

“YOU ARE THE BODY OF CHRIST”

Introduction

- 1) **1 Corinthians 12:27** – “Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually”
 - a) Paul describes the church with a well-known figure – a body and its members
- 2) Christians make up a body and are individual members of it
 - a) **Body** – an organism composed of a variety of parts functioning together for the common good (unity)
 - b) **Member** – a constituent part having a function of its own (diversity)
- 3) Every Christians should study this description and learn more about the body of Christ and being members of it

I) **CONTEXT – Spiritual Gifts to Each Person for Profit of All (vv. 1-11)**

- A) Same Spirit, Lord, God (vv. 4-6) gave diverse spiritual gifts to individuals (vv. 8-10) to work the will of God for all (v. 11)
- B) Spirit gives spiritual gifts to each person for profit of all (v. 7)
 - 1) Fulfilled in time of first century; spiritual gifts have been done away (13:10)
 - 2) Now we continue in good works (Eph. 2:10); each person for good of the body of Christ

II) **THE ONE BODY OF CHRIST (vv. 12-13)**

- A) **Body** = church, God’s people in Christ
 - 1) Here used in universal sense (see also Eph. 1:22-23; 2:16; 4:4; Col. 1:18; 3:15)
 - 2) Many members, but only one body (not many bodies, or denominations)
- B) Baptized into one body, the body of Christ (cf. Gal. 3:27)
 - 1) Baptized into universal body (a Christian *joins* a local church – Acts 9:26)
- C) Unity – one mind, one purpose, one guide, one head (1 Cor. 1:10)

III) **INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS (vv. 14-26)**

- A) **Diversity of Function** (vv. 14-19)
 - 1) Not diversity of doctrinal truth (unity-in-diversity error)
 - 2) Emphasis is on **many members** – no need for discontent because we all have a function
 - 3) Each part has a function because God composed the body (vv. 18, 24)
 - a) We are to use our abilities in whatever capacities we can – preach, teach, elder, deacon, song leader, visit, encourage, physical labor, etc.
 - b) Every member is vital and important – if we do not think we are useful or fit in, we are arguing against God’s wisdom
 - c) Not all are equal in **prominence**, but are equal in **importance** to the common good
 - d) Just like an orchestra, not all can play the same instrument, but each instrument is vital to the whole effort
- B) **Unity of Purpose** (vv. 20-26)
 - 1) Emphasis on **one body** – all work together; cannot be separated or left behind
 - 2) Cannot declare some members as unnecessary; God composes the body
 - 3) No division in the body, but unity in Christ (cf. 1:10); same care for one another

IV) **RELATED SCRIPTURES**

- A) Ephesians 4:11-16; Colossians 2:19; Romans 12:4-5

Conclusion

We should understand the nature of the body [church] of Christ and our part as individual members. Our unity must be strong to withstand the efforts of the evil one to divide and destroy the body.