

Bible Studies for Life: February 21

Connecting to Christ's Body • 1 Corinthians 12:12-24

By Bobby McKay



McKay

It seems Baptists are known more for what they oppose than what they support. I recall many years ago when I was a new Pastor, a fellow Pastor told me, "There are two kinds of Baptists. Some are born again, and some are born against." I have found this observation to be accurate more times than I can count. I am sure other Christian denominations have their differences, but it seems like no fight can rival a Southern Baptist fight. Each time a local church argues over something with no eternal value, the reputation of the church (and the people comprising it) suffers. We can wonder and act perplexed why more in our community are not coming to our church services, or we can take an honest look at the reputation and history of the churches we attend. Why would guests be drawn to a place that fights more than the local golf course, hunting club, or ball game?

The lion's share of the problems in most churches boils down to two areas: communication and neglect of the Head of the church, Jesus. As a Christian matures, he/she will desire to be a productive and encouraging member of the local body of Christ. You show me a member of the church who is an antagonist, troublemaker, or likes to complain and I will show

you someone who is either not saved or not mature. A growing Christian will not be a problem in the church. The key is remembering our place in the body of Christ.

The condition of the church at Corinth in Paul's days have been widely written about and discussed. It was a hard place to do ministry due to the sinful actions that permeated the church and culture. In 1 Corinthians 1:1-9, it may surprise you to see Paul's love for them. He thanked God for them, encouraged them in their gifts, and offered them grace. Fellow Pastors and church members, take note. There is no perfect church, are you thankful for the church God allows you to minister to?

One of the key aims in this letter to Corinth was to set things back in order for the church. A church out of God's designed order will have little if any, positive impact in the world. The analogy Paul chooses to use in 1 Corinthians 12 is that of the human body. By doing so, Paul attempted to show the reader how each part is vital to the whole health of the church and its effectiveness. Like the human body, the church has many varying parts. Some parts are more pronounced are utilized, but all have a job to do and are essential.

Think of it this way. I bet I can make you dance with only a hammer and your thumb. If I were to draw back and hit you with the hammer on top of your thumb, you would immediately stick that thumb in your mouth and begin to do a little hopping movement. Suddenly, the pain in your thumb has gotten the attention of your mouth, feet, and entire nervous system. There are no unimportant parts in the local church. Every single member affects the other.

With so many body parts to choose from, some in the local church aspire to be the head. Fortunately for us, that position has already been claimed by the only One that is worthy: Jesus. With Him being the Head, we should speak as He would, see as He would, think as He would, and listen as He

would. Any church without this Head is dead, and any church that tries to have two heads is a freak!

I always keep a paper crown from Burger King near my desk. It reminds me of Who is in charge and the only One who is qualified to "run" the church. If anyone wishes to be the head in our churches, tell them they must first wear the Burger King crown for 24 hours for everyone to see. You and I look ridiculous wearing a crown. Let Jesus wear it. He is the only worthy. He has earned the right to rule.

One single body part does not constitute a body. God does not allow for Lone Ranger Christians. Support, serve and share your gifts in your local church. You will discover each member is needed and loved. Even if you are a thumb!

McKay is pastor of Pleasant Grove Church, Brookhaven.