

Series: Understanding the Body of Christ

Tonight's Lesson: "When Did the Body of Christ Begin?"

Introduction

- Today, God is taking believers in Christ and placing them into spiritual _____ with Jesus Christ and forming what the Bible calls "*the church, which is his body.*" Ephesians 1:22-23
- In tonight's lesson, we will examine the subject of when the body of Christ began.
- We will examine two important truths, and hopefully, bring some clarity to this important issue.

First, the body of Christ could not _____ until the finished work of Christ was accomplished.

1. How does a person get into the body of Christ?
 - The moment people place their faith and trust in Christ's finished work, the Holy Spirit _____ into them and baptizes them into Christ.
Ephesians 1:12-13, 2:8-10
 - We now possess the resurrection _____ of Jesus Christ.
 - "*Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.*" **Romans 6:11**
 - "*But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.*" **Romans 8:11**
2. Here is the point: There is no way that a person could be baptized by God's Spirit into the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ until it first _____.
3. In the body of Christ, we learn that there is no Jew or Gentile. We are all one in Christ. The middle wall of partition has come down. Galatians 3:27-28; Ephesians 2:14
4. How did God accomplish the breaking down of that wall and the bringing together of Jews and Gentiles into one body? According to Ephesians 2:16, Christ accomplished this "*by the _____.*"

5. The Bible is clear: The church, the body of Christ, could not possibly begin until Christ's finished work.
 - The _____ removed the enmity of the law that would have cursed us with eternal death.
 - The _____ provides a living union with Christ for all those who believe on Him.

Second, the body of Christ was not _____ until the apostle Paul.

1. The idea of "the body of Christ," composed of saved Jews and Gentiles, is the exclusive _____ of the apostle Paul.
2. This truth was revealed to Paul after his _____ in Acts 9.
Colossians 1:24-28; Ephesians 3:1-9
3. If the church, the body of Christ, was Paul's doctrinal domain, where would we look to find sound doctrine that fits for us today? While all of God's Word is profitable, Paul's epistles (Romans through Philemon) constitute _____ doctrine for the body of Christ today.