

8-5-18

THE CHURCH IS THE BODY OF CHRIST

TEXT:

I Corinthians 12:12 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.

I Corinthians 12:13 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.

I Corinthians 12:14 For the body is not one member, but many.

I Corinthians 12:15 If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?

I Corinthians 12:16 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?

I Corinthians 12:17 If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling?

I Corinthians 12:18 But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.

I Corinthians 12:19 And if they were all one member, where were the body?

I Corinthians 12:20 But now are they many members, yet but one body.

I Corinthians 12:21 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.

I Corinthians 12:22 Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary:

I Corinthians 12:23 And those members of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness.

I Corinthians 12:24 For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked:

I Corinthians 12:25 That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another.

INTRO:

This morning we partook of what we call the Lord's table or communion. We believe that Jesus taught His disciples to perpetuate this ordinance in remembrance of Himself. It is a memorial. It is amazing how some churches make it some mystical ordinance by which you actually receive Christ. When we partake of the elements, the elements themselves do not impart to us some spiritual blessing, it is what they represent that should provoke us to meditate on who our Lord is; what He did for us; and the blessings we have by being in him, and He in us. We are commanded by our Lord to "Do this often in remembrance of Him.. "

So we do it every month and on special occasions.

The bread represents our Lord's body, the cup being filled with the fruit of the vine represents His blood. The truth is, we are partakers of his body, and His blood. We are one in Him.

CONSIDER THE CHURCH IS THE BODY OF CHRIST.

Communion is that ordinance that outwardly pictures what the church is all about. The church is a body, many members, united together to work together in peace and harmony. Many members, one body. Not just any organization. We are one in Christ.

I Cor. 12 gives a great commentary and explanation of this truth that we are all part of that body.

This morning I thought it would be good for us to meditate on this truth.

What is interesting is that I Cor. Chapter 11 talks about the ordinance of communion, and it is followed by chapter 12, which talks about the church as being the body of Christ and we are members in particular. This morning we are going to go through chapter 12 verse by verse.

I. THE LORD WANTS US TO HAVE UNDERSTANDING WHAT IT IS TO BE PART OF THE BODY CALLED HIS CHURCH.

I Corinthians 12 gives a clear teaching about what it is to be in the body of Christ. This morning we are going to look at this chapter and see how it applies to communion and being one in his church.

1. WHEN WE ARE SAVED AND PLACED IN HIS BODY HE GIVES US SPIRITUAL GIFTS:

I Corinthians 12:1 Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant.

I Corinthians 12:2 Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led.

I Corinthians 12:3 Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.

1st we must be saved to be in this body. We want the church to grow but the church cannot grow unless people are genuinely saved and have the same spirit.

I Corinthians 12:3 Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.

We are placed in the body when the Spirit of God quickens us, and we profess Him as our Lord and Saviour.

Notice.. I Cor. 12:3

I Corinthians 12:3 Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.

A person who is saved will confess Jesus as Lord before others.. what is in your heart will come out of your mouth. Your salvation is a supernatural gift of God.

SALVATION IS A GIFT THAT WE CAN ASK FOR:

Luke 11:11 If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent?

Luke 11:12 Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion?

Luke 11:13 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?

Jesus will give the gift of the Holy Spirit to anyone who sincerely calls on him.

When we confess with our mouths & believe in our hearts we are saved, sealed, and engrafted into the church.

Romans 10:9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

Receiving the Holy Spirit and Salvation are one of the same.

ROM 8:9 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

The Holy Spirit is what unites us.

The Holy Spirit is what empowers us.

The Holy Spirit is what equips us to serve Him.

The Holy Spirit is what helps us to agree based on the Scripture.

Unity comes when we all have the same Spirit. If we have not the Holy Spirit we are not a church. Communion means nothing. We are no different than any other secular organization, Knights of Columbus, Masonic Lodge, Feeding America, YMCA, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, Habitat for Humanity, and on and on we can go.

Brother Accardi was invited to join a Limburger Cheese Club, the only qualification to be part of that club was to like Limburger Cheese. I was not invited. The Church is not a club. IT IS THE BODY OF CHRIST!

II. THE KEY IS THAT WE ALL HAVE THE HOLY SPIRIT.

I Corinthians 12:4 Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.

I Corinthians 12:5 And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord.

I Corinthians 12:6 And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.

One Spirit. Unity with diversity.

The Spirit of God is the spiritual blood that unites the body of Christ.

In the church, when we all walk in the Holy Spirit we can all walk united together, perfectly united yet different. Diversity of gifts, but united in Spirit.

III. WHEN WE ARE PLACED IN THIS BODY BY HIS SPIRIT. WE ARE ALSO GIVEN SPIRITUAL GIFTS BASED ON THE APPOINTMENT OF GOD.

1. This is for the profit of the church.

I Corinthians 12:7 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. The purpose of doing so is for the profit of the body of Christ.

The Bible likens this to our physical bodies. We have many different members, but they all work together for the benefit of the body.

2. *Each member of the church brings to the church his/her unique gifts and talents for the benefit of the church.*

I Corinthians 12:8 For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit;

I Corinthians 12:9 To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit;

I Corinthians 12:10 To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues:

I Corinthians 12:11 But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.

Note: The key verse in this passage is I Cor. 12:11

I Corinthians 12:11 But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.

God divides gifts and abilities to each member of the church as He wills.

Note: It is God that has placed you in His church for the benefit of His body. One body many members.

Look I personally do not believe that we should dichotomize spiritual and physical gifts. All that you have is given to you by God. Your abilities, your talents, we should all work together for the benefit of God's body called the church. But what makes a Christian unique is that he is able to combine his spiritual gifts with his physical gifts to do a work for God.

THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT IS:

GAL 5:22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

GAL 5:23 Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

GAL 5:24 And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.

This is the what makes up the spiritual blood of the church.

What makes a Christian different in this world? When we do work in this physical world we should do it with love, joy, peace, longsuffering, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance.

In the church, God imparts to His members administrative abilities to help the church.

One may have the gift of exhortation, and ability to console and encourage.

Another the gift of administration, to lead and organize.

Another the gift of ministry and service.

Another the gift to teach and preach .

Another the gift of giving.

Another the gift of prayer and praying.
Another the gift of admonition and preaching.

Again it is like a physical body. The eyes have a very specific purpose and they cannot do what the hands do. But the hands cannot do what the eyes do, the feet cannot do what the ears do, and the ears cannot do what the feet do etc. etc..

IV. THERE IS A DIVERSITY IN THE BODY FOR THE WELFARE OF THE BODY.

I Corinthians 12:12 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.

I Corinthians 12:13 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.

I Corinthians 12:14 For the body is not one member, but many.

We all are unique and different.

We are in Christ and the church is called the body of Christ.
We are His flesh and his blood.

Unity with diversity, just like illustrated in communion.

Notice I Cor. 12:13, by one spirit we are all baptized into one body!

When the Spirit of Christ comes into our lives, this is a spiritual Baptism. We are placed in Christ by His spirit.

I Corinthians 12:13 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.

WE HAVE BEEN MADE TO DRINK OF ONE SPIRIT.

Again, the illustration of communion is alluded to in this passage.
We are all made to drink of one Spirit.

The Holy Spirit was called Living Waters in John Chapter 4:10.

V. IT IS GOD THAT PLACES US IN HIS BODY AS HE CHOOSES WE ARE NOT ALL THE SAME.

I Corinthians 12:15 If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?

I Corinthians 12:16 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?

I Corinthians 12:17 If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling?

I Corinthians 12:18 But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.

The Bible uses our physical bodies as an example of what it is to be in Christ.

Amazing how much we miss a member of our bodies only after that member hurts.

Amazing how parts of our bodies that we never knew we had before, when we go to the doctor and we find that these members of our body are failing suddenly we learn how that affects our whole body.

What member of the body is more important? Sad to say, it is usually after we hurt that member through neglect we find how important that member is.

When we hurt our eye we suddenly realize how important our eyes are.

When our ear is infected it hinders everything.

When our hand hurts back hurts, etc. etc..

Now when a person's body is working properly, when the body is healthy, when it is as it was designed, the different members function in such a manner that they do not draw attention to themselves.

Do we even have to give it a thought that we are breathing, or our hearts are beating? Many internal organs are working properly but when one little organ gives out the whole body is set back and necessitates giving it our attention.

When I turned 50 I was diagnosed with diabetes. This led to more and more problems, until finally I had to inconvenience my whole body to accommodate for a deficiency of my pancreas. A little organ that I had not even known existed is not doing its job or is being overworked. And the whole body suffers because of it. The pancreas produces insulin, and there is a problem with the balance of how much insulin is made and how much sugar is absorbed into the body. This has caused the whole body to be inconvenienced. Change of diet, changes in schedule. But the simple bottom line is that if you want a healthy body you have to make these changes.

A few years back, my doctor told me I should get my gall bladder out, but they could not explain to me why. I would ask what the gallbladder does. They told me at one time it may have done something but it is no longer necessary. WRONG ANSWER!

So I didn't do it. Finally, my doctor said if you don't get your gallbladder out it could lead to some serious problems, it could become infected even become cancerous.. This was just about the time that Steve Jobs, didn't listen to his doctor and developed cancer and died from it. This made me think I better go ahead and listen to my doctor.

So I inconvenienced my whole body for one little organ that I didn't even know I had. Then when they went to operate and remove my gall bladder they couldn't find it. It was on the wrong side. The operation took twice as long as normal and when the doctor came out he told my wife I was a very special person. She said, "I know.." but what do you mean? He said my gallbladder was on the opposite side of where it should have been. I guess I was WAP sided inside.

Then I asked how could you know my gallbladder was bad when you couldn't even find it?

The point is that sometimes the members of the church that work quietly behind the scenes may be very very important to the body. Sometimes, there are people, that give and no one knows about it.. they pray and no one knows about it.. they see things that need to be done in the church and no one knows about it.

The are so much more important than anyone would imagine. THEY ARE PART OF THE BODY.

VI. WHICH IS THE MOST IMPORTANT MEMBER OF THE BODY?

I Corinthians 12:19 And if they were all one member, where were the body?

I Corinthians 12:20 But now are they many members, yet but one body.

I Corinthians 12:21 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.

I Corinthians 12:22 Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary:

I Corinthians 12:23 And those members of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness.

I Corinthians 12:24 For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked:

I Corinthians 12:25 That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another.

I Corinthians 12:26 And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.

Truth is if I were to think there was a member of my body that was most needful I would choose one of those members that we all can see everyday.

Hands, feet, eyes, etc..

We never realize how important some of the more feeble parts of our being are, which we see less of on the outward, yet are really the ones we need the most.

I shared how my gallbladder was messing up my whole life.

I shared how important my pancreas is to the welfare of my body.

Those of you with heart problems know how important that is to your body.

Lungs, kidneys, on and on we can go. These parts we do not even see.

We find out a gland in our body is not working properly and our whole life is disrupted.

I can think of some of the saints that went on before us:

Selwyn Schmitt had a heart problem.

Bob Snyder a lung problem.

Gertrude Lewis a gallbladder problem took her.

Carlton Lewis a heart problem.

Poor Anna Jones developed liver problems and she died at an early age.

VII. GOD PLACES EVERY MEMBER IN THE BODY AS HE PLEASES.

I Corinthians 12:27 Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.

I Corinthians 12:28 And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.

I Corinthians 12:29 Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles?

I Corinthians 12:30 Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?

I Corinthians 12:31 But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way.

The members are placed in the body as He pleases.

I Corinthians 12:26 And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.

I Corinthians 12:27 Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.

We need to care and nurture the body.

We need to allow each member to freely exercise their gifts in the body.

How do you discover your spiritual gifts in the church?

You do so by working together, by seeking to do things to benefit the church for the welfare of the body.

We all can witness, we all can work, we all can give, we all can pray, we all can be faithful in our attendance. As we do these things, in time, God will make manifest our gifts and abilities.

This morning we partook of the Lord's supper. A reminder of what the church is all about. One loaf, one body, many members. We have all been made to drink of the same cup. ONE SPIRIT!

Imagine what we can accomplish for the Lord if we just worked together as a body! ONE BODY, MANY MEMBERS.

Let us pray that we could nurture and love each other in Christ.

Let us pray that we each could recognize what God has called us to do in the body and do it with all our might.

Let us learn to be content with where God has placed us in his body the church.

I Corinthians 12:25 That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another.

Why do schisms come? Do they not come because we do not accept where the Lord has placed us in His body, and this breeds discontentment and disunity amongst the body?

I Corinthians 11:18 For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it.

I Corinthians 11:19 For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you.

Divisions, heresies - means opinions, fighting over nit picky things that don't matter.

When we all drink of the Holy spirit these things go away.

Let us be ONE SPIRIT. ONE BODY. One In Christ!