

The Body of Christ

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[0 : 00] The Church. The Church is not a building of bricks and mortar. It's not a room full of people.

! It's not an organisation. It's a body. And at this time we're told to discern the Lord's! discern it. Recognise it. Take note of it. And so that's my intention as we gather now around the Lord's table. 1 Corinthians 11 verse 29 it says, For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. So there's a time where we reflect, we come around and gather, we partake of the bread and the cup as a remembrance time, and we want to remember the Lord's death until we come. And at this time it's mindful for us to consider the Lord's body. Discern it.

Recognise it. Take note of it today. So Paul is calling the Church a body. A body. The body of Christ. And he uses this metaphor, this analogy to picture what the Church is to be. A body. A body. What is the body of Christ? It says in 1 Corinthians 12, again following on from what we just read, verse 12, for as the body is one and have many members, so, and all the members of that body being many are one body. So also is Christ. As the body is one and have many members. So, and all the members of that body being many are one body. So also is Christ.

As the body has many parts. So also is Christ. It says we are one body. One body. Now this church is scattered far and wide of various flavours but for those that are the believers, we are one. We are united. We have that one body. We are one body. And as this local gathering, we are a one body. A group of believers together in faith and unity in Christ. And the church is called a body. It's a living entity.

A living entity. A living system. A living organism. And the body of Christ is pictured here as this wonderful analogy. This wonderful picture that he paints of this body.

[2 : 23] And the church, as God pictures it as we are to understand it. The church is living. It's alive. There's life here. His life. And it's a united entity. Single united entity.

It is Jesus Christ on earth. In a sense, isn't it? As each one of us is filled with Christ and his spirit. As we're brothers and sisters. We're one body.

Jesus Christ on earth. We are the Jesus Christ that our world sees in this present time. As we call Christians, Christ ones.

We are his. And we're meant to be alive, living, vibrant. Living and breathing and acting as Christ does through his people. So, just to paint some of these pictures today and to reflect on that as we recognise, as we discern the Lord's body just now.

Just as a body does, we're meant to hold together and help one another. There's an interplay of many parts. And we need each other. And there's this wonderful unity. If your body wasn't united, there'd be some problems there, wouldn't there?

[3 : 37] If all the parts weren't holding together, you're not going to function very well. But likewise with the church. There's a wonderful unity, according to the maker's design, as every part functions, has its part to play.

So, 1 Corinthians 12, it goes on from verse 20. But now, are they many members? Yet, but one body. Now, picture it there, you see.

The body, as you look underneath the skin, what we all look like underneath, we probably all look much the same underneath the skin. As far as the different components inside that we have.

Now, are there many members? Yet, but one body. It's like that in the church, isn't it? Different shapes and sizes. Different abilities and functions. It goes on, verse 21. And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee.

Your eye needs your hand. Your hand needs your eye. To guide it. To make things happen. If your face wants you to scratch it, you need your hand to do it. Whatever it be.

[4 : 42] All the parts need one another to do what they need to do. Then it goes on. Verse 22. Nay, much more these members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary.

There's parts inside of you that don't see the light of day. But without them, you'd be in big trouble. And I know there's people here that can say that's for sure. And I know some of their parts are malfunctioned.

And they noticed it. Even though there's feeble parts, they're not so on show. And it's like that with the church of God, isn't it? Every part plays its part.

And every part's important. We could go on as we consider the local church too. In the local church setting. That we all want to fit together to be healthy and growing.

Just as we work our own human body. We want every part to play its part. It goes on in Ephesians 5. From verse 16 it says, But speaking the truth in love of this body, that it may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ.

[5 : 47] There's this needful thing that we are connected to the head, which is Christ. Verse 16 of Ephesians 4.

From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplies. That every joint supplies something. And it's fitly joined together.

Every part has a particular role and place and function. According to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

The building up. Edifying. Building up of itself in love. If one part doesn't do its part, the body can have malnutrition or not be formed as fully as it needs to be.

But God wants every part of the church to be functioning well too. So we are a healthy church. I know Pastor Adams talked about before the different gifts and abilities.

[6 : 45] And we're looking to do some more work in that field. How can we discern what's our ability? What's our gift? What's our calling? How can I lend myself to this church to make it function well?

What things can I bring? And so this body has a head. Who is that? It's not me. You know, some people come up and say, I'm the boss.

Oh, hey boss. I'm not the boss. Not at all. I'm the chief servant. I'm the chief, what do they call it? Bottle washer? I'm the chief cook and bottle washer.

I forgot to be to dishes last night actually. After the meeting, I left them in the sink. So thank you. I trust someone's got to those. It was just flat out last night. I didn't get to that little job. But I'm the chief servant.

So I'm the one that you, I'm the chief dog's body. That's what it means. But the head of this church, the head of the church, it's not the Pope. No, he claims to be, or people claim him to be.

[7 : 44] It's not the Pope. It's not some bishop or cardinal. It's not some president. Who is the head of this church? Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ. Working through his spirit.

Christ is the head of the church. And when you think of your head, people look at your head, your face, don't they? It's your identity. It's your life. It's your direction. The head of the body.

It means that the Lord Jesus is in charge. He is in charge. And that's how it should be in the church. And so just like our physical bodies are made up of different members, different components, different parts.

So as we have hands and legs and ears and eyes, and so is the body of Christ. It's made up of different parts with different functions. We're members one of another. It goes on in Romans 12, verse 4 through 5.

For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same offers, so we being many are one body in Christ, and everyone members one of another.

[8 : 45] So this picture that he paints of the body, it's in Corinthians, it's in Ephesians, it's in Romans. It's quite an apparent picture that Paul paints of the body of Christ.

And so we all have a part to play. Everyone is important. And it's a sad thing when you see some cut themselves off from the body. They isolate themselves from the body, from other Christians. It grieves me to see I know numbers of folk that are out of fellowship, that they're independent, and it's such a sad thing, because they're missing out on a blessing, and we're missing out on a blessing, because they're not here.

So it's good that we get together and encourage one another. We're members one of another. And the body is joined together by muscles and sinews and bones. It speaks of relationships, and

interconnection, and interrelationships, interdependence.

That's the kind of analogy there. The Christian love that should prevail, that wants to encourage each other. The body has a nervous system, as we see in terms of action and direction and coordination.

[9 : 50] The body has a circulatory system. The blood system brings life and energy and defends the body from infection. It fights off disease. And likewise, the church should have that interconnectedness, that soundness, as we have good teaching, and as a teaching to and from.

We're exhorting one another. In psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, we're teaching and admonishing one another. And when you come to church, you can exhort and be exhorted. I can exhort, and you can exhort me.

We're exhorting one another, encouraging one another, so much the more as we see the day approaching. And God's Spirit is at work in all of us, in different ways, helping one another. Every part is necessary.

Even those that are the most feeble, we would not last long if our digestive system failed. It plays a vital role, doesn't it? You might not ever spend time thinking about it, but it's very important.

I know someone was telling you lately how they had some trouble, and what your different bones and parts that you scarcely know the name of, if one of those parts, one of those components fail, you'll know about it.

[10 : 56] So we need everyone. Everyone needs everyone in the church, in the body of Christ. There's a togetherness here. There's a great kaleidoscope of people, different kinds of people.

I thank God there's people from all kinds of countries here, even Pommies. Even Pommies. Bless the Lord for all the Poms, including me.

Many people from different nations and countries and cultures and backgrounds, and God's brought us all together as a family, as this gathering time together just now.

And we can stand together, strive together, work together, worship together, as brethren. 1 Corinthians 3, 9 it says, we're laborers together with God, working together.

It's been said that the walls of Jericho fell because Israel was quiet together. There was a time when they had to walk around quietly, wasn't there? Not say anything.

[11 : 53] They all had to do the same thing. They were quiet together. Then they marched together. And then they shouted together. Then God did something tremendous, didn't he? As they worked together.

And it's true that we're all going up together, we that believe. And we'll spend eternity together. And as brethren, we need one another to support one another, to bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

Someone has said this, the Christian life is not a solo flight to heaven with the occasional piece of formation flying on Sunday mornings.

It's not meant to be like that, is it? We need one another. Get together when you can. You don't have to wait till it says 6 o'clock. You can get together before 6 o'clock tonight and get together. You don't have to wait till Monday night to pray, 7 o'clock. Or Wednesday night, 7 o'clock. Or Wednesday, 1.30. You don't have to put a time in your calendar when you get together.

[12 : 52] You can talk to a Christian at other times. You might be able to give a phone call, send a card, make a contact, send an email. Take time to care for one another.

Let's help each other grow, build one another up, exhort one another and grow together. There's a sharing, there's a growing and God makes it all happen.

There's a body here, His body and we're working together. Am I doing my part? Are you doing your part? We belong. We belong today. And there's a unity here that God makes happen.

There's a one accordness and there's a unity. There's a unity of separation in that we're not joining with some things that we're not in accord with. There's a unity of separation.

There's a unity of fellowship. There's a unity of sound doctrine. A unity of the faith. And there's a bond, a family bond because we're family today. We're brothers and sisters in Christ.

[13 : 53] And there's a bond alike to a family. So let's recognise the body. That's my brief exaltation just now to recognise the body. And so we're going to come around the Lord's table.

Call forward Ian, Dean, Mick and Casey are going to help. We're going to pass the bread and cup. That's our practice to hold together. And if you're a believer today, this is a believer's time.

It's not the church for you table. It's the Lord's table. The Lord's table. And if you belong to the Lord, if you are in the body of Christ, then please take part.

If you don't know the Lord, you can know Him in an eye blink as you trust Him, as you put your faith in Him, as your heart is turned from self and sin unto Him, trusting Him.

So please, if you trust Him now, if you're His, then He is yours and you're a part of the body by His grace as you trust Him. So Lord Jesus, thank you for dying on the cross for my sin and taking my penalty and paying for it there that I can be saved by your mercy and grace.

[15 : 09] It's that simple. Sometimes we complicate it and make it more than just simply trusting the simplicity that is in Christ.

Stop trusting yourself and start trusting Him and then everything changes. Everything changes. You've made a new creation. You've given a new walk, a new way of living and He turns your life around.

There's a conversion and then you become a part of the family of God. We read that He met with His own on that night.

Well, there was one there that wasn't His. He even washed His feet, gave Him something. But then it says that He took the bread and He took the cup and He shared it.

He blessed it, broke it, shared it, gave it. And He says, this do until He come.

[16 : 20] Until He come. There's a time limit. So please feel invited, feel very welcome as you trust Him now. And let's recognise the Lord's body.

It's you and me. We're here. It's here. His body is right here, right now. In you and me, together, in Christ, in that family bond, in that unity of the Spirit.

Thank God for it. He is the head. We depend upon Him as many members, some more feeble yet necessary, many yet one.

Thank you. and He does the work according to the effectual working when He's able to join us together, compact us, join us together as we grow up into Him as a healthy body, I trust.

Joined by His Spirit, made one. It's a wonderful thing to kind of grasp, isn't it? It's hard to grasp it, but how we can be one as much as we're different.

[17 : 35] No one is more important than another. We're all one. Every part is important.

Be encouraged, brothers and sisters, if you've got gifts and callings deep within, you might want to ask and pray for direction. How can I be used of God? How can I use what I have to bless others, to be an effective Christian, so that every part plays its part, making increase of the body unto the edifying, building up of itself in love.

Praise God. Let's spend a moment as we've waited on just to reflect. The Bible says examine yourself. It's not for me to examine you or you to examine another, but examine yourself today. Amen. Amen.