

REFLECTIONS

Thoughts on nature and the Christian faith - 4/22/19

*"The eye cannot say to the hand, 'I have no need of you,'
nor again the head to the feet, 'I have no need of you.'*

*On the contrary, the parts of the body that seem
to be weaker are indispensable." - I Cor. 12:21-22*



Lichens are amazing organisms. I photographed these lichen growing on a fallen tree limb on our property. Lichens are a composite organism of algae and fungus living in a symbiotic relationship. The fungus provides structure and the algae provide nutrition. The resultant organism is far superior to either of its parts. There are over 20,000 different kinds of lichen which cover over 6% of the earth's land surface. Apparently this cooperation works incredibly well. The church is like that. It is composed of a multitude of parts, each having its own unique gifts which join together to form one body. There is in reality only one church. She goes by various names, operates in various ways, speaks various languages, and exists in various stages of maturity, but forms only one holy bride of Christ. She functions through the diverse gifts given to each member. The Holy Spirit gives those gifts as He pleases to whom He pleases. And the body grows together, if it is to grow at all, when each member gives to, and receives from, every other member. We are not to be jealous of other parts of the body, nor are we to endeavor to imitate another's gifts or function. What we are to do is to cooperate in order to produce that which cannot be produced individually. The church is a vital living, breathing, and growing organism. Each part is indispensable to the health of the body. There are no first class or second class members. Sadly, we often act more like a theater production, with performers and observers, rather than a family depending on, and learning from, one another. What we are called upon to do is not defined by age, education, gender, or social status but by the gifts we have been given. We have much to learn from lichen. John