

Part 2 - Connected to the Body.

Being connected to the body of Christ is like being connected to a network. A lot of you have computers and/or devices that can access the internet, and we all know the frustration of not being able to connect to a network. The functionality of your device is severely limited because it's **not connected**. When you are finally able to connect to the internet suddenly all kinds of possibilities open up. You are able to communicate with other people, you have access to a wealth of information, your device stays updated, etc ... all because your **connected**.

It is much the same when we get connected to the Body of Christ through a local church or youth group. When you get connected to the Body of Christ, it's like being connected to a network. We can share things with one another, we can strengthen one another, we have access to a wealth of wisdom from our elders, and we keep "updated" spiritually and hear what the Spirit is saying ... all because we get **connected!**

When we say "Body" what we are really referring to is the church. (The church, the Body of Christ, the family of God, all mean the same thing.) No, not this specific local church, but the global church; all the people of the world who are united as one under the banner of Jesus' name. The church is not a street address and it's not a building made of brick and mortar. The church is made up of people; YOU are the church. That means you can have church wherever you go. You can have church in your school, on your job, at your house or anywhere you are, because YOU are the church.

The reason we call the church the "BODY" of Christ is because the apostle Paul compared the church to the human body in 1 Corinthians 12.

1 Corinthians 12:12-21, 26-27 (NLT)

12 The human body has many parts, but the many parts make up one whole body. So it is with the body of Christ.

13 Some of us are Jews, some are Gentiles, some are slaves, and some are free. But we have all been baptized into one body by one Spirit, and we all share the same Spirit.

14 Yes, the body has many different parts, not just one part.

15 If the foot says, "I am not a part of the body because I am not a hand," that does not make it any less a part of the body.

16 And if the ear says, "I am not part of the body because I am not an eye," would that make it any less a part of the body?

17 If the whole body were an eye, how would you hear? Or if your whole body were an ear, how would you smell anything?

18 But our bodies have many parts, and God has put each part just where he wants it.

19 How strange a body would be if it had only one part!

20 Yes, there are many parts, but only one body.

21 The eye can never say to the hand, "I don't need you." The head can't say to the feet, "I don't need you."

26 If one part suffers, all the parts suffer with it, and if one part is honored, all the parts are glad.

27 All of you together are Christ's body, and each of you is a part of it.

Often times in scripture, different writers (even Jesus himself) will use analogies to help us understand something that is a bit obscure. In this case Paul is comparing something that we all know very well, the human body, to something we might not fully understand, the church. And through this comparison we gain valuable insight into this entity called the church.

The main point I want to draw from this passage is that this thing called the Church is different from any other social club or group you can join, because the church is **alive**. Paul compared it to a body for many reasons but I think the main reason he did is because he wanted us to know it is a living entity. It is a **body**, not a business. It is an **organism** not an organization. It's the church of the **living** God.

This is something you want to be a part of. This is something you **NEED** to be a part of. There is nothing like being a part of and being connected to the church!

There is a specific way that we get connected to the body, it is called the **New Birth**: Repentance, Baptism in Jesus' Name, Receiving the Holy Ghost.

Just coming to church services doesn't connect you to the church. That connects you to **people** who are in the church, but that doesn't connect you **personally** to the church. There's a big difference between being **around** the church and being **in** the church. There's a big difference between being **around** the people of God and being **a part** of the people of God. If we want to **connect** to the Body of Christ for ourselves, we must be born again!

1 Corinthians 12:13 (NLT)

13 Some of us are Jews, some are Gentiles, some are slaves, and some are free. But we have all been **baptized into one body** by one Spirit, and we all share the same Spirit.

The way to connect to the Body is by being baptized in Jesus' name! We understand that this is not the final step (seeking the Holy Ghost, growing in righteousness), but it is where we are brought into God's family.

Being baptized is not a religious ritual. It is not some form of initiation at Capital Community Church. It is what brings you into a covenant relationship with Jesus Christ, it washes away every sin and it gives you a brand new start in life!

Romans 6:3-4 (NKJV)

3 Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?

4 Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

When you are baptized you are given a brand new life. All of your old sinful ways and all the mistakes you have ever made are buried under the blood of Jesus, never to be held against you again. If you carry around baggage from past mistakes; if you carry around guilt and shame, you can have that removed from your life by being baptized tonight!

Coming to The Revolution every Wednesday won't get you connected to the church, but the very moment you are baptized in water and have the name of Jesus spoken over you, you get put in His church.

Mark 16:16

16 He that believeth and is **baptized** shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

John 3:5

5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be **born of water** and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.



Getting connected to the Body is like being connected to a network.

Sometimes our human bodies can get wounded and sick and sometimes even the body of Christ can get wounded and sick.

Internet story

Rogers shut down the network for our whole house because one computer had a virus. They weren't willing to compromise the whole server so it isolated the problem until it got resolved, then reestablished connection. **The whole house lost connection because of one computer with a virus on the network.**

Sometimes people in the church get "viruses". They get a bad attitude, they start talking bad about others, they hold grudges, they don't forgive and because of it cliques are formed and new people walk in and out of our doors and never come back because we are too busy hating and not loving one another. **A whole youth group can be hindered because of one or two people having a bad spirit and a loud mouth.**

Proverbs 6:16-19

16 These six things doth the Lord hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him:

17 A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood,

18 An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief,

19 A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.

Three of the seven things that God hates have to do with the words that come out of our mouth, one of which is sowing discord.

When you talk bad about people in your church and you bring division, that is evil in God's eyes and he is not pleased. Not only does it put you in a bad state, but it hinders how God can operate in a youth group.

1 Corinthians 12:25

25 That there should be no **schism** in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another.

Schism - a split or a gap. Division, rent.

There should be no division in the body. We should be friendly to each other and everyone that comes through those doors and not gravitate to one or two close friends every week. When people walk in and they see cliques and factions in a youth group they immediately know that what we have isn't real. They immediately know that we don't have a hold on God like we say we do.

John 13:35

35 By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

When people see we don't have love, they see we aren't of God.

1 John 4:20

20 If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?

When God looks down and sees us not loving one another, cliques, factions, gossip and us ignoring people coming in hungry for God, He immediately says "I can't move there until they fix the problem." It's like He puts up a firewall like Rogers and waits for us to clean up the virus.

In the book of Philippians Paul confronts a problem in the church there.

Philippians 4:2-3

2 I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord.

3 And I intreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellowlabourers, whose names are in the book of life.

Can you imagine being at church that day? The pastor gets up and starts reading Paul's letter to the church and about 3/4's of the way through the message two names get called out in front of everybody!

It seems harsh, but that's how important unity is! That's how important it is to settle differences and right wrongs and be in one accord. That's how important it is to demolish cliques.

Notice that Paul beseeched BOTH of them individually. When there is a disagreement we tend to put the blame on the other person and expect the oneness to make things right to be on their shoulders. We tend to feel like we are the one who was wronged even if we weren't. So Paul cut right to the heart of the matter and was basically saying, "It doesn't matter who is right or who is wrong, just make it right!" The responsibility to make things right is not just on the person who is wrong, it's on both people.

Tower of Babel

Genesis 11:1-6

1 And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech.

2 And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there.

3 And they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar.

4 And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.

5 And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded.

6 And the Lord said, **Behold, the people is one**, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now **nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do.**

If a group of Godless men and women can be unified together and God Himself say nothing will be restrained from them, how much more could we, the church, see if we could come together in unity.

Psalm 133:1

1 Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!