

## I. Introduction and context

Body of Christ: common analogy used by Paul—Rom. 12, Col. 3, Eph. 4

- Concerning the *spiritual*—12:1
- Manifestations were discussed—what members of the body are enabled to do supernaturally. **Ability**.
- Now abiding offices/anointings/functions are discussed==what a member of the body generally does and does well. **Assignment**.
- There are *occasions* and *offices* (minas and talents)

Key Metaphor: Every organ and member of the body must fulfill its role, if the body is going to work properly and achieve the desires of the mind. It's not the whole body without every member.

Key Takeaway: Every person in the church must fulfill his or her role, if the body of Jesus is going to work properly and achieve the desires of God. It's not the whole Christ without every member. That includes you! Here **and** contributing!

- What if you don't have all the members or the parts are in the wrong place? A Picasso painting!

## II. Overview:

1. We belong to Christ (12-13)
2. We belong where God puts us (14-20)
3. We belong to each other (21-27)

## III. We belong to Christ (12-13)

- We are in Jesus—one Spirit (6:17) and one body.
- Such nearness! Such belonging! Such acceptance! Such partnership!
- **So it is with Christ**—Jesus is now a body of believers on earth, as well as a Lord in heaven

Ephesians 1:22-23: "And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all."

- We are one—He is not divided!
- The body has much diversity in its members—all races, economic statuses, cultures, ages, abilities!
- All the saints, working in unity, are essential to the operations of Jesus in the earth

## IV. We belong where God puts us (14-20)

- Principle: v.18, 24, 28
- God arranges, composes & appoints
- A decorator arranging bouquets
- A CEO staffing his company
- A composer crafting a symphony
- Purposeful, precise, artistic—the work and weaving of God is BEAUTIFUL
- Some roles are rare, others common
- Not to be **envied** or **despised**
- All are given by God; All are *needed*

Without a colon, no one in here would be sitting pretty.

David Guzik: The only member of our body that serves itself and contributes nothing is called a cancer!

- Our function in the body is our *office*

Q: How do I know my office?—by **Call**

1. Need—"someone really should \_\_\_\_\_"
- Your idea or a leader's prompting

2. Inspiration—leading, vision, desire
3. Responsibility—step into the role
4. Testing—over time the call **abides**
5. Recognition—by leaders, church

Q: Can my office change?—Yes by **Call**

Paul serves as:

1. Preacher/Teacher—Acts 9:19-23
2. Prophet—Acts 13:1
3. Apostle—Rom.1:1—called to be apostle

Q: Can my local body change?—by **Call**

Paul fellowshipped in: Jerusalem, Antioch, Ephesus, Corinth

V. We belong to each other (21-27)

1. We share benefits—when the Eye works, the steps are guided. When the hand works, the body can swat the fly the ear hears. When the back works, the hands can lift the cinder block off the smashed pinky toe.

**Note:** You perform a function others may not be able to do for themselves! Miss church and others will miss your gift.

2. We share pain—the whole body hurts when the paper cut is soaked in lime juice. The whole body shuts down when unseen organs fail.

**Note:** Hurt with the persecuted church. Pray for missionaries in trouble. Lift up your sick brothers and sisters!!

3. We share joy—when I drink ice cold Diet Pepsi, my throat is soothed and my body is cooled. When I do a good workout, my whole body gets endorphins!

**Note:** Celebrate with those who are succeeding, growing, getting honor and advancement! Don't give envy a chance to germinate.

5. We share an identity—in Christ
  - One name unites us: Jesus
  - One will leads us: Abba's
  - One heart motivates us in love
  - One Glory we seek: His

VI. Conclusion: Meaning of Membership

1. Membership is the consistent exercise of our function (office) in the body.
2. Membership is love: building others up and being there for them in good times and bad
3. Membership is a fact: I **am** a member of Jesus—I'm either a fruitful one or a dead branch, a healthy cell or a rupturing appendix. Will I deny this truth and disconnect? Woe to the wicked and slothful servant who buried his talent!
4. Membership is about Jesus!
  - If people are going to contact Jesus, they must contact His body. I hope His Body shows up! I hope the hands, mouth, eyes and feet are all here!
  - We need all of Jesus to do all that Jesus did.
  - We need gifts the Jesus had that we currently don't have—God will give what we lack so that we can show the fullness of His Son. On your personal gift assessment, how many of you listed miraculous gifts? Ask!
  - It's with His **body** that He speaks to you, touches you, listens, sits with you, feeds you, directs and heals you.
  - Denying your role in the body is denying Jesus His full expression in the local church. That is serious sin.

- We should be as faithful as members of the body as Jesus is faithful to us.
- Only Jesus can station you in a location and an office. Only Jesus can reassign you. Make sure before you step out of a church or ministry that you are really sent elsewhere!
- You are called and gifted so that you can **love others** with the very love of God, through all His various gifts!