

INTERDEPENDENCE

“The eye cannot say to the hand, ‘I don’t need you!’ And the head cannot say to the feet, ‘I don’t need you!’”

—1 CORINTHIANS 12:21

The Apostle Paul describes the church as being the body of Christ. Christ is the Head and every true Christian is a member of His body. Paul makes two basic statements we need to appreciate about the body of Christ. Firstly, we are all different as we have varying abilities and separate functions. Secondly, we are interdependent on one another.

“There are different kinds of gifts,” Paul says, “but the same Spirit distributes them. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work” (1 Corinthians 12:4-6). Paul illustrates this by stating the foot should not say, “Because I am not a hand I do not belong to the body” and the ear should not say, “Because I am not an eye I do not belong to the body.” The body is made up of many different parts. God engineered it that way and made every part important for its own use. Similarly, Paul is stating that there are many different roles and gifts God has ordained within His body, the church, and every role is important.

Though it is true that some roles may have a higher profile than others, it is not true to conclude they are more significant. Jesus Christ is not working only through individuals, but His church as a

corporate body. Individuals make up the church, but it is the body of Christ we have been baptized into by the Holy Spirit, and it is as one body Christ works; each member interdependent on one another. There can be no such thing as a “lone ranger” in the work of God.

There are Christians who may think themselves to be inferior to other Christians, perhaps because they have the silent, nondescript roles, while others, filling a more prominent role, are inclined to think themselves more important. Neither is true. We cannot make the mistake of concluding that one work of God pays bigger rewards on the Day of Judgment than another. In fact, Paul writes, “On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and the parts that are less honourable we treat with special honour” (1 Corinthians 12:22-23).

As Christians, we are the channels God uses for His work in this world. He is the One who initiates, carries out and completes the work. God is committed to His agenda, and when we are committed to Him, 1 Thessalonians 5:24 says, “The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do it.” Interdependence makes for a fruitful church!

PRAYER: Dear Lord Jesus, help me to become a more fruitful worker in your church, and show me where and how I would best contribute. Thank You, Lord.

TO REFLECT UPON: Am I working interdependently with others in the work of Christ?