

Philippians 2; Lord's Day 21

I BELIEVE THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS

- Lord's Day 21b; Philippians 2

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I. The Truth Understood

A. The history behind the present unity of the saints.

B. God re-created a positive spiritual unity in the “members of Christ,” who partake “of Him, and of all His riches and gifts.”

1. This unity involves only (and all) those in Christ (the one salvation makes for their unity in Christ).

2. Communion with Jesus means that I know the love and fulness of Christ, in Whom I have fulfillment, comfort, and peace.

C. They are “saints” because they are justified and sanctified in Christ (cf. Canons V-1).

D. In the unity there is diversity, i.e., “many members” (I Cor. 12:12): Jews or Gentiles, bond or free.

1. Grace does not make us uniform, but each member of the body has their own place.

2. The purpose of the diversity is to manifest the greatness of God's grace and the breadth of His love.

II. Our calling is to practice our faith in this blessed truth by serving Christ (the Head) by serving the other members.

A. The first duty is to partake of Christ (His riches and gifts) and of the blessed friendship with God (covenant).

1. The more I am in fellowship with God in Christ, the more I am willing to serve Him and my fellow-members in love.

2. To partake of Christ is to be forgiven and righteous, so we can and must practice these as we are forgiven and loved.

B. Be consciously aware of this communion by serving (edifying) the other members (I Cor. 12:25,26; Eph. 4:12b,16).

1. I am saved into the body so I can use my gifts to serve others (Rom. 12).

2. Delight in the assembling of the saints together (Hebrews 10:25).

C. The more excellent way to exercise the communion of saints is to love (I Cor. 13).

D. Let the peace of God rule, and think of the things which are good in the other (Phil. 4:3b,7,8).

E. Great blessing and edification arise from the proper exercise of the communion of saints.