



The Body Of Christ

1 Corinthians 1:10-13

10 Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; **but that ye be perfectly joined together** in the same mind and in the same judgment.

11 For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you.

12 Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ.

13 **Is Christ divided?** was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?

Something about the Christmas season that I really love is the opportunity to spend a lot of time with family!

- It is one of the very few times of the year when there are no schedules to follow.
- No School to attend.
- No Work to accomplish.
- No calls to answer.
- No errands to run.
- It is so nice to just sit back and relax with the family.
- Every family ought to do Christmas more often.

We ought to celebrate it four times a year!

- It is a needed time of uniting together.
- It is a needed time of refreshing and renewal.

Christmas is different than a vacation because there is no rushing off to the airport...there is no two days driving to get some place warm.

Vacations can be very stressful...but Christmas....ahhh...it is so relaxing!

It is a time of sharing with one another, getting closer with your kids and your spouse....we need that closeness with our families!

How many of you would agree that we need more of that time?

In keeping with that Christmas feeling, I want to talk about our need for one another in the church!

- We are all part of a family...the family of God
- We need one another!
- We need to be able to depend on one another.
- Share with one another.

In the hustle and bustle of our lives it is tough to find time to spend with one another.

The first letter that Paul wrote to the Corinthian church dealt with the need for the church to be unified and working together.

The church at that time in Corinth was not functioning as a close knit unit.

They were not a family.

Although they were all baptized and filled with the Holy Ghost, there were many in the church who were separating themselves from one another.

- One would say, "Well I am a follower of Peter."
- Another would say, "I am a follower of Paul," and another, would say, "Apollos is the man I follow."
- And then another would claim to follow Christ.

Paul came along and said "stop! Did any of these men die for you? Did any of these men shed their blood for you? Were you baptized in their name?"

Paul said, "I am appealing to you dear brothers and sisters, to be united together with one mind and one purpose as followers of Christ!"

All throughout the book of 1st Corinthians you will find references to the body of Christ!....It is the theme of Paul's letter.

In Chapter twelve, Paul gives us a great picture of how the family of God should function as he compares it to the physical body....

1 Corinthians 12:12-27

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.

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.

14 For the body is not one member, but many.

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?

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?

17 If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling?

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

19 And if they were all one member, where were the body?

20 But now are they many members, yet but one body.

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.

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

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.

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:

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

26 And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members

rejoice with it.

27 Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.

The family of God is called the body of Christ...or as we know it, the Church!

Paul chose the human body as a comparison for the church for a reason!

I believe the reason is simply how amazing the human body is.

A public speaker once presented some really neat facts detailing the functions of the human body.....

- His research revealed that in twenty-four hours, the heart beats 103,689 times, pumping blood 168 million miles through the body.
- A person takes approximately 23,040 breaths and inhales roughly 438 cubic feet of air.
- The average person consumes an estimated 3.25 pounds of food every day...some of you a lot more than that.
- During this same period, the eyes blink roughly 20,000 times, and the body uses 750 different muscles to move its different parts
- All of this happens because of more than 14 million chemical reactions in the brain, which result in thousands of messages being sent to the body at speeds approaching 300 miles per hour.

The human body is an amazing thing....The bible says that we are fearfully and wonderfully made!

How many of you would agree with me?

- Each one of our muscles has an important function.
- Each one of our parts has a role to play.
- There is no insignificant part in your body.

Each part of the body is placed exactly where it is for a reason.

Each part is shaped like it is for a purpose.

- Think of your ears...if you picture them alone they have a pretty wacky shape....but the shape of your ear has a function....its shape is used to gather and enhance sound.

God knew exactly what He was doing when He made you!

- Imagine if your nose were placed on your head the opposite way...you might drown during in a rainstorm.
- Your nose was place just like it is for a reason.
- Your nose also helps you breathe and taste your food.

Each part of your body has a particular purpose.....but it also a greater purpose that benefits the entire body.

“One day it occurred to all the members of the body that they were doing all the work while the belly was having all the food. So they held a meeting (presumably without inviting the belly) and after a long discussion decided to go on strike until the belly consented to take its proper share ... of the work.

So for a day or two the hands refused to take the food, the mouth refused to receive it and the teeth had no work to do. But after a day or two, the members began to find that they themselves were not feeling very well at all. The hands could hardly move, the mouth was all parched and dry, while the legs were unable to support the rest of the body.

They discovered that even the belly in its dull, quiet way was doing necessary work that supported the functions of the entire body.”

You might not like how your belly looks...but it has a function!

You might not like how your nose looks...but it has a function!

I could go on and on and on describing how amazing our bodies are.....but Paul was describing the body of Christ.

- Paul's point was this....as amazing as the human body is, the body of Christ is even more amazing.
- As much as the human body needs all of its parts or members working together....the church also needs all of its members working together to support one another.

We need one another in order to function as God intended us to function!

Look at the person next to you and say, "I need You!"

We need one another!

That is why it is so important to come to church as often as you can!

You might think that you can get by missing church all the time...but you can't...because you are part of the body of Christ!

It is not just you that is losing out...but the rest of the body can't function properly without you!

- You can't make it alone.
- And the body can't make it without you!

Somebody say...it is not all about me!

- It is about the body of Christ!
- It is about the family of God!
- We sacrifice for the benefit of the family!

If I were here preaching to myself tonight...it wouldn't be the same!

- I wouldn't be able to preach without you.
- I wouldn't be able to pastor without you.
- Y'all are awesome listeners.
- Y'all are awesome encouragers.

We gather together as often as we can....because I have a need....and you have a need.

- By gathering together we are meeting one another's needs.
- By gathering together we are getting refreshed and renewed.
- By gathering together we are drawing closer to one another and closer to God.

By all of us gathering together the entire body benefits!

It is not the building that makes Life Church what it is.

- It is you Brother Mike.
- It is you Brother Jim.
- It is you Sister Kristi.
- It is each one of you meeting the needs of one another.

You have something to offer that I do not have!

You have a talent that I don't have.

You have an ability.

You have something special.

Don't think that you don't have something that benefits the body...you do!

Can I get a witness?

I have been watching the posts on Facebook over the course of this winter storm....and some of you are downright upset at the weather!

But do you know what it really is....you haven't learned to love the cold!

It reminds me of the long winters in Canada...as young children we would get through them by learning to love them!

How many of you know that love is learned!

- The first time I went out in the snow, I didn't like it at all! It was cold and wet.
- I wouldn't touch it, I wouldn't walk on it, and I wouldn't play with it!
- I didn't want any part of the snow!
- But then I saw my older brother Jim having a blast in the snow!
- Over and over again I would watch him, until finally I joined in!
- First it was making snow angels, snow men, and then snow forts!
- We learned how to survive in the snow...eating it, and licking icicles!
- Then it was snow ball fights!
- Eventually we moved on to tobogganing, skiing, and skating!
- Then as we got older we would make our own ice rink in the backyard and play ice hockey till the wee hours of the morning!

I learned to love the winter time...I learned to love the snow and the cold!

Winter became just as enjoyable as summer!

But you know what...I wouldn't have learned any of it by myself!

- I needed someone to show me...whether it was my parents, my brother or some friends...I needed someone to show me how awesome the winter time could be!

The reason you need the church is because there will come a time when you are facing a long, dark, lonely time in your life....and you won't know what how to get through it.

But somebody else in the church will have already been there and done that...and they will be able to lead you through that time...

.....and you never know...you may even end up enjoying that time!

What is really neat about the family of God though....is, somebody may need to show you how to get through that trial just as much as you need them to lead you through!

- My brother Jim would not have built those snow forts without me.
- There wouldn't have been any ice rinks without me.
- He was doing it for me, and I was doing it because of him!

It is not much fun playing ice hockey alone!

Whatever you are going through right now there is somebody who has already gone through it!

If not, then you are fixing to lead somebody through that same trial!

- We need each other.
- No man is an island unto himself.
- We are all part of the same body!

Can I get a witness?

Jesus shared a neat story of the prophet Elijah and an old widow woman....

Luke 4:25-26

25 But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land;

26 But unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow.

This was a time of great famine and poverty.

- Elijah was starving.
- The widow woman and her son were starving.
- They both had needs.

Jesus said that there were many widows in that day, but Elijah was sent to only one of them...why was that?

- What about the needs of the other widows during this famine?
- What about their situations of poverty?
- What about their children?

Why was Elijah not called to go to all of them?

There are two reasons I believe...the first is obvious...one person could not possibly reach all of the widows of the land.

The second reason is the one that I want to focus on...

This prophet and this widow were ordained of God to get one another through the most trying time in each of their lives.

- God set up a unique meeting at a unique time so that these two would have an opportunity to rescue one another.
- God was ordering some steps.
- God knew that they needed one another.
- There were hundreds of widows in that land with needs, but for some reason God chose this widow!
- Maybe her heart was ready!
- Maybe God saw that she was about to give up!

Elijah could not have possibly reached all the widows of the land...but he could reach one!

Sometimes we are just too blind to see what God is trying to do...but God has ordered our steps...He has brought each of us together during this Christmas season for such a time as this!

If we could begin to see things through God's eyes we would literally be blown away by what we see!

Elijah was not brought to the widow women of Zarepta just to meet her needs...but he was called there so that

his needs would also be met!

Elijah needed food, water, and someone to minister to...the widow woman needed food, and water for both her and her son, and she also needed salvation!

God was fulfilling the needs in both of their lives...and also the life of her son!

It was a divine appointment!

I believe that God has brought this family we call Life Church together at a unique time in history.

God has gathered us together from all over North America.

God has chosen each one of us!

- Bro. Mike, there are many places all over the country that need an outreach director, but somehow you ended up here.
- Bro. Britton there are hundreds of places that need a Youth Pastor, but somehow God has placed you here.

I believe that God places specific people in our lives that we can reach, that we can minister to, that we can love and grow close to...and in the process of doing that our needs are also met!

- We need one another!
- We are all part of the same family!
- We are all part of the same body!

We have got to stop looking at one another as competition.

- **We are all on the same team, we need all the help we can get, we need each other more than we ever have before!**
- **We have been brought together for this hour...this church has been joined together for a unique purpose and time!**

The church has a function!

Valparaiso needs to hear this truth!

God is molding and shaping each one of you for specific purpose in His Church.

But understand that your function affects another function.

Your purpose affects another purpose.

This is how the church is designed...it is all about our relationships not only with God...but with one another!

It is a Kingdom principle!

- **God has brought you and I together for this day, God has joined us together for this hour, for this community!**
- **If we can get a hold of this I believe that we can shake our world!**

I believe there are some needs here tonight that many of us are not aware of...and if we could put our God glasses on we would be blown away by what we see!

I wonder in closing if we could all just gather around this altar and begin to lift one another up in prayer before God...let's come and pray with one another tonight!