

Body of Christ

Series #4: Session #3

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SESSION SNAPSHOT

Weekly Verses: 1 Corinthians 12:12-31

Main Themes: Understanding who we are as a whole church body is so important to knowing who we are in Christ. God made us all to be the Body of Christ together.

Session Objective: Our hope is that students will begin to notice the beauty of how God intertwines our differences to form a whole body of people to do His good work.

UNDERSTANDING THE PASSAGE (For Teacher)

This passage is one that is very uniting for the people of God, and it can also be very convicting for some. This idea that we are not all supposed to be the same because we are all Christians can challenge the way we have often perceived the nature of the Church. There have often been hurtful situations where people felt excluded and guilty for being too different within the church. This passage is telling us that God created our differences so that we might work together to be a more complete people. If we had a whole church full of people whose passion is worship music, sure the worship would be great, but what about the sermon? What about compassionate ministries? Who is going to teach the little children?? Now, you can assign people to do roles that they are not necessarily passionate about, just to fill an obligation. But that is the thing – the practices of the church ought to be vibrantly led by individuals with the diverse giftings and callings to do so, even if that means that “Church” takes on a different form than we might be used to. Having a whole church with so many diverse passions and callings increases the church’s capacity to uniquely extend the love of God to one another and to the world.

Verses 24-26 are ones that hold a lot of conviction,

“But God has put the body together, giving greater honor to the parts that lacked it, so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. If one part suffers,

every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it.”

We are called to take care of each other, to have equal concern for one another. Our task is to be empathetic and to see others through the eyes of Jesus, the eyes of true love. This means we must leave favoritism at the door, and we must champion one another to live into our unique callings. There is no room for self-sufficiency or climbing the ladder. Living this way means daily confessing that we need God’s grace, and we need each other. When we collaborate and empower one another, the witness of the body of Christ in the world is strengthened. It is through the way that we love one another that the world might know the love of Christ.

OPENER (Naming Life)

Ask students to respond aloud to the following questions:

- *What are some things you can do completely by yourself? (Not necessarily things you enjoy doing alone, just things that **can** be done entirely alone).*
- *Now, thinking about those tasks you can do alone, reflect on the following questions:*
 - *Who provided the materials you use for this?*
 - *Who gave you the knowledge you need to be able to do this?*
 - *How might this be enriched by doing it with another person?*
 - *How would doing it with another person complicate things?*
 - *Are there any things that can be truly accomplished without the involvement of others, somewhere along the way?*

CRITICAL REFLECTION

Continue reflection with the following questions:

- *Are you someone who tends to be self-sufficient, or do you like to collaborate with others?*
- *How do you feel when you have to depend on others?*
- *How do you feel when others have to depend on you?*

TURNING TO THE STORY

1. Either read 1 Corinthians 12:12-31 aloud or ask a student to read it aloud.

2. Ask these follow up questions:
 - a. What parts of this passage stand out to you? Are there any parts that feel confusing or even silly?
 - b. Do you think it is smart to have so many different people all working together to accomplish a goal, or should we all be cookie-cutter the same to accomplish things?

DIALOGUE (Between Our Lives and the Story)

Use the following questions to continue discussion:

1. How do you see verses 15-20 fitting into your own life?
2. We can see a lot of separation in the world. What are verses 24-26 telling us considering this separation between beliefs, inside and outside of the people of God?
3. How does this passage speak to our self-worth as the people of God?

FAITH PRACTICE

This week's faith practice is to ask for help. We live in a culture that often tells us we can accomplish all that we need to in our own strength, and that is simply untrue. We have the example of our God coming to earth as a human baby, entirely reliant on the care and nurture of his mother. Our God humbled himself enough to be hosted at the tables of those who had much less than he did. Our God has never been too proud to receive and to collaborate with humanity – why would we ever try to walk alone?

So, whether it's going to tutoring to get help on your homework, or asking an older sibling for relationship advice, or staying late after practice to ask your coach for extra help – find a way this week to ask for help. And know that when you ask another person for help, you are also giving them an opportunity to practice their own unique giftings and callings. We are all better when we collaborate together.

BENEDICTION

May you go into this week noticing the beautiful differences that God made in us, and may we empower each other to worship God more completely in collaboration with one another.