

**Empowered**  
“Body Parts”  
1 Corinthians 12:12-31  
Growth Group Discussion Guide

**Opening Question** (get everyone involved in discussion):

- ❖ Begin your time together with a moment of silence, then pray and ask for God’s Spirit to shape us through his word.
- ❖ If you had to do without one body part, what would it be, and why?

**1. Read 1 Cor. 12:12-14, then discuss:**

- Paul develops the analogy of human body parts here, to represent the nature of the church. In these first three verses...
  - What reasons does Paul give to value our unity as one body?
  - What reasons does Paul give to value our diversity as distinct parts?
  - What application does this paragraph have for our church body?

**2. Read 1 Cor. 12:15-26, then discuss the following.**

- This section is a lengthy description of the human body. What aspects of the human body are crucial to understand, in order to grasp the spiritual analogy?
- Paul here shines light on the member of the body who sees himself/herself as less valuable than the others. What response does he give to change that person’s perspective?
- Paul also calls into question the members of the body who see themselves as more valuable than all the others. What response does he give to change that perspective?
- Which of these perspectives do you tend to fall into, by default?
- In what ways do we need to apply these principles in the life of our body?
- How well does v. 26 describe your experience of relationships in our church body?
- The big idea that Josh brought out on Sunday was, “The body needs each part, and each part needs the body.”
  - To what degree do you believe this statement to be true about our church body?
  - To what degree do you feel that your unique gifts are being used for the good of our body? Are you being nudged to try out any gift for the first time?
  - Do you feel that certain gifts are missing from the life of our church body?
  - Are there any gifts (or people) who we tend to overlook? How could we change this?

**3. Read 1 Cor. 12:27-31, and discuss the following.**

- In v. 27, Paul makes the statement that has been implied: “you (all) are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a (body) part of it.”
  - This “body” analogy is so familiar that we sometimes lose the grandeur of it. What does it mean to you that Jesus chose you to be a part of *his* body?
- In v. 28, Paul gives a sampling of 8 spiritual gifts. Discuss each one to the degree that your group needs/wants. What are they? How do they bless the body of Christ?

- What do you make of the fact that Paul seems to rank some gifts as more important here?
  - Josh's explanation was as follows: "These gifts are essential for the starting and strengthening of each local church body." In other words, we cannot do without them.
  - What does Paul mean that we are to "eagerly desire the greater gifts?" How can we all take an active role in this process in our body?
  - Who do you know who might have one of these three "greater" gifts, but hasn't had the chance to develop it (maybe even in this group)? How can you encourage that development?
- What is the point of the rhetorical questions in vv. 29-30?
- Have you seen anything new in this discussion that would move you to take an action step? Please share.

**Prayer:**

- Pray for our church to grow in the necessary ways revealed by this study.
- Take a moment to share, and pray for any other needs that exist among your group members.