

I. Intentional Designs For The Church (12-18)

A. Understand the union of all believers (12-13) - “For 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. 13 For 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.”

B. Celebrate the uniqueness of all believers (14-17) - “For 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?”

The physical body illustration typifies the variety in the Body of Christ

C. Acknowledge the Choreographer of all believers (18) - “But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as He chose.”

II. Bonds of Honor Within The Church (19-26)

A. Kingdom honor is relational (19-21) - “If all were a single member, where would the body be? 20 As it is, there are many parts, yet one body. 21 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.””

B. Kingdom honor is counterintuitive (22-24) - “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 unrepresentable 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.”

C. Kingdom honor is unifying (25-26) - “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.”

III. Mature Partnerships In The Church (27-31)

A. Something to understand (27) - “Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.”

B. Something to remember (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.”

C. Something to embrace (29-30) - “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?” **Not everyone shares your gift, yet they are equally valid in the Body**

D. Something to pursue (31) - “But earnestly desire the higher gifts. And I will show you a still more excellent way.”