

“YOUR BODY DEPENDS ON YOU!”

I Corinthians 12:14-26

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INTRODUCTION

I preach these messages this morning and evening by popular demand. That does not happen all the time! But, since the topic is important and solidly Biblical, and since I have not preached on this topic for some time, I agreed to do so. So today, we focus on the believer and his responsibility to his body—that is to his church.

Our Bodies are remarkable.

Here, Paul refers to **two** bodies; we have one, and we belong to another, having been baptized into that body by the Holy Spirit (vv. 12-13).

In this passage Paul first gives us Illustrations from the Human Body, and then he gives us Results for the Body of Christ.

You must take your God-given place in the Body.

I. ILLUSTRATIONS FROM THE HUMAN BODY

A. Variety: God made unity—not uniformity (14, 17, 19, 20)

1. One body—many members (14)

A “member” is a part having functions of its own; each one has a job.

- Not a **single** member, or other members would be missing (17)
- Not a single member or there would be no **body** (19).

2. Many members—one body (20)

The body is more than the sum of its parts!

The body is not just a pastor or a deacon etc. No one can do it all!

Illus: A member acting as a body would be monstrous!

- A big EYE (“I”)—“all eyes”!
- A big EAR—too many big ears already!
- A big MOUTH—too many of these also!
- A big FOOT—we already have too many clumsy Christians
- The same application can be made *to other churches and groups within Bible-believing Christianity.*
- However, such does not remove the demand for purity and for necessary church discipline when believers get out of line.

B. Discontentment (15-16: inferiority)

1. The foot and the hand (15)

2. The ear and the eye (16)

We cannot separate ourselves from the body—*What would a foot do if separated?*

What would the body do without the foot?

Someone says:

- I'm only a helper, but not a teacher.
- I'm a teacher, but not a trustee.
- I'm a trustee, but not a deacon.
- I'm a deacon, but not a pastor.
- I'm a pastor, but not a BIG pastor!
- In this context people were saying: "I'm a prophet or teacher, but not a 'tongues-speaker'."
- See I Cor. 13:4—"Love is not jealous."

C. Pride (21-24)

1. Prominent members cannot dispense with "less important" members: "I have no need of you."
 - Eye to the hand—if no hand, what happens to the desires of the eyes?
 - Head to the feet—if no feet, who carries out the orders of the head?
2. Less prominent members are important (22-24)
 - a. Weaker members are necessary (22—Notice "seem to be")
Internal organs—give us no protection, yet we cannot live without them!
Compare prayers in secret vs. those in public; the Corinthians and spectacular gifts.
 - b. Less honorable members: ("We deem", "think to be"—23a)
Yet, we deck them with more honor—such as clothes, ornaments on our *arms, legs, hips, trunk*, etc.
 - c. Unseemly members (23b)—our *private parts*; we give **special care** and modesty to them.
 - d. Seemly members—no need of special care (24a) [face needs no clothes; yet feet are clothed and decked; cf. expensive footwear today.]

D. God's Sovereignty (18, 24b)—in **both bodies**.

1. Placement of body members (18—He is the **creator** of the body.)
 - a. "Each one"
 - b. "As He willed"—for the good of the whole
The eye did not give itself the power to see!
Compare a pastor of missionary:
 - One in a city, one in the wilderness
 - One in one country, one in another country
 - One rich, one poor
 - One Black, one Caucasian, one Oriental, one Native American, etc.*Should members arrange themselves? Does the body do that?*

Pride and discontentment are not only selfishness, they are also rebellion against God's will! See Rom. 9:20.

2. Composition of the Body (24b)

Harmonious blending—compare the mixing of colors; He gives "more abundant honor" to those who feel the lack of it.

This shows not only God's **sovereignty**, but also His **wisdom** and **benevolence**!

- II. RESULTS FOR THE BODY OF CHRIST (25-26)
 - A. Unity—no “schism”; cf. 1:10; etc.
 - B. Mutual Care (25b)—“anxious, careful care”
 - 1. As for oneself
 - 2. No partiality
 - C. Mutual Sympathy (26)
 - 1. Suffer together (26a) [cf. an injured body part such as “big toe”, back disc, bruised heel, knee, headache, kidney stone, etc.]
 - 2. Rejoice together when one is “glorified” or honored (26b)
Thus when all the parts function well, all are happy and rejoice.

CONCLUSION

You must take your God-given place in the Body.

You do have a place!

[For the first time I have put blanks in the conclusion; I want you to fill them in—and then FILL THEM IN YOUR LIFE!! WHAT GOOD IS PREACHING THAT IS NOT PRACTICED????]

- 1) Join the body! You are needed; you must not separate yourself.
- 2) Get busy! You have a job. There are many opportunities and needs.
- 3) Be a consistent tither—10% of gross income; your body needs your help! You can’t depend on the other body parts if you don’t do your part. **There are tremendous needs; you will make a difference.**
- 4) Be content with the gifts and opportunities God gives you.
- 5) Don’t be superior; what you have God has given you.
- 6) **HONOR GOD’S SOVEREIGNTY!**

INVITATION—Ask to commit to the specific points above.