

Bibliocentric Believers

1 Corinthians 4:6-7

I. Intro

SLIDE 1

● Anecdote

- Bibliocentric?
- Are you a Bibliocentric Believer? - - To be clear about the question - it'll help you to know that...
- ...a Bibliocentric Believer is a Christian who places a priority on the Bible as the primary source of divine revelation - regarding religious truth.
- And while there are those who will insist that they aren't Bibliocentric believers - - because they prefer to identify as Christocentric Christians...
- ...the problem with this position is based on the fact that — the Christocentric Christian still needs a spiritual source of information...
- ...so that we can know - Who Jesus is - and What He has done.
- Not only that - but - we also need the written revelation of the Lord - in order to grasp God's plan of redemption.
- And it's for this reason that Paul encouraged the Christians in Corinth - to become Bibliocentric Believers.

II. Outline

● Points

- Bible
- It's here in our text today where we find Paul - encouraging the original recipients of this epistle to realize that...

- ...the Bible is the source of spiritual truth - which helps us to grasp God's perfect plans and purposes.
- At the same time - the Bible provides us with the foundational principles we need - for how every Christian community should function.
- And as we study the scriptures before us this morning - we'll begin to see that...

SLIDES 2-4

1. ...Bibliocentric Believers put the Bible above Sectarian Divisions
 2. ...Bibliocentric Believers put the Bible above Religious Traditions
 3. ...Bibliocentric Believers put the Bible above Personal Promotions
- With this as our outline let's open our Bibles to 1st Corinthians chapter 4...
 - ...where we find Paul - encouraging the Christians in Corinth to become Bibliocentric Believers.

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III. Sectarian Divisions

● Set up

• Context

- As we make our way to the fourth chapter of 1st Corinthians - I wanna take a moment to put our text back into its context.
- I should remind you that Paul wrote this epistle - in order to address the contentions of the carnal Christians...
- ...who were causing divisions at the church in Corinth - as they argued about authority.
- Remember - it was back in the beginning of this epistle - where Paul addressed this issue of sectarianism...

- ...by challenging those who were saying: “I am of Paul,” or “I am of Apollos,” or “I am of Cephas,” or “I am of Christ.”
- Now - here in our text today - we find Paul - challenging the original recipients of this epistle - to become Bibliocentric Believers.
- With this as our focus let's pick up our study of 1st Corinthians 4 - beginning there at verse 6 - where Paul declared...

SLIDES 6-7

1Co 4:6 Now these things, brethren, I have figuratively transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes, that you may learn in us not to think beyond what is written, that none of you may be puffed up on behalf of one against the other.

1Co 4:7 For who makes you differ from another? And what do you have that you did not receive? Now if you did indeed receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?

- Transfer
- Here in our text today - we find Paul - helping his audience to understand that their sectarian divisions were based on unbiblical goals.

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- It's for this reason that Paul decided to illustrate his point - as he appealed to himself - and Apollos.
- Now - in order to understand what Paul meant - when he informed them that he figuratively transferred these things to himself and Apollos...
- ...it'll help you to know that the phrase - figuratively transferred - was translated from a Greek word...
- ...which was used in reference to an example that transfers to oneself - what holds true of the whole class to which one belongs.
- The same word was also used of an illustration - by which a person says of themselves - what holds true of all in the same category.
- Paul/Apollos

- With this definition in mind - let's consider how the scholars who created the Amplified Bible rendered verse 6 - they put it like this...

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1Co 4:6 Now I have applied these things [that is, the analogies about factions] to myself and Apollos for your benefit, believers, so that you may learn from us not to go beyond what is written [in Scripture], so that none of you will become arrogant and boast in favor of one [minister or teacher] against the other.

- This translation helps us to more easily see that - the point that Paul was making.

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- And just to be clear - it'll help us to remember that - Paul took the time help the Christians in Corinth to realize that...
- ...there was no Biblical basis for creating these sectarian divisions - - and the reason why was due to the fact that...
- ...both he and Apollos were nothing more than the servants of our Savior - who were accomplishing their calling in Christ.
- That being the case - Paul assured them that there was no Biblical reason to divide the church - over their sectarian preferences.

- Written

- With this as our focus - let's take another look at verse 6 - where Paul declared...

SLIDE 11

1Co 4:6a Now these things, brethren, I have figuratively transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes, that you may learn in us not to think beyond what is written....

- Now - I wanna stop right here - so that we can consider what Paul meant - when he encouraged his audience...

SLIDE 12

- ...that they needed to learn how NOT to think beyond what is written.

- That word - written - was translated from the Greek word - grapho - which is the basis for several English words...
- ...including - graph - Autograph - calligraphy - and telegraph.
- The original Greek word was used in reference to the form of letters that are written on a tablet, parchment, paper, or other material.

- Bible

- As we consider the context of this passage - I have no doubt that Paul was using this word - in reference to the 39 books found in the Old Testament.
- In order to make my case - I should take a moment to point out that it was in the first and second chapters of this epistle...
- ...where Paul used the word - grapho - in reference to the book of Isaiah.
- And it was in the third chapter of this epistle - where Paul also used the Greek word - Grapho - in reference to the book of Job.
- In 1st Corinthians chapter 9 - Paul used the Greek word - Grapho - in reference to the book of Deuteronomy.
- And in 1st Corinthians 10 - Paul used the Greek word - Grapho - in reference to the book of Exodus.
- In light of these examples - we can see how Paul used the Greek word - Grapho - in reference to the Old Testament.

- Jesus

- I should also point out that Christ Jesus also used the Greek word - grapho in reference to the Old Testament.
- It's in Luke chapter 24 - verse 44 - where our risen Redeemer declared...

SLIDE 13

Luk 24:44 “These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me.”

- Here in this statement - we find the Lord Jesus referring to the Grapho - or the written words of the Old Testament...

SLIDE 14

- ...which - according to Christ Jesus - includes the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms.
- With all of this in mind - it seems to me that when Paul encouraged the Christians in Corinth - not to think beyond the GRAPHO...
- ...he was actually encouraging them to make sure that their thoughts were in line with the writings that we find in the Old Testament.
- And not only that - but - I also believe that he was referring to the writings that we find in his epistles.
- Epistles
- For example - it's in 1st Corinthians 14 - it's verse 37 - where Paul referred to the Grapho found in this epistle - by declaring...

SLIDE 15

1Co 14:37 If anyone thinks himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things which I write to you are the commandments of the Lord.

- According to Paul - the grapho - or - the writings that we find here in 1st Corinthians - are actually the commandments of the Lord.

SLIDE 16

- And so - when Paul encouraged the Christians in Corinth to refrain from thinking beyond what was written...
- ...it seems to me that he was encouraging them to make sure that their opinions were in line with the instructions found in this epistle.
- And not only this epistle - but - I would also argue that Paul was encouraging them...

- ...to refrain from thinking beyond what is written - in all of the epistles that were being written - there in the first century.

- Beyond

- I like the way that John Darby rendered the Greek - found in verse 6 - he put it like this...

SLIDE 17

1Co 4:6 Now these things, brethren, I have transferred, in their application, to myself and Apollos, for your sakes, that ye may learn in us the lesson of not letting your thoughts go above what is written, that ye may not be puffed up one for such a one against another.

- More simply put - Paul was encouraging the Christians in Corinth to make sure that their opinions - were based on the Bible.

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- And the reason why is because - those who think beyond what has been written in the Bible...
- ...are running the risk of elevating their own opinions - above the written word of God.
- And listen - whenever Christians begin to elevate their personal opinions - above the word of God...
- ...it's not long before the personal opinions of people - begin to divide the church - with sectarian divisions.

- Think

- It's for this reason that Paul encouraged the Christians in Corinth - to refrain from thinking beyond what is written in the Bible.
- And just to be clear - that word - think - found there in verse 6 - was translated from a Greek word...
- ...which in this context - was used of those who are of the same mind - and as a result - they cherish the same views.

- The same word was used of those who side with one's party - in public affairs.
- And as we consider the meaning of this word in it's biblical context - we can see that...
 - ...Paul wanted the Christians in Corinth to refrain from the Sectarian Divisions that are created...
 - ...whenever believers begin to place their personal opinions - above the word of God.
- Same
 - This was precisely the point that Paul was making - back in 1st Corinthians chapter 1 - it's verse 10 - where he declared...

SLIDE 19

1Co 1:10 Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

- Rather than creating sectarian divisions - by attempting to elevate our personal opinions above the word of God...

SLIDE 20

- ...Paul encouraged every believer to be perfectly joined together in the same mind - and in the same judgment.
- And the best way to do this - is by making sure that our beliefs are based on the written word of God.
- It's for this reason that Paul encouraged us to refrain from thinking beyond what is written.
- And with this as our goal - it'll help you to know that the Greek word rendered - think...

- ...was also used of those who have a modest opinion of themselves.
- Soberly
- This is the same Greek word that Paul used in Romans chapter 12 - it's verse 3 - where he declared...

SLIDE 21

Rom 12:3 For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.

- Christian - listen - those who think beyond what is written - are thinking more highly of themselves - than they ought to think.

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- And it's sad to say that many churches have been destroyed by the sectarian divisions that occur...
- ...whenever believers begin to introduce extra-biblical opinions - that are beyond the written word of God.
- It's for this reason that I encourage every Christian to become Bibliocentric believers...
- ...who make sure that our personal opinions are inline with the word of God.

● Transition

- Points
- Now - this brings us to our second point - because listen...

1. ...Bibliocentric Believers not only put the Bible above Sectarian Divisions...

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2. ...but - Bibliocentric Believers also put the Bible above Religious Traditions

- With this as our focus - let's continue to consider the challenge that Paul presented to the Christians in Corinth.

- Look with me again - there at 1st Corinthians chapter 4 - it's there in verse 6 - where Paul declared...

IV. Religious Traditions

SLIDE 24

1Co 4:6 Now these things, brethren, I have figuratively transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes, that you may learn in us not to think beyond what is written, that none of you may be puffed up on behalf of one against the other.

- Puffed
- Now - as we take another look at this verse - I should take a moment to point out that...

SLIDE 25

- ...the carnal Christians who exalt their personal opinions above the word of God...
- ...tend to be puffed up with pride - as they attempt to make their mark on their fellowship of faith.
- And in order to explain my point - it'll help you to know that the term - puffed up - found there at the end of verse 6...
- ...was translated from a Greek word - which was used of those who are inflated with self-importance.
- The same Greek word was also used of those who are filled with arrogant pride - which leads them to engage in self-promotion.
- Exalt
- Sadly - it's not uncommon for those who are puffed up - to not only think beyond what is written...
- ...but - they are just as quick to exalt their own opinions - above the word of God.

- And what's even worse is that - there are many leaders throughout church history...
- ...who ended up creating a sectarian division - that resulted in unbiblical religious traditions...
- ...that have left a long lasting impact on the Christian church.
 - And with this as our focus - I'd like to take some time to consider some of these unbiblical religious traditions.
- Traditions
 - For example - the sign of the cross - which is commonly practiced in the Roman Catholic Church...
 - ...is an unbiblical religious tradition - initially introduced in the 3rd century AD.
 - And it was during the fourth century - after the Christian church became the official religion of the Roman Empire...
 - ...when the veneration of icons - and prayers to the martyrs started to become religious traditions - which were widely embraced.
 - In 431 AD - the worship of Mary - as the Mother of God was introduced during the Council of Ephesus.
 - And by 500 AD - the priests of the Roman Catholic Church began to dress differently from the laity.
 - With this in mind - I can't help but to remember the way that Jesus rebuked the religious rulers of Israel - for their traditions.
- Garments
 - It's in Matthew chapter 23 verses 4 and 5 - where the Lord Jesus described the religious pride of the scribes and the Pharisees by declaring...

Mat 23:4 “...they bind heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on men’s shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers.
Mat 23:5 “But all their works they do to be seen by men. They make their phylacteries broad and enlarge the borders of their garments.

- According to the Lord Jesus - the scribes and the Pharisees loved to be recognized as religious men.

SLIDE 27

- It’s for this reason that they would increase the size of the phylacteries that they wore.
- Just to be clear - a phylactery is a small leather box that contained passages from the Torah written on parchment.
- And in order to demonstrate their commitment to this religious tradition - they would increased the size of their phylacteries.
- Not only that - but they would enlarge the borders of their garments as they set out to show their religiosity.
- Garments
- In similar fashion - the priests of the Roman Catholic Church started wearing long ornate robes...
- ...and it wasn’t long before the pope started wearing the funny hat - that was initially introduced during the 8th century.
- And while some insist that the Pope’s headdress has pagan origins - as it appears to represent Dagon - the Babylonian fish god...
- ...we can’t say for sure if the pope’s hat is based in Babylon - - but what we can say for sure is that...
- ...there is no Biblical basis for believing that church leaders should wear theses robes - and vestments - and funny hats.
- This is all nothing more than unbiblical religious traditions - that are beyond what is written.

- More Traditions
 - And listen - this is a scratch on the surface - of all the unbiblical religious traditions...
 - ...that the leaders of the Roman Catholic Church have introduced - throughout the ages.
 - For example - it was in the late 10th century - when Fasting on Fridays and during Lent was imposed on parishioners.
 - During the 11th century the celibacy of the priesthood was decreed - without any Biblical justification.
 - And it was during the late 11th century - when the tradition of rosary beads was introduced.
 - It was also the 13th century - when the Confession of sins to the Catholic priests was instituted - as a necessary means of salvation.
 - And it's sad to say that time would fail me to catalogue every unbiblical tradition - created by the Roman Catholic Church.
- Elders
 - With all of this in mind - we should take some time to consider the unbiblical traditions that were implemented by the religious rulers of Israel.
 - With this as our focus - hold your place here in the book of Corinthians - and let's turn in our Bibles to Mark chapter 7.
 - You see - it's here in the 7th chapter of Mark's gospel account - where we find a group of Pharisees and some of the scribes...
 - ...challenging the Lord Jesus - and the reason why was due to the fact that...

- ...they saw some of His disciples - failing to follow the tradition of the elders...
- ...which included the washing of cups, pitchers, copper vessels, and couches.
- And it's here in the gospel of - where we find the Lord Jesus - challenging the religious rulers of Israel.
- Vain
- With this as our focus - let's turn our attention to Mark chapter 7 - beginning there at verse 5 - where we learn that...

SLIDES 28-32

Mar 7:5 ...the Pharisees and scribes asked Him, "Why do Your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashed hands?"

Mar 7:6 He answered and said to them, "Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written:

'This people honors Me with their lips,
But their heart is far from Me.

Mar 7:7 And in vain they worship Me,
Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.'

Mar 7:8 "For laying aside the commandment of God, you hold the tradition of men—the washing of pitchers and cups, and many other such things you do."

Mar 7:9 He said to them, "All too well you reject the commandment of God, that you may keep your tradition.

Mar 7:10 "For Moses said, 'Honor your father and your mother'; and, 'He who curses father or mother, let him be put to death.'

Mar 7:11 "But you say, 'If a man says to his father or mother, "Whatever profit you might have received from me is Corban"—' (that is, a gift to God),

Mar 7:12 "then you no longer let him do anything for his father or his mother,

Mar 7:13 "making the word of God of no effect through your tradition which you have handed down. And many such things you do."

- Here in these verses - we find the Lord Jesus - rebuking the religious rulers of Israel...

SLIDE 33

- ...and the reason why was due to the fact that - they were elevating the traditions of men - above the commandments of God.
- In this way - they were guilty of thinking beyond what was written in the word of God.
- And not only that - but - the Lord Jesus also accused them of making the word of God of no effect...
- ...and the reason why was due to the fact that - they were placing a greater emphasis on their unbiblical traditions.
- Good?
- Now - this is not to suggest that all traditions are bad - - and I certainly don't mean to suggest that it's a sin to practice traditions.
- Case in point - it's in 1st Corinthians chapter 11 - verse 2 - where Paul commended the Christians in Corinth - by declaring...

SLIDE 34

1Co 11:2 Now I praise you, brethren, that you remember me in all things and keep the traditions just as I delivered them to you.

- From this - we can see that there are traditions that Paul presented in his epistles - - which we will do well to follow.

SLIDE 35

- And yet - at the same time - it's crucial for Christians to realize that - these traditions can be found in the New Testament epistles.
- What this means is that - we should follow the traditions that have been presented in the epistles...
- ...while simultaneously refraining from the traditions that are beyond what has been written in the word of God.
- And yes - this includes the traditions that were created from previous dispensations.

- Substance
- Let's consider how Paul put it in Colossians chapter 2 - it's verses 16 thru 23 - where he declared...

SLIDES 36-40

Col 2:16 ...let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths,
 Col 2:17 which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ.
 Col 2:18 Let no one cheat you of your reward, taking delight in false humility and worship of angels, intruding into those things which he has not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind,
 Col 2:19 and not holding fast to the Head, from whom all the body, nourished and knit together by joints and ligaments, grows with the increase that is from God.
 Col 2:20 Therefore, if you died with Christ from the basic principles of the world, why, as though living in the world, do you subject yourselves to regulations—
 Col 2:21 “Do not touch, do not taste, do not handle,”
 Col 2:22 which all concern things which perish with the using—according to the commandments and doctrines of men?
 Col 2:23 These things indeed have an appearance of wisdom in self-imposed religion, false humility, and neglect of the body, but are of no value against the indulgence of the flesh.

- Paul was warning the Christians in Colossae - about those who were vainly puffed up by the opinions found in their fleshly mind.

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- And according to Paul - these are the people who are quick to declare the doctrines of men...
- ...as they attempt to elevate their religious regulations - above the word of God.
- And while these people will often times present their opinions - in a way that sounds humble - and spiritual...
- ...Paul assured us that their humility is false - and their regulations are nothing more than self-imposed religion.

- What this means is that those who try to impose religious traditions upon us - are vainly puffed up by their fleshly mind.

● Transition

• Points

- Now - this brings us to our third point - because listen...

1. ...Bibliocentric Believers not only put the Bible above Sectarian Divisions...

2. and Bibliocentric Believers not only put the Bible above Religious Traditions

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3. ...but - Bibliocentric Believers also put the Bible above Personal Promotions

- With this as our focus - let's continue to consider the challenge that Paul presented to the Christians in Corinth.
- Look with me again - there at 1st Corinthians chapter 4 - it's there in verse 6 - where Paul declared...

V. Personal Promotions

SLIDES 43-44

1Co 4:6 Now these things, brethren, I have figuratively transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes, that you may learn in us not to think beyond what is written, that none of you may be puffed up on behalf of one against the other.

1Co 4:7 For who makes you differ from another? And what do you have that you did not receive? Now if you did indeed receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?

• Boast

- As we take another look at these verses - we must not fail to notice the way that Paul connected the dots...

SLIDE 45

- ...between those who are puffed up with pride - - and those who boast about their position - and power.

- It's in our study next week - when we'll consider the way that Paul addressed those who are rich - and those who reign like kings.
- And from this - it seems to me that there were those who were using their position - and their power...
 - ...as a platform - for pushing their personal agenda onto others.
 - And the chances are - those believers were asserting their influence on others...
 - ...by boasting about the blessings that they had received from the Lord.
- Receive
 - It's for this reason that Paul put things into a proper perspective - by asking...

SLIDE 46

1Co 4:7 For who makes you differ from another? And what do you have that you did not receive? Now if you did indeed receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?

- As we take another look at this verse - we can see how Paul was trying to bring those believers back to a biblicentric perspective.

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- And he did this by helping them to realize that - all of the blessings that they were boasting about...
 - ...were actually gifts of grace - that were given to them by God.
 - And whether we're talking about the free gift of grace by which we're saved...
 - ...or we're talking about our natural abilities - or our spiritual gifts - every blessing that we enjoy is a gift from God.
- Gift

- I like the way that James put it in the first chapter of his epistle - it's verse 17 where he declared...

SLIDE 48

Jas 1:17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.

- Christian - listen - the Bibliocentric believer is a Christian who is quick to recognize that...

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- ...every good gift - and every perfect gift - is ultimately from the Father of lights.
- With that being the case - Paul was challenging the Christians in Corinth to realize that...
 - ...they were boasting about the blessings that they had received from the Lord.
- Birthday Gift
 - In order to put this into perspective - imagine for a moment that your child decided to boast about themselves at their birthday party.
 - After opening all of their birthday gifts - they turned to their friends - and began to brag about being the best person at the party...
 - ...and the reason why was because - they had received a stack of incredible gifts.
 - Now - I'm sure we all recognize that - being the recipient of gifts doesn't make us better than anyone else.
 - And at the same time - it's also important for us to realize that - those who have received the good - and perfect gifts of God...
 - ...doesn't provide us with a platform - for personal promotion - here in our fellowship of faith.

- Different
- In order to explain my point - let's take another look at verse 7 - where Paul asked...

SLIDE 50

1Co 4:7 For who makes you differ from another? And what do you have that you did not receive? Now if you did indeed receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?

- Apparently - the Christians who were boasting about the blessings that they had received...

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- ...were attempting to make a distinction between themselves - - and those were somehow - less than.
- Its for this reason that Paul challenged them to think Biblically about their position by asking: "who makes you differ from another?"
- And in order to better grasp Paul's point - we should take some time to consider the problem that arises...
- ...whenever boastful believers attempt to promote themselves - by complaining against the different members of the body.

• Diversity

- In order to explain my point - we should first consider the way that different believers have received different gifts from the Holy Spirit.
- It's in 1st Corinthians chapter 12 - verses 4 thru 6 - where he declared...

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1Co 12:4 There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.

1Co 12:5 There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord.

1Co 12:6 And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all.

- Christian - listen - the Holy Spirit has given a diversity of gifts to different believers...

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- ...so that we might all do our part - to accomplish the different ministries in the church.
- And while it's true that those who trust in the Lord Jesus - has also received specific spiritual gifts - according to the grace of God...
- ...it's also true that we've received these gifts - for the benefit of other believers - here within our fellowship of faith.
- And in this way - we've been called to function like a body - with every member doing it's part - to bless the whole.
- Body
- Let's consider how Paul put it in the same chapter of this epistle - it's in 1st Corinthians 12 - beginning at verse 14 - where Paul declared...

SLIDES 54-58

1Co 12:14 For in fact the body is not one member but many.

1Co 12:15 If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I am not of the body," is it therefore not of the body?

1Co 12:16 And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I am not of the body," is it therefore not of the body?

1Co 12:17 If the whole body were an eye, where would be the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where would be the smelling?

1Co 12:18 But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased.

1Co 12:19 And if they were all one member, where would the body be?

1Co 12:20 But now indeed there are many members, yet one body.

1Co 12:21 And 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."

1Co 12:22 No, much rather, those members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary.

1Co 12:23 And those members of the body which we think to be less honorable, on these we bestow greater honor; and our unpresentable parts have greater modesty,

1Co 12:24 but our presentable parts have no need. But God composed the body, having given greater honor to that part which lacks it,

1Co 12:25 that there should be no schism in the body, but that the members should have the same care for one another.

- Here in these verses - we find Paul - comparing the church in Corinth - to a body with many different members.

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- And as we consider the way that a body functions - it's crucial for Christians to recognize that...
 - ...each individual member is a blessing to the entire body - as each part does it's share - for the sake of the whole.
 - The eye is not better than the nose - - and the fingers are not better than the toes.
 - Each part of the body is a blessing to the whole body - as every members fulfills it's specific function.
- Better?
 - Now - as we consider this comparison - between the physical body - and the mystical body - better know as the church...
 - ...we should take a moment to consider the problem that arises - when boastful believers begin to brag about their gifts.
 - For example - there are some churches - where the gift of tongues is treated like the greatest gift.
 - And there are some who go as far as saying that the Christian who doesn't speak in tongues - can't be sure of their salvation.
 - Please trust me when I tell you that - there is no Biblical reason to believe that every Christian should speak in tongues.
 - Therefore - those who have received the gift of tongues - shouldn't engage in self-promotion - regarding the gift that they've received...

- ...and the reason why is because - they are no better than the Christian who have received different spiritual gifts.
- Bibliocentric
 - I like the way that Paul addressed this - in the letter that he sent to the church in Rome.
 - Let's turn in our Bibles - to Romans chapter 12 - and as we make our way to the 12th chapter of Romans...
 - ...I wanna take a moment to remind you that - every believer has been called to do their part...
 - ...so that the entire body of believers might be edified by the way we exercise our spiritual gifts.
 - And knowing that it's not uncommon for carnal Christians to boast about our place in the body...
 - ...the Bibliocentric believer will refrain from the personal promotion - by which we boast and brag about ourselves.
 - And instead - we will simply serve the Lord - according to the gifts that we've received.

● Application

- Use
 - Let's consider how Paul put it - here in Romans chapter 12 - look with me beginning there at verse 3 - where Paul declared...

SLIDE 60-62

Rom 12:3 For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.

Rom 12:4 For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function,

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

Rom 12:6 Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith;

Rom 12:7 or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching;

Rom 12:8 he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.

- Christian - listen - the Bibliocentric believer is quick to realize that - our calling in Christ is no better than any other believer.

SLIDE 63

- And so - rather than wasting our time - engaging in the prideful sin of personal promotion...
- ...let's simply become those believers - who are using our spiritual gifts to edify the entire body.
- And in this way - we will all fulfill the function that Christ Jesus is calling us to accomplish...
- ...according to the divinely inspired instruction that we find in the word of God.

VI. Conclusion

● Wrap up

- Points
- Now - as we begin to wrap up this study - I want to take a moment to remind you that...
- ...the Christian who wants to live a life that is pleasing to the Lord - should make sure that we are Bibliocentric Believers.
- And just to be clear - I'll remind you that...
- 1. ...Bibliocentric Believers put the Bible above Sectarian Divisions...

2. ...Bibliocentric Believers also put the Bible above Religious Traditions...
 3. ...and Bibliocentric Believers put the Bible above Personal Promotions
- To sum it up with simplicity - Bibliocentric Believers are Christians - who are looking to the divinely inspired word of God...
 - ...for the spiritual guidance we need - to make daily decisions that are pleasing in the eyes of the Lord.
 - And with this as our goal - let's become those believers - who not only receive the word with all readiness...
 - ...but - let's spend time studying the Scriptures every day - so that we can become Bibliocentric Believers.