

We Are The Body

For we are many members and yet of one Body in Christ Jesus

1 Corinthians 12:11-31

Accountability: Let's hold ourselves accountable!

- Last time we discussed the nineteen spiritual gifts that are mentioned in the New Testament. Did you gain any clarity this week in your personal walk about your gifts?
- Were there opportunities to use your gifts this week to serve others, and how did you do with that? How can you improve on this in the coming week?

Refresh: Let's take a fresh look at our focal scripture again!

- 1 Corinthians 12:11-21

Exploration: Four questions to guide our group discussion.

- Paul speaks of the Lord's Church as diverse individuals with differing gifts, who together, comprise a single body of believers. In Ephesians 4:14-16, Paul correlates the growth of the church to every body part performing its function. Thinking in these terms, how is church health impacted by every body part serving the Lord on purpose? What is the obvious implication for the body when "parts" don't work, are severed or amputated, etc? Let's talk about this in terms of "health" and "disease".
- Paul noted that we are all a part of one body, having all been saved, sealed, and sanctified by one and the same Spirit. There isn't a separate Holy Spirit for different classes or cultures of people. This means that the "body" illustration extends beyond the local church and to the family of God at large. Bearing this in mind, how should this spiritual reality inform the way that Christians interact with others who may be from different cultures, classes, or categories as defined by the secular world around us?
- In church life, believers are sometimes tempted to exalt one gift as more important than another, or even worse, to exalt people who possess a flamboyant gift as the "important" people. Paul reminds us that every gift matters and that all of our gifts are important to the body. If a person feels that they are insignificant, or if others treat them as insignificant, Paul says that they are nevertheless an important part of the body. What would happen if the entire body were an eye, or a hand? How would this impact the success of a local church? What if the church were nothing but preachers?

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- Paul mentioned that God has set each one of us in the body just as He desired to do so...and we know from elsewhere in the Bible that He does this in order that the body may have all that it needs to be complete. That said, Paul also instructed us to earnestly desire the best gifts. How should we determine which gifts are the best gifts? Is it ok to ask the Lord for spiritual gifts?

Study: Additional scriptures for deeper Bible study.

- Ephesians 4:14-16 Every part has to do its share!
- 2 Timothy 1:6-7 What did Paul mean by fanning the gift of God into a flame?
- Romans 11:29 This verse is often quoted to demonstrate that once God gives us a spiritual gift, that He never takes it away...same with a call to ministry. Read this passage in context. Does this context have to do with spiritual gifts, or with God's future hope for the salvation of Israel?
- Hebrews 2:1-4 How do Spiritual Gifts give testimony to our salvation?
- Acts 2:14-21 What did Peter consider the last days?

Application: How can I apply this to my life this week?

- As we reflect, is there a possibility that you have considered some servants of the Lord as more or less important than others? Would you make a commitment to see the importance and value of every member of the body?
- Our desire is to continue to grow into a healthy church that honors Jesus. In order for health to be realized, every part needs to do its share. What is one specific way that you can serve the body this week...perhaps in our small group? How will you do it, and when?
- Thinking about the places where the Lord has us serving in His church, what gifts should we be praying about so that we can be more effective in serving the Lord?