

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

These questions are designed to help you talk about God's word and Pastor Brian's message with friends and family. You of course can use your own questions, but we'd like to give you this tool to encourage Biblical fellowship and discipleship in your circle of relationships. **Enjoy discovering more about Him!**

"UNIT" | 1 COR 12:12-31 | PASTOR BRIAN BELL

WARM-UP QUESTION:

Which part of your body would you replace?

"E Pluribus Unum" 1 Corinthians 12: 12-14

Paul explains that though the church is made up of many people, it should be one closely connected group because they've declared their faith in Jesus and are filled by the Holy Spirit. **How should this impact people's view of their church?**

"Unity in Diversity" 1 Corinthians 12: 15-20

Paul takes time to develop the analogy of the church being like a body, where each part is important and there are different roles to fulfill. There should be diversity among believers, not exact copies of each other. **Why does God want different types of people in church? How do people who show self-centeredness, either with pride or insecurity, hurt their ability to be part of the body?**

"Interdependence with No Division, Instead Member Care" 1 Corinthians 12: 21-26

Each part needs the other, even the ones that seem weak or unrepresentable. People shouldn't say "I don't need you" and instead should rejoice and suffer with others. **How can believers be inclusive of different people? How can the church show empathy?**

"Ex Uno Plures" 1 Corinthians 12: 27-31

Paul lists important roles in the church: prophets, teachers, miracle workers and healers, administrators, and speaking in tongues. He wants them to seek the higher gifts while recognizing no one has all the gifts. **What are ways people can discover their gifts?**

REFLECTION QUESTION:

The Holy Spirit unites the church into one body out of many parts that need each other and live and work together. **Have you asked God to reveal what role you are to play? Have you struggled with jealousy or pride that hurt your ability to be part of the church? Pray and ask God to show you what role to play and to allow others to help you do it.**

UNIT

I. Announce:

- A. **Welcome:** Those online & in Fellowship Hall.
- B. **Slide1** Interview Jeff & Kristi Stiff:
- C. **Slide2** Baby Dedications: *Huxton Robert Stiff* (aka Buggy). *Harley Laine Stiff*.
 - 1. **Jeff & Kristi Stiff.** **Zoie** (Jacob) and **Carson**.
- D. **Slide3** Welcome Team: *Are you a people person?* do you like to help make people feel like they belong and are comfortable? **then** you would be a great fit for *our welcome team*: We are looking for people to join our **greeters** and **hospitality team** at our 2nd and 3rd services. *For more info please contact Pstr Tony, or complete a Ministry Application online.*
- E. **Prayer:**

II. Slide4 Intro: UNIT

- A. Thank you all for **bringing in today your own visual aid**. You live in it, you walk around in it. **Your body**.
- B. **Title: UNIT** - an individual *thing* or *person* regarded as single and complete, *but which can also form* an individual component of a larger or more complex whole.
 - 1. **3 Dog Night** sang about *1 being the loneliest number that you'll ever do*.
- C. **A body consists of many parts, but there is in it an essential unity**.
 - 1. **To fly a Kite you need what?** *paper, a tail, a string, wind, someone to fly it*.
 - a) **But if** the wind calms, **if** the paper tears, **if** the sticks break, **if** the tail gets caught in a tree, **or** the flyer lets go of the string, **then** the kite *will come down*.
 - b) Each has a part to play. *Now can you tell me which part of the Kite is more important?*
- D. Let's keep in mind that the main theme through this chapter is **Unity in Gifting**. (v.4-6)
- E. This is all about, *How the Church is Designed to Function*.

F. For the **Metaphor** of *the body of Christ*, think of 2 words: **container** & **content**.

1. **The body** is the **container**. **Christ** is the **content**.
2. When **God** formed **Adam**, did He **form** Adam's **content** or his **container**? (He formed his **container**). **Then** God breathed into him the? (**content**).
 - a) It's the same with the church (breath sound) on **Pentecost** (a mighty rushing wind).
 - b) And, It's the same (breath sound) in John 20:22 *he breathed on His disciples and said to them, **Receive the Holy Spirit***.

G. **Remember**, this is a church building, but **we** are the church. **Also**, when we talk about **the church** or **His body**, it is both **Universal** and **Local** (CM).

III. Slide5a **E PLURIBUS UNUM** (12-14) *Read out of many, one. ONE BODY.*

A. (12) **Comparison**: physical body & Christ's body.

B. (13) For in **one Spirit** we were all **baptized** into **one body** - and all were made to **drink of one Spirit**. So when you came to *Faith in Christ*, you was **baptized**, or **immersed**, or **submerged**, or **plunged** into **the Holy Spirit**. **And** when you **drink** a glass of water you take it inside of you. [baptized into **1 Spirit**, **1 Identity**, all wear **1 Jersey**]

1. Jesus gave us *the formula* in Jn.14:20 *You in Me, and I in you*.
2. Slide5b This is an important definition of the church. "*We're not just a group of religious people who hang out and enjoy certain functions together. We are a group of people who share the same life, who belong to the same Lord, we are filled with the same spirit, we are given gifts by that same spirit, we are intended to function together to change the world by the life of God.*" **This is the work of the church!** Ray Stedman

C. **Gathering** bricks and **arranging** bricks are 2 different things on a **job site**.

1. Seeing them **gathered together on a pallet**, is one thing. **But** when they're **arranged** into making something beautiful, that's another.
2. How do you see your **Christian life**? How do you see **your church**? When you gather together is it just about being on a pallet together?

- a) We go to the same church, we meet in the same room ... *I think Church is to be more than that. More than just a member of the family, but to participate in the family.*

IV. Slide6 UNITY IN DIVERSITY (15-20) Read

A. First let me just say, *if your foot starts talking to you ... ?*

B. (15,16) There are no Insignificant members of the body. [not self-deprecating]

1. Have you heard yourself say, *my ministry isn't that important, I am only a ...*
2. Many have a wrong idea of what the work of the church is. Many think *the real work of the church is on Sunday mornings. Often their concept is ... I can't teach, I can't lead worship, it looks like everything is functioning well around here. Thus, I have no part to play in the church.*

3. But that is not **the work of the church** at all. *To heal the brokenhearted out in the world, give deliverance to the captives, to preach good news to the poor and despairing of heart. That is what the body of Christ has come into the world to do. To encourage, strengthen & help people. Especially to deliver them from guilt, the loneliness and the misery of sin, and set them free from whatever holds them in bondage. This is what the work for the church is!*

a) We do not come to church, to fulfill the work at the church. We come here to get ready to fulfill it out there. [This is the locker room. Out there is the field]

b) Oh, if we could capture again, *the glorious excitement that Jesus had, Walking through the hurt of this world, and touching with the healing hand the destroyed lives all around.*

C. (17,18) No one is a More Important member of the body. [not self-important]

1. A golf tournament is different than a team sport. A Golf Tournament is 'a struggle of independent egos pitted against each other'. A Football game (futbol) is where each team member plays his own role, but works with the other team members to accomplish something together.

2. He admonishes those who our **self important**. Try tiring your shoes without your thumb (doable but hard). The thumb is important.

V. Slide7 **INTERDEPENDENCE (21-24)** Read Depend on each other.

A. I picture the **hand** saying back to the **eye**, *then wait till you get something in your eye, see if you need me.*

B. You may not have said, *I have no need of you* out loud, but let's test that.

1. In this last month, did you share with someone **an area of need** in your life? In this past month, did you **express gratitude** to another member at CM for what that person means to you? - Would the sign **no help wanted** fit around your neck? If someone asked you, **how can I help you** this week, would you be embarrassed or offended? We are pretty **independent people**.

a) **But** remember, when a part of your body declares **independence** from the other parts, when it goes rogue, it decides to live for itself, **do you know what we call that?** *It's called cancer.*

C. (22) **The members that seem to be weaker are actually indispensable.** [eyelids, tear ducts, tiny anvil bone in your inner ear] - **You may think I'm just a big toe :(**

1. **Did you know how important your big toe is?** (it has a more imp job than *finding the corners of furniture* in the middle of the night). *Your big toes maintain your balance, provide you with arch support, foot stability, and help in maintaining your static and dynamic balance.*

D. (23,24) **Unpresentable parts** - private parts (but not so private anymore), bathing suit parts, **hidden**. These parts though hidden are obviously **exceedingly important**.

1. **Now thinking spiritually** - those that have a *ministry of prayer* are hidden. **Often others don't even know about it.** (Estella) (blind man I saw folding bulletins, in the dark, in the back, in Pstr Lamb's underground church in China)

VI. Slide8 **NO DIVISION, INSTEAD MEMBER CARE (25-26)** Read

- A. (26) **Suffer together** - have you ever had an *injury*, where at night time, the rest of your body was *so concerned* that it sat up all night with it to keep it company? (mind)
1. Or we say, **when your back goes out** everything goes out.
 2. We *suffer together*, we *rejoice together*.

VII.Slide9 **EX UNO PLURES (27-31) Read** - *from 1 person many people.*

(from 1 person/Christ, many members make up His body/the church).

- A. **Apostles** (sent ones) - in the 1st century, the *apostles* included the **Twelve**, but also others like *James, Barnabas, and Paul*.
- B. **Prophets** - To relay a message from God. Could be foretelling or forth-telling (speak to what God says about the future, or to what He said in the past).
- C. **Teachers** - offer a clear articulation of the faith, building up converts, **won by the preaching of the evangelists & the apostles**.
- D. **Then Miracles & Healing** - see last week.
- E. **Helping** - assisting people in need (poor, widows, orphans, immigrants, refugees).
- F. **Administrating** - (only here in NT) translated as *helmsman, captain, or shipmaster*.
1. The gift of providing guidance or direction to the church community.
- G. **Tongues** - see last week. Or wait till ch.14.
- H. (29,30) **7 Rhetorical questions**. Answer is **No!**
- I. (31) **Higher gifts** - gifts that benefit the entire church community.
- J. A **more excellent way** is in the next chapter. **This sets up our famous Love Chapter**. Best chapter in the Bible.
- K. **Remember**, there is *a big difference* between the gifts of the Spirit and the fruit of the Spirit. The **fruit** is what God is after. *The fruit of the Spirit is love ...*
- L. *Maybe it's no coincidence that it lands on Mother's Day for us next Sun :)*
1. The **gifts** God gives to you, **fruit** is what He desires from you. **Gifts are useless ... w/o love** (1st fruit mentioned).

2. Did you notice that age is never talked about with the gifts? So high schoolers this is for you. And we should remember as single adults or couples, parents of middle schoolers or elementary kids ... *cultivate the gifts in our next generation*.
3. We need them & their gifts. Don't despise them cuz of their youth. *Help them to define them, & to find theirs, & deploy them to be used by God.*

M.Keywords: church, body, unity.