

PAUL: PERSECUTOR TO PREACHER – Church

-Since Covid, how has your church attendance, viewing, etc., changed?

One of Paul's favorite metaphors for the church is a "body"...

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. For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body – whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free – and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. (1 Cor. 12:12-13) – if church is the body, what type of body do you see, one that is healthy or sick? Why?

Within the body of Christ...

- ***There is unity: Everyone belongs*** – “Now the body is not made up of one part but of many. If the foot should say, ‘Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,’ it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body. And if the ear should say, ‘Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,’ it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body.” (vv. 14-16) – **how do you see the church unified? How do you see it divided?**

“...Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name – the name you gave me – so that they may be one as we are one.” (John 17:11)

- ***There is diversity: Everyone contributes*** – “If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be?” (v. 17)
- ***There is structure: Everyone fits*** – “But in fact God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be.” (v. 18) – **do you see gaps at TVC? How would you fill those gaps with the right people who fit?**

This should create...Which of the three below do you lack? Why does it lack?

- ***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!’” (v. 21)
- ***Appreciation*** – “On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor...But God has combined the members of the body and has given greater honor to the parts that lacked it...” (vv. 22-24)
- ***Compassion*** – “...so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it.” (v. 25-26)

And God placed all things under His feet and appointed Him to be head over everything for the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills everything in every way. (Eph. 1:22-23) –
how might you look to Jesus to fill that which is lacking in you personally to better contribute to the program of God called the church?