truth

The unity Christ gives is found in Himself rather than outward sameness. What does recognising His life in born-again believers from another background ask of your own attitudes towards them? Explain the response you want to make.

5. Action Step

Consider your own way of receiving a believer from a different background. How could you show welcome or care in recognition of the one spiritual life Christ gives, without making a shared ceremony the basis of belonging? Explain an honest response you want to make or are still considering.

6. Early Response

Have you already considered how to show welcome or care to a believer from a different background in recognition of the one spiritual life Christ gives, without making a shared ceremony the basis of belonging? If yes, explain what you did or what became clearer. If not, explain what you are still considering or what has made it difficult to begin.

7. Ongoing Practice

How can the truth of one Spirit bringing believers into one body guide your continuing view of Church membership? Explain what will help you recognise the living body under Christ its Head rather than treating an organisation or ceremony as its source.

8. Doctrinal Clarity

How do **1 Corinthians 12:13** *and* **Romans 8:9** *explain entrance into Christ's body and the identifying reality of belonging? Explain why physical water or another outward ordinance cannot be assigned the spiritual work these verses give to the Spirit.*

9. Living the Truth

A group says born-again believers who have not shared its ceremony are not yet fully members of Christ's body. How would you examine that claim using the one new man and completeness in Christ? Explain how you would respond to the people involved.

10. Final Response

Bring together the removed wall, reconciliation in one body and the same indwelling Christ. What does Christ being all and in all establish for spiritual unity and the place of outward ordinances? Explain what you now understand and the personal response it invites.