

Series: Words of Counsel and Correction

# THE BODY OF CHRIST

## 1 CORINTHIANS 12:12-27

Text: 1 Corinthians 12:27

### **1 Corinthians 12:27**

*<sup>27</sup> Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.*

Introduction:

When we think about our body its often don't think complementary things.

Some feel they are fat or skinny, too short or tall – bumpy, lumpy, or just plain ugly.

Yet in our text we read that believers are the body of Christ.

Many today are not attending church faithfully or at all and one of the main reasons why is because when the look at the church – the body of Christ, all they see is the building and the flawed people.

Understanding this truth could and should transform the way we look at ourselves as the body of Christ.

I want us to consider what God's Word has to say about His church – the body of Christ.

## **1. WE SEE OUR PLACEMENT IN THE BODY OF CHRIST**

### ***1 Corinthians 12:12-13***

*<sup>12</sup> For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. <sup>13</sup> For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.*

These verses are not just symbolic language. They reveal a mysterious, but literal, spiritual truth. When we receive Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, we literally become a part of the spiritual body of Christ. We are “baptized” or “submerged” into the Body of Jesus Christ. The water baptism we go through is symbolic of the spiritual baptism that God performs on every believer.

Verse 13 tells us that the Holy Spirit does this work of placing us into the spiritual body of Christ.

From the moment we believe, we are in Christ.

The phrases “in Christ,” “in Christ Jesus” or “in the Lord” are used this way almost 100 times in the New Testament.

So this truth is extremely important.

When a person place their trust in Christ, the Holy Spirit literally comes to live in their heart and at the same time, the Holy Spirit places that individual into the Body of Christ.

Note some of the verses that speak about believers being in Christ:

**Romans 8:1**

*<sup>1</sup> There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.*

**Romans 16:7**

*<sup>7</sup> Salute Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen, and my fellowprisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me.*

**2 Corinthians 5:17**

*<sup>17</sup> Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*

### **Ephesians 2:13**

*<sup>13</sup> But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.*

### **Ephesians 2:6**

*<sup>6</sup> And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:*

Note not only the Placement In the Body of Christ but secondly:

## **2. WE SEE OUR PROFIT TO THE BODY OF CHRIST**

The truth is all believers who love the Lord and are right with the Lord have great value in the Lord's church.

There are a lot of people who feel inferior in the church due to their background, education, income, or looks.

Maybe someone in your past has hurt you and made you feel worthless. But God doesn't want you to feel that way! God wants you to see your value in His Body. This was Paul's message to Christians in vs. 14-19.

### **1 Corinthians 12:14-19**

*<sup>14</sup> For the body is not one member, but many. <sup>15</sup> If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? <sup>16</sup> And if the*

*ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? <sup>17</sup> If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? <sup>18</sup> But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. <sup>19</sup> And if they were all one member, where were the body?*

Every part of the Body is significant. God wants you to see your own value.

Now I don't want to sound like Joel Osteen but the believer with the right love for the Lord in the right place are important in the Body of Christ.

Illustration:

Think about your physical body. Nobody in their right mind would trade a finger for a thousand dollars. Would you trade your arm for \$100,000? Would you trade your tongue for a million? -- Of course not. And these are just parts of the temporary body God gave us for this world, things we can really live without.

Consider also verses 20-22:

## **1 Corinthians 12:20-22**

<sup>20</sup> *But now are they many members, yet but one body.*

<sup>21</sup> *And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. <sup>22</sup> Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary:*

Every part in the Body of Christ has importance. We all matter.

We all need each other!

Never think you don't matter in the Body of Christ, because we all have God-given value.

Illustration:

I know at times God does move people; and certainly one should leave a church if it fails to line up with scripture – but too often too many leave a church when they don't get their way or something rubs them the wrong way. That not only hurts them but it also hurts the church.

Many churches today are struggling because someone left a church on their own; not because God led them away.

Note not only the Placement and Profit but thirdly:

### **3. WE SEE OUR PURPOSE IN THE BODY OF CHRIST**

We all have great purpose in the Lord's Body. And Paul shows us 3 major ways to fulfill God's purpose for our lives:

#### **A. Service**

The Lord calls all believers to a life of Godly service. And we are designed to serve together in the Body of Christ. This truth is obvious from the examples Paul uses in these verses:

#### **1 Corinthians 12:15-17**

*<sup>15</sup> If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? <sup>16</sup> And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? <sup>17</sup> If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling?*

- The Foot Walks
- The Hand Holds
- The Ear Hears
- The Eyes See

Every part of the body has a purpose, as we serve the Lord together. And there are countless examples of Godly service we could we could give:

- Teaching in Sunday school.
- Helping in the Nursery.
- Checking on the sick and home bound members.
- Singing for the Lord.
- Helping in the kitchen.
- Praying for the sick, our families and lost people.
- Giving to help missions around the world.

Every part of the body has a purpose, as we serve our Savior together, remembering that He is the Head of the Body.

**1 Corinthians 12:18**

<sup>18</sup> *But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, **as it hath pleased him.***

Note Ephesians 4:11-15:



## ***Ephesians 4:11-15***

*<sup>11</sup> And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;*

*<sup>12</sup> For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: <sup>13</sup> Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: <sup>14</sup> That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; <sup>15</sup> But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:*

Illustration:

George Young was a little-known preacher in the 1800's. George was also a carpenter. He spent a lifetime humbly serving the Lord in small communities. Financial support was often lacking, and it was hard on George's family. But through all the ups and downs his faithful wife never wavered in her loyalty to God and to her husband.

After a long struggle, the family was able to move into their own small home (which George built himself). But later when George was away preaching, some local thugs, who didn't like his Gospel preaching, set fire to

the house. It was totally destroyed. But out of that experience George wrote this wonderful song:

“In shady, green pastures, so rich and so sweet, God leads His dear children along;

Where the water’s cool flow bathes the weary one’s feet, God leads His dear children along.

Some through the waters, some through the flood,

Some through the fire, but all through the blood;

Some through great sorrow, but God gives a song, in the night season and all the day long.”

God leads His dear children along. You can always count on that as we serve the Lord together. And Lord calls all believers to a life of Godly service.

Not only do we fulfill God’s purpose for our lives through service but also through:

## B. Sympathy

It’s the Godly sympathy we see in the first part of vs. 26:

### **1 Corinthians 12:26**

*<sup>26</sup> And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.*

In God's Body, the church, we hurt together. Isn't that the truth with your physical body? -- When you have a bad toothache or headache, your hand surely doesn't think: "So what, I don't care!"

When you are part of the Body of Christ, you don't ever have to suffer alone. We are designed to hurt together. And we are designed to help one another.

Note this truth in verses 24-25:

### **1 Corinthians 12:24-25**

*<sup>24</sup> For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked: <sup>25</sup> That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another.*

We are called to care for each other in the Body of Christ. When one part of the Body is hurting, God wants the rest of us to do everything we can to help. He wants us to show that we care. The Lord calls all believers to a life of Godly sympathy.

Not only do we fulfill God's purpose for our lives through service, and sympathy but also through:

### C. Success

#### **1 Corinthians 12:26**

<sup>26</sup> And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or ***one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.***

We win the victory together!

Paul closes this letter speaking about victory:

#### **1 Corinthians 15:57-58**

<sup>57</sup> *But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.* <sup>58</sup> *Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.*

Close:

On July 24, 2002, nine miners in western Pennsylvania got trapped 240 feet below ground in a flooded mine shaft. Think about a building 20 stories high. That's how far down they were! Rescue efforts began right away. But the rescue crews knew the odds were against them saving those men.

Almost everybody in the country had their eyes glued on the news from the mine. Those 9 miners were trapped for three days, then, miraculously rescued. Even the mainstream media called it a miracle, because there was such a slim chance that anyone could survive in that flooded mine. The 55 degree water threatened to kill them slowly by hypothermia. And the rescue shaft had to be drilled in just the right place, 250 feet down in time for the men to be saved.

Those miners were gasping for air, as floodwater rose to their chins. Blaine Mayhugh asked his boss for a pen when the water in the shaft kept rising. He said, "I want to write my wife and kids to tell them I love them." They tied themselves together so that no one could float away or slip under the water, but also so all their bodies would be found if they died. They shared food from a lunch pail that floated by.

After they were miraculously saved, the men said that it was their decision to bond together that saved their lives. From the outset they watched out for one another.

- If one man got tired, his bond to the other men kept him afloat.
- When one got cold, the other eight would huddle around him and warm him up.

- They vowed that whether they lived or died, they would do so together.

What a picture of the Body of Christ!

But there is another great lesson from that miracle in the mine, because even together, those men were hopeless without help from above. And when their rescue came, all they had to do was receive it: Just climb aboard that yellow rescue cylinder and be lifted up to safety. That's what Jesus Christ does for all who will trust Him and call on Him. He will put you in Him, and you will be saved forever.