

FULLY FUNCTIONING MEMBERS

I. 1 Corinthians 12:12-27 Romans 12:3-8

A. Last week we talked about Jesus' family, asking the question who that family is and whether or not we're members of it. While the Jewish leaders thought Jesus was of the devil, Jesus' natural family thought He had lost His mind. Read Mark 3:31-35...

B. Today will be more of the same except we'll talk about body parts instead of family members... Satan is the original serial killer and he would love to be able to destroy and dismember every Christian and every church family. *"But Jesus said this to Peter when He identified Jesus as the Messiah: And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."* (Matt 16:18)

C. So what does such a church look like and how does it function? Let's take a look at the Word of God, 1 Corinthians 12:12-27...

1) V12-13 *"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 in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit."* The notion that some Christians have the Spirit of God while others don't isn't Biblical. A person is either regenerated or they're not. People who were dead in their trespasses and sins are made alive in Christ, not half alive for some and all alive for others. There's not a two class system for believers. Which Scriptures are written for those with the Spirit and which ones for those without the Spirit? Romans 8:9b: *"Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to Him."*

2) Every member has a purpose, every member has a function, and every member is necessary for a healthy body of believers. (Quote by Mrs. William P. Janzen)

3) V18 *"But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as He chose."* God has designed every believer to be connected, enjoined, attached to the body of Christ and functioning in it. If people remove themselves, God is not well served or pleased. Jesus to Saul on persecuting the church: *"Why are you persecuting Me?"* (Sermon excerpt from John Piper)

4) V26-27 *"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."* (Quote by D.A. Carson)

D. Do the scriptures have anything more to say about this? Romans 12:3-8...

E. Every heard the saying, *"I'm gonna take my ball and go home!"*? Billy owns the football and when he doesn't get his way, picks up the ball and stomps off towards home, ending the game for everybody else. When it comes to your gifts, however, they aren't yours in the first place and while stomping off may seem like an option, it's not a Biblical option. May God be merciful to you when He takes you to the woodshed and then sends you and your ball back to the playing field. :-)

F. The Cross of Jesus Christ is vertical and horizontal. The vertical post reminds us that Jesus absorbed the wrath of God for each of our sins. His suffering was horrible beyond description. The horizontal post reminds us that His arms were stretched out wide because He loved us so much He was willing to die in our place. His love for you is beyond comprehension. His resurrection affirmed His mission was accomplished. His sacrifice was to make us His own—all of us together—His very own people. Any notion that He died for you in order to allow you to live a separate existence from the body of Christ is a false notion, not to mention incredibly selfish at its core...

G. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, strength, and mind. And love and serve one another in a manner worthy of His sacrifice, in joyful obedience, with deep abiding gratitude, for making you a part of the Body of Christ...

* Close with Prayer...

Scriptures, Videos, & Bonus Stuff

1 Corinthians 12:12-27 (ESV)

12 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. 13 For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit. 14 For the body does not consist of one member but of many. 15 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. 16 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. 17 If the whole body were an eye, where would be the sense of hearing? If the whole body were an ear, where would be the sense of smell? 18 But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as He chose. 19 If all were a single member, where would the body be? 20 As it is, there are many parts, yet one body. 21 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.” **22** On the contrary, the parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, **23** and on those parts of the body that we think less honorable we bestow the greater honor, and our unpresentable parts are treated with greater modesty, **24** which our more presentable parts do not require. But God has so composed the body, giving greater honor to the part that lacked it, **25** that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. **26** If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together. **27** Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.

Romans 12:3-8 (ESV)

3 For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. **4** For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, **5** so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. **6** Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; **7** if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; **8** the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.

Romans 8:9 (ESV)

9 You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to Him.

Quote by Mrs. William P. Janzen

“Can I be a Christian without joining other Christians in the church? Yes, it is something like: being a soldier without an army, a seaman without a ship, a businessman without a business, a tuba player without an orchestra, a football player without a team, or a bee without a hive.”

Sermon Excerpt by John Piper

"The body of Christ, universally, is expressed in the bodies of Christ locally. To belong to THE body of Christ means in the New Testament to belong to A body of Christ. Let me say that again because that's very very threatening for many Lone Ranger Christians. To belong to THE body of Christ in the New Testament meant to belong to A body of Christ. They weren't separate. They weren't like, '*Oh I'm a part of the universal church and I just cruise. I just go from church to church and small group to small group and to parachurch ministry to parachurch ministry and I have no roots like this anywhere.*' That's not Biblical!"

- John Piper, *Belong To A Church*, [DesiringGod.org](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U8EIN2syoTs). <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U8EIN2syoTs>

Quote by D.A. Carson

"What binds us together is not common education, common race, common income levels, common politics, common nationality, common accents, common jobs, or anything else of that sort. Christians come together because they have all been loved by Jesus Himself. They are a band of natural enemies who love one another for Jesus' sake."

Film Clips & Other Links

Belong To A Church - John Piper

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U8EIN2syoTs>

Why Small Churches Are The Next Big Thing - Karl Vaters

<http://gideas.org/articles/why-small-churches-are-the-next-big-thing/>

Do Christians Really Have To Go To Church? - Phillip Nation

<http://www.crosswalk.com/video/i-m-a-christian-but-i-don-t-like-going-to-church.html>

What Part of the Body of Christ Are You? - Francis Chan

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m5WbW6J-g6w>

"We Are The Body of Christ" (Very Unique Clip)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PKcsJlv9Ec8>

Bonus Stuff

Matthew 16:13-18 (ESV)

13 Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" **14** And they said, "Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." **15** He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" **16** Simon Peter replied, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." **17** And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not

revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. **18** And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

Quote by John Calvin

"So highly does the Lord esteem the communion of His church, that He considers everyone a traitor and apostate from religion who perversely withdraws himself from any Christian society which preserves the true ministry of the word and sacraments."

Quote by James H. Aughey

"Jesus organized the church, which is His vineyard. He commands all to go into the vineyard and work. All who are united to Christ by faith, and are thus members of His mystical body, should be members of His visible church."

Quote by R.C. Sproul

"How desperately sad is the fact that the church is known by schism, not unity; ignorance, not knowledge; and indecisiveness rather than maturity. How it must break God's heart to see us continue in such a poverty stricken condition in light of what He has done, stands ready to do, has the resources to accomplish, and has defined as our calling in Christ."

Quote by E.M. Bounds

"The church is not a democracy in which we have chosen God, but a theocracy in which He has chosen us. The church is the only society in the world that never loses any of its members, even by death. The church upon its knees would bring heaven upon the earth."

Quote by Vance Havner

"Christians, like snowflakes, are frail, but when they stick together they can stop traffic."

This Is My Church

Author Unknown

This is my church.

It is composed of people just like me.

It will be friendly if I am.

It will do great work if I work.

It will make generous gifts for many causes if I am generous.

It will bring others into fellowship if I bring them.

Its seats will be filled if I fill them.

It will be a church of loyalty and love, of faith and service if I, who make it what it is, am filled with these.

Therefore, with God's help, I dedicate myself to the task of being all these things I want my church to be.