

JESUS **CENTERED CHURCH**

LETTER TO THE EPHESIANS

Jesus didn't come to reject power, but to
redefine it.

What might need a deeper look if we trust that Paul is inviting us to live into the self sacrificial power Jesus gave up everything to redefine?

Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.

Ephesians 5:21-6:9

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.

Ephesians 5:21-6:9

After all, no one ever hated their own body, but they feed and care for their body, just as Christ does the church— for we are members of his body. “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.”

This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church. However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.

Ephesians 5:21-6:9

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. “Honor your father and mother” — which is the first commandment with a promise — “so that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth.”

Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.

Ephesians 5:21-6:9

Slaves, obey your earthly masters with respect and fear, and with sincerity of heart, just as you would obey Christ. Obey them not only to win their favor when their eye is on you, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from your heart. Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not people, because you know that the Lord will reward each one for whatever good they do, whether they are slave or free.

Ephesians 5:21-6:9

And masters, treat your slaves in the same way. Do not threaten them, since you know that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no favoritism with him.

Ephesians 5:21-6:9

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Ephesians 5:21

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Ephesians 5:21

“Everyone in the Christian community should willingly choose to submit to one another because that honors Jesus.”

Submit to one another defined:

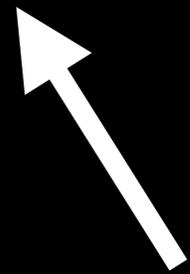
Gently teach and correct each other out of love

Remind each other of who God is by singing
songs to each other

Choose wholehearted service as though you were
serving Jesus himself

Ephesians 5:21-

ὑποτασσόμενοι ἀλλήλοις = Submit to one another



Word Paul modified to go from hierarchical submission to mutual submission.

Three illustrations:

Wives and husbands

Parents and children

Masters and the enslaved

Interpretation Challenges:

1. Missing verb
2. Misunderstood imagery
3. Missing cultural context
4. Missing Main Point

Missing verb:

Ephesians 5:21-

ὑποτασσόμενοι ἀλλήλοις ἐν φόβῳ Χριστοῦ

Submit to one another

Out of reverence

for Christ

Ephesians 5:22 -

αἱ γυναῖκες τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν ὡς τῷ κυρίῳ,

Wives to your husbands

as to the Lord

Missing verb:

Ephesians 5:21-

ὑποτασσόμενοι ἀλλήλοις ἐν φόβῳ Χριστοῦ

Submit to one another

Out of reverence

for Christ

Ephesians 5:22 -

αἱ γυναῖκες τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν ὡς τῷ κυρίῳ,

Wives submit to one another to your husbands

as to the Lord

“Spouses make sure to be submitting yourselves to the teaching and correction you are giving to one another in Christ.”

Ephesians 5:22

**Bruce Fleming Contextual
Paraphrase**

Ephesians 5:21 and 5:24 (*husbands & wives*)

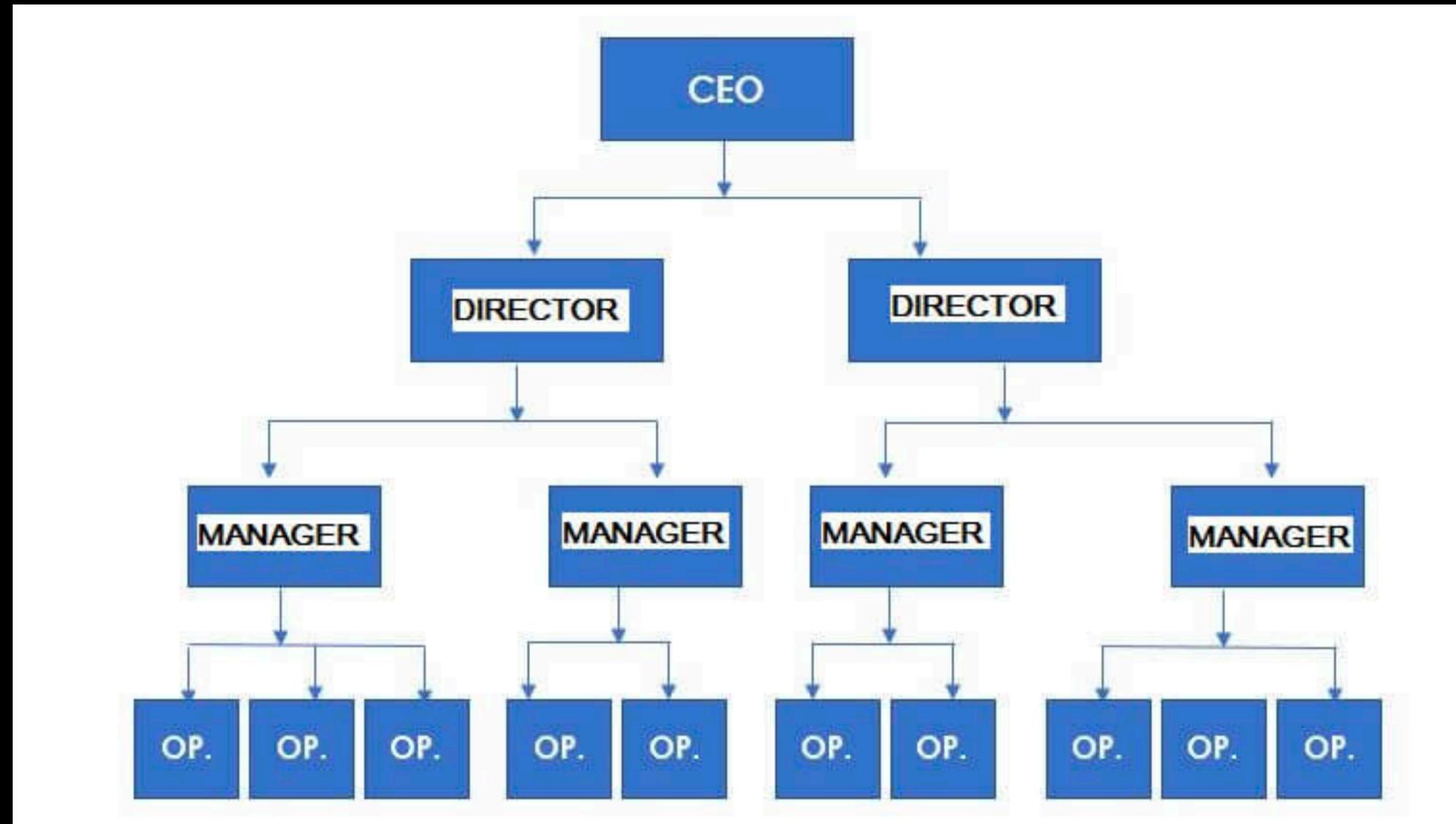
Ὑποτασσομένοι = mutually submit to (*mutuality*)

Ephesians 6:1 and 6:5 (*children & enslaved*)

ὑπακούετε = obey, be obedient to (*hierarchical*)

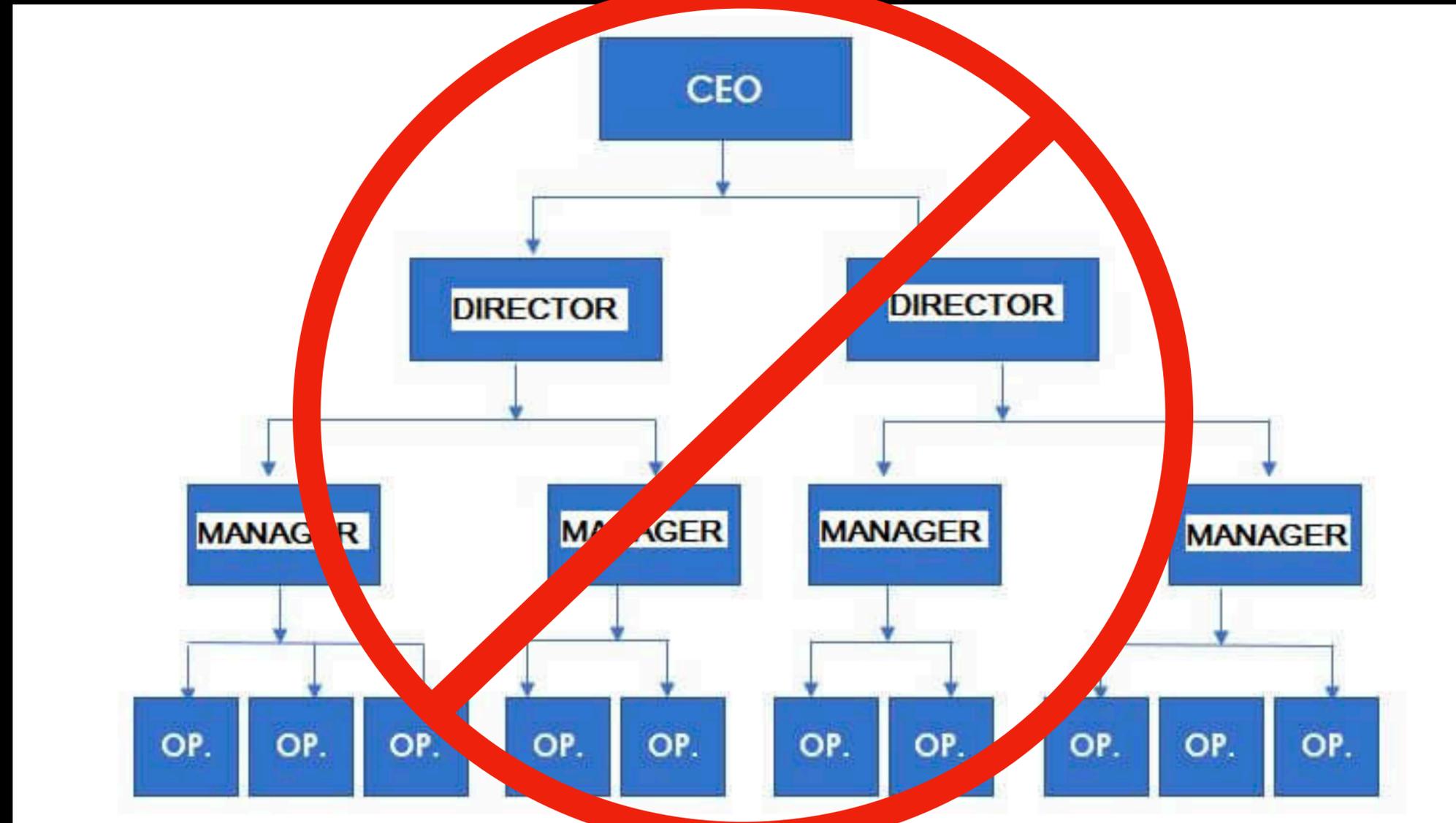
ὑπακούετε ≠ Ὑποτασσομένοι

Misunderstood imagery



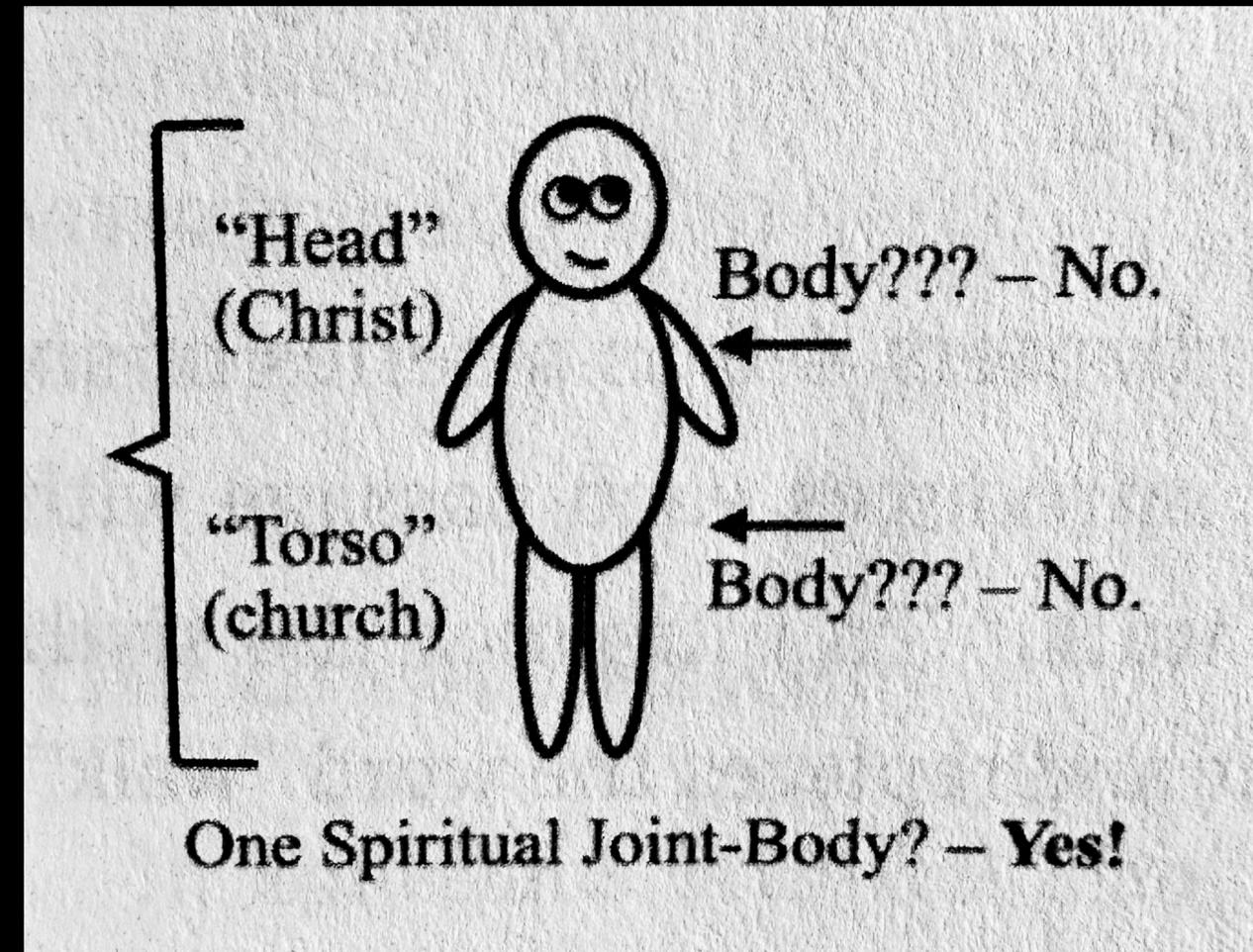
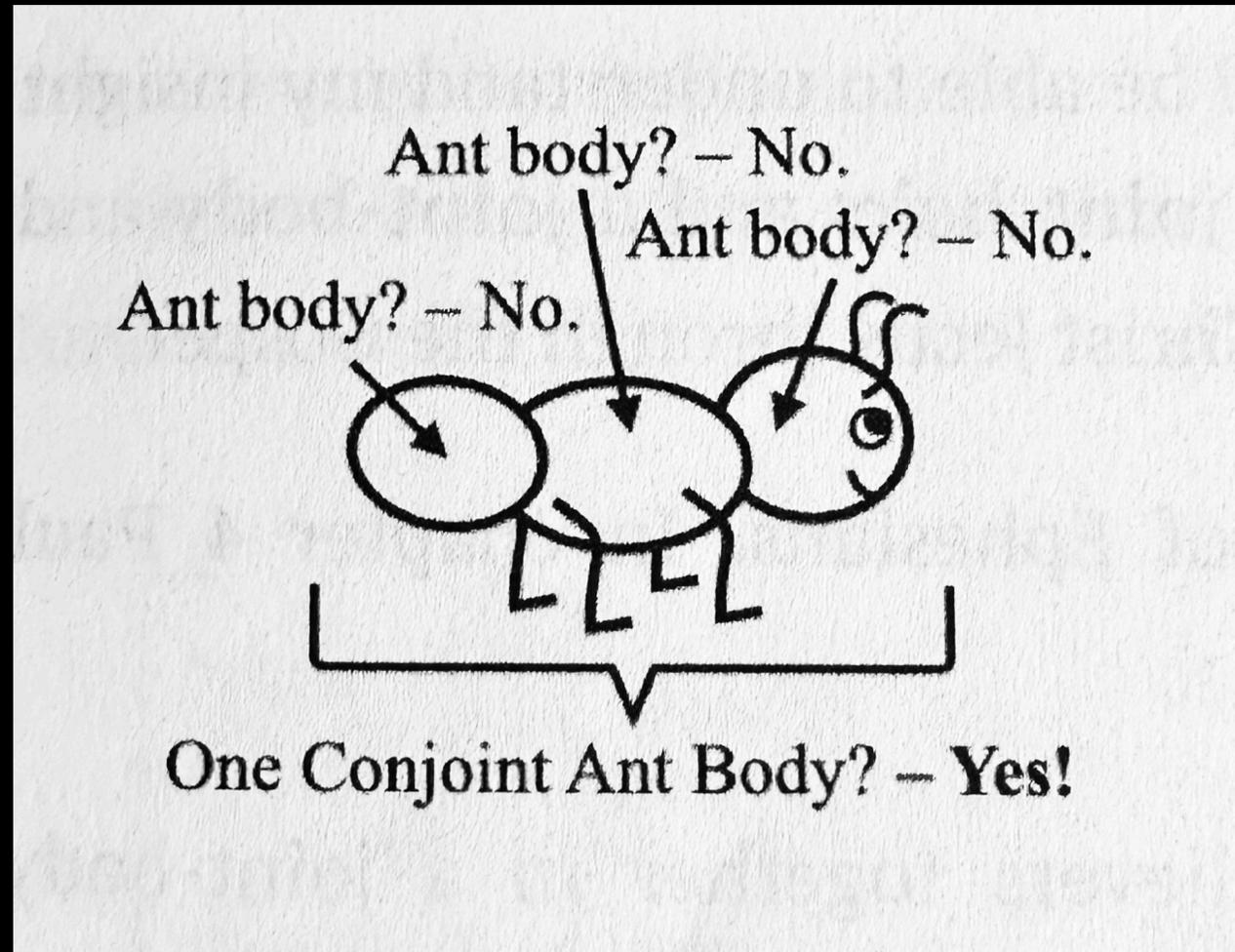
“For the husband is the **head** of the wife as Christ is the **head** of the church, his body...” - Ephesians 5:23

Misunderstood imagery



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Misunderstood imagery



Not hierarchical

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Misunderstood imagery

“For the husband is the **head of** the wife as Christ is the **head of** the church, his body...” - Ephesians 5:23

“For when you are married you *are united in one joint body*, just as Christ and the church *is united in one joint body*...” - Ephesians 5:23

Missing cultural context:

“Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.” - Ephesians 6:4

Missing cultural context:

Parents

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“[slaves] Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not people, because you know that the Lord will reward each one for whatever good they do, whether they are slave or free. And masters, treat your slaves in the same way. - Ephesians 6:7-9a

Missing cultural context:

Parents

“~~Fathers~~, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.” - Ephesians 6:4

“[slaves] Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not people, because you know that the Lord will reward each one for whatever good they do, whether they are slave or free. **And masters, treat your slaves in the same way.** - Ephesians 6:7-9a



Missing main point:

This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church. - Ephesians 5:32

Christ is unified with the church like a head to a body!

As Christ loved the church and gave himself
up for her...

Ephesians 5:25

As Christ loved the church and gave himself
up for her...

Ephesians 5:25

So we are invited to love each other and give
ourselves up for each other (*service and sacrifice*)



David R. MacIver

@DRMacIver

The modern condition is mostly trying to do things on your own that people have historically achieved with a large support network and wondering why you're tired all the time.

A Jesus centered church submits to each other
out of love and seeks to serve one another
wholeheartedly as though serving Jesus himself.