

Putting the World Back Together Outline

1 Corinthians 12:14-31

- I. The world is broken.
 - A. Genesis 3 to Revelation 20
 - B. Revelation 21:5 “**Behold I am making all things new.**”
 - C. God’s making things “new” in Jesus Christ—2 Corinthians 5:17
 - D. The church, the body of Christ plays a vital role in making all things new.
- II. The situation in 1 Corinthians 12
 - A. The church at Corinth was a vibrant body of believers.
 - 1. They had all the spiritual gifts (1:7).
 - 2. They are believers empowered by the Holy Spirit.
 - 3. They had good biblical preaching (Apollos, Cephas, Paul).
 - B. The church at Corinth was a “broken church”.
 - 1. Ignored flagrant sin within the church.
 - 2. They were “fleshly”.
 - 3. They played favoritism.
 - 4. There was disunity—the main problem of the church.
 - C. Context in chapter 12.
 - 1. Some in the church were “Proud” and some “Insecure”.
 - 2. The church was all trying to do the same thing—the same gift.
 - 3. They forgot that God had given them their gifts.
 - D. Regarding spiritual gifts.
 - 1. Every believer has been given the Holy Spirit.
 - 2. Everyone who has the Holy Spirit has been given at least one spiritual gift.
 - 3. The entire Trinity is involved with the administering and empowerment of the gifts.

4. There is a diversity of spiritual gifts.

III. The Body of Christ.

- A. A body is a living organism.
- B. A body is made up of many parts but it is still one body.
- C. A body must have diversity.
- D. A body has a sovereign.
- E. A body must have harmony.

IV. The foot and Ear people (12:15-16).

- A. Feeling as though their part, their gift, is not important or needed.
 - 1. Their attitude affects their God given purpose and responsibility within the body
 - 2. All parts are essential for the body to work.
- B. One part cannot operate without the other parts—diversity. (12:17)
- C. God is the sovereign over the body—He appointed and designed (12:18)

V. The eye and the head people (12:19-21).

- A. Believed to be superior to the other parts—independent, more valuable.
 - 1. Every part in the body of Christ is essential .

VI. The less honorable parts (12:23-24).

- A. The hidden parts of the body.
- B. God's concern—unity within the body.

VII. What God wants (12:25-26).

- A. Unity in love (V.25)

THE BODY IS FUNCTIONING WELL AND THE GIFTS ARE BEING EXERCISED RIGHTLY WHEN THE CHURCH IS IN THE PLACE OF LOVE.

VIII. God appoints.

- A. Apostles, prophets, teachers
- B. Miracles, gifts of healing, helps, administrations, various kinds of tongues.
- C. A more excellent way (V31)—Not a gift, but a fruit of the Spirit—Love.

- IX. The eschatology of the church—The Body of Christ.
 - A. The church is the body of Christ the lost world will see!
 - B. John 17:21-23

Putting the World Back Together Pastoral Notes

1 Corinthians 12:14-31

Let me begin with something profound... you might want to write this down... when something is broken...two possibilities...1. It will not function the way it was intended to function...or... 2. It won't function at all...

With that great insight...looking around we know something is broken... we all know that our country is very divided on many/most issues... but it doesn't matter which side of the isle you sit... it doesn't matter what your preferences or beliefs are... there is one consensus...one thing most people will agree on...and that is... the world is broken.

I don't need to spend time trying to convince you of that fact... we all know it is... It has been since Genesis chapter 3...the three chapters before we see that God created the heavens and the earth and He pronounced everything as "good"....BUT

Genesis 3...explained in Romans 5:12...**sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned through one man's sin...**

From Genesis 3 all the way to the end of the Bible.... Revelation 20... the earth and everyone in it is "broken".... Sin and death reign...

But God had and has a plan... the world will not remain broken forever... God promises a new heaven and a new unbroken earth... a new earth where suffering, pain, sin and death cease for all eternity!

In Revelation 21... John recounts seeing this new heaven and new unbroken earth... He sees and tells us of a magnificent holy city where God dwells with His people.... God promises to wipe away every tear from His people's eyes... no more sorrow... no more suffering...

No more death, mourning, crying or pain...there is coming a time when all of creation will be free from the reign and effects of sin... After seeing this future revelation... John sees Jesus seated on the throne declaring **Behold I make all things new.**

This should be something everyone is eager for...certainly every Christian... the broken world made new... this is "to come"... we eagerly await this... but perhaps you haven't realized that God's plan for renewal of this broken world has already begun...

God's great restoration plan for the world arguably was initiated nano-seconds after Adam's first sin... but was manifested to the world that day that Jesus went to the cross... shed His blood as payment for our sin....

We are all broken by our sin... all of us... but through the blood of Jesus Christ we are restored...the moment you trust in God for your salvation...Jesus Christ... you receive the Holy

Spirit... and at that moment you become a new creation!.... that broken creation becomes a new unbroken creation!.... this is now if you are in Christ... you don't have to wait for this... 2 Corinthians 5:17

17 Therefore if anyone is in Christ, this person is a new creation; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.

No longer bound by sin... we are now able to please God through His Son Jesus... we are empowered to live lives His way... Galatians 6:20 sums it up pretty well...

20 I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

Every time A sinner comes to Christ... the broken world becomes less and less broken...the restoration has already begun...we live with the promise that a day is coming when EVERYTHING...heaven and earth will be made new... but until then... God has begun His restoration process person by person who comes to faith in Jesus Christ....

But that is not all... there's much more to His world restoration plan... God's restoration plan does not end with thousands or millions of individual little Christians running around resting in the fact that they are saved creatures... waiting to end up in heaven someday.

An individual's salvation is just the beginning... not only have we entered into eternal salvation... but we have entered into... we have each been placed in a larger body... this body is the church... and the church has a purpose and a mission.... And ALL Christians are a part of this body...the church.... And the church plays a vital role in God's plan to make all things new.

This is where we join in where we left off a month ago... A few weeks ago as I was reading through chapter 12 for the gazillionth time...I realized that the church... what the apostle Paul ingeniously refers to as "**The Body of Christ**" plays a vital role in His making all things new.

There's an eschatological purpose for the church... so when the church... The Body of Christ is broken... it is either not operating the way that God designed to operate... or it is not operating at all.... And that is the apostle's concern here in chapter 12.

For the last seven months we've been looking at the Corinthian church... Paul... through the situation at Corinth has been teaching us timeless truths applicable to churches of all times.... Including for us today.

Remember that the church at Corinth was a vibrant church... there was much good regarding the Corinthian church...chapter 1 told us the church was made up of saved, sanctified believers in

Christ... they were “enriched” by the Holy Spirit having the spiritual gifts... **1:7 not lacking in any gift.**

This is a church of believers... empowered by the Holy Spirit... we know there’s good Bible teaching going on... Apollos... Cephas... Paul... and they were teaching the gospel....

but it also was a broken church... as we have seen the church had many problems... they turned their eyes from flagrant sin in the church... they were fleshly... Carnal... played favoritism... all of these problems led to an overarching problem that was the source of their brokenness.... And that was they were not a unified church... there was great disunity in the church...

That’s why Paul said in 1:10... **I exhort you, brothers by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ that you all agree that there be no divisions among you, but that you be made complete in the same mind and in the same judgement.**

Well... we’re in chapter 12 and they still haven’t learned... we see here that instead of using their gifts... ministering with their God given spiritual gifts...

1. some... the proud... were basically saying *We’re the only ones that matter*... then you had the very humble that were saying *we don’t matter, we don’t have the right gifts... we don’t have the gifts like the proud one’s do*
2. They were all trying to do the same thing... instead of realizing that God had given each one of them a specific spiritual gift... they were all wanting the same gift.... Discontent with the gifts they were given.... or some thought they were the privileged ones because they had the best gifts.
3. They didn’t remember that they were “given” these gifts... They forgot that God gifted them... basically denying God’s sovereignty... and if they did remember it was God gifting them... they were discontent with what He had given them.

This is a broken church... it needs to be made new.... And that is what Paul is trying to do in chapter 12... If you missed July 9th’s sermon when we looked at about half of chapter 12 I encourage you to listen to it...

A few main points important for today’s context...

1. Every believer has been given the Holy Spirit
2. Everyone who has the Holy Spirit has been given by God at least one spiritual gift.
3. The entire Trinity is involved with the administering and empowerment of the gifts.

12:4-5 Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit. 5 And there are varieties of ministries, and the same Lord. 6 There are varieties of effects, but the same God who works all things in all persons.

4. There is a diversity of spiritual gifts... to one wisdom, to one the workings of miracles... etc.

All the gifts are the working of the Trinity within you for His purpose...not for our glory
5. The gifts are all for the building up of the church... the body of Christ

12:12 For even as the body is one and yet has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many are one body, so also is Christ

The Body Of Christ... what a great metaphor for the church! Some observations of this body///

1. A body is a living organism—the church then is a living organism... it's not just an *organization*.... An organization is something made up of parts that have been intentionally put together to operate efficiently for a purpose... a desired outcome.

If there is no organization to a business the business will be broken... that's why you have things like organizational charts... a hierarchy of management to workers... so that everything is organized for efficiently producing a desired outcome—product.

A church is to be organized.... But its much more than that... it is organized with an “ism” attached...it's alive! it is a living organized entity.... Now think about that... an organization is made up of an assortment of expendable parts...at anytime management can make changes in the structure and discard any part...you're fired!

An organism can't do that... every part of an organism is there for a purpose and is vital for the life and existence of the organism.... Christian... you are all a part of a living organism... the church... the body of Christ... you are all essential to the life of the body of Christ.... as a Christian... being in the body is NOT an option...you're in it...by God's design....and you have a purpose... where are you in that?

A living organism when healthy grows, matures and develops...usually becomes more useful.

2. A body is made up of many parts but it is still one body— (12) **all the members of the body, though they are many are one body**... this is the picture of unity.... But its more than just unity... it is unity within diversity.

3. A body must have diversity— many members... a body to be a functioning efficient body must have feet... legs... arms...hands... head... all different parts... but all make up the one body...all UNIFIED within ONE body.... a head is not a body.... it is a part of a body.... a body is many parts making up the ONE.

4. A body has a sovereign—and that sovereign is God.... this is so important...this applies even to what you might think as your body... You don't own a body... you are just a steward of one of God's bodies... you're his.

The moment of conception... you had no choice in what gender you would be... God decided that way before you were born... Your body was designed by God... God put you together...

you had absolutely nothing to do with it.... now you are either a good steward of what God has created or you are a bad steward....

The same thing is true for the body of the church... God has created His body of Jesus Christ... He has chosen the parts... He made them... He empowers them... He gifts each part with a specific gift for a specific function and purpose...

Read verse 18

Read verse 25b

Read verse 28

5. A body must have harmony— this is where our stewardship as parts of the body come into play... just as we can be poor stewards of “our” physical bodies... we can be poor stewards of God’s body of Christ.... The church.... For the body of Christ to function optimally as the body of Christ...there has to be harmony within the parts.

Diversity is essential but it must exist in harmony... unity within the body... the diversity does not threaten unity in a healthy body.

So... the Body of Christ is made up of many *diverse* parts... but it is still one body...and the body is God’s body.... and all the parts must exist and operate in harmony with each other.... Which was Paul’s concern for most of chapter 12.

Let’s finish the chapter beginning at verse 14... what Paul does is expose the foolishness of not being in harmony... this is where the analogy of a physical body is really good...

[put yourself in this...]

Read verse 14

That’s obvious... we all know that... but what Paul is showing is the obvious... we all know a foot is very important to a body... right?... it would be foolish to look at your foot and say *I don’t need that so I’ll cut it off*... but verse 15 we have who we could call “the foot people”.

Read verse 15

The foot may not be beautiful.... It may even stink!... it may be ugly.... You put a sock over it... but the foot is a vital part of the body right?..... the foot people are saying here... *I’m just a stinky foot... I’m not as important than that hand.*

The foot people are not happy with the part they’ve been assigned... by who?.... God!.... well.. this body is very discontent...

Read verse 16

The ear people are envious of the eye people... here's the problem... the foot people and the ear people are not efficient in their jobs because they spend all their time jealous over the other body parts they think are more valuable...

Even worse... they are so distraught and feel so inferior to the other parts that they don't even DO their job of being a foot... or an ear... of course this is all silly.... And that is the point!

Here's a fact... no matter how dissatisfied the foot may be being a foot... it will always only be a foot.... And the foot... and the ear are essential to the body to function as one! ... People in the Corinthian church were envious of others in the church who had gifts that seemed more important.... More valuable than the gifts they had.

If the foot doesn't walk... the body doesn't go anywhere!...all the parts are needed for the body to work:

Read verse 17

If the whole body were an eye it wouldn't be alive!...all of you have a gift... or gifts... some may be high profile gifts... the gifts of teaching... the gift of preaching... some of you really wish you had one of those gifts.... You were given the gift of service... the gift of hospitality... the gift of wisdom...

If this church body was made up of just a preacher... you wouldn't be here this morning.... This church couldn't be a functioning body of Christ if all we had was a preacher...could ALMOST do it with just our secretary.... it takes many, many diverse parts for a church to operate as a body of Christ....

If you are sitting there unsatisfied with your gift... with your part... remember verse 18

Read verse 18

You didn't chose your gift... you didn't pick your part... God appointed all the parts as He desired... This reflects His sovereignty and it reflects His wisdom... who are you to complain?

So... there are parts within the body who wish they were a different part... they feel insignificant and undesirable within the body.... then there are those who think so highly of themselves they don't think they need anyone else....

Read verses 20-21

There were those in the Corinthian church who thought very highly about themselves... they were the stars... the celebrities of the church... they were the leaders... the elite... the rest of the people could disappear for all they were concerned.

Paul looks them in the eyes and says... *you would be nothing without your support staff!*... the little guy that comes in at night and cleans up your messes... the lady that comes in early Sunday

mornings to straighten up the hymnals and clean the trash out of the chairs... those that watch kids in the nursery while you're preaching too long.

What about our encouragers... we have parts in this body whose obvious gift is that of being an encourager... encouragers do not get the glory... they empower others to achieve success in their gifts!... they are never on the stage.... They are never the visible ones... . Some of you are encouragers... a vital part of this body.

No one can say that another part of the body is not necessary... When I was 10 years old our doctor told my parents I didn't need my tonsils... there was nothing wrong with me... I didn't have recurring sore throat... back in the early 60's the medical world determined that God made one mistake... he gave us tonsils... and we don't need them.... so we needed to remove them.... CUT THEM OUT!

AND THEY DID.... BUT THEY COULD ONLY DO THAT BECAUSE...

They promised us ice cream if we let them.... We did and I was in pain for several weeks after... since then... the thinking has changed.

Mayo Clinic— *The tonsils are the immune system's first line of defense against bacteria and viruses that enter your mouth....* Ahh... we don't need that

USC Medical Center— *Tonsils are an **essential** part of the immune system, preventing germs from entering the mouth or nose.* About the ice cream...

***Curious George Goes to the Hospital**, George swallows a jigsaw puzzle piece and must have a small operation to remove it. The monkey is given ice cream after his surgery—just like many children who had tonsillectomies. (A common complaint after the surgery is a severe sore throat, making it hard to eat. The chill of ice cream or a popsicle can provide relief.)*

Every part in the body of Christ is essential.... Ice cream or not.

Read verse 22

A key word there... circle it... is "Seem"... the members of the body that SEEM to be weaker... less important... they are necessary!... maybe even the invisible.

Going back to Mr. Foot... Mr. Foot is discontent being a foot... but has he ever stopped to think about him not being the only foot in the world?... about his support parts?... how about his big toe?... where would Mr. Foot be without his big toe? ...does he realize it isn't just all about him?... what if his big toe was cut off... discarded..... Mayo Clinic...

The Big, or First toe, plays a vital role in our balance when standing and push off when walking or running. Up to 90% of the control of our foot comes from the flexibility of the big toe. As we push off, our big toe needs to extend.

The main function of the big toe is to direct body weight through the foot in the direction of travel

CUT IT OFF!

Point—There are no insignificant parts to the body.

Read verses 23-24

The less honorable parts are most likely your private parts that need to be clothed.... The head, arms can be seen but there are some things that should be hidden...we cover them up... we hide them from view... but that doesn't discount their importance!

The point Paul is making over and over is that there are no insignificant parts of the body of Christ... even the parts that are less visible... even unseen.

Who do you think God is going to honor the most... the most visible and audible person of the church that stands out who has a pride problem or the humble servant who quietly, invisibly takes care of his task that has been set before him in the body?

What God is concerned with is for the body of Christ to operate in unity...all parts... all gifts.... All people working together for His glory and His purpose... in that all the gifts are gifts... given to us by God...none of us are more valuable to Him than another! We are to be faithful in our part.

Here's what God wants:

Read verses 25-26

The entire church body is built up.... It is "edified" when the members of the body of the church truly love one another... all is unified as one body for the same purpose... and that each truly cares for one another.... Loves one another... as we will see in chapter 13.

So... instead of envy.... Instead of jealousy of another's position and role in the body... we love each other in our differences..... in each other's quirks!... tell me you haven't noticed the quirks!

I like the way the King James describes us in 1Peter 2:9 **But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people....** we are peculiar.... We are strange... and we are to love every one of us!

We truly care about each and every part of the body of Christ.... When another member is hurting we hurt along with them.... when another is "honored"... when they are recognized and highly praised. We get the happy vibes!

This is life in the body.... connected.... Unified... Romans 12:15 **Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep....** Galatians 6:2 **Bear one another's burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ.**

What's the Law of Christ?... it is to love God with all of our being and to love our neighbors as we love ourselves.... Mk. 12 **THE BODY IS FUNCTIONING WELL.... AND THE GIFTS ARE BEING EXERCISED RIGHTLY WHEN THE CHURCH IS IN THE PLACE OF LOVE.**

Read verse 27

Keep this in the forefront of your mind we will end with it in a minute...

Read verse 28

Most believe these are listed in order of importance... the first three being vital for the foundation and formation of the church... those after are the lesser important gifts...note again that God is doing the appointing.

1. Apostles

It is God who appointed the apostles... there is a sense of the word apostle that is a general term for missionary... but here it is most likely referring to the office of apostle which was closed after the addition of the apostle Paul

The office of apostle required two things:

1. To visibly see the risen Lord
2. To be commissioned by Jesus Himself.

The apostles laid the foundations of the church...

2. Prophets

Not the prophets of the Old Testament like Isaiah or Ezekiel... but men gifted in prophesy are men who received insight from God into His word... so that they could guide and direct the church.

3. Teachers

Differ from prophets in that they teach from what already exists... they study God's word and prepare to present what they studied... Prophets have been given what to preach from God.... then the list of spiritual gifts.... Least would be the gift of tongues..... we will go into all of that more in chapter 14..... but to finish this chapter... Paul ends with seven rhetorical questions... a question that makes a point rather than to get an answer.... In the case of these seven... the answer for all seven in "no".

Read verses 29-30

NO!...There are different gifts... for different ministries... for a variety of workings by the Holy Spirit (12:4-6).

Read verse 31a

You just spent this entire sermon telling us that God gives us various gifts for His purposes and we should be satisfied in our gifts.... Now he tells us to desire the greater gifts.... That has stumped the greatest theologians!.... but we can conclude that to desire the greater gifts.... Not for us.... not for my status or position or glory... but for the greater good of the church.

And I will yet show you a more excellent way... another stump for theologians but I believe Paul is pointing us to something far greater than the spiritual gifts... something that is the fruit of the Spirit... not a gift.... Something all true Christians have.... And that is love... chapter 13.. next week..... but we're not finished.

I began with saying the church... the body of Christ is eschatological... that it is a vital part of God's "making all things new"... the restoration of a broken world... There is a very specific day in the future when ALL things will be made new...

Isaiah in the Old Testament prophesied that God said **See, I will create new heavens and a new earth... the former things will not be remembered....**that's in the future... but Life in Christ makes you new... the restoration has begun in Jesus Christ... if you are in Christ you are a new creature! NOW...CIRCLING BACK...

So where's the body play into this eschatology?... the church has a mission... here's how it works... every new creature in Christ receives THE Holy Spirit... the Holy Spirit gives each a spiritual gift and each enters into the body of Jesus Christ... we are to use our spiritual gifts to build up that body... it is an organism... it will grow as we build each other up.

It is the body of Jesus Christ but it is not the literal incarnated physical body of Jesus Christ... in a sense...the body of Jesus Christ... the church... is the Jesus Christ the world will see... did you get that?...the body of Jesus Christ was put together by God so as to present to a lost world His Son Jesus Christ!... that they might see Him! (Is that what they see?)

Where do you get this Dan?

John 17:21-23

The great prayer Jesus prayed on the night He was betrayed... praying to God the Father for His disciples... all disciples... all who believe in Him... listen to this: *I ask you Father...*

21 that they may all be one; just as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me.

22 The glory which You have given Me I also have given to them, so that they may be one, just as We are one; 23 I in them and You in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, WHY? so that the world may know that You sent Me, and You loved them, just as You loved Me.

The Body of Christ is God's tool to reveal His Son Jesus Christ to the lost world...

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit teaching them to keep all that I commanded you; and behold I am with you always , even to the end of the age.