

We Are the Body of Christ 1 Corinthians 12: 12-27

When I think of a body made up of many parts
working together in great harmony and
with intense purpose I think of this person - Tiger Woods.
He has the most amazing ability to aim and hit a golf
ball exactly where he wants it.
And he has used this ability to win many golf tournaments.
I learned a lot about golf just watching him.
I even improved my score by at least 10 strokes just
watching him on TV.

When I watch Tiger Woods I see
that his eyes, muscles, legs, arms, his hands, his feet,
his head all work together for one purpose.
He is so focused.
What a beautiful sight it is to see him
drive a ball down the fair way 285 yards.
He has the body of a champion.

The bible teaches that we are the body of Christ.
Even though we are many people,
who speak many languages, and
come from many different countries and cultures,
we are God's one people.
We are one body working together for one purpose.
Again today we recognized our differences;
some of us are from Taiwan, some from China,
some from Indonesia, some from Korea, and
the Philippines, some from Bolivia, and
some of us were born right here in the USA.
Some of us are poor, some of us are well off,
we are men and women, old and young.
What a beautiful diversity God has made us.
A rainbow of color and variety with many gifts to share.

And the most amazing thing the bible teaches us is
that God has placed all of us together.
Our getting together today, and
in this past year is not just a coincidence
not just a matter of practical convenience.
It is not just a nice idea some of us thought up.
It is God's plan.
Look at V. 18. **"But in fact God has arranged the**

**parts of the body, every one of them,
just as he wanted them to be.”**

This is what God desires,
to make the many different parts of the body
work together in harmony, focused on one thing
to bring Glory to God.

And what makes us one body?

We all read the same bible,
we all have the same teacher - Jesus,
we all worship and trust the same God,
we all have the same confession,
we have one baptism, one Lord, one faith, and
we are all anointed with the same Holy Spirit.
We have one savior and one Father. One father.
Think about that. We all have one father.
How do we say that in Chinese, Korean, Spanish,
Indonesian, Filipino, Swahili?

And because we have one Father
we are all brothers and sisters,
we are all one family, one body.
We belong together, we are connected
bonded through the body & blood of Jesus.

We are sister congregations, friends family,
working together, feeling connected,
we appreciate each other and help each other.

In the Christian Reformed Church we have been thinking
about what it means God's diverse and unified Family
for over 30 years.

And the logo we've use to capture the vision of the
one body made of many parts is
a painting by Paul Stoub done in 1986.

This picture has been our motto. (See bulletin or slide)

This picture express our hope for the church.
Children of every race and nation embracing each,
holding onto each other,
sharing their joys and their sorrow together.
One body many parts.

And as one body
we are no longer independent congregations,
we are no longer just separate individuals
we are interdependent.

We communicate, cooperate, integrate, delegate,
deliberate, celebrate, and just ate together.

We can no longer say to each other.

“We do not belong to the body.”

We can no longer say to each other

“We don’t need you.”

We belong to each, we need each other.

And the more we feel this way and

the more we act this way

the more we show what it means

to be the body of Christ together,

and the more we bring Glory to God.

And you know what binds us together in this family?

in this body of Christ?

Do you know what the glue is that holds us together?

love.

The ability to sacrifice for each other,

the ability to be patient, to be kind.

Love, Paul says, does not envy, it does not boast,

it is not proud. Love is not rude,

it is not self seeking, it is not easily angered.

Love keeps no records of wrongs.

Love rejoices with the truth. Love always protects,

always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

Love never fails, in building up the body of Christ

Love never fails in bringing glory to God.

And so on this first anniversary of Hope Intern’l Church,

this first anniversary of our working

together as sister congregations,

the Spirit of God reminds us that

there are many parts, there is great diversity,

but we belong together and need each other,

and “now you are the body of Christ and

each one of you, each one of us,

is a part of it.” V.27

God has put us together so that

we can beautifully and with great harmony

and intense purpose

bring glory to God.

To God be the Glory!

Amen?