

THE BODY OF CHRIST
1 Corinthians 12:12-31

I. THE HIGHEST HONOR

- A. *“But God has so composed the body, giving the greatest honor to the inferior part...” (1 Corinthians 12:24)*
- B. Paul Turns Honoring Upside Down!
 - 1. Who are the most important people in the church?
 - 2. Leadership in a post-modern world.
- C. A Place to Belong.
 - 1. “The church is a body, not a building; an organism, not an organization ... You are called to belong, not just believe.”
 - 2. “He called the church to meet your five deepest needs: a purpose to live for, people to live with, purpose to live by, a profession to live out, and a power to live on.” (Rick Warren)

II. CREATING A MAD CHURCH

- A. *“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.” (12:12)*
- B. You’ve Got to Be Kidding!
 - 1. Paul had a troubled, troublesome church on his hands in Corinth. There were divisions, disputes, infidelities, and other problems.
 - 2. And yet Paul said, “Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.” (1 Corinthians 12:27)
- C. Created for Community.
 - 1. You are important to God!
 - 2. “If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together.” (1 Cor. 12:26)
- D. Created for God’s Glory.
 - 1. We are called to make a difference.
 - 2. “God arranged the organs in the body, each one of them, as he chose.” (1 Corinthians 12:18)

III. FOUR MARKS OF FAILURE

- A. *“But earnestly desire the higher gifts. And I will show you a still more excellent way.” (1 Corinthians 12:31)*
- B. When Nobody Takes You for Granted.
 - * People we commonly take for granted are those who are always there.
- C. When Everyone Says Nice Things About You.
 - * If everyone agrees with what you’re saying you must not be saying much of anything.
- D. When You’re Not Lonely.
 - * Practicing courage, compassion, and conscience will cause lots of lonely walks.
- E. When You’re Living a Carefree Life.
 - * Being a Christian means caring about what’s wrong with the world.

Prayer Concerns: Members – Burney Biesel, Sarah Clark, Diane Mallard, Anne Miller, Carol Webb ... **Friends** – Bobby Atkins, Lane Brasfield, Jonathan Cupples, Travis Davison, Sr., Wallis Ann Davison, Raoul Drum, Kathy Greer, Jean Hansford, Jim Hixon, Benette Hobday, Linda Lindner, Geraldyn McFarland, Edith Robinson, **Joseph David Smith, D. Cliffe Stone, Michelle Sykes, Earl Vickery, Stephen Ministry** ...

Christian Sympathy is extended to: Peggy Bradshaw and family in the death of her aunt, Dorothy Stutts who passed away on Thursday, January 18. Please remember them in prayer.

PASTORAL PRAYER

Almighty God, you sent Christ to deliver your people, and by your Spirit gave birth to the church. We feel the breath of your Spirit upon us and within us, strengthening, encouraging, and calling us to faithfulness. O God, we thank you for our lives, and the inheritance of your love. We thank you for the church. Lead us to maturity in Christ.

Build our faith, O God, on the rock of Christ's own obedience. We give thanks that he has gone before us to show the way. Save us from hesitation when the path looks rough, and from falling back when suffering and hardship block our way. Help us to stand firm in the assurance that you will not forsake us. Give us your Spirit of power when our knees are shaking; reassure us by your comforting presence. May the love of Christ be reflected in our every act. As the imperfect passes away and we draw close to your heavenly splendor, let us do so with rejoicing, for in Christ you set us free.

Hear us now as we pray the prayer Christ taught us to pray ...

THE LORD'S PRAYER: Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

1 CORINTHIANS 12:12-27

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. For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body – Jews or Greeks, slaves or free – and all were made to drink of one Spirit.

For the body does not consist of one member but of many. 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. 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. If the whole body were an eye, where would be the hearing? If the whole body were an ear, where would be the sense of smell? But as it is, God arranged the organs in the body, each one of them, as he chose. If all were a single organ, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, yet one body. 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." One the contrary, the parts of the body which seem to be weaker are indispensable, and those parts of the body which we think less honorable we invest with the greater honor, and our unpresentable parts are treated with greater modesty, which our more presentable parts do not require. But God has so composed the body, giving the greater honor to the inferior part, that there may be no discord in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together.

Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.

SERMON SCHEDULE

In the Sanctuary:

January 28	<i>Jesus' First Sermon</i>	Mark 6:1-6
February 4	<i>Do You Remember?</i>	Luke 5:1-11

On the Radio (1450 AM):

January 28	<i>Qualities of an Encourager</i>	Acts 4:32-37
February 4	<i>God's Attitude Toward Prayer</i>	Luke 18:1-8