

Call to Worship— Psalm 134

Sermon Text— 1 Corinthians 12:17-31

Benediction— 1 John 2:15-17

Text — 1 Corinthians 12:27-31 ESV

[27] Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. [28] And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, helping, administrating, and various kinds of tongues. [29] Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? [30] Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? [31] But earnestly desire the higher gifts. And I will show you a still more excellent way. (ESV)

NEXT WEEK: “The End Is Near” 1 Peter 4:7-11

Outline: “Members”

- **INTRO**— In 1 Corinthians 12 the term *sōma*, body, is used nearly 20 times, but here in verse 27 do we finally see the qualifying statement “BODY OF CHRIST”. IT has always been more than an illustration, it is a real description of a real body of a real resurrected savior about the real glory of God and real kingdom ministry in history until he comes again.
- **TRANSITION**— READ v1-26
- v27 Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.
 - NOW (not later)— timing = present AND active
 - Not “like” the body of Christ = the perfect illustration turns out to be a REAL description
 - “Membership Matters”
 - Want to be a New Testament church? Focus more on THIS than on Acts 1-5 because our failure to be the body is what resulted in Acts 6 as Ananias and Saphira were publicly executed by the Spirit for failing to be members of the body. Let’s be careful what we wish for, repent, and cease to listen to the twisting words of our enemy the serpent still echoing “Did God actually say...?” Thus Paul’s entire premise for answering Corinth’s questions and stating clearly “Now concerning spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be uninformed... Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.”
- v28-31a And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, helping, administrating, and various kinds of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret?
 - Appointed (further reference the setting in place of the members by a sovereign God)
 - Apostles— formal [The 12 plus Paul, James, eyewitnesses to the resurrection and commissioned by Christ personally,], transitional [Acts 6 deacons, Barnabas, Silas etc], general [pioneer missionaries]
 - Literal = messengers
 - Prophets— To set the stage for Ch 14, we will be using Tom Schreinner’s definition of prophecy which includes “the reception of spontaneous revelations from God, and such words instruct, encourage, and warn the people of God.” This is distinct from only hyper-discernment, or predicting, but is an edifying grace gift that can be anticipated when the prophet utters “Thus safety the Lord...” How does this gift work? What does it look like? When was/is it exercised? We will tackle that later in Ch 14.
 - Teachers— noted in every biblical list of spiritual gifts, and emphasized in the NT pastoral epistles, the charge to deliver and explain God’s very words to God’s own body is of utmost priority

- Miracles, gifts of healing— distinct in timing, miracles are not done in our timing, but perfectly timed for God’s maximum glory, gifts of healing to some degree would be distinct in that it occurs more regularly/ frequently and gifts of healing in contrast to miracles can include but is not limited to medical help, emergency help, or even as far as helps and healing for mental illness or even seasonal (milestones) ailments due to age and circumstance
- Helping (to aid, “here hold this”) Administrating (governing & leadership)
 - REMINDER:
[1 Corinthians 12:4-7 ESV] 4 Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; 5 and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; 6 and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. 7 To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.
- Various kinds of tongues— distinct dialect of kindred peoples; distinct tribe/nation + familiarity and unity in the use of the gift (ie diverse people speaking a common language that is not their own)
 - NOT angelic language, NOT private prayer language, NOT utterance/groanings
- Rhetorical Questions: Are all _____? ... NO (and at this point the reader should be saying OF COURSE NOT)
 - But earnestly desire the higher gifts.
 - pursue with zeal/passion (active)
 - greater and more impacting gifts (but this is marked by their usefulness for the greater good, not for personal promotion)
 - BECAUSE THERE IS A GREATER PURPOSE
- v31b And I will show you a still more excellent way.
 - What follows in Ch13 is the emphasis of HOW to use the gifts in LOVE
 - There is more to it than efficiency, church growth, or even peace
 - There is an impact to be made and souls to be won and disciplined by applying these gifts fueled with LOVE

CONCLUSION: “... a more excellent way”

Can I invite you now to be part of a more excellent way?