

GOAL: MEMBERSHIP AS STAGNANT DUTY → URBAN, PRACTICAL NECESSITY REASONED, ORDAINED, SUSTAINED BY JESUS
 1 COR 12 - IN MIDDLE OF UPSET, PAUL SETS RECORD STRAIGHT
 IN LIGHT OF OUR SEASON:
 REMINDER → UPWARD CALL!
 INVITATION

What is Membership?
 September 3, 2023
 HEART OF MEMBERSHIP.

How this will work FIRST

OUR POSITION IN MEMBERSHIP (1 CORINTHIANS 12:12-13)

12For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ.
13For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.

BODY METAPHOR - CONSIDER YOURS
 WE ARE HIS BODY
 UNITED BY CHRIST + HOLY SPIRIT
 WE COME FROM ALL OVER,
 BUT OUR INVITATION INTO BODY
 IS THROUGH THE QUALIFICATION OF CHRIST

NOW VERY DIFFERENT BACKGROUNDS
 BOND OF SHARED EXPERIENCE
 WE HAVE DEEPEST SHARED EXPERIENCE:
 DARK TO LIGHT

CHRIST IS OUR ONLY QUALIFICATION
 SALVATION → ABIDING
 NOT QUALIFIED BY
 TENDERS } ETC...
 SPIRITUALITY }
 SERVICE }

DON'T DO THIS TO SELF
 DON'T DO THIS TO OTHERS

OUR PART IN MEMBERSHIP (1 CORINTHIANS 12:14-20)

14For the body does not consist of one member but of many. **15**If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. **16**And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. **17**If the whole body were an eye, where would be the sense of hearing? If the whole body were an ear, where would be the sense of smell? **18**But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. **19**If all were a single member, where would the body be? **20**As it is, there are many parts, yet one body.

EACH PART HAS VALUE + PURPOSE
 GOD ARRANGED THIS WAY

CHALK BOARD
 WINE TASTING
 TOOLS IN TOOLBOX
 ER SURGEON

EACH ONE
 NEEDED FOR
 A PURPOSE

IDENTITY - UNDERSTANDING WHO YOU REALLY ARE
 SOME OF US THINK WE HAVE NOTHING TO OFFER
 SOME OF US HAVE SOMETHING TO OFFER + WITHHOLD

GOD ARRANGED BODY WITH YOU IN IT
 COME BE A PART
 SOME NEED TO HEAR INVITATION
 SOME NEED TO HEAR CHALLENGE

OUR PEOPLE IN MEMBERSHIP (1 CORINTHIANS 12:21-26)

21The 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." **22**On the contrary, the parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, **23**and on those parts of the body that we think less honorable we bestow the greater honor, and our unpresentable parts are treated with greater modesty, **24**which our more presentable parts do not require. But God has so composed the body, giving greater honor to the part that lacked it, **25**that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. **26**If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together.

PICTURE OF VALUING THE PRESENCE,
 GIFTS, + DIFFERENCES OF OTHERS

1 EQUAL HONOR } LONG TO RECEIVE,
 2 NO DIVISION } HARD TO GIVE
 3 SAME CARE }

SPURGEON - OLD WOMAN PRAYING
 CHARLIE PLUMS - VIETNAM SET FIGHTER
 FLYING AROUND, NO THOUGHT FOR
 THOSE BELOW UNTIL IT IS NEEDED
 WHO IS PULLING YOUR PARACHUTE

BECAUSE GOD COMPOSED THE BODY,
 WE MUST SHOW HONOR TO ALL PARTS
 1 GOD COMPOSED, NO MISTAKE
 2 SHOW HONOR - WORD + DEED
 ↳ NO DIVISION,
 SAME CARE

HIS PLAN IN MEMBERSHIP (1 CORINTHIANS 12:27-31)

27Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. **28**And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, helping, administrating, and various kinds of tongues. **29**Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? **30**Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? **31**But earnestly desire the higher gifts. And I will show you a still more excellent way.

GOD PROMISES A VARIETY OF GIFTS + PEOPLES
 FOR THE SAKE OF HIS CHURCH
 YOU ARE PART OF THIS MOSAIC

RECALL the legend of the three masons working on a stone. They were approached by a man who asked each in turn, "What are you doing?" "I am cutting stone," replied the first. "I am earning a living," said the second. But the third answered, "I am building a cathedral." It makes all the difference in the world whether we are able to carry our imagination into our work and see not merely the hard substance upon which we toil, or the indirect use to which we can put our wage, but the meaning which the forth-putting of our energy has in actual human welfare.

WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU ARE A PART OF HERE?

GOD HAS APPOINTED + GIFTED HIS CHURCH FOR HIS PURPOSES, NOT OURS
 WE ARE NOT BUILDING A BRAND
 WE ARE NOT A HOSPITABLE SOCIAL CLUB OF nice people
 WE ARE NOT A FREE TALK
 WE ARE THE BODY OF CHRIST
 LOVE + SERVE GOD
 LOVE + SERVE OTHERS
 MAKE JESUS KNOWN

A STILL MORE EXCELLENT WAY (1 CORINTHIANS 13) WRITTEN TO A CHURCH!

1If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. **2**And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. **3**If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing. **4**Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant **5**or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; **6**it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. **7**Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. **8**Love never ends. As for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away. **9**For we know in part and we prophesy in part, **10**but when the perfect comes, the partial will pass away. **11**When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways. **12**For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known. **13**So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

GOD'S LOVE SHOULD CHANGE US TO LOVE + BELONG DIFFERENTIALLY