

## **The Body of Christ**

1 Corinthians 12:12-27

2018-05-06

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### **1. Welcome and Announcements**

- a. Welcome to Tallgrass!
  - i. My parents
  - ii. Welcome Liam and Precious
- b. **Taco Bar potluck** after – Directions (No staggered Kids Pickup. Childcare available through 2<sup>nd</sup> grade upstairs in 4s Room. Movie. starting 645).
- c. **No after parties** next week – Mothers Day! Celebrate your moms well
- d. **Tallgrass Kids SUMMER** signups – signup link to be sent out tonight. Wanting to provide kids through 6<sup>th</sup> gr.
- e. **ManCamp** coming up – Details – May 19-20. Guys, join us! Invite your friends and neighbors. Gonna be fun! But you gotta rsvp so we can get you specific directions. Even if you can't stay the night, come hang out with us till bedtime!

### **2. Mingle (2-3 min)**

- a. Mingle Question: "Where did you grow up?"
- b. Go grab a freebie Bible

### **3. Introduce myself**

- a. This is my family (pic)
- b. Jenn and I have been married 14 years this summer.
- c. 3 young boys, Ben's 6, Sam is almost 5, and Jack is 2
- d. I attended KState and then went through the same Seminary program as Ben Deaver...and then we worked together on staff at New Hope Church for about a decade before stepping out together to plant Tallgrass.
- e. I love our town! And am committed to God's good for Manhattan – and beyond!

### **4. Today we're starting a new teaching series on the Church!**

- a. As we start out with Tallgrass, we want to lay quickly a foundation to grow on – based on what God has already revealed – about church life should be!
- b. "Life Together in the Body of Christ"
  - i. **Memory Verse Cards!**
  - ii. **Pass them out – kids?**
- c. **LIFE TOGETHER book plug**
  - i. Dietrich Bonhoeffer – German pastor, eventually executed by the Nazis.
  - ii. Some "new" classics. This one highly worth the read.
  - iii. \$10 – put Book in the memo.
- d. The scripture uses a number of different metaphors for the church.
  - i. Field
  - ii. Building
  - iii. Flock
  - iv. Bride
  - v. Family
- e. Perhaps the most famous and poignant is the metaphor of the human body!
  - i. Can find this analogy in:
    1. Romans
    2. 1 Corinthians
    3. Ephesians

#### 4. Colossians

#### 5. Read Eph 4:15-16

- a. We'll be reading out of the English Standard Version (ESV) if you'd like to follow along on your bible apps, or in our freebie Bibles (page 569)
  - b. If you don't have a Bible, please Take that one home. It's our gift to you!
  - c. It's also the middle verse on your memory verse card
6. You get this picture of the body being held together with all sort of internal joints and ligaments. All of them functioning in astounding complexity and unity to make the body function and grow.
- a. A pretty rich picture!
  - b. We know FAR more about the Body's inner-workings today!**
  - c. And this analogy is even more powerful, accordingly, today than back then!
    - i. 360 individual joints!
    - ii. Over 600 muscles
    - iii. 1,320 ligaments/tendons
    - iv. 78 organs
    - v. And that doesn't even come CLOSE to looking smaller
      1. We're still figuring this out, but latest number scientists have figured: the average human body contains about 37 TRILLION cells!
        - a. That's 37 million million.
        - b. This number is truly mind boggling
        - c. Lets try to think of this in dollars.
        - d. Get a stack of \$10 bills.
        - e. Stack them up, the short way, up and up, and up, through all the clouds, past the airplanes, past the air, past the international space station, keep stacking on \$10 bills, past the satellites, all the way through dark space, and you'd hit \$37 trillion with your stack of \$10 bills right around the time you bumped into the American flag, on the moon.
        - f. and that stack is still of \$10s!!
        - g. A stack of ones would be 10 times higher!!!
      2. 37 Billion cells in the human body!
      3. Each CELL is an astoundingly complex city of activity in themselves! Each an incredible molecular machine whirring and working faster and more complexly than anything humans have ever constructed...
        - a. Just like God designed them to
      4. All working in UNISON, performing complex and diverse tasks so the body can grow and function
  - d. The same God who designed the human body, who designed and developed all the interrelated and interdependent systems of our bodies, from our bones to our muscles, to our organs, to each of our 37 trillion cells, THAT SAME GOD, has designed and developed his church.
    - i. (as we'll read in a minute)
  - e. He's put each part together with the same (perhaps even GREATER) majesty and masterfulness.
    - i. And it's beautiful.
    - ii. And it's messy.
    - iii. And it's us.
7. So without further ado, I'm going to invite Christian Greeve to come up and read our focus passage tonight. We're going to be the rest of our time in the New Testament Book of 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians. Chapter 12, starting in verse 12.
- a. In honor of God and his Word, would you stand with us as Christian reads 1 Corinthians 12:12-27.

8. CHRISTIAN READS 1 Cor 12:12-27
9. Thanks Christian! – PRAY
10. Today we're talking about church -- Church is a funny word, really.
  - a. What do you think of ... what do you picture... when you hear the word "church"?
    - i. Ask Kids
    - ii. A building?
    - iii. You're not alone!
    - iv. Most people do!
      1. For good reasons! – *ask me about it later in the Questions & Testimonies time if you want*
    - v. Yet clearly in this passage we've just read, there's no mention or inference of a worship building. The body of Christ is referred to as a whole made up of many individual members!
      1. **The church is the people!**
11. So, what difference does this make?
12. The Body of Christ, the church, is not a building, not an institution
  - a. What God is talking about here is that the church is the people!
13. Regular people who have become united with Christ and one another by deciding to follow Christ
  - a. **Mystical union**
    - i. United with Christ
    - ii. And united with one another
    - iii. We often call it MYSTICAL because it's spiritual, and we can't fully wrap our minds around it.
    - iv. Baptized into one body (v 13)
      1. Not with water, but with the Spirit
      2. Quick word about usage of "baptized" in bible
        - a. Meant "put into"
        - b. Must ask, put into WHAT
        - c. Context
        - d. Here the context is the One Spirit (of God)
      3. Somehow when regular people decide to follow Jesus, God does something that puts them INTO Christ. So that most everything that is true of Christ becomes true of us.
        - a. Everything Good coming to Christ is coming to us!
        - b. We become forgiven and free. Just like Christ is free and carries NO shame or judgement
        - c. Just as he was resurrected to new and eternal life, we also are promised to be resurrected to new and eternal life!
        - d. We become children of God, the Bible even says we're COHEIRS with Christ! (Rom 8)
      4. What's perhaps even MORE astounding, mysterious and mystical, is that this same uniting also happens horizontally. We are members of one another! United in a real spiritual way we can't fully explain. (Rom 12)
14. Our focus passage today seems to indicate that this type of living. This interconnected cooperative, relational type of church life.
15. Let's look at some marks of healthy and unhealthy churches based on what we just read. Clear up the picture a little more as we paint it in shapes and colors we're more familiar with:
16. What is it like when a church body is not working well – not functioning properly
  - a. **THE UNHEALTHY CHURCH BODY**
  - b. The body is NOT built up in love
    - i. No growth – no real love
    - ii. Or cancerous growth

iii. It DOESN'T function right!

1. The body CAN function while some of its internal systems or parts are not working correctly, but NOT without impairment!

- c. Jealousy and rivals between members
- d. Self-aggrandizement (considering self and your roles better than others)
- e. Self-abasement (thinking too low of yourself, I have nothing to offer)
- f. No real unity
- g. No real diversity
- h. Selfishness & Consumerism
- i. Low commitment ethos
  - i. Sporadic engagement by members
- j. Boredom
  - i. People don't really want to be there
- k. Very little real kingdom work gets done!
  - i. Members are NOT helped to grow into Christian maturity
    - 1. WHICH MUST INCLUDE SERVICE/MINISTRY!
  - ii. The Lost are not effectively reached with the Good news

**17. Marks of a healthy / functioning body**

- a. The body is build built up in love!
  - i. Growth of the body in line with health!
  - ii. Doesn't mean there's no issues, no pains
    - 1. Just means that when there is, healing is pursued vigorously.
- b. Contentment!
  - i. Folks embrace that they have a role to play and are happy to serve, whatever
  - ii. Very little jealousy
    - 1. When there is jealousy, it is dealt with quickly, repentance and reconciliation highly valued
- c. No member feels superior to others, instead HUMILITY is the common flavor, especially those with more public roles
- d. Confidence -- No member feels INFERIOR to others, instead is confident in their identity in Christ and as a part of his Body.
  - i. Feels honored and valued by the other members of the body
  - ii. Especially those "less presentable" members.
    - 1. The socially awkward.
    - 2. The embarrassing folks.
    - 3. The weak. The struggling.
    - 4. The DIFFICULT people (God makes sure there is always one close to you in church life!)
- e. There is profound unity & diversity
  - i. Unity of purpose
    - 1. The care and growth of the church
      - a. Both as a whole
      - b. AND as individual members
    - 2. The sharing of the Good News with the lost
  - ii. The kind of togetherness and unity that makes others take notice
    - 1. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." (John 13:35)
    - 2. Especially when we have:
- f. There is profound diversity!

- i. This unity is not because we homogenize everyone, on the contrary, the unity of the Body shines the brighter because of the great diversity of its members
- ii. Everyone has a part to play. There are MANY roles, many gifts, many ways to serve. All needed. All valued.
- iii. Many personalities, backgrounds, political views, theological opinions, socio-economic strata, races, ethnicities, etc.
- iv. Both men and women are valued and contributing members of the Body!
  - 1. More about this in a few weeks when we study 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy!
- v. Children are engaged. VALUED. Wanted.
  - 1. Children as just as much a part of the Body as adults.
  - 2. They're not considered a nuisance, but rather a blessing.
  - 3. The church looks for ways not only to care for kids well, but to help them learn to serve in the Body!
- g. Not self-focused, but rather OTHERS focused.
  - i. People don't do CHURCH primarily to get, but to GIVE
  - ii. Not to be "served" "fed" but to serve and feed others.
- h. Members aren't passively riding the pews, slipping in 10 minutes late, just looking for the best show, for the best sermon, what they want/can get.
- i. There's a High commitment ethos.
  - i. People want to be there! It's not boring. They're excited to be a part
  - ii. It's not like pulling teeth, crickets chirping, trying to get needs met
  - iii. Folks are actually EAGER to serve!
  - iv. It's not awkward to talk about financial giving
    - 1. Folks are excited to GIVE – and they give SACRIFICIALLY
    - 2. There's not really money shortages. But there's more than enough – extra to engage with and even experiment with new ways to minister and reach the lost!
- j. Lots and Lots of Kingdom work happening.
  - i. Members of the Body are being seen, known, loved, cared for, helped, healed, equipped, even admonished when needed, and released to serve and minister themselves -- so that they grow up healthily – becoming more and more like Christ!
    - 1. It's messy. But it's exciting. And it's rich. And it's fulfilling.
  - ii. The Lost are being engaged – AND WON – with the Good News
    - 1. They're not considered a nuisance. Not the enemy.
    - 2. They're befriended, cared for, loved, and actually told the Good news
      - a. THE GOOD NEWS!!! --- that God exists. He loves them. And even though they've strayed far from Him, God has made a way for them to come home through the life, death, and resurrection of his Son Jesus on the cross, ~2000 years ago. That forgiveness and eternal life is being offered FREELY, for all who would accept it by believing in Christ.
    - 3. Lots of lost people. Lots of messiness.
    - 4. Coming into the church.
    - 5. LOTS of mess.
    - 6. But it's the most exciting thing (most challenging thing) you've ever been a part of. And it's like a drug – or a healthier analogy – like a cup of cold water when you're dying of thirst. You want MORE!
  - iii. And God loves it.
    - 1. He's glorified.

18. I first experienced this kind of church life through small groups we called LIFE Groups at our previous church. And now that I've gotten a taste, I never want to go back.
- a. Sure there are seasons where life gets hard.
  - b. Where availability changes.
  - c. Even where engagement with others in the Body is tough – feels more like a drag than a blessing.
  - d. But in general, this kind of living has been the most profound thing I've ever been a part of.
19. There's no reason our church can't be like that.
- a. Indeed, we're already taking great steps just starting out to be and become this type of Body.
    - i. I've been so encouraged watching y'all make this church your own as we've launched out.
    - ii. All hands on deck.
    - iii. Y'all have been serving like crazy, reaching out to your neighbors, supporting one another, accepting inconvenience.
    - iv. Really loving one another well.
  - b. But this all takes work.
  - c. It will take time. MORE time.
  - d. Inconvenience.
  - e. Messyness.
  - f. Sacrifice.
  - g. Choices.
  - h. It won't happen by default.
  - i. It's a different way.
    - i. A very OLD way.
    - ii. But Ben and I feel strongly this is the way Jesus is leading us. The way he's trying to lead THIS church.
    - iii. It's not about perfection. It's about life. And growth. And His work to make everything new. To make everything sad come untrue.
    - iv. AND WE GET TO BE A PART OF IT!
    - v. It's crazy! It's a mystery.
    - vi. It's true.
20. Application:
- a. If you're not yet in the Body, not yet decided to believe the Good News and become mystically united with Christ, why not do that today?
    - i. Why not right now?
    - ii. His Word promises us that though ALL have sinned, all have fallen short, all have gone their own way, the free gift of God – the forgiveness of your sins and the restoration of relationship with your Creator God – is available to all who want it. You simply must accept it. Decide to take the gift. He's not going to force it on you.
    - iii. But if you want it, it's yours!
    - iv. Just pray to God in your heart. Tell him that you believe he is who he says. That his Good News is real. And that you want that free gift Christ offers.
    - v. Why not accept that gift today. You don't know what the next days or even hours will bring. Make the best choice of your life now, while you still can.
  - b. If you're a member of Christ, a member of his Body, the Church
    - i. Hear today that Every member is vitally important to our church.
      1. Including you!
    - ii. You may be here struggling to sense your place at Tallgrass
      1. How am I going to feel a part?

2. What role should I play?
3. Would it even matter?
  - a. I don't think I have anything to offer...
- iii. God has PLACED you in his body, and given you a role to play. Just because you don't clearly know what it is doesn't neglect the fact that it's true.
- c. Play your part in the Body of Christ
  - i. It's fine if you're not sure your niche role.
  - ii. Next step: jump in and serve
  - iii. We're ALL called to serve... both within and beyond our roles.
  - iv. The most important aspect of your unique part in the body is not your gifts, but your unique life
    1. YOU
    2. No one else can be and do exactly what you can... because no one else is just like you. No one else lives your exact life.
    3. God has made us all unique – incredible diversity
    4. So if you don't offer yourself, gifts, weaknesses, warts and all, no one else will.
    5. And the Body will suffer because of it!
      - a. So don't be afraid – get in there and offer you! Jesus knows what he's doing, even if you don't.
  - v. So the first step to figuring out your roles and gifts are to just serve... try lots of things.
    1. And over time, let others help you see where they've noticed you tend to shine.
  - vi. Serve doing life together with others
    1. Live life together with others in the Body
      - a. That can start here at these central gatherings, but it will have to really be lived on smaller scales. Smaller groups like LIFE Groups and Discovery Groups – where you can REALLY get to know each other. Where the REAL life on life happens.
    2. Where you risk knowing and being known.
    3. See needs, and try to meet them
    4. Let people see YOUR needs, and risk letting them try to meet them!
    5. Practice rejoicing and mourning.
      - a. When others around you are rejoicing, practice rejoicing with them, discipline yourself to share in their joy! (for indeed you are united, members of the same Body). Their joy IS ours!
      - b. When others around you are suffering, sorrowful – sit with them. Hurt with them. For indeed you are united, members of the same Body). Their pain IS ours!
        - i. I threw out my back a few weeks ago. – OH MAN! It's just my back that hurt... but it affected my WHOLE BODY. Everything shut down. My brain didn't get to decide... “WELL, the back is hurting, BUT NOT ME”. No, we all share in the same reality since we're part of one body.
    - c. We've got a LOT of pain and suffering in our Tallgrass Body right now. Seems like so many of us have been going through the ringer. And I do think we've been opposed by spiritual forces. The enemy seems to be doing everything he can to disrupt and discourage the healthy establishment and grow of this new expression of the Body of Christ!
      - i. This stuff is real!
      - ii. Folks are dealing with major health issues
      - iii. Miscarriages
      - iv. Marriage struggles

- v. Brokenness
- vi. Discouragements
- vii. Relational Rejections
- viii. Overwhelmed by life circumstances
- ix. Depression
- x. Anxiety
- xi. The list goes on.
- xii. Our family has been going through ALL OF THESE! In this recent launch season!
  - 1. The timing has been crazy – seemingly coordinated attack
- d. Rejoicing with those who rejoice and mourning with those who mourn is tough to do. Especially when you're hurting, but someone else is rejoicing.
  - i. When that person in your LIFE Group just got engaged, and you're still single.
  - ii. When ANOTHER couple shares that they're pregnant, and you just had another miscarriage.
  - iii. It's really hard. Unnatural. Won't happen by default.
  - iv. It will take work. Commitment.
  - v. And the Holy Spirit of God
    - 1. Good thing He promises to help with these very things!
- vii. Serve by meeting practical needs as we gather together
  - 1. Serve with Tallgrass Kids 1-2/mo during our central gathering time.
    - a. We are committed to loving and serving our children as we gather!
    - b. We have current needs. And more needed as we begin our summer kids program at the end of this month, hoping to serve kids through 6<sup>th</sup> grade!
  - 2. Serve on Sound or Slides
    - a. We only have a couple people. It's not hard. We'll train you. No setup or teardown.
  - 3. Serve on another Team
    - a. Hospitality (Amalie)
    - b. Communications (Website, Social Media, etc) – Shanna
    - c. Music (peter)
  - 4. Serve by giving your money
    - a. Just like a body, all parts contribute to build up the body so it can grow and function.
    - b. Most of the good works God calls us to as a church take money. That's why God calls us to give.... Sacrificially, prayerfully, joyfully.
    - c. Tallgrass, yall are doing SO WELL here so far!!!
      - i. Let's take a moment to celebrate this (as we should!)
      - ii. APRIL GIVING NUMBERS!!!
      - iii. Needed /mo for our budget: \$11,754
      - iv. Received in April!: \$14,565!
      - v. That's a 1<sup>st</sup> month surplus vs budget of \$2,811!
    - d. What an amazingly encouraging start for us all!
      - i. Praise God!
    - e. Still lots of room and needs to grow into with our church budget.
    - f. There's lots more exciting ministry we could do if God brought in more!
      - i. Reminder that we encourage folks to give online via our website tallgrass.church



- ii. But if you prefer cash or check that's fine too! Just use the little box in the back.

- 5. Kids & Youth – you are members of the Body JUST AS MUCH AS ADULTS!
  - a. Younger kids--Many of the ways you'll serve will start in the home. With your parents. With your siblings.
  - b. Practice living out the "One Anothers" at home (grab a bookmark!)
    - i. forgiving, bearing with them in love, honoring, serving, loving, showing compassion, etc
  - c. Older kids and youth, be mindful of how you treat kids younger than you.
    - i. Do you treat them like a nuisance, ignore them, try to get away from them?
    - ii. Or do you include them, show them kindness, love them like a good older brother or sister (for that's what you are!)
  - d. Look for ways to serve when we gather!
    - i. Kids - Volunteer to pass out hand-outs, read scripture, share a testimony
    - ii. When we have potlucks, go around after you're done eating and ask folks if they'd like refills on drinks.
    - iii. Help wipe down tables afterwards
    - iv. Youth – look to serve on any team!

21. Tallgrass Church, I'm truly excited to see what God does as we grow together in this Body!

- a. We're not perfect for sure! But we're growing.
- b. Amen Lord, let it be!
- c. **Pray**

22. Q&A & Testimonies

- a. What's something you're taking away from this teaching?
- b. What's been your experience with church?
  - i. How have you experienced the Body of Christ building itself up in love?
  - ii. How have you experienced the Body struggling to do this well? (please no specific names if negative)
- c. What do you sense trying to hinder you engaging well in This Body?
- d. What hopes do you have for your engagement with this Body known as Tallgrass Church?
- e. What other questions or testimonies would you like to share?

23. Now: LORD'S SUPPER (10min)

- a. Appropriate as we consider the Body of Christ.
  - i. As we connect his broken human body to his united spiritual body – the Church!

### **SUMMARIZE 1 Corinthians 11:17-34**

- The place the Apostle Paul talks most about the Lord's Supper is 1 Corinthians 11, the chapter right before where we've been tonight.
- The Corinthian followers of Jesus were experiencing division.
  - They were divided over following different leaders.
  - They were divided between the wealthy and the poor.
  - People were showing up to Central Gatherings totally drunk.
  - All sorts of immorality.
- And Paul comes down hardest on their religious formalism that's dividing their church family.
- Christ's body was broken so that He could build His Body and heal divides.
- Relationship over ritual; family over formalism.

Kenneth Bailey, *Paul Through Mediterranean Eyes*, p. 324

“It is not merely a social occasion to pass the time with select friends. There is no audience watching a performance. Leaders and led are all participants. They have come together as the body of Christ to remember the saving events that created them as a body and to proclaim that salvation to the world.” – Kenneth Bailey, *Paul Through Mediterranean Eyes*, p. 324

“Each worshiper is intimately connected with the other worshipers, and the struggles, joys, fears and failures of all are known and shared. All come as sinners in need of grace, and in that shared awareness there is openness to receive needed healing. The only believer who is unworthy to receive the Holy Communion is the person who thinks that he/she is worthy to receive it.” – Kenneth Bailey, *Paul Through Mediterranean Eyes*, p. 324

- Here at Tallgrass Community Church we are much more committed to us understanding and living out of the reality of the mystical union we have in Christ than we are to the particular method and frequency of taking the Lord’s Supper.
- We’re going to take the Lord’s Supper together on the first Sunday of the months for now and see how we like that frequency. We’ll be talking about this more in the future!
- All are equal at the Lord’s Supper. The Gospel unites people from diverse backgrounds. The thing that unites us is that we are all in relationship with our Creator based on the life, death, and resurrection of the historic person, Jesus Christ.
- If you don’t believe the Gospel, that Jesus Christ died for your sins and rose from the dead three days later, no problem! -- we’re so glad you’re here! I encourage you to take this time to reflect on what you’ve heard this evening. Consider the claims of Christ. Respond to the Spirit of God in your life. Consider your life. Where are you currently seeking satisfaction? Is it working out for you? Cry out to God! Talk to Him during this time. What have you got to lose?
- Taking the Lord’s Supper is all of the following:
  - A time of reflection on the meaning of the death of Jesus Christ on our behalf
  - A time of thanksgiving for the death of Jesus Christ on our behalf
  - A time of celebration of the death of Jesus Christ on our behalf. Today, I encourage you to focus on the celebration of Jesus death! We can have abundant life because of what Jesus did on our behalf! That’s why I opted for the mini red solo party cups today. This is a party! Jesus wants us to celebrate His great victory over evil! Right after this we’ll sing some together then head downstairs to eat together and continue to celebrate the Body of Christ together!
- I’m going to read a part of that passage in 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 11, then we’ll celebrate the Lord’s Supper together.
- If you have trusted Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior then when you’re ready please come up and Maris and I will serve you the bread and juice representing the Body and Blood of Jesus.
- We’re going to have “More than Conquers” playing in the background to remind us that this is a party – and what we’re celebrating.
- Peter, when the line begins winding down, go ahead and lead us to continue to celebrate through song.

### **Read 1 Corinthians 11:23-26 (page 558)**

<sup>23</sup> For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, <sup>24</sup> and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, “This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” <sup>25</sup> In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.” <sup>26</sup> For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.

## CHOPPING BLOCK

### 24. Church word etymology

- a. What happened!!!?
- b. The word used in the bible for church, a Greek word, is ekklesia.
  - i. Literally means “the called out ones”
- c. However, the English word “church” is derived from a totally different greek word, “kuriakon” (kirk = church)
  - i. Meaning “The Lord’s ---- typically used for a temple – the Lord’s House” – HERE’S WHERE THE BUILDING CAME IN
  - ii. Well, as it turns out, the idea of the church being a building came in pretty early in Christian history.
  - iii. Only a few hundred years after the birth of the Christian Church, Christianity became the official religion of the Roman empire under Emperor Constantine. And these pagan Romans flocked en masse to converted pagan temples now official Christian churches.
  - iv. Since then, especially in the West, the church has usually been a place you go to.... God’s House ... the temple...
  - v. The final nail in the coffin came in 1612 with the release of the first King James Bible. Before then, all the early English translations of the bible rendered the original word “ekklesia” as congregation (the people gathered!).
  - vi. But King James sent a letter to the translators of the King James Bible instructing them to render the term “ekklesia” not as congregation, but rather as “church/house of God” in an attempt to validate his new formed Anglican institutional church.
- d. And thus, when you google “church” on google images, you’ll get pages and pages of ornate buildings, and almost no images of groups of people.

### 25. Body life will have to be fought for. Worked for. Otherwise why the words about how the body of Christ SHOULD function?

- a. Because the writer, the Apostle Paul, knows that this doesn’t come easily.
- b. He KNOWS that we tend to
  - i. Be jealous
  - ii. Yes, even in the church
  - iii. We are discontent with our roles
  - iv. We wish we could be like \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_
  - v. Or we think we have nothing to offer because we’re not good at \_\_\_\_\_
  - vi. Or (perhaps even more annoyingly) we can think we’re better than others in the church because we \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_
- vii. He knows that many local churches can get sideways in their thinking, valuing and honoring those who perform only certain roles in the church, and distaining or neglecting those who don’t fit the mold.

### 26. But the word of God is clear on this:

- a. The church is the PEOPLE, not the building
  - i. It’s something we ARE – not something we go to
- b. God himself is designing the church.
- c. And he wants us to work together like a body. Diverse in roles, yet impossibly united into a integrated and growing whole.
- d. And every single person in the church is a member of Christ and has a vital role to play.
- e. Everyone is valuable. Everyone indispensable.
- f. Everyone is to be loved, cared for, honored.

- g. If we can do THIS... be united in love, moving forward together in mission, all the while our individual members are remarkably diverse, then our neighbors will take notice.
  - i. <sup>35</sup>By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.” (John 13:35)
- h. So what do we do with this?

1 Cor 12:12-27 ESV

<sup>12</sup>For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ.<sup>13</sup>For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves<sup>[a]</sup> or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.

<sup>14</sup>For the body does not consist of one member but of many. <sup>15</sup>If the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body. <sup>16</sup>And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body. <sup>17</sup>If the whole body were an eye, where would be the sense of hearing? If the whole body were an ear, where would be the sense of smell? <sup>18</sup>But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. <sup>19</sup>If all were a single member, where would the body be? <sup>20</sup>As it is, there are many parts,<sup>[b]</sup> yet one body.

<sup>21</sup>The eye cannot say to the hand, “I have no need of you,” nor again the head to the feet, “I have no need of you.” <sup>22</sup>On the contrary, the parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, <sup>23</sup>and on those parts of the body that we think less honorable we bestow the greater honor, and our unpresentable parts are treated with greater modesty, <sup>24</sup>which our more presentable parts do not require. But God has so composed the body, giving greater honor to the part that lacked it, <sup>25</sup>that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. <sup>26</sup>If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together.

<sup>27</sup>Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.

Big Ideas:

1. The human body is an analogy for the church
2. In the same way the Body is a unified whole, yet if made of many distinct and interrelated parts
3. And all of the parts contribute their unique functioning that enables the body as a whole to function properly.
4. The body CAN function while some of it’s internal systems or parts are not working correctly, but NOT without impairment!
5. All of the parts of the body are important!
6. Jealousy is nonsensical between body parts
7. For the unified whole to function, it must be made up of SIGNIFICANT interrelated diversity
8. Unity in diversity (and vice versa?)
9. Discontent with one’s place in the body DOES NOT change the fact that you ARE a part of the Body
10. God has designed the church and our constituent parts!
11. We ALL/EACH need each other. No matter how connected we feel
12. Those parts of our body that seem weaker or embarrassing are actually the parts we MOST need!
13. We are to lift up in care and honor those members of our church that seem weak, odd, useless, unseemly, embarrassing.
14. All members are to have the same CARE for one another
15. SO THAT there be NO DIVISION w/in the body
16. We are so interrelated that we share each other’s’ joys and pains.
17. There is to be NO jealousy. Instead not only are commanded to “rejoice with those who rejoice, and mourn with those who mourn” (Rom 12:15) but we are told that it is reality regardless of our perception!
  - a. This is profound
18. All believers in Christ are united WITH THE CHURCH – whether they like or know it or not.

- a. Reflect on the word CHURCH
- b. Etymology
- c. Building
- d. BUT WE ARE THE CHURCH
  - i. Yet we SO RARELY live that way.

Eph 4

<sup>11</sup>And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds<sup>(e)</sup> and teachers,<sup>(e)</sup> <sup>12</sup>to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, <sup>13</sup>until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood,<sup>(e)</sup> to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, <sup>14</sup>so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. <sup>15</sup>**Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ,<sup>16</sup>from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.**

Big ideas:

1. The body of Christ should build ITSELF up
2. It does this in love
3. By speaking the truth in love
4. The church is held together and functions only when all its complex parts function in their own special ways.