

Many Parts, One Body Outline

1 Corinthians 12:12-31

- I. Two scenes.
 - A. The statue of Napoleon—"*I did this, I do this, I will do this*"
 - B. Jesus Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane—"*not my will but Yours be done*"
 - C. Application— doing the Lord's work in the power of the flesh rather than the Spirit.
- II. Origin of operating in the Spirit.
 - A. John the Baptist foretells the baptism of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 3:11)
 - B. The Holy Spirit descends upon Jesus (Matthew 3:16)
 - C. Jesus is led by the Spirit (Matthew 4:1)
- III. Recap of Spiritual Gifts.
 - A. It begins with our salvation—a profession of faith through the work of the Holy Spirit.
 - B. We receive the Holy Spirit at the moment of salvation.
 - C. The Holy Spirit gives every believer at least one spiritual gift.
 - D. There are a variety of gifts for a variety of ministries for a variety of workings.
- IV. The context gifts are to be used.
 - A. Through the church—the "body of Christ".
 - 1. Romans 12:5; 1 Corinthians 10:17; Ephesians 4:12; Colossians 1:24
- V. The body is Christ.
 - A. The church may be called the body of Christ because....
 - 1. Members of the Body of Christ are joined to Christ in salvation (Eph. 4:15-16)
 - 2. Members of the Body of Christ follow Christ as their head.
 - 3. Members of the Body of Christ are the physical representation of Christ in this world.
 - 4. Members of the Body of Christ are indwelt by the Holy Spirit of Christ. (Romans 8:9)

5. Members of the Body of Christ possess a diversity of gifts suited to particular functions (1 Corinthians 12:12).
6. Members of the Body of Christ share a common bond with all other Christians (1 Corinthians 12:25)
7. Members of the Body of Christ are secure in their salvation (John 10:28-30).
8. Members of the Body of Christ partake of Christ's death and resurrection (Col. 2:12).
9. Members of the Body of Christ share Christ's inheritance (Romans 8:17).
10. Members of the Body of Christ receive the gift of Christ's righteousness (Rom.5:17).

VI. The Body—Many parts, one body (1 Cor. 12: 12,14,20)

- A. Diversity is essential for a body to function.
- B. The Corinthian context.
 1. The problem was disunity within the body.
 - a. An overemphasis of one gift—the speaking in tongues.
 2. Paul's possible, "probable" context of the temple of Asclepius and his ex-votos (offerings to the gods).
 3. Some thought their spiritual gift to be inferior, while others thought there's to be superior to others gifts.
- C. Paul's goal—for the church to exercise their diverse gifts, but to have unity dominating the diversity.

VII. How do we get into the body? (Verse 13)

A. **For also by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body.**

1. *Baptizo*—To dip, to sink, to immerse, to cover, to fill.

It is the work of the Holy Spirit, placing the believer into union with Christ and into union with other believers in the body of Christ at the moment of salvation.

2. Jesus does the baptizing (John 1:33)

VIII. We need each other (Verses 15,16.21)

- A. **THERE IS NO UNIMPORTANT GIFT OR PERSON IN THE BODY OF CHRIST!**

IX. We need to be different from one another (Verses 17 and 18).

A. A WELL FUNCTIONING BODY REQUIRES A MULTIPLICITY OF FUNCTIONS.

Many Parts, One Body Pastoral Notes

1 Corinthians 12:12-31

Yesterday around 2:00 I made the executive decision to make this sermon into two parts... I did not want to do that... but you will be glad I did...

Borrowing a page from Francis Schaeffer's *The Lord's Work in the Lord's Way*... let me give you two scenes... the first scene is in France... Paris... at the Hotel des Invalides... where a statue of Napoleon stands... a classic pose.

As he stands with his hand in his coat at his breast, he is the personification of "*I did this!*"...the sculpture has caught the attitude, the attitude of **the great man of the world**, the one who says in all three tenses: "*I did this...I do this...I will do this.*"

Schaeffer says *this attitude has shown forth so well in the statue... personifies the flesh*....now contrast that to a scene described in Luke 22... after the supper in the upper room the night before His death on the cross...

Jesus with His disciples go to the garden of Gethsemane... **(40) Now when He arrived at that place, He said to them, "pray that you may not enter into temptation."**

And He withdrew from them about a stone's throw, and He knelt down and prayed.... A man who say *I did this, I do this, I will do this* doesn't need such a time of prayer... he's got it all handled himself... but Jesus... Jesus says in this prayer **Father if You are willing, remove this cup from Me, yet not my will but Yours be done....** *I place my complete trust in You Father... Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.*

Such a contrast!... The eternal Son of God who in the incarnation is now also a true man... and as we hear His words... there is no sign of Napoleon's massive egoism... one says *I don't need anyone else... I can do it all...the power of one...* the other says.... *It's not about what I want its what you want Father!...it's all for you and Your glory.....I trust You...I submit to you... I put My faith in You... it's all about you.*

Listen to Schaeffer's words...(1980's) *the central problem of our age is not liberalism or modernism.... Nor the threat of communism... nor even the threat of rationalism and the monolithic consensus that surrounds us... all these are dangerous but not the primary threat... the real problem is this: the church of the Lord Jesus Christ, individually or corporately, tending to do the Lord's work in the power of the flesh rather than the Spirit.* *The central problem is always in the people of God, not in the circumstances surrounding them.*

In other words... the real problem of our age is that the church has a Napoleonic attitude... we can do this ourselves... *I did this, I do this, I will do this*... and because of this mindset... we have become powerless...because of this... the lost world around us is not drawn to us because we don't seem to have anything to offer that they can't get on their own...

That is always the result of not operating on the supernatural power God has made available to us through the Holy Spirit... operate in the Spirit there will be supernatural results...

Backing up thirty years plus a few... in the very beginning of Jesus's ministry here on earth... Matthew 3... John the Baptist had been baptizing in the Jordan river... John being questioned by the Pharisees regarding his baptism... John tells them these words that begin a form of repeated phrases in the New Testament. ... six times to be exact.

He (John the B) said to them...(11) **As for me, I baptize you with water for repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I am, and I am not fit to remove His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit of fire. (remember "fire").**

13 Then Jesus *arrived from Galilee at the Jordan, coming to John to be baptized by him. 14 But John tried to prevent Him.....16 After He was baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove and settling on Him, 17 and behold, a voice from the heavens said, "This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."

This is a classic passage where the Trinity are all represented and working... but it is more than that... we see it when we attach those words to verse 1 of chapter 4:

Then...after Jesus receives the Holy Spirit... Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.

As soon as Jesus was baptized by the Holy Spirit...He was led by Him!...If Jesus needed to be led by the Holy Spirit... how much more do we need to be?... but all this is to show something I think profound and important for us to see this morning in the context of our passage.

John the Baptist tells us two very important things... we see it clearly over in John's account of the same incident in the Jordan river... 1... John presents to the world the "**Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world**...Jesus Christ, the perfect sacrifice for payment of our sins (John 1:29)

And 2nd... something most miss... this same person... Jesus Christ... the lamb of God... God's only Son... **is the One who baptizes with the Holy Spirit**... verse 33... John speaking again...33 **And I did not recognize Him, but He (god) who sent me to baptize in water said to me, 'He (Jesus) upon whom you see the Spirit descending and remaining upon Him(Matt.3) this is the One who baptizes in the Holy Spirit.'**

Not only was Jesus baptized with the Holy Spirit... but it is Jesus who is the One who baptizes us and all believers into the Holy Spirit....what does THAT mean?...what does that do?... hopefully we will all get great insight into all this from today's passage in 1st Corinthians 12.

There is unfathomable power in the Holy Spirit... why would we embrace the Napoleonic philosophy of power if the flesh when God has made available this unfathomable power to each one of us??... let's read the passage:

Read 1 Corinthians 12:12-18

All this is in the context of spiritual gifts... which we've been talking about now for a couple of weeks... we could summarize where we've been by making a few points:

1. It begins with our confession of faith in Jesus Christ... We make our confession of faith in Christ through the Holy Spirit... the Holy Spirit enables us to see the truth regarding who Jesus is... what He has done for us...

It is the Holy Spirit that gives us the faith to believe that Jesus died for our sins and was raised from the dead...and enables us to proclaim Him as Lord.... 12:3 **no one can say "Jesus is Lord" except by the Holy Spirit.**

2. The moment of salvation... we receive the Holy Spirit... more about that this morning... and **3.** the Holy Spirit gives each believer a "spiritual gift"... these are not the same as the fruit of the Spirit we read in Galatians 5...(love, joy, peace, patience...) those are fruit that is to be evident in all believers...and through the life of the believer fruit will develop more and more and become more and more evident in one's life....sanctification.

Spiritual gifts on the other hand... are *supernatural endowments...gifts of the Holy Spirit for the edification... the building up of the church... God's people... the body of Christ ...* the gifts are abilities supernaturally given by God to strengthen...create oneness, harmony and power to unify and develop fellow believers in Christ.

(7) But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for what is profitable... edification.

4. There are a variety of gifts for a variety of ministries for a variety of workings (8,9)... all by the same...One true God... incorporating the entire Godhead... the Holy Trinity... Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

There are many gifts... all the lists in the Bible are just a sampling... **(11) But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually just AS HE WILLS.**

We were not designed to be a one person show.... We were not designed to be the all in all Napoleon...the flesh is weak!...So... to the Christian... we were all given gifts... and the power of the Holy Spirit to employ those gifts for His glory and purpose...

But there's more to it... much more... there is a context in which we are to work out our gifts... that is... the church... what Paul defines for us here as "the body of Christ"... if you are a Christian... you are a "part" of the Body of Christ.... At the moment of salvation...you became a body part in the body of Jesus Christ.

Last week I briefly mentioned that some profess to be followers of Christ but have declared that they have no need or purpose for the church...*I can worship God by myself thank you very much!... why put up with hypocrites, odd people and sometimes annoying people?... I can study the Bible alone... pray alone and have my own potluck.*

The problem with that is that, that is not God's design... God does not want millions of little independent autonomous Christian Napoleons running around thinking they are self-sufficient when it comes to their relationship with the Almighty.

There is no biblical justification for a "true Christian" to confess that "Jesus is Lord" but fail to participate in the life of the church.... The idea of an "unchurched Christian" is an oxymoron!

The Great Commission of Jesus Christ cannot be accomplished by a disarray of independent, disunified un-powered individuals running around with Bibles... God has designed the church to be a body of believers united together for the same purpose.... Empowered supernaturally by the Holy Spirit.

What we just read... in this passage is that the apostle Paul does NOT see the church as an organization... a democracy... or even an assembly... he sees it as an organism...something living.... He sees it as a "body"... specifically the Body of Christ.

Romans 12:5 so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.

1 Corinthians 10:17 Because there is one bread (the body of Jesus Christ), we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread.

Ephesians 4:12 to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ...

Colossians 1:24 Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church,

1. The Body is Christ...Christ is the body

Read verse 12

The Church may be called the Body of Christ because.....

1) Members of the Body of Christ are joined to Christ in salvation

Ephesians 4:15–16 **Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, 16 from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow ...**

2) Members of the Body of Christ follow Christ as their head....**no one else running this body**

3) Members of the Body of Christ are the physical representation of Christ in this world. The Church is the organism through which Christ manifests His life to the world today.... People... unbelievers will see Christ by the visible church.... That should convict you!

4) Members of the Body of Christ are indwelt by the Holy Spirit of Christ.

Romans 8:9 **You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him.**

5) Members of the Body of Christ possess a diversity of gifts suited to particular functions .

1 Corinthians 12:12 **“The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ” (verse 12).**

6) Members of the Body of Christ share a common bond with all other Christians, regardless of background, race, or ministry. “There should be no division in the body, but . . . its parts should have equal concern for each other” (1 Corinthians 12:25).

7) Members of the Body of Christ are secure in their salvation. For a Christian to lose his salvation, God would have to perform an “amputation” on the Body of Christ!

John 10:28–30 **I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. 29 My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father’s hand. 30 I and the Father are one.”**

8) Members of the Body of Christ partake of Christ’s death and resurrection.

Colossians 2:12 **having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead.**

9) Members of the Body of Christ share Christ’s inheritance .

Romans 8:17 **and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.**

10) Members of the Body of Christ receive the gift of Christ's righteousness .

Romans 5:17 **For if, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ.**

The body is Christ... the church is the body of Christ....

2. The Body—Many parts, one body (Verses 12,14,20)

Reread verse 12... and 14...20

Three times Paul emphasizes that the body is made up of many parts but it is ONE body.... Think about this for a few minutes... it's a vivid metaphor... thinking of your body... you can point out many different parts... foot, hand, arm, head...

But going further... even within these members are many, many more parts you can't even see... your body is made up of somewhere around 27 trillion cells... if you were to count each one of these cells say 10 per second it would take you 100,000 years to count them all....

I am told that as I am speaking right now I am using 72 different muscles... The body is one amazing organism of cooperation and interdependency of parts...

Many parts... diversity... **diversity is essential for a body to function**... *the body is NOT an agglomeration of autonomous body parts... but a symbiotic whole* (Garland)... A collection of arms, legs and torsos does not create a body... each part of the body takes its meaning **from being a functional body member.**

If you cut your little finger off from your hand.... From the body... the finger becomes what?.... worthless!... the finger only has value when it is connected to the rest of the body!

I hope you're putting this together with you in this... if you are a Christian... you have been given the Holy Spirit to empower and teach you... He has given you a spiritual gift... that gift is your function... you have a God given purpose as a body part... in the body of Christ....

You are to be functioning in your gift in the body.... The body of Jesus Christ is only going to be healthy and functioning properly when its members are connected to the body...and functioning as they are designed to function!

Any person for whatever reason decides to sever their relationship to the body.... They don't lose their salvation... they will never experience their true value... there is an interdependence between parts...body parts.

Let's talk a bit about the Corinthian church context... we know that there was an issue on the church regarding spiritual gifts... that is why we have chapters 12, 13, 14... Paul is addressing the problem... we'll see more in chapter 14... but the main problem was the church was not operating in unity...disarrayed body parts.

Something possible if not very likely... *why was Paul so prolific in his use of the 'unified BODY of Christ metaphor'?*... Paul uses the body as a metaphor for the church 18 times in his letters...it's probable that Paul had a reaction to one of the striking features of the temple in Corinth in his day...that was dedicated to the healing god Asclepius.

A major archeological discovery in Corinth uncovered numerous, huge terra-cotta ex-votos (ex-votos are offerings to the gods)...in the form of heads... arms...hands...feet.. legs... breasts... eyes and ears...all in a big pile..... a huge *agglomeration of autonomous body parts*.

The idea was that these ex-votos were given over to the god Asclepius to heal and put them altogether again in a formable body...The apostle... aware of this... it was widely popular in his day...he would have seen all these disconnected, dismembered limbs as symbols of EVERYTHING A CHRISTIAN SHOULD NOT BE.

Dead...unloving...and unloved... useless parts...dead parts...separated from the body...the exact opposite of the body of Christ....

Other problems were that some felt their spiritual gifts were inferior to others... some gifts were more prestigious to have... some gifts more important...(We'll address this all next time)...so

The parts of the body are to operate in the function the Holy Spirit has given to them... and enabled them to do...the problem was everyone was obsessed with speaking in tongues... people were speaking in "tongues" without the gift of speaking in tongues... they were valuing the gift of tongues over all other gifts.... And if you did not have the gift of tongues... you were looked down upon...inferior...

Paul gave them a sampling of spiritual gifts in a list in chapter 12 to show them there are many more spiritual gifts.... Many more important gifts than speaking in tongues.... The church has become disunified.

Some say the entire message of this passage is "Unity in diversity" Or "diversity in unity"... Paul wants diversity...diversity is essential in the body...but what Paul really wants is "**Unity dominating diversity**".... And making diversity genuinely meaningful and constructive.... I think of it as Unity putting diversity into submission!

[We hear a lot about diversity... but diversity left alone to itself seldom results in unity....]

By the way... one little word in verse 12 to highlight... circle... “All”.... **All the members of the body, though they are many, are one body.... So also Christ.**

3. How do we get into the body? (Verse 13)

This is a difficult verse... some have made this say things it doesn't say... this is not some “second blessing” or some special anointing... this is simply saying... **for also by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body.**

Why is this so difficult?... because of that word “**Baptized**”... *baptizo*... means a gazillion things... it can mean to dip something... it could mean to immerse something in something... it could mean sink...

There is a historical account of a ship that sunk in the Aegean Sea around the time of Paul... the account says *the ship baptized*... filled with water... the word is used to describe soldiers wading breast deep in water... they were baptized...

The problem is that the Bible never actually defines *baptizo*... but it uses it... 63 verses.... a couple chapters back...

1 Corinthians 10:1-2 **Our fathers were under the cloud and passed through the sea and all were baptized into Moses...**

Matthew 3:11-12 this is that verse I told you to remember.... John the Baptist talking to the Pharisees... **As for me (John the Baptist), I baptize you with water for repentance...** but there's another baptism... **but He who is coming after me is mightier than I and I am not fit to remove His sandals.... He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire....**

You don't want that baptism!.... a baptism of fire is judgement to hell from God...

Acts 8:35-38... the story of Phillip and the Eunuch who comes to salvation... they see some water and the Eunuch blurts out **Look! Water! What prevents me from being baptized?**

Luke 12:50... Jesus says **But I have a baptism to undergo, and how distressed I am until it is finished...** this obviously is not a baptism with water!..... Jesus is referring to being immersed in suffering.... The suffering He would endure on the cross...

So you can see... baptism is difficult to pin down... baptized in the clouds and sea into Moses... baptism of repentance... with fire... with judgement to hell... water... and suffering... what we can say for sure about verse 13 is that **every Christian has been made a part of the one body of Jesus Christ through the immersion of the Holy Spirit.**

I think that two things are being referred to here... I think it points to water baptism *Indirectly*... and water baptism is pointing specifically to the *baptism of the Holy Spirit*...

There are seven verses referring to the baptism of the Holy Spirit... six of those say the same thing... Acts 1:4-5 is one of them... **Gathering them together, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for [b]what the Father had promised, “Which,” He said, “you heard of from Me; 5 for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with(en = by means of) the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”**

Six verses are identical to that one.... And all six tells us nothing about what it means to be baptized by the Holy Spirit.... only verse 12:13 tells us what it means... **we will be immersed into one body by (means of) the Holy Spirit....**

A good definition... *it is the work of the Holy Spirit, placing the believer into union with Christ and into union with other believers in the body of Christ at the moment of salvation....*the Holy Spirit assembles the body...He puts it together... He puts us into it at the moment of our salvation.

Who does the baptizing of the Holy Spirit into the believer?...so that BY THE MEANS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT brings the believer into the body of Christ?... how did I begin this message?... John 1:33...**The One whom you see the Spirit descending and abiding on Him... this is the One who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.....** Jesus is the baptizer!

The moment you accepted Jesus as your Lord and Savior... which was through the Holy Spirit... Jesus Himself baptized you with the Holy Spirit... brought you into union with Himself...by the means of the Holy Spirit.... now what are you to do?

You do what Jesus did the moment He received the Holy Spirit... He was lead by the Holy Spirit... you be lead by the Holy Spirit... function in the body as you've been gifted.

4. We need each other

Something else about the Corinthian church... some in the church apparently had been made to feel inferior to others... either that they had no spiritual gift or the gift they had was inferior to others...

Read verses 15 &16, 21

Think of it this way... ears that constantly hear someone say how beautiful eyes are can easily get the idea they are inconsequential... and eyes can get the idea that they are all important. BUT...the point is... BOTH ears and eyes have their specific assigned function in the body, without either... the body would be disabled!

THERE IS NO UNIMPORTANT GIFT OR PERSON IN THE BODY OF CHRIST!

Dr. Paul Brand...pioneering physician in the work on leprosy in the last century... died about 20 years ago... wrote a wonderful book called *Fearfully and Wonderfully Made*... spending hours and hours peering through the lens of microscopes...

He was struck by how the human body was like a community... and the more he looked at the cells of the body... the more he saw God's creation of the body as an organized structure of many independent cells working together for the good of the body.... He could not help but make a correlation between what he was looking at and Paul's writing in 1st Corinthians 12

"The body is one unit, though it is made up of many cells, and though all its cells are many, they form one body. . . . If the white cell should say, because I am not a brain cell, I do not belong to the body, it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body. And if the muscle cell should say to the optic nerve cell, because I am not an optic nerve, I do not belong to the body, it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body. If the whole body were an optic nerve cell, where would be the ability to walk? If the whole body were an auditory nerve, where would be the sense of sight? But in fact God has arranged the cells in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. If all cells were the same, where would the body be? As it is, there are many cells, but one body."

THERE IS NO UNIMPORTANT GIFT OR PERSON IN THE BODY OF CHRIST!

Paul notches it up in verse 17

5. We NEED to differ from one another

Read verse 17

What if the whole body was just an eye?... no diversity... there would be no sense of smell... not able to hear... not able to touch... couldn't move... couldn't get that speck out of the eye!

A WELL FUNCTIONING BODY REQUIRES A MULTIPLICITY OF FUNCTIONS.

Everyone in the Corinthian church was obsessed with tongues... a church full of tongues would be a little freaky!... not only that... it would shrivel up and die!... from the loss of nourishment... no teaching... preaching... administrating... service...no life.

Can you imagine if WE were all like?...when I finish this chapter in a few weeks... we will get into specifics of life in the body of Christ as it looks for us...but I want to leave with you today a principle...and I hope you will ponder this principle for days after today.

Uniformity ultimately produces death... diversity brings for life...now think about the body... when the body approaches death... what happens?... the various parts... begin to cease functioning...

What happens when the body ultimately dies?... it goes back to dust again... Ecclesiastes 3:20, Solomon declared, "**All go to the same place; all come from dust, and to dust all return.**"

All is dust!... the heart is dust... bones are dust... limbs are all dust.... All would be "uniform" ... what was once a diverse multifunctioning symbiotic system called a body...composed of a diversity of parts.... is now a useless, lifeless pile of dirt.

What has happened is that the body has become too uniform... We must be more than a collection of body parts attending church services every week hoping that the preacher at least has the gift of preaching and is using it... we need more than just the preacher trying to use his gift!

If this church... amazing church!... many diverse gifts... if this church relied only on the preachers to do Sunday mornings and everyone else just sat in the chairs... we'd NEVER have a Sunday morning worship service!

The preachers may be the mouths... but there's a lot of body parts out there making it possible for the mouths to speak!... this church is incredibly gifted and those gifts are being used... but imagine... just imagine the impact this body would have for the Kingdom of God if everyone joined in using their gifts!!!!

The church needs each one of you... think about you and your gifts...

- some of you are wondering what your gift is... make sure you're in God's word... be willing to surrender to His will... pray... and get moving!... start volunteering... volunteer for the nursery... you'll know if it's your gift or not!
- some of you know what your gift is... but you wish it was something else... remember that it is God who chooses your gift... it is God who gives it to you... it is His decision... are you going to tell Him He's wrong?

This is a time to be humble... a time to set yourself aside... cop a servant attitude... let go of yourself and be used by God!... be moldable... be obedient... Be willing!

Circling back around to where we began... Schaeffer said *the real problem is this: the church of the Lord Jesus Christ, individually or corporately, tending to do the Lord's work in the power of the flesh rather than the Spirit. The central problem is always in the people of God, not in the circumstances surrounding them.*

The church is powerless unless its parts embrace the power of the Holy Spirit in unity.

Let's embrace the Spirit...

This came to life to me as My wife and me were sitting on our deck having breakfast last week... as we began thinking and discussing about how organized yet diverse the world is... diversity is essential... but only if unified.

In the church... the greater the diversity ... the greater is accomplished for the kingdom of God... but there MUST be unity...

Back to Dr. Paul Brand... after describing the diversity of cells within the human body... the diversity of tasks each cell is designed to do...using all that as a metaphor for the church... much like Paul did 2000 years earlier... he gives a caution to the church....

He says...*My only message is the caution of a doctor: ...the body will have health ONLY if each cell regards the needs of the other cells... no self-sufficient... self-absorbed Napoleon cells...are healthy cells for the body.*

He talks about his specialty... lipoma tumors... lipoma tumors become part of a body... *“under the microscope they seem composed of healthy fat cells, bulging with shiny oils... all in all... the Lipoma cells are healthy cells!..... the cell functions beautifully!!....except for one flaw—they have become disloyal. In their activity... they disregard the body's needs*

but that's not the way it is to be!...

God made the body with its intricately interconnected parts to perform at its optimum....all achieving the same purpose using their diverse gifts...each one of you have a gift...