

## 1 Corinthians Chapter 12 Continued

**1 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."**

Paul used the human body as an analogy for the unity of the church in Christ. From this point on to (verse 27), he used "body" 18 times.

This is part of the teaching that we had earlier on the fact that all Christians make up the body of Christ, and Christ Himself is the head. Jesus is also, the tree of life that we are grafted into if we are believers. We are nothing in and of our self, but we are the power of God working on this earth, when we do all things in the name of Jesus. It is His power that we have been given authority to use, if we are believers. We will also, find that Jesus is the Vine, and we are the branches. We get our strength and power to exist from the vine. He is the Cornerstone, and we are the lively stones as well. We could go on and on. The truth is, if we stand alone, we can do nothing of ourselves. He is our strength. We are also told, that when we become a Christian, we no longer live, but Christ liveth in us. We are part of Him.

Galatians 2:20 "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."

We all have our part to play in the body of Christ.

**1 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."**

Galatians 3:28 "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus."

There is only one Way and that is Christ. We were flesh, filled with death, until we accepted life in the Lord Jesus Christ. All Christians have been grafted into the Tree of Life (the Lord Jesus Christ). We are adopted children of the Father. Our adoption was paid for with the blood of Jesus Christ.

Romans 12:5 "So we, [being] many, are one body in Christ,"

Look with me, at what baptism does for us.

Romans 6:3-8 "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?" "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." "For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also [in the likeness] of [his] resurrection:" "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with [him], that the

body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." "For he that is dead is freed from sin." "Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him:"

It is the Spirit of Christ within us that makes us one with Him.

Baptized: The church, the spiritual body of Christ, is formed as believers are immersed by Christ with the Holy Spirit. Christ is the baptizer who immerses each believer with the Spirit into unity with all other believers. Paul is not writing of water baptism. That outward sign depicts the believer's union with Christ in His death and resurrection. Similarly, all believers are also immersed into the body of Christ by means of the Holy Spirit. Paul's point is to emphasize the unity of believers. There cannot be any believer who has not been Spirit baptized, nor can there be more than one Spirit baptism or the whole point of unity in the body of Christ is convoluted. Believers have all been Spirit baptized and thus are all in one body. This is not an experience to seek, but a reality to acknowledge.

"Drink into one Spirit": At salvation, all believers not only become full members of Christ's body, the church, but the Holy Spirit is placed within each of them. There is no need or divine provision for any such thing as a second blessing, a triumphalistic experience of a deeper life, or a formula for instantly increased spirituality. Christ's salvation provision is perfect and He calls only for obedience and trust in what has already been given.

### **1 Corinthians 12:14: "For the body is not one member, but many."**

By his illustration of how every part of a human body is essential to the function of that body, Paul showed that unity is an indispensable need of the church; but divinely provided diversity within that unity is also necessary. His words additionally implied that some selfish members were discontent with their gifts, wanting the gifts they had not been given (verse 11). With that attitude, they in effect questioned God's wisdom and implied He had made a mistake in assignments. In seeking showy abilities and power, they also became vulnerable to carnal, demonically counterfeited gifts.

The church you attend is one body, but it is made up of many members. That is what this is saying, as well. That is what Paul is saying, it takes all the parts rightly fit together to make the whole.

### **1 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?"**

So many times, someone will feel that their contribution to the body is not the same as someone else, and they will feel that they are not of the body. Paul is showing, here, how ridiculous that is. If the body was just made up of hands with no feet, look what a mess the body would be. We are all unique. Each one of us fits into the body to make up the whole. If you have ever worked a jigsaw puzzle, you see thousands of little pieces, and no two of them are exactly alike. Each one has a place. If even one piece is missing, the puzzle cannot be finished. You may not be a corner piece, but the puzzle is not complete, until your contribution is made.

**1 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?"**

What a silly question to ask. This is the same as above. What a problem to be able to see, and not to hear.

**1 Corinthians 12:17 "If the whole body [were] an eye, where [were] the hearing? If the whole [were] hearing, where [were] the smelling?"**

Each person is a unique individual. God made you for a specific purpose. No one else can take your place in the kingdom of God. If you do not fulfill the position that God has for you, then there will be a place not filled.

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

Paul dealt with the foolish and carnal Corinthians who were discontent with what had been given them sovereignty for the edification of the church and the glory of its Lord.

Are you working in a church that is so small that you feel as if you are forgotten? We see from the verse above, that each of us is exactly where the Lord would have us, if we have submitted our will to His will. Some may feel, because they are not the pastor of the church that God could not possibly have anything for them to do in this body. God knows what your abilities and your desires are. He has you where you will do the most good. As I said in another verse, you are unique. No one can do the job that God has called you to do as well as you can do it.

**1 Corinthians 12:19 "And if they were all one member, where [were] the body?"**

We see that the over all plan is not always what we had in mind. You cannot be someone else. Be the very best that you can be in the capacity that the Lord has called you to.

**1 Corinthians 12:20 "But now [are they] many members, yet but one body."**

Every person in the church is an integral part. If you happen to be the janitor instead of the missionary, realize that the church would be a mess, if you did not do your job. Be the very best janitor in the world. When we were trying to say something to make our children realize their importance in the place God has chosen for them to labor, we told them, if they were a garbage collector, be the best in the name of the Lord. No honest job is to be looked down on. We cannot all be surgeons. Be what you can be, and do it as unto the Lord.

**1 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."**

“No need”: While some in Corinth were bemoaning the fact that they did not have the showy gifts, those who did were belittling those with the quieter and less prominent gifts. The “eye” and the “head”, which are highly visible and the focus of all who engage each other, represent the

people with public gifts. They so overestimated their own importance that they disdained those whom they perceived as less gifted and less significant. They were apparently indifferent. ("I have no need"), and self-sufficient.

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

If you did not have a big toe, you could not balance yourself to stand. You see the lesser job might not appear to be important at a glance, but it gives balance to the whole body.

**1 Corinthians 12:23-24 "And those [members] of the body, which we think to be less honorable, upon these we bestow more abundant honor; and our uncomely [parts] have more abundant comeliness." "For our comely [parts] have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honor to that [part] which lacked:"**

This is just showing, that even the jobs that are not out front, are just as important as those that are out in view. Rich and poor, old and young, white and black, all make up the family of God.

Paul's answer to the pride of the more visibly gifted was to engage his analogy again and remind them that the more fragile and less lovely, in fact, ugly parts of the body which are not publicly "presentable" are given the great respect for their necessity. He spoke of the internal organs.

The thing that bonds us together is the Lord. We are all family.

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

"Schism" means gap or split. It can, also, mean division or rent. In the beginning, the church was of one accord. Together we stand, divided we fall. If one has a problem, it should be the problem of all. If one rejoices, we should all rejoice with him.

God has designed visible, public gifts to have a crucial place, but equally designed and more vital to life are the hidden gifts, thus maintaining the perspective of unity, all are essential to the working of the body of Christ.

**1 Corinthians 12:26-27 "And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it." "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular."**

If there is an injury to any part of the body, the whole body hurts.

This is a call to mutual love and concern in the fellowship of believers which maintains the unity that honors the Lord. There is one body in which all function, yet never do they lose their personal identity and the essential necessity of ministry as God has designed them to do it.

Just because we are part of the larger body, does not mean that we are not individuals with Christ. He saved all of us, one at a time

Once again (in verses 28-30), Paul emphasizes the sovereignty of God. He does so by illustrating the individuality and unity of the body by a repeat of the representative categories of ministries, calling and giftedness.

**1 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."**

Apostles ... prophets: Their purpose was;

(1) To lay the foundation of the church;

(2) To receive and declare the revelation of God's Word through signs, wonders, and miracles. "Apostles" refers primarily, to those 12 chosen by our Lord plus Paul and Matthias.

There was also secondary serving as messengers of the church such as Barnabas, Silas and Timothy.

Prophets were especially gifted men in the local churches, who preached God's Word. Any message preached by a prophet had to be judged by the word of the apostle. Teachers could be the same as pastor-teachers, but probably should be broadened to include all who are gifted for teaching in the church, whether they have the office of pastor or not.

The following Scripture gives a view of how serious it would be to vary from the true message.

Galatians 1:8 "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed."

The apostles, in the verse above, are watchmen of the church. In this case, it was Paul who had established this church. Prophets are not only those who through the anointing of the Holy Spirit tell of the future, but would be the person who brought the message to the church. God has a specific message for each individual church. The minister (prophet or prophetess), should bring the message God has for that particular group on that particular day.

We find also, that God has given others a special understanding of the Scriptures, so that they can teach the Word with powerful anointing. Notice in all of this, that God puts His Word before miracles and other things. Miracles and healings are each a unique gift in themselves, and God has chosen someone in each church to fulfill this calling.

Sometimes one person will have more than one of these offices to fulfill. We must not be influenced by signs and wonders above the Word. The Antichrist will be able to call down fire

from heaven. All miracles and healings must stay within the realm of the Word. If we are to do the particular thing, there will be an example in the Bible.

Helps, even though it is one of the most important jobs, is usually unsung. They fill in the gap, and do it so quietly that usually no one notices. God notices always. Governments are like the deacons and elders of the church. They see to the day to day function of the church. They must be godly people.

Diversities of tongues just mean that certain people in the church generally bring to the assembled people messages from God to the congregation in a tongue other than the native tongue. All of these are important functions in the church.

**1 Corinthians 12:29-31 "[Are] all apostles? [are] all prophets? [are] all teachers? [are] all workers of miracles?" "Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret?" "But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way."**

Each of these rhetorical queries expects a "no" answer. The body of Christ is diverse and God sovereignty designs it that way.

Each person functions in the office the Lord has called him or her. This is the only time permissible to covet. The best gifts are preaching the Word, of course.

## **1 Corinthians Chapter 12 Continued Questions**

1. Who make up the body of Christ?
2. Who is the Vine?
3. If He is the Vine, who are the branches?
4. For by one \_\_\_\_\_ are we baptized into one body.
5. Who, or what, is the Tree of Life?
6. We were baptized into \_\_\_\_\_ death.
7. After we are baptized, how should we walk?
8. If we are planted in the likeness of His death, we shall also be in the likeness of His \_\_\_\_\_.
9. What had to be destroyed?
10. The body is not one member, but \_\_\_\_\_.

11. What does the author relate our part in the whole as?
12. Each person is a \_\_\_\_\_ individual.
13. Who can do the job that God has called you to do?
14. Whatever work we do, we should do it as unto the \_\_\_\_\_.
15. Who make up the family of God?
16. What does schism mean?
17. An injury to any part of the body hurts \_\_\_\_\_.
18. Jesus saved all of us \_\_\_\_\_ at a time.
19. Give the works in the church listed in verse 28.
20. What is the apostle in this situation?
21. What was their main function?
22. What are some of the functions of the prophet?
23. What are the special abilities of the teacher?
24. Are signs and wonders dependable, explain?
25. What is one calling that is usually unsung?
26. Who would be part of the ministry of governments?
27. Explain the function of tongues.
28. When is the only time permissible to covet?