

Parson to Person

1 Corinthians 12 – Part 4

(The Uniqueness of the Body of Christ)

“For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink into one Spirit. For in fact the body is not one member but many. If the foot should say, ‘Because I am not a hand, I am not of the body,’ is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear should say, ‘Because I am not an eye, I am not of the body,’ is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where would be the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where would be the smelling? But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased. And if they were all one member, where would the body be? But now indeed there are many members, yet one body. And 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.’ No, much rather, those members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary. And those members of the body which we think to be less honorable, on these we bestow greater honor; and our unpresentable parts have greater modesty, but our presentable parts have no need. But God composed the body, having given greater honor to that part which lacks it, that there should be no schism in the body, but that the members should have the same care for one another. And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or

if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it” (1 Corinthians 12:12–26).

One Body – Many Members – The Church

The Bible documents the fact that the Church (a select number of individuals redeemed from the time period known as the Church Age) are referred to as the *“body of Christ.”* No other group of “the redeemed” from any other time period/dispensation are referred to this way. We, *“the body of Christ,”* are a unique, distinct, foreordained, and foreknown number of privileged individuals. We have been called by the Lord for such a time as this!

A Representative Body

- 1) During the Old Covenant dispensation, Israel was the primary visible incarnational representation of God on the earth. He chose them to make Himself known to them, and make Himself known through them—for the benefit of the whole world.
- 2) During His first incarnational earthly ministry, Jesus, *“the image of the invisible God,”* came as both the embodied representation of God to man—and as mankind’s Redeemer (see Colossians 1:12–22).
- 3) Presently, the Church, as the ecclesia (“called out and assembled individuals”) represents the Lord to the world in similitude to Israel. We, the redeemed, referred to as *“the body of Christ,”* are a called out and assembled group of individuals from the now

Church Age. We, the Church, are a group of people, who being many and distinct, are being formed into one representative body, through which God has chosen to make Himself known to the world—for His glory. (This does not discount nor discontinue God's work in and through Israel.)

With this in mind, Paul addressed the individual and corporate make-up of the Church, the interdependence of the members of the Church, the necessity of each member, and that every member, doing their part, for the glory of God, is all organized by and managed by the Lord. We are His Church! Moreover, Paul, under the inspiration of the Spirit, addressed our need for one another in two ways: first by suggesting that individually we are needed, and secondly, that individually we need others.

You Have No Need of Me!

Human beings are spread across a temperamental/emotional/mental spectrum. At one end are the persons who believe they are insignificant and unimportant. At the other end are those who feel that the world could not survive without them. All of us are on the spectrum and fit somewhere in the scene.

For those in the “you have no need of me” classification, Paul wrote, *“If the foot should say, ‘Because I am not a hand, I am not of the body,’ is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear should say, ‘Because I am not an eye, I am not of the body,’ is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye,*

where would be the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where would be the smelling? But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased” (vss. 15–18).

If we view ourselves as unimportant, herein, God corrects our thinking. God calls, gifts, and places us in the body for His purposes—and His purposes are perfect. We are needed.

Paul addressed this when writing, “...those members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary. And those members of the body which we think to be less honorable, on these we bestow greater honor; and our unpresentable parts have greater modesty, but our presentable parts have no need. But God composed the body, having given greater honor to that part which lacks it, that there should be no schism in the body, but that the members should have the same care for one another” (vss. 22–25).

We are all needed. We are all important!

I Have No Need of You!

For those in the “I have no need of you” category, Paul wrote, *“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’ ” (vs. 21).*

Again, may I say, we are all needed. We are all important!

“If the whole body were an eye, where would be the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where would be the smelling?” (vs. 17), “and if they were all one member, where

would the body be? But now indeed there are many members, yet one body” (vss. 19–20).

Just as He Pleases

God chooses, places, and forms the member functions individually and corporately for His own purposes, *“just as He pleases”* (vs. 18). May we never forget it. We are all needed. We are all important. Every gift is needed. Every gift is important. Every office is needed. Every office is important. Why, because we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus, for His purposes.

We are told that “God composed the body, having given greater honor to that part which lacks it, that there should be no schism in the body, but that the members should have the same care for one another. And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it” (vss. 24a–26).

May the Lord allow us to serve the Lord together, serve one another in humility and grace, serve others in the name of the Lord, all for the glory and praise of God.

Whatever our gifting, whatever our position, whatever our purpose, we are all important; we are all needed; we all belong!

I love you all,
Pastor Paul