

One Body

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[0 : 00] Let's go to 1 Corinthians 11 verse 29. Talking about the body, discerning the body. One body. It talks about the Lord's table, the cup and the bread.

! And this theme of one body, 1 Corinthians 11 verse 29 reads, but for he that eateth and drinketh unworthily eateth and drinketh damnation to him, not discerning the Lord's body. So it's talking about this time where the church meets and remembers Christ, the cup speaking of his blood, the bread speaking of his body.

And Paul gives a warning here to recognise what the body is, to recognise the body. And in the next chapter, the very next chapter, chapter 12, he talks about the body, the body of Christ being the church.

On earth. It's a kind of stunning picture, isn't it? Really. And so just some thoughts about this analogy that the Bible gives to us of the church being as a body.

Sometimes people have a distorted image of what the church is. Some maybe think of church as like a petrol station. You know, you drive in and you fill up your spiritual petrol tank and when you're running low, you get a, hopefully you get a good sermon and it will keep you going for a while until the next top up.

[1 : 32] You know, a spiritual gas station, petrol station. Some think maybe as church as like a movie theatre, where it's just offering entertainment. You sit back and you just get entertained. You get an hour of escape. Hopefully you've got comfortable enough seats and, you know, we don't give you popcorn.

But, you know, you leave your problems at the door and you come out smiling, hopefully feeling better than when you went in. A movie theatre, entertainment. Some think of church as like a chemist shop, a place where you can fill your prescription and deal with whatever the pain is, the situation.

It's like a therapeutic kind of feel. Some then see church as like a shop, you know, there's this consumer mentality. You go shopping for a church, you know, you find the church that's just got all the products you want, all the programs you want for your family, for your children maybe.

You pick and choose, like a smorgasbord, like a shop kind of picture. But the Bible gives us this picture. It tells us of a body. Think of that, a one body. And it gives us this true picture, this, the church, which means a congregation, an assembly.

It means a gathering together of God's saved people. And it says that the church is a body. And we pick that up in 1 Corinthians 12. There's this powerful picture here of oneness.

[2 : 52] Paul writes, verse 20 of chapter 12, 1 Corinthians 12, verse 20. But now are they many members, yet but one body. 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.

And it goes on. There's this sense of, this oneness here, a oneness. There's a unity. That's what hopefully a godly church is. There's a unity. There's a coming together and we're one.

We're one body. It's not scattered individuals, but a combined, connected, gathered people. Now I know there's some dear ones that I know that live only a few stones throw from here and they sit at home and they don't fellowship.

It's kind of sad for whatever reason. And I don't think it's a really, I can't say that it's a scriptural one that they choose not to gather. Because it's very clear and plain from scripture that we should assemble.

It's the right thing to do. You know, the old song goes, the foot bone's connected to the leg bone. And the leg bone's connected to the knee bone. And the knee bone's connected to the thigh bone and so on.

[4 : 00] In other words, there's different parts, but they're joined together. They're different parts, yet there's a wonderful oneness. Even though we're all a bit different, you know, thank the Lord that

our body isn't all an eye or all an ear or all a toe or foot, etc.

We're all different. We all come together in that oneness to make the body. So the church is pictured like this wonderful picture of a body. What a clear picture it is of this single, united, living entity that we are.

The church. It's alive. It's alive. It's alive. And we can think of all the parts that make up a human body, if you like. And some of them, well, most of them really, we don't even see the parts inside of our body.

Think of that. And really the church is Jesus Christ on the earth. And he is the head of the body, it says. He is living and breathing and acting through his people. As some have said, we're his hand extended.

You know, whose feet does Jesus have? Our feet. His hands, our hands. He's touching and acting, living through his people.

[5 : 09] Many parts, but one body. Beautiful picture. A beautiful picture of absolute unity, of togetherness. God wants us really to get our act together, to be that oneness of the body.

Another aspect about a body is Paul tells us about weakness. There's a certain weakness. It tells us here in 1 Corinthians 12, how some parts seem to be more feeble.

He says, much more those members of the body which seem to be more feeble are necessary. Now, I know for myself, as I get older, there's a few aches and pains that didn't used to be there.

There's some parts of my body, I've got a certain achy bit, weak bits. Prone to aches. And maybe you might have a foot that's been sprained or you had an old injury and it flares up and you feel, ooh, some of those parts are a bit feeble.

They're inclined to give us some trouble. Some of the parts are weaker or at least appear to be weaker. And it's the same in the church that we bear with one another, don't we? That we all have a role to play.

[6 : 14] There's a certain weakness amongst us. We're fallible, frail, faulty human beings at times. And even when we seem to be a feeble part, we are needful.

It's just like for your own body. You've got a sore hand. You don't cut it off. You bear with it. Hopefully, it'll come good. Paul says in 2 Corinthians 12 verse 10 that when he is weak, he is strong.

God's strength comes to us when we're weak. When we realise our weakness, God's strength is made perfect in weakness. And we all need to have that due regard to care for one another, to love one another, to not get too high an opinion of oneself, to think of others as weaker because we've all got our weak bits.

And to think of others as inferior. You know, some of us are going to have the view, others are inferior, they don't have our knowledge or our learning or our right doctrine. We don't want to have that opinionated divisiveness which can be destructive.

But rather, Paul says, those members that seem to be more feeble are necessary. Even those that seem the most feeble parts. Parts we might not really give due regard to.

[7 : 24] I mean, you know, brother, I don't know what your liver looks like. Or, you know, sister, I don't know what your kidneys look like. Because we can't see them. They're not always presented.

They might be less honourable. You know, it's not your smiling, handsome or beautiful face. It's something that's inside of you. But we can't always see those parts. Yet, all of those parts of the body are needful.

And so, even those parts that might be less honourable, that don't see the light of day, that might be less attractive. You know, those parts inside of us that no one even sees.

Every part is important. And it's a picture there of the body again. So, not one of us is insignificant. We all have a function to fulfil. I mean, God forbid that, you know, one of those internal organs was failing.

Then you'd realise how important that function is to fulfil. So, we all have a function to fulfil. So, this body, it pictures this togetherness, this oneness. It pictures a weakness that is inherent in a human body.

[8 : 30] And also, it pictures a completeness. Thirdly, it says, verse 25, that there should be no schism, no division, no divisiveness in the body. But that the members should have the same care, one for another.

So, there's our oneness, our weakness. There's our completeness that we are. There's a completeness in Christ. That we are according to God's plan and design and purpose. And God wants his people to be a body.

So, Paul says, in the context of the communion table, rightly discerning the Lord's body. Let's realise that we are that body of Christ on the earth. That we are this, maybe just a portion of the body here, in a sense, as a local church gathering here.

But we are that body. We're meant to be alive, active. We're meant to be functioning. Every part to that peak efficiency. God helping us. Effective, coordinated.

Every one of us in the body. We've all got a role to fulfil. Something we can contribute. Something we can do to make the body work. And have we got that togetherness, that harmony, that maintaining of unity that Paul exhorts us to in Ephesians.

[9 : 39] To keep that unity. Not a false unity. Not a unity that's some kind of mishmash of all kinds of funny ideas and practices. But a unity that is of the Holy Spirit.

A unity that is of the bond of peace. A unity that is based on the truth. And Paul tells in 1 Corinthians 12 further, that do we care for one another as a body.

Treat every part as equally important and necessary. So, it's timely as we gather as the one body. As the body of Christ. As we are pictured to be.

The assembly. That we have that thought for one another. We have that thoughtfulness about who the body of Christ is. And where the body of Christ is today. Of course, we know he's ascended.

He's risen. He's living by faith in those. He dwells in the heart by faith of every believer. But he's also the body. He's the very presence that we are here. The very assembly that we are today.

[10 : 34] Of his people. And so, we're all important, necessary. And needful of care. That there be no divisiveness. Or splitting. Or disheartening.

Harmony. But that we be a part. A body that works and functions well together. A healthy body. And so, Paul says. He warns about those not discerning the Lord's body.

Not being recognising it. Not aware of it. Maybe just, you know, sometimes Christians can be like a maverick. Or, you know, some alone ranger. And just go and do their own thing. And not really connect to the body.

Not come into harmony. And into fellowship. He wants us rather to be together. It's a picture of unity, isn't it? Of oneness. Of love. We see that weakness.

As we might feel weak and unable. And we feel like we lack. We might feel feeble. But we're all necessary. Every one of us. Even though you might feel that you're not a very strong Christian.

[11 : 32] You are important. Because you're part of the body. Even the feeble parts. The weak parts are necessary. And there's a completeness. When every part comes together. We're effective.

The body functions when every part does its function. As Paul tells us elsewhere. So back to 1 Corinthians 11. We see that we are to remember our Lord's body.

Given for us. We remember that he that went to the cross. His physical body was nailed. Scarred. Bruised. Hurt. Wounded. Flogged.

Pierced. And it says that our sin was in his body on the tree. That's an amazing thought, isn't it? Really. Just to think of that. That our sin was in his body on the tree.

As it were. That as he was nailed to that wood. As he was held up and raised up. On that piece of wood. The cross. Our sin was there. That very day. And it was nailed.

[12 : 31] Every part of our sin. Every payment that was due for our sin. Every penalty that our sin incurs. Was fully paid out. For those that will receive it.

So one day. His tangible body will come. He will be coming in the air. He will come for his people. And he will come. And his feet will touch the ground. At the mount in Jerusalem. And every eye shall see him.

Then. And for the meantime. His body is you and me. So let's be that functioning. United. Weak sometimes.

But complete body that we are. His body. And every part is important. And necessary. Let's maintain that harmony. That closeness.

[13 : 30] That we ought to have. That care. That love. That's what we want. A harmony of the body. That the body be healthy. And well. Not.

In discord. But in one accord. As one body. Thank you.