

**What abilities has God put in your life?  
How are you going to use them for His kingdom?**



**Complete this as many ways as you can.  
If I am a part of the body then....**



Our attitude needs to be  
What can I do?  
How do I give?  
How can I help?  
What are your needs?



**If I belong to the body  
What are the privileges?  
What are the responsibilities?  
What do I do when the temptation comes to withdraw?**



**Which of these statements are true?  
How do you respond to them?  
What do they require you to do?**

- I am part of a vision larger than myself.**
- I am different from you.**
- I need to be proactive with my giftings.**
- It is good that we are different.**
- God put us together as He saw fit so I must live in harmony with others.**
- I have a part to do that is necessary.**
- If I do not play my part the whole suffers.**
- God made me as I am to be the part He wants me to be.**
- No part is more important than another.**
- My part of the body means I have a purpose.**
- Needs are met as we all do our part?**
- My part of the body means I have value.**
- I need to treat others with honour.**
- I can't say to anyone "I don't need you."**
- We are all connected to each other.**
- If it is Christ's body then it matters**
- If it is Christ's body then he sets the purpose.**
- All members have the same concern for each other.**
- What I do for others is done for Christ.**
- I should know what my part is.**
- If God made me a part then I will be a part.**

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# FREEDOM

Christian Church

## The Body



### Read 1 Corinthians 12:12-31

Paul writes in the context of the gifts of the Spirit. In 1 Corinthians 12 Paul gives three separate lists of the gifts of the Spirit (12:8-10; 28 and 29-30). Paul describes them collectively as gifts, services and works. Paul argues that all the gifts of the Spirit are equal, all are necessary and none should be considered inferior.



### What would you imagine they considered the most important gift?

You may have answered Apostle 28; 29 or prophet 10; 28, 29 but they would have answered tongues. The Corinthian church seems to have valued tongues as the ultimate expression of spirituality and to have spoken in tongues in public meetings almost to the exclusion of everything else. Paul writes 1 Corinthians 12-14 to counter this imbalance.



### Do we value speaking in tongues?

Probably today we undervalue speaking in tongues. Some people have misunderstood this part of Corinthians, thinking that Paul is devaluing the gifts of tongues and discouraging its use. This is not the case, he is simply calling for balance 1 Corinthians 14:18, 39.

What Paul says in this passage should be read in the context of all the gifts of the Spirit and all of the functions needed in the church, what Paul calls services and works 1 Corinthians 12:4-6.

In 1 Corinthians 12:12-31 the Church is compared to a body. This is just one of many metaphors that are used to describe the church. Each one has a different emphasis, a different way of explaining who we are, how we function, and why we are here.



### What do each of these emphasis?

- Army**
- Building**
- Temple**
- Bride of Christ**
- Flock of sheep**

### Which do you identify with the most?




### What does being a body emphasis?

- We belong to one another**
- We are a part of a whole**
- We need each other**
- Function comes from co-operation not individuality**
- We are not intended to all be the same**
- Within the whole diversity – God's plan**
- Equality within the body**



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 *Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ. 1 Corinthians 12:12*


**What parts are there in the body?**

**How many parts are there?**

 *And so the body is not made up of one part but of many. 1 Corinthians 12:14*

**What would happen if we all had the same part to play in church?**

**What would happen if we all had the same set of abilities?**

 *Now if the foot should say, 'Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,' it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. 1 Corinthians 12:15*

**Why would a foot say this?**

**How would the foot say this when it doesn't have a mouth?**

**What makes you think you are not part of the body?**

It probably comes down to. Feeling different, feeling inferior, feeling superior or not seeing where you fit the whole.

**Are any of these reasons to exclude yourself from the body?**

**According to this verse can a foot stop being a part of the body?**


**Does the way a foot feel change whether it is a part of the body?**

We all know that every church is a coalition of the willing. Anyone can leave at any time. The same was true in Paul's day. But to think this way misses the point.

**What good is a foot without a leg?**

**What good is a leg without a foot?**


A foot needs a leg and a leg needs a foot. It is symbiotic. The leg loses function when the foot is missing and the foot loses purpose when it detaches. It becomes irrelevant.

 *If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? 1 Corinthians 12:17*

**What point is Paul making here?**

**Every part is needed and if it is missing leaves a deficiency.**

**What parts do we lack?**

 *But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. 1 Corinthians 12:18*

**Who chooses what part you are?**

 **Who chooses where you are placed?**

**Do we get any say in the matter?**

**Why does God arrange the parts?**

**What is His goal?**

**If we are all different parts then is diversity a good thing or a bad thing?**


 *As it is, there are many parts, but one body. 1 Corinthians 12:20*

**What implications does this have for us?**

**What makes it hard to be a body?**

**Why do you think Paul needed to remind the Corinthians of this?**


This implies that we need to work together, be united, and work for the common good.

 *The eye cannot say to the hand, 'I don't need you!' And the head cannot say to the feet, 'I don't need you!' 1 Corinthians 12:21*

**Why would the eye say this?**

We tend to think that our gift, talent or job is the most important. We understand our part but not necessarily the part of others. The eye thinks like an eye, it does not think like a hand. This is natural and quite normal.

**What change in perspective are we being asked to make?**

 *On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable and the parts that we think are less honourable we treat with special honour. And the parts that are unpresentable are treated with special modesty, while our presentable parts need no special treatment. 1 Corinthians 12:22-24*

 **What do you think of as the weaker parts?**


**What makes them indispensable?**

**How do you treat them with honour?**

**What might make a part unpresentable?**

**How do we treat them with special modesty?**

It may be anyone you think of as embarrassing for some reason or another. A body covers its unpresentable parts with clothes, we have to do it with acceptance and protection. An example might be how we treat people with additional needs or those who are sick or perhaps destitute.


 *But God has put the body together, giving greater honour to the parts that lacked it, 1 Corinthians 12:24*

**If God has done this how should we react?**

*So that there should be no division in the body, 1 Corinthians 12:25*

This is a continuation of what Paul has said in the previous verse. If we treat the weak with honour and consider the needs of all then we will be in unity.

**What kind of unity is Paul encouraging here?**

 *If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honoured, every part rejoices with it. 1 Corinthians 12:26*

**How does this work out practically?**


**What kind of suffering might a member of the body endure?**

**What kind of honour?**

**What kind of a picture of the church is Paul presenting?**

**Is it realistic?**

 **Complete this as many ways as you can.**  
**If we are a body then....**

 *Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. 1 Corinthians 12:27*  
It turns out that not only are we a body but we are Christ's body. In other places, Christ is called the head Ephesians 4:15. For us the primary meaning of head as a metaphor is leader, and the Greek does include this meaning, but the primary meaning of the Greek is origin or source. Much the way that in English you can talk of the head of a river.

**If Christ is the head what is His role?**

 **Being a body is one thing being the body of Christ is another.**  
**If we are the body of Christ then....**

**What part of the body are you?**

**How are you going to find out what part of the body you are?**

**How are you going to play your part?**

**What do you need to do to make the body function better?**

**What will happen if you do not?**