

1 Corinthians 12:12-27 - The CHURCH as a BODY

INTRO - The church is an amazing institution & entity. It is a Divine institution & living entity. The church is a unique creation...formed by God...enlivened by the Spirit ...and part of Christ. When God became a Man...a body was formed for Him...a body of Flesh and a Body of Faith. *Ecclesiology* - *ekklesia* = *called out ones*. The church has been *called out* of the world – holy calling. The CHURCH is a group of *Believers* the Bible describes as a *Building ... a Body ... and a Bride*. Today, in our study of the church, we think about The Church as a Body ... the Body of Christ. When God became a Man...a body was formed for Him...a body of Flesh and a Body of Faith. (a Body of Flesh in the womb of Mary and a Body of Faith in the many members of the church.) The church is Christ's body. He is the Head, and we are its many members. By necessity, the *body* has much diversity among its members but also a cohesive unity. Jesus has so attached Himself to His church that He is incomplete without her...just as a head would be incomplete without a body. The Body is FORMED by God and each member FITS into a designed place with a determined FUNCTION which brings FULLNESS to the Body and to the Head.

FORMED

1. God is the Creator of all things. God created the church.
 - a. We were formless and void sinners....Spirit of God was hovering over... Gen. 1:2
 - b. He formed the church from the dust of the ground (as it were)
 - c. He breathed into the church the breath of life and we became alive. Gen. 2:7
2. The Spirit gives life to the body formed by the Father
 - a. 1 Cor. 12:13 The Spirit hovers over the waters of baptism
 - i. Not the waters of the baptistry but the waters of the new birth
 1. John 3:5
 - b. Eph. 4:4
3. Church membership is tied to the Holy Spirit's workmanship
 - a. This is symbolized in baptism (baptism makes you a member of the local body)
 - b. Only the Holy Spirit can make a church member
 - i. It takes His power...His breath... and His baptism - to be in Christ's body

FITS

- When the Spirit forms the members of the body, He also fits them into a particular place
 - 1 Cor. 12:11-12, 18
 - Each member fits into the body. Each member has a place and a purpose
- Mr. Potato Head
 - There are holes in the body that are designed to have a part fit into
 - 1 Cor. 12:14-18 Feet, ears, eyes....all have a place in the body

- Being a member of the body is biblical
 - The church is a body..... and a body has many members 1 Cor. 12:12
 - Every member has an important place in the body
 - there is hole in the body that needs to be filled by you
- Do you feel that you fit in this local body?
 - If you are born of the Spirit, then you belong in local body
 - You fit in the *Body of Faith*

FUNCTION

1. Each member fits in the body but has a different function in the body
 - a. The body of Christ is not “cookie cutter Christianity”
 - b. God did not make us all the same. We are different for distinctive roles
 - c. 1 Cor. 12:17-18
2. We should celebrate our differences...our uniqueness
 - a. God creates unity from diversity, and it makes such beautiful symmetry
 - b. Look at the uni-verse! Look at creation!
 - i. Look at how we are fearfully and wonderfully made! Psalm 139:14
 - c. The church is an amazing conglomeration combined in a congregation.
3. We need our different functions
 - a. “*Rebellion against the Stomach*”
 - b. We should support our varied roles that God has for us in the body (1 Cor. 12:4-11)
 - c. We need what each member brings 1 Cor. 12:20-22
4. The body doesn’t function well without all its members
 - a. “Inactive member” is an oxymoron

FULLNESS

- We are incomplete without each other. A body needs all its parts to be its best
 - Missing members handicap the church...leave holes in the church
 - God has formed the many members to fit into one body and has assigned each member a unique function to bring fullness to the body.
 - We are only complete with each other
 - man buried with his pickled fingerit was important to him and part of him
- Jesus is incomplete without His church.
 - I wouldn’t believe it if the Bible hadn’t said it - Eph. 1:22-23 (amazing mystery)
 - Jesus has so united Himself to His church that He is incomplete without us.
 - The church is the fullness of Christ
 - He is the Head, but we are His body - a body was prepared for Him
 - *A body of flesh* and a *body of faith*
 - When God became man...Jesus inextricably linked Himself to us
 - Jesus is joined to His church
- To be in the church is to be *in Christ*
 - A Christian is attached to Christ....we are part of His body - 1 Cor. 12:27