



[Ephesians 1:21-23](#)

(21) far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. (22) And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, (23) which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

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Despite its smallness and visible weaknesses, as the complement of Christ, the church is also in an exalted position. We members do not literally add a thing to Christ's divinity, but in His view, He is not complete and will not be complete until united with His bride. Thus, as He sanctifies and shapes us in [holiness](#), He gradually fills His bride's every part with every gift needed to enable her to function effectively so that she, as a whole, can glorify [God](#) in her overall responsibility to our Father and to our Lord and Savior. Since everything in Christ's spiritual body comes from Him, He *is* everything to every member within it.

No religion but Christianity offers such an exalted and loving, spiritual Being sent to labor on behalf of its adherents. He is our Creator, our Lawgiver, the Forgiver of our sins, the Dispenser of His Spirit, the Giver of [eternal life](#), our Guide through life who blazes the trail before us, and the Enabler of true spiritual growth and overcoming.

This body of believers is not contained within one corporate entity, and an individual cannot just go out and join it. The Father must lead a person to it ([John 6:44](#)). When He does, the newly called person will find people who are keeping God's commandments—*all ten* of them—inboth letter *and* spirit. They will [worship God](#) in spirit and [truth](#) ([John 4:24](#)) without dodging spiritual realities, and they will sacrifice themselves despite personal costs. They will be honest to a fault, trustworthy, and uncomplaining. They are not driven by envy and [covetousness](#), nor are they fixed on immediate or self-gratification.

The [Kingdom of God](#) is the vision that drives them. They strive to transform into the

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image of [Jesus Christ](#) and to glorify the Father and Son in everything. They live solidly in the present, aware of many of its harsh realities, but they make every move with their gaze on their eternal future. They truly are pilgrims, people who humbly see themselves as mere tiny specks in a vast and awesome purpose yet privileged beyond all bounds. They believe that purpose, and in gratitude, give themselves by [faith](#) to see it accomplished in their lives.

— John W. Ritenbaugh

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