

Appreciating And Honoring The Body

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[0 : 00] Okay, I want to talk to you this morning about appreciating and honoring the body. Appreciating and honoring the body. And we're going to be mostly in 1 Corinthians 12 and 13.

! And in appointing elders, I think also that's going to change my role to decrease as well when there's elders in place.

But I think one of the things that has to be done in order for that to be a successful transition is that we need to appreciate and honor the body well in order for that to work.

That's true in any church, really. It's true in the sense of all the people who are looking to the elders or pastors or shepherds over the church, be able to relate rightly to them.

And it also has to do with a team of elders being able to relate rightly to each other. Okay? And this all has to do with appreciating and honoring the body. I'm going to start with 3 John 9 and 10.

[1 : 21] He says, I've written something to the church, but Diotrephes, who likes to put himself first, does not acknowledge our authority. So if I come, I will bring up what he is doing, talking wicked nonsense against us, and not content with that, he refuses to welcome the brothers and also stops those who want to and puts them out of the church.

Okay? So here we have this guy named Diotrephes, if I'm saying that right, and he is not welcoming the brothers. You have people coming in who are encouraging people, who are speaking to people. These are probably traveling preachers of such that were coming in, and this guy was not receiving them. And not only was he not receiving them, he was inciting others to not receive them as well.

And so this is the exact opposite culture of what I'm talking about. This is a culture that isn't welcoming people for who they are, who God has made them. It's not recognizing people by the Spirit, by who God has called them to be, and how that would be a benefit to us as a church.

And also recognizing the fact that sometimes, if we have a hard time with a certain person, or a certain personality type, or a certain gift mix, we can sometimes, sometimes very specifically and intentionally cause others to not receive someone, but also sometimes we can do it accidentally.

[2 : 40] Okay? I don't think Diotrephes was doing it accidentally, but we can. In the way that we talk about people, in the way that we withhold certain things, or if we feign praise towards people, or the tone that we use, or little comments we can make to one another, we can build a culture of welcoming one another.

And I'm not talking about welcoming one another in a hospitable way, like, hey, glad you're here on Sunday morning, and good to have you, and thank you for being here. Can I get you something to drink? There's coffee back here, and let me introduce you to so-and-so.

No, I'm not talking about that. I'm talking about welcoming one another in the sense that I am recognizing that you are a part of the body that I am not. That you are a part of body, and our body together makes up the body of Christ, and every single person is necessary.

And so welcoming one another is saying, I want to welcome all the parts, not just the parts that I like, not just the parts that are strong, not just the parts that are like me, but all the parts.

And I want to make sure that I am helping to build a culture that causes other people to welcome people as well. Does that make sense? And Diotrephes was doing the opposite. Not only was he not welcoming, he was also causing other people not to welcome.

[3 : 48] And it's good for us to recognize that that could happen to us as well. We could possibly do that. Whether, you know, really kind of up front in your face, like, hey, I don't like this person. He's a dope, you know.

Or if you just say, or if you're just kind of saying, well, you know, you're kind of just so kind of suspicions about people, right? Going back to the evil suspicions that we can do. So, I want us to be sensitive to that.

And really, it goes back to even what I was just saying when we were talking about the Lord's table, in that we have to recognize the body. And so, one of the things I want to ask of you this morning is, how do you think you do with recognizing the body?

Okay? And when I say recognize the body, I mean recognizing when you, if you would, you don't have to do it now, but if you were to look around this room and you'd see the different people, you can say, I recognize the value in each and every one of these people.

I recognize who they are. I recognize what gifts they have and how those gifts are meant to benefit the whole. I recognize the differences.

[4 : 48] I recognize the differences, even that I don't like or that are more uncomfortable to me, as a blessing and a benefit to the whole. Do we do that? Do we do that?

Do we recognize the body? Do we appreciate the body? And do we honor the body? Okay? So, let's look to our main text here. Let's go to 1 Corinthians chapter 12. I'm going to start in verse 14. And we're going to work through this and go all the way actually through 1 Corinthians 13. Okay? So, 1 Corinthians chapter 12. You've got your Bibles. You can look to there. 1 Corinthians 12, 12. I'm sorry, 14.

And this first paragraph here, I think, is hitting kind of the topic of insecurity. Okay? So, it's speaking of the body. In verse 14, he says, The body does not consist of one member, but of many.

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. And if the ear should say, Because I'm not an eye, I do not belong to the body, that would not make it any less a part of the body.

[5 : 55] Okay? So, pause there. Because I'm not a hand, because I'm not an eye. So, why is this theoretical person saying that? They're comparing themselves to other people.

Right? And in their mind, the hand and the eye are the exalted positions. These are the things that cause you to have, quote unquote, value. These are the things that people look on, you know, hands, eyes, pretty important.

Okay? And when you see certain parts that seem to look like, or seem to present themselves as ones that are very important, it's easy then, if you look at yourself and say, Oh, I'm not an eye.

I'm not a hand. I can start to be insecure about who I am. Well, I'm not an eye and I'm not a hand, so I don't quite belong.

I don't fit in as much. I'm not as important. I'm not as valuable. Insecurity, right? And so, this comes from having an exalted view of one part of the body over the other that causes you to believe that your part doesn't matter.

[7 : 02] And that's an error that he is bringing up here. Okay? Now, it's okay to see that certain parts of the body are a little bit more prominent, right? Or, like, have more utility in certain aspects.

But it's not okay to see that there's certain parts of the body that don't matter and to be insecure about your part. Because if you're insecure about your part, and you start to deduce that because I'm not one of these ones that's more up front, like the hands or the eyes, that seem to be on face value, Oh, those things offer value by just looking at it.

Like, we use our hands for so many things. And, wow, what would you do if you had not sight?

Right? Right? It's easy then to disqualify yourself and say, Oh, I mean, can you imagine the heart saying, Man, because I'm not an eye or a hand, I don't belong.

It's like, um, actually, your part's pretty important. You know, the heart is a big deal. Like, don't check out on us here right now. Like, we need you to work the way it's supposed to.

Or if the brain should say, You know, the eye and the hand, they really are important. But the brain, I mean, you can't even see it. Is it even really there? It's like, hey, no, don't check out on us.

[8 : 13] We need that brain. And without the brain, this body is not functioning. We should look at the body the same way. There are parts of the body that you don't see as much. Maybe they're not as prominent. But you can't say in an insecure way, Oh, because I'm not one of these more prominent, upfront hands, eyes, I don't belong.

I don't matter. I'm not important. And what can end up happening is, if you get insecure about that, that can reinforce in the culture of the church a negating or a devaluing of your part because you're devaluing you.

Do you understand how that happens? I don't think we think about that as much. Have you ever thought that maybe that you devaluing yourself could cause other people to reinforce that and devalue you as well?

And if that happens, what ends up happening is we build a culture where certain parts of the body are not valued. And when certain parts of the body aren't valued and they check out or don't show up in the way they should, there's a word for that.

It's called handicap. It's called handicap. We don't want a handicap body. We don't want a body where certain people start to kind of take a step back and aren't as confident, aren't as secure.

[9 : 25] And so what ends up happening is, number one, you got to say, hey, if I'm one of those people who tends to say, you know, I mean, I'm not up front here preaching, so I'm not really that important.

It's like, hold on. The preacher isn't the only important person. Your part is important as well. Don't devalue yourself. And don't devalue yourself in such a way where you're building a culture of devaluing certain parts of the body.

Don't exalt certain parts so high as to say, oh, the things we can't see aren't as important. And that's a dangerous thing. Okay? He says, because I'm not a hand, because I'm not an eye. He says, that would not make it any less a part of the body.

Do you believe that? Do you believe that this morning? Some of you maybe believe it, and some of you maybe it's easy for you to believe it, and some of you it's more difficult. And if it is, you've got to be honest with that.

And honestly, it would be good for you to tell someone, you know what? I devalue my part of the body. I put myself down. I kind of think I'm not really that important. Like, if I don't show up at a meeting, I think, no one's going to miss me.

[10 : 28] It's not that big of a deal. I'm not really that important of a part anyways. Nothing could be further from the truth. And if you believe that, you think, oh, that's only affecting me.

Oh, no. It's not only affecting you. It's affecting all of us. When you devalue yourself and check out and say, my part doesn't matter, my presence doesn't matter, you've now hurt the whole body. And essentially, you're not recognizing the body. You're just recognizing yourself as something separate from the body. If you recognize a body, you realize that all the parts work together and are necessary.

When you think you're like a Lego that you can just pull the piece off and throw away, we're not Legos. You can't just pull your arm off and say, hey, it's going to be fine. You'll be bleeding everywhere and you could bleed out and the body could die.

That's the kind of way you have to think. And so when you say, yeah, I'm tired. It's no big deal if I don't show up. I had a long day. Or they don't really, I don't have as a prominent of a part anyways.

[11 : 29] I'm not an eye. I'm not a hand. Not a big deal if I'm not there. You don't realize that you could be very much harming the body with that kind of mentality. Verse 17.

He then makes the point of how else you should think about this. He says, if the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing? Where would be the sense of hearing?

If the whole body were an ear, where would be the sense of smell? Okay? So, we would, if everybody was the eye and the hand, if everybody was that more prominent part, then we'd be missing the other parts.

Okay? And, not to mention that that would be a super lame body. You know, there's a, if, can you imagine a body that was just all the same part? Like a body that was just shaped like a body, but it was all ears?

You'd be like, ugh. That's disgusting, number one. But, that's weird. There's something that, just amazingly awesome about the body, because, what?

[12 : 27] Well, the next verse. As it is God, arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as what? As he chose. Do you believe that?

Do you believe that God chose you to be a specific part of the body? Do you believe that the, the part of the body you are, isn't happenstance? Isn't just because you decided to be that, or because, you know, maybe you're just a little more insecure, and someone else is more secure?

The part of the body that you are, is because God chose it. God chose it. He made you that part of the body. Well, if he's the one who made it, then all the more so can we not reject it.

All the more so can we not say, you know, doesn't really matter. I'm not a hand. I'm not an eye.

Doesn't matter if I don't show up. Doesn't matter if I kind of back out of my, my role. No, God chose it.

If God chose it, that's a game changer. That's a game changer. If God chose it, then it's very meaningful. If God chose it, it's very essential.

[13:27] If God chose it, it has value. God doesn't do things haphazardly. God isn't just kind of flippantly just, oh yeah, there's this part and this, this part. Like, what's that part do? I don't know.

You know, God didn't do that. God put each part together and said, I know what that part is. Maybe the whole rest of the body doesn't know what that part is, but you know who does know? God knows.

He knows. And not only does he know, he knows because he chose. You have been chosen to be the part of the body that you are. Honor the Lord.

Honor the Lord by being that part. Don't be insecure about it. Don't be insecure about it. Don't be shy about it. Don't be sheepish about it. You don't, you think you're serving the body by doing that? You're not. You're harming the body if you do that. Your insecurity in your part harms the rest of the body. It's important to know because God chose you to be arranged in the way that he chose it to be arranged.

[14:23] He chose each member to be arranged in the way that he chose. Verse 19, he said, if all were a single member, where would the body be? Exactly. The body is a beautiful thing. The body is a God-given thing.

The God, the body is something that works together for his glory. He says, as it is, there are many parts, you have one body. Okay. So that's the first, first kind of part there. I think addressing this insecurity and this thing that would keep us from being the parts that we're supposed to be, which kind of just starts with honoring God in the part that we are and then creating a culture where that's normative.

Now he goes into the second part, verse 21. Here's where we see dishonor for particular parts of the body. Okay. Verse 21, the eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of you.

So originally, this other paragraph was, I have no need of me. This is now saying, I have no need of you. So one's rejecting yourself. Now this is rejecting other people, right?

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. So he's using these same two examples again. Eye and, uh, no, he's not.

[15:33] He's using the head now. Nevermind. He's using the eye and the head, but two heads, pretty prominent, uh, part as well. He's using these prominent things and it can, you can start to think, you know, Hey, you start to feel pretty important.

My part is important. My part of the body is more needed. My part of the body is the way everybody should be. Why isn't everybody like me?

In fact, I've so drank the Kool-Aid, so to speak, that I'm starting to think that these other parts, I don't really think they're needed. I don't really think they're needed. You need to conform and be more like me, because if the whole church was like me, now we're talking.

Now we got a healthy body. And Paul's saying, uh, no, no, that is not right. 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. On the contrary, the parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable. Okay. So here you have these parts that seem to be stronger, the eye and the head, you know, a lot of agreement that those are very important things.

[16:42] And then you got things like, like the feet. Okay. And the hand. And you'd say, well, is the hand as important as the eye? Is the feet as important as the head? Well, that head ain't going anywhere if those feet aren't taken up there.

But as he says, these, the parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable. Now you might look at other people and you might say, I am legitimately stronger.

Like I'm stronger in what I do. I may be stronger in my faith. I may be stronger in my knowledge of the Bible. I might be stronger in my maturity. Even if that's true. And it is true.

Sometimes let's not act like it's not true. Some people have a stronger faith. Some people are more mature. Some people have are stronger in their carrying and use of the Bible.

Right. That's true. But that never gives you an excuse then to say to the other people who are weaker, I don't need you. You're not important. Okay.

[17:39] Those people are still important. In fact, he doesn't just say they're important. He uses a more, a stronger word. He says they're indispensable. They're indispensable.

Now we don't like weak things. We think weak things are indispensable. We like to throw away weak things and get stronger things. Not in the body of Christ.

You need all of them. You need all the parts. And the weaker parts are indispensable. And he says in verse 23, and on those parts of the body that we think less honorable, we bestow greater honor. And our unpresentable parts are treated with greater modesty, which our more presentable parts do not require. Okay. So the parts of the body that we think less honorable, we bestow the greater honor.

Do you do that? Do you do that in the body of Christ? Do you look at the parts that you think weaker, maybe not as honorable?

[18 : 36] And do you give them, do you bestow on them even more honor? This is how God designed the body to be unified. This is how God designed the body to be unified. Do you do that?

Do I do that? Or do we tend to go the other way and think, no, man, I just wish these people weren't here. Or I wish these people weren't like the way they are.

Like, why can't they be more, well, I hate to say it, but why can't they just be more like me? You know, because I mean, let's be honest. I mean, if everybody was like me, it would be great. Right. You know, like you kind of, no one says that, but maybe you think that, right?

Like you wouldn't, you're too sophisticated to say that, but we might think that like, I, you know, I mean, I would never say it, but like, if everybody was like me, this church would be awesome.

Right. And the fact is, that's not true. That's not true. It would actually not be awesome. It would be really bad. We need all the parts. And yeah, some are weaker. Some are more prominent.

[19 : 34] Some are better at what they do. Some aren't as good at what they do, but that doesn't make them any less needed. It doesn't make them any less required, indispensable. Okay.

But do you believe that? And it's one thing to say, yeah, yeah, yeah, Josh, I believe it. I've read this before. I mean, come on. I've maybe even heard you preach on this before. Okay. No, no, no.

That's what I'm talking about. Do you believe it to the point of action where we're building into the culture of the church, value, honor, and appreciation for all the parts?

Does your mouth speak words that are appreciative of other parts of the body that are not like you? Does your mouth speak appreciation for other parts of the body who are good at things maybe that you're not good at, who are weaker at things that you're strong in?

Do we appreciate that? What about the ones whose personality types are completely different than yours? Do we dismiss them? Or do we speak appreciation for them? And have we learned the art of appreciation?

Okay. Most of you guys know the church that we came from. This church was planted out of the Bellicose Church. That eldership team that I'm on at that church, it's very different from one another.

[20 : 49] And there's one guy in particular who's a lot different than me. His name is Brian, right? Him and I are totally different on so many levels as far as how we function together, how our gifts are together.

And what ends up happening too, and this happens in church cultures, you might have even been a part of this at some point in time, but what ends up happening is when you have different people in leadership in a church, certain people start to form opinions over which leader they like better.

You ever done that before? You may have done that yourself. I'm not even saying it's bad to say, you know, I tend to prefer this particular leader a little bit more. I tend to prefer their leadership style. I tend to prefer their preaching style.

Or, you know, when they preach, it's, I feel like I get more out of it. And when the other person preaches, you know, not so much. And you end up getting these kinds of things where people come up to you and say, Hey, are you preaching this morning?

And it's like, yeah. I'm like, Oh, great. That's awesome. I was like, would you have said that if I said no, you know, like if the other guy was preaching and you're kind of like, I kept starting to see a little subtle things going on here.

[21 : 53] And it's like, man, I really love it when you preach. It's, it's, it's really great. I just feel like I get so much out of it. Well, what about the other guy? Well, I mean, it's not as much I get out of him or whatever, you know?

And then what could end up happening is you start having these things where like, I like so-and-so I like this leader. I like that leader. And we don't appreciate that. Both of them have things that are beneficial to the body.

Then you have a plurality of elders and you have multiple elders. You can end up just gravitating towards one of them and say, that's my guy. I'm a Josh guy. You know, when he preaches, that's my style, like that exhortation, like that in your face.

And then there's other people who are like, I'm not much of a Josh guy. I don't need to be coached and yelled at every morning. You know, like, can we get a little more like, you know, whatever not he is, you know, can we get something like that?

You know, and that different people might think that way. Okay. And Christ church is going to have elders and they're going to have multiple elders. And you're probably going to have some, you gravitate towards a little bit more.

[22 : 53] Some of you're just a little bit more fond of, and you like their leadership style a little better. You might like their preaching style a little bit better. And part of that's okay. As long as you can honor and appreciate the parts that maybe you don't gravitate towards, you can see the value in them.

You can appreciate them verbally. You can speak in such a way that builds unity, that builds us together. And you can use the scriptures and a growing maturity to say, there are things that I don't have.

There are things that I don't do. And there are styles and personalities and gift mixes that are different from me, that if they weren't in the body, the body would suffer. Do you understand what I'm saying?

And that's what needs to happen. And we need to prepare ourselves for that. Because that's every church. Every church has to deal with that reality. Every church has to prepare to say, okay, am I good?

How am I at honoring and appreciating the parts of the body? Verse 24 says, God has so composed the body, giving greater honor to the part that lacked it, that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another.

[24 : 03] Okay? So, really important verbiage here. He says, God has so composed the body. God made it this way. God's the one who builds his body. God's the one who makes his church. God's the one who puts different personality types and different gift mixes and different strengths and weaknesses.

He's the one who puts them together. You might say, well, I'm the one who picked coming to this church. I'm the one who showed up here. Well, you know, yeah, in one sense, but you know, in a bigger sense, God is the one who comprises the body.

God's the one who brought us together. God's the one who fitted this little church called Christ Church together in this wonderful new building. Okay? He put this together. He brought these people together.

And it's good to remember that. That God is the one who leads us into these places. And what he does is, he gives greater honor to the part that lacked it, that there may be no division in the body, that the members may have the same care for one another.

And that's the important part. Once we appreciate and honor each different part of the body, what ends up happening is, then there's no division in the body. Then, when there's this mutual respect, mutual honoring of the different parts, we now have a unified body.

[25 : 07] And that's the best kind. That's the best kind. When you have parts of the body revolting against the others, we have a word for that. It's called cancer. It's not good. You don't want cancer.

You don't want one part revolting against the other part and attacking the other part. When that happens, a lot of bad things happen, including the death of that body eventually if it's not taken care of. Okay?

And so, God's saying, I got a remedy for this. I got a remedy for this. And it is that I compose the body in such a way where you're giving greater honor here and greater honor there, and we're appreciating and honoring the parts of the body so that there's no division in the body and that the members can have the same care for one another.

That's God's goal. That's what God wants to do. He wants us to have the same care for one another, not just for the people that we really like, not just for the people who are like us. And what I found, you know, walking with the Lord for the last 30-some years is that some of my best friends that have been formed over these years are people that probably I never would have been friends with had I not regarded them as part of the body, had I not pushed through my differences with them and appreciated the parts of them that I probably, in another setting, wouldn't even have

considered because I just would have gravitated towards similar interests, similar personality type gift mix.

And I maybe would have never been forced into relating to those people in the way that I have. But because I have, those are now some of my best friends. Those are some of the people I appreciate the most.

[26 : 36] And I realized that, you know what? There's other cool people besides me. Like there's people that are actually enjoyable, not just me. And their personality types, although different, and different strengths, in many ways, are even better than me.

What a concept, right? And it actually makes all of life better. And the more of those people I get in my life, I'm a better person. They're better people. And together as a church, we're a healthier people.

And so it's important to realize that. And as we transition, as the Lord is establishing us as a church, it's really important to lay the groundwork for these transitions, for new elders to emerge, is that we need to make sure we're doing this.

Because if we don't do that, it'll be a little clunky. It'll be a little clunky. It'll be a little rough. And so I'm telling you this now to prepare the way.

I'm asking that we all do kind of a heart check, not just when we take the Lord's table, but when we think about this in the context of our life together, and we say, I want to make sure I'm doing this right.

[27 : 39] And then what happens is in verse 26, it says, if one member suffers, all suffer together. If one member is honored, all rejoice together. And this is true body life. This is the best body life.

And you realize, when one person's down, we're all down. When one person's up, we're all up. It's as if that we rise and fall together. Right? We rise and fall together. Instead of an individual way of looking at things and say like, hey, I'm good.

I don't really care about anybody else. It's like, you know, I'm having a hard time. I don't really care what anybody else thinks. No. When we have a body mentality, we say, if I'm good, I'm bringing up the whole group.

And if I'm bad, I'm bringing down the whole group. And so I need to, I need to be open and honest. I need to have that conversation and that kind of mentality that looks at it that way. Verse 27, you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.

And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, helping, administrating, and various kinds of tongues.

[28 : 41] Okay. So it's a quite, that's an eclectic group of giftings right there. I mean, they're fairly different than one another. If you think of people that even might possess some of those giftings, you can see some major differences in some of those people, right?

It says in verse 29, are all apostles, are all prophets, are all teachers, do all work miracles, do all possess gifts of healing, do all speak with tongues, do all interpret? It's a rhetorical question.

Of course he's saying, no, not everybody has this. That's why we need each other. Other people have gifts you don't have. Other people have gifts you don't have. And if you don't relate rightly to them and don't appreciate them and honor them, you miss out on that.

And we all miss out on that. And I will show you a still more excellent way. So now we, so that was a pretty, that's a pretty excellent way right there, I think. Don't you think?

Like the way he laid that out there, that's, that's a great way of looking at it. Paul's laying this out in a, in a pretty, I think, easily digestible, understandable way. That the example, the body, when he uses it, I'm thinking, that's helpful.

[29 : 42] That helps me understand it. That helps me see it. That's a pretty excellent way of seeing how the church relates to each other. And he says, hey, I'm going to show you a more excellent way.

All right. I'm all ears. I thought that was a pretty excellent way. So you're going to, you're going to show an even more excellent way. Okay. What do you got? What do you got? And it's, you know, it's the funnier wedding card, right?

You know, first Corinthians 13, but actually first Corinthians 13, weirdly enough, the context of it isn't a wedding. Did you know that? I know it's on the front of all the wedding cards and that's when it gets talked about, but it's actually in the context of body life.

It's actually in the context of the gifts of the spirit. And we should think of it at that. Okay. He says, if I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I'm a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.

And if I have prophetic powers and understand all the mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.

[30 : 45] Now, he's really going for it here. I mean, he's like, he's listening. Like, these are some pretty big things, but he says, if you don't have love, dead in the water, doesn't matter. Right? I'm nothing. And he kind of like, really?

Like, really? Nothing? Like, if you had all the prophetic powers and all the faith and you could move mountains, you'd still be nothing if you had not love? Yeah. Yeah, that's what he says.

That's the way he puts it. He says, if I give away all I have and deliver up my body to be burned, okay, okay. I mean, that's a pretty big deal, right? Like, surely that's a big deal.

Like, if you, if you gave away everything you had and gave your own body to be burned, which has got to be one of the worst ways to go, okay, pain-wise, you think, that should be good.

He says, but if you don't have love, I gain nothing. Whoa. That's, that's some strong language there.

[31 : 43] Yeah, I can give up every, I can be like the most selfless seemingly person who gives up everything, they have even their own body to the flames. But if I don't have love, I gain nothing. Whoa.

This is like, Hey, listen up. Right. And then here it is. Here's that one we see on the front of the cards often. Right. Love is patient and kind.

Love does not envy or boast. It's not arrogant or rude. It's not insist on its own way. It's not irritable or resentful. It does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth.

Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Okay. Let's look at this. But let's look at it again in its context. What is the context of 1 Corinthians 13?

Body life, spiritual gifts, recognizing one another, appreciating one another, working together with one another. One part suffers. We all suffer. This is, remember, like, I'm going to show you a more excellent way.

[32 : 41] What is the more excellent way of body life? It's the way of love. Okay. It's the way of love. And not just ooey-goey, sentimental, worldly love.

We're talking a specific kind of love that he describes very specifically, right? So let's look at it. Love is patient and kind. Okay. If you've ever tried to do church with a group of people that's more than a Sunday morning service, you know that you need this kind of love.

You have to be patient with one another. Right? It requires patience. And our ability to relate to one another as a body is going to be dependent on how patient we are with one another. And who are the people you need patience with?

Typically the people that rub you wrong. Typically the people who aren't like you. Typically the people who are weak. Typically the people who sin, who do things that are wrong.

Or it can just be, maybe they're not sinning. They just, they're different than you. And you're just like, man, why do they have to be that way? Why do they got to do things that way? Why do they do things differently than the way I do them?

[33 : 48] Maybe it's only methodology. Right? Their methodology is different than mine. Why can't they just do things the way I do things? What does that require? Patience. Patience.

Kindness. Are we patient and kind to the people who do things differently than us? It's not rude. It's not rude. It does not insist on its own way.

Okay? Again, that's another great one with body life. The fact that the Bible says that it doesn't insist on its own way alludes to the fact that there are multiple ways.

Is there one way to do everything? No. There are sometimes, there are certain things that God has a way it should be done and it's just one way. Okay? And those things we need to submit to the word on.

And it's, there's not much conversation about it. It's like, if you're not doing it, you need to repent. Do it the way that God says to do it. Okay? But, then there's other things when there's not one way.

[34 : 49] There can be multiple ways to do the same godly thing. And love doesn't insist on its own way. Love says, hey, there's multiple ways to do this and I'm really fond of my way.

I like my way. I happen to think my way is the best. But love says, I'm not going to insist on it. I'm not going to insist on my way. I'm not going to insist on, hey, my way is always the best way.

At the end of the day, that's probably not true. No. It might be a good way a lot of the times. Maybe even the majority of the times. But even if that's true, love doesn't insist on its own way when there are multiple ways that could be plausible.

Okay? That's love. Love doesn't insist on its own way. It's not irritable or resentful. Man, I wish that one wasn't in there. Right? Is that irritable or resentful?

You ever get irritated at anybody? Does the way that someone does something ever irritate you in the church? Anybody? I'm not telling you to say who they are, but like anyone in this room that irritates you sometimes?

[35 : 56] The way they do things, the way they do their life, the way they do church, the way they do their kids, the way they talk, the way they use their gift, the way they do their family, the way they do their job, the way they do their house, the way they, I don't know, go down the list.

Right? Whether they have a live tree or a fake tree. Whatever those things, certain things irritate us. Right?

Love is not irritable. Love is not irritable. It doesn't resent. It's not resentful. It doesn't hold things against people. Right? It doesn't keep a record of wrongs, I think the NIV says.

Right? Keeps short accounts. Keeps, doesn't hold things against people. And so, we have to be patient with one another. We have to not be irritated with one another. And you know how you're not irritated with? Irritation is a sign that you're not appreciating something about someone.

Now, sometimes it's a sin. So, I'm not telling you to appreciate their sins. Okay? You shouldn't appreciate their sin. But when you're irritated over something that's not a sin, it's just not something you like, maybe we need to be more appreciative of that person.

[37 : 05] Be appreciative of who they are. Be appreciative of what they give. Be appreciative of their perspective. Their gift mix. Each gift mix brings a different perspective. You might say, man, why do you see things that way?

Well, maybe they're gifted differently than you. And the way they're gifted is really important. It's really important. We need it. We need it. You need it. I need it. We don't just need your gift mix. We don't just need your way. We don't just need your way of seeing things. We need all of them. Well, what if certain people are leading and they lead in a way that you don't see? What are you going to do? Are you going to get irritated? Are you going to get irritated?

Are you going to get resentful? Are you going to hold the record of wrongs? Or are we going to be patient? Kind? Not irritable? Not rejoicing at wrongdoing, but rejoicing with the truth.

Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, and endures all things. Okay? How are we doing with bearing with one another? The Bible says bear one another's burdens.

[38 : 04] People say all the time, you know, I just don't want to be a burden. Too late. You already are. We all are. We're all somebody's burden. Right? And the Bible says we're supposed to bear one another's burdens.

So don't apologize all the time for being a burden. That's what the church does. We're burden carriers. We're burden bearers. And we're all burdensome at some point in time. Love bears all things.

Know that when you're bearing with someone else, guess what? Someone's bearing with you. No, come on. I bear with other people. They don't bear with me. No, no, no. We all bear with one another.

We all bear with one another. And as to the front of your mind as bearing with someone specifically is, just know that someone else is bearing with you the same way. That is visceral as this response is for you.

Just remember, someone else is probably having just as a hard time as do. I know that seems impossible. I know you're thinking, surely not sweet old me. I'm such an easy person to get along with. People must love the way I think and love the way I do things.

[39 : 09] No, someone's bearing with you as well. Okay? Love bears all things. It believes all things. So it's not, it doesn't have these evil suspicions, it's constantly thinking, I bet they're thinking this and I bet the reason they did this is because of this.

And no, it believes all things. It's true. It's, it's, it's, it believe in the best of people. I think we've done a great, a much better job of that as a church since we talked about it whenever that was months ago.

I think it's been awesome. And I just want to encourage us to keep doing that. Keep believing all things to hope the best for one another, right? Hoping all things, enduring all things. And sometimes that's, that's what life together is, it's enduring.

You know, sometimes it's sunshine and rainbows and sometimes it's just enduring, right? And you don't get to pick when that is. And typically it's not what you want when you want. Sometimes you're thinking, man, I could really use things to be easy right now and then it's, it's hard.

What do you got to do? You got to endure all things. For whose sake? For the one who made, who composed the body, for Christ's sake. Love never ends. As for prophecies, they will pass away.

[40 : 14] As for tongues, they will cease. As for knowledge, it will pass away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part. Really important. In all this, we can say, you know, but I really see things well.

Like, I know, I know this and I know that and I know what he's thinking and she's thinking and I know how this is all supposed to work. It's always good to remember this verse should be at the front of every disagreement we ever have.

I know in part. I see in part. Because usually at the front of every argument is someone thinking, I see things perfectly.

I see things clearly. Okay? And, sometimes we see clearer than others. But we can always say that we never see things fully and we never know things fully.

We know in part and we see in part. Right? But when the perfect comes, the partial will pass away. Verse 11. When I was a child, I spoke like a child.

[41 : 17] I thought like a child. I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways. And one of the things I think it's important for us is as elders are appointed, as different leaders become more prominent in our church, it's going to press on us in different ways.

It will. I guarantee it. It will. It always does. It always does. And, it's important for us to not be childish. It's important for us to say, you know what?

I used to speak like a child. I used to think like a child. I used to reason like a child. But when I became a man, I put childish ways behind us. And it's important for us, although a young church, to not be childish. And to say, you know what?

We're going to be mature when elders are appointed. We're going to be mature when different leaders are put in places and make mistakes and make mistakes and do things that even they would regret.

And we're going to be understanding. And we're not going to be like children. We're going to act like adults. For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part.

[42 : 20] Then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known. So now faith, hope, and love abide. These three. But the greatest of these is love. So it's really important that when we look at each other, we're able to tell the difference between a disqualification and a weakness.

If you conflate those two, you're going to have problems, right? There are weaknesses and then there's disqualifications. Disqualifications are disqualifications. There are character things that are truly disqualifications.

And then there are just weaknesses. They're just weaknesses, right? And it's okay for people to be in leadership who have weaknesses. Otherwise, no one would be able to be in leadership. You guys are, many of you are well aware of the weaknesses in my life.

And I could still be a leader. And someone has to be who has weaknesses because there are no potential leaders who don't have weaknesses, right? So we can't, but we can't conflate the two.

We have to be clear on which is which. Sometimes we can, we also can't conflate disqualification and personality conflict, okay? This, we can't say that person's different than me, therefore they're disqualified.

[43 : 26] We have to say, no, that person's different than you. Okay, let's figure this out. Now, is the difference because there's a character issue that is disqualifying? That's one thing. But just personality conflict and different personalities, that is what it is.

And we have to learn to deal with that. Or the difference between disqualification and methodology, like I was saying before, right? You can't conflate the two and think, oh, they have a different method of doing things, therefore they're disqualified.

Only if it's something specifically in the Bible that says this is the one method. But if it's something that the Bible's not clear on and there's openness to be multiple methods, then, and they happen to

have a different method than you that doesn't disqualify them, just means we've got to work together and figure out that, how are we going to do this?

There's freedom to choose different methodologies. And then there's the difference between division and disagreement, where there's first tier issues, second tier issues, third tier issues, and fourth tier issues. Maybe a first or second tier issue, like the gospel, like Jesus being God, you know, like those kind of things.

Yeah, we should divide on those things, right? Those are things we should divide on. You know, if someone's saying, you know, you can marry the same gender, it's like, yeah, we're going to divide on that.

[44 : 37] That's not okay. All right? But, you know, if it's other lesser things of like worship style or, you know, certain beliefs about things that there's room within the church to disagree on those things, well, then we have to work through those.

We have to figure it out. And we have to be able to function together. And I'll tell you, having been doing it for many years now, it's possible. And when it happens, it's a beautiful thing. Okay? In conclusion, read Romans 12, 4 to 8.

For as in one body we have many members and the members do not all have the same function. So we, though many, are one body in Christ and individually members one of another, having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us.

Let us use them. If prophecy in proportion to our faith, if service in our serving, the one who teaches in his teaching, 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.

And then Romans 15, 5 to 7 says, May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another in accord with Christ Jesus that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

[45 : 57] Therefore, welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you for the glory of God. And that's what I leave you with. Ultimately, that's what I'm talking about. That we would welcome one another, that we would welcome each other, we would welcome leaders as God appoints them over the coming months and next year as those leaders get appointed, that we would welcome them as Christ has welcomed us for the glory of God.

Amen? Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.