

A Body You Have Prepared for Me

1 Corinthians 12:1-27

James 1:1-18

1 Thessalonians 1



22 January 2023

Continuing into 2023

- **RUNNING TOGETHER** into the fog of 2023. (Hebrews 12:1-2)
- Do you have a plan to grow for 2023?
 - Does your plan include you growing together in a local church?
- Our goals - emphasis on **AIMING** - **2 Corinthians 5:8-10**; 1 John 3:22; Colossians 1:9-11; **John 8:29**; Hebrews 13:21.
 - ★ Paul's **SINGLE** "aim" or "ambition" in life. (**Philippians 3:12-14**)
 - ★ "aim" or "ambition" can be translated "labor"; "**strive earnestly**".
 - ★ "to please" is εὐάρεστος euarestos {yoo-ar-es-tos} and means "**well pleasing**"; "**acceptable**".
 - ★ The verb is in the **PRESENT** tense denoting **continuous** action.
 - ★ (Colossians 1:10) Christians are "to walk worthy of the Lord, **fully pleasing** Him, being fruitful in **every** good work and **increasing** in the knowledge of God."
 - ★ (1 Thessalonians 4:1) We are **obligated** "to walk (live) and to **please** God."
 - ★ **NOTE**: "whether present or absent" – this phrase points back to verses 1-8. Paul faced death over and over. BUT his "**aim**" remained **fixed** or **absolutely focused**! See **Philippians 1:20**!
 - ★ One of Paul's Motivation: The Judgment Seat of Christ
 - ★ Our works (our deeds) will be judged "good" if they were done with the "aim" to glorify God or "bad" if they were done for self-interest! (Hebrews 4:13; Romans 8:1; Ecclesiastes 12:13-14)
 - ★ (1 Corinthians 10:31) **Whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do, we are to do all for the glory of God.**
 - ★ Those who have received the gift of God's grace are under **obligation** to live their lives in accordance with **GOD's WILL** – NOT their own! (1 Peter 4:1-2; Matt 12:50; 1 John 2:17)
- **Catechism**: Are you praying **as** commanded by our Lord? Are you praying with and for your Church? A "BODY of Christ" prays **TOGETHER**!
- **Memory/Meditation**: (Psalm 111:9) Is God's name holy and awesome to you? Are you honoring His name by your obedience to His Law?

- **DOING EVERYTHING TOGETHER.** You will intentionally join and serve the Body or you will intentionally turn your back on the Body and do your own thing. There is no teaching of Christians doing their own thing. **God's purpose/will for EVERY Christian** is that they are an active, serving member of a local body of believers doing everything and growing together.
- Is your love for THE BODY (all the members) abounding more and more or has it grown cold.
 - Are you loving your brethren **fervently**. (1 Peter 1:22)
 - Is your love without any hypocrisy? (Romans 12:9)
 - Are you **laboring** ("kopos" - laboring to exhaustion) in your love for your brethren? (1 Thess 1:3; Galatians 5:6)
 - Are you loving your brethren **just as** Christ loves you? (1 John 3:16; John 13:34-35)
 - Is your love **increasing** and **abounding more and more** toward your brethren? (1 Thess 3:12; 2 Thess 1:3; Philippians 1:9)
 - Are you, in love, **servicing** your brethren? (Matthew 20:26-28; Galatians 5:13-14; John 13:14-15)
 - ✗ OR has your love grown cold? Is your love **visible** to your brethren? (1 John 3:18-19; James 2:15-16; Matt 24:11-12)

From Community to Individualism

- Beginning in the 1960's western culture was moving from being community minded (corporate) to individualism. Serving the community was turning to serving self. SELF became more important than community.
- In the 70s, 80s, and 90s this change "**seeped**" into the Church.
- Church members became more and more individualistic in doing what they wanted, when they wanted, how they wanted, etc.
- Individualism seeped also into being of one mind when it came to doctrine. Now, there is no unity when it comes to doctrine and the Church has accepted it now as normal!!!!!! This is why we hear statements like:
 - ★ We must agree on the essentials but we can disagree on the non-essentials.
 - ★ Let's just agree to disagree.
 - ★ People have always disagreed with the interpretation of the Scriptures.
 - ★ Christ is important not doctrine.
- The **doctrine** of the Church being the Body of Christ faded, even disappeared. Church membership, we were told, was/is not necessary. (Galatians 5:9 - A little leaven has leavened the whole.)

A Body I Have Prepared for You?

- (Genesis 2:7, 22) God formed Adam and God "built" Eve.
- (Psalm 139:13-16) God formed each of us! (Jer 1:5; Exodus 4:11; Psalm 94:9)

- (Exodus 4:11) God forms each part!
- (Psalm 33:15) God fashions (potters) everyone's heart individually.
- (Hebrews 10:5-7) When God the Son, who is Spirit, God prepared a body for Him in order to accomplish His purpose for His people.
- (1 Corinthians 6:19-20) Disciples of Christ have been purchased by the blood of God and our bodies and our spirits belong to God - NOT US. God is sovereign over us and does, with us, whatever He pleases. (Psalm 115:3; 135:6; Dan 4:35; Psalms 33:9-11; Eph 1:11)
- (1 Corinthians 12:18, 24) And so with His Churches. God has prepared a "body"/ Church for His people to grow in and to serve Him. God forms each Church "body" as He pleases.

God: The Giver of Gifts (1 Corinthians 12:1-11)

- (vv. 1-11) Spiritual gifts for everyone/stewards of those gifts in the Body.
- God has a purpose for each of His Churches.

One Body; Many Members; One Head (1 Corinthians 12:12-14)

- (Romans 12:4-5) One Body, many members each with a special function.
- (Ephesians 1:17-23) God gave Christ to the **church** to be head over all things. (**Colossians 1:24**)
- (Colossians 1:15-18) Christ is the Head of the body, the church.

The Body: Each Doing Their God Given Part (1 Cor 12:15-24)

- (v. 15) Christians do not choose their gifts nor do they gift themselves. A foot cannot choose to be a hand.
- (vv. 16-18) Diversity of gifts is NECESSARY and God set each member into the body as He pleases!
- (vv. 20-21) **One member CANNOT say, "I have no need for the body!"**
 - One cannot be a member at their "home church" while away from the body. One is to serve God where God has them!!!!!!
 - Church is not a club that you join and get your name on some roll/register. Church is something that God puts you in!
 - While you are away from your "home church" **God has prepared a body/Church for you to serve and grow in.** He has you here and expects you to grow and serve in a LOCAL body.
- (vv. 22-24) ALL members are NECESSARY.
- (vv. 12-24) The need for each member to do his/her part. Individuals **cannot** say they are required to be part of the Body.
 - Excuses that do not pass in the courtroom of God.

One Mind/One Understanding/One Mouth (1 Corinthians 12:25)

- (v. 25) No division in the Body. Emphasis on unity/oneness in the Body. Link to last week's sermon - seven ones.
- The Body must speak the same thing and be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. (1 Cor 1:10; Rom 12:16; 15:5-6; 16:17; Philippians 1:27; 2:1-4; 3:16; 1 Peter 3:8-9)
- The Body **needs** all members and all members **need** the Body.

Intimacy of the Body (1 Corinthians 12:26)

- (v. 26) Intimacy of the Body. When one suffers/rejoices the whole body suffers/rejoices.
- How do we do this? – By intimately knowing each other and involved in each others' lives.

Diversity with Unity (1 Corinthians 12:27-30)

- One Body; Many Members; One Head.
- Our unity comes from being in Christ Jesus and in Christ there is perfect unity, one accord, one mind, one understanding.
- It is when we use our diversity of gifts **together** in obedience to our Head that God is glorified. (1 Peter 4:10-11)
- Again, there must be diversity in gifts but not diversity in doctrine/ understanding.

The Earnest Desire for the Body (1 Corinthians 12:31)

- (v. 31) Earnestly desire (imperative, present, active, 2nd person plural) the best gifts - for the BODY not self.
 - ① Every Christians is ALREADY perfectly gifted!
 - ② God is sovereign over His gifts and He gives as He pleases - not as man pleases.
- Paul tells the saints to seek a more *excellent* way - unselfish, serving, non-failing love for each other in the Body.
- Love is the fulfillment of the Law - love defined by God!

What Is Your Part in the Church?

- Are you an acting serving member of the “the BODY”?
- Do you have a genuine concern for the growth of “the BODY”?
- Are you praying with, studying with, and fellowshiping with “the BODY” so that we can become ONE MOUTH, ONE UNDERSTANDING in ONE ACCORD?
- Are you ministering to all your brothers and sisters in the Body with the grace/gifts that you have been given by God? (1 Peter 4:10-11)
- Are you doing your part so that the whole Body can grow for the edifying itself in love, as God designed Church to be? (Ephesians 4:16)
- Are you *intimately* connected with the Body of Christ?