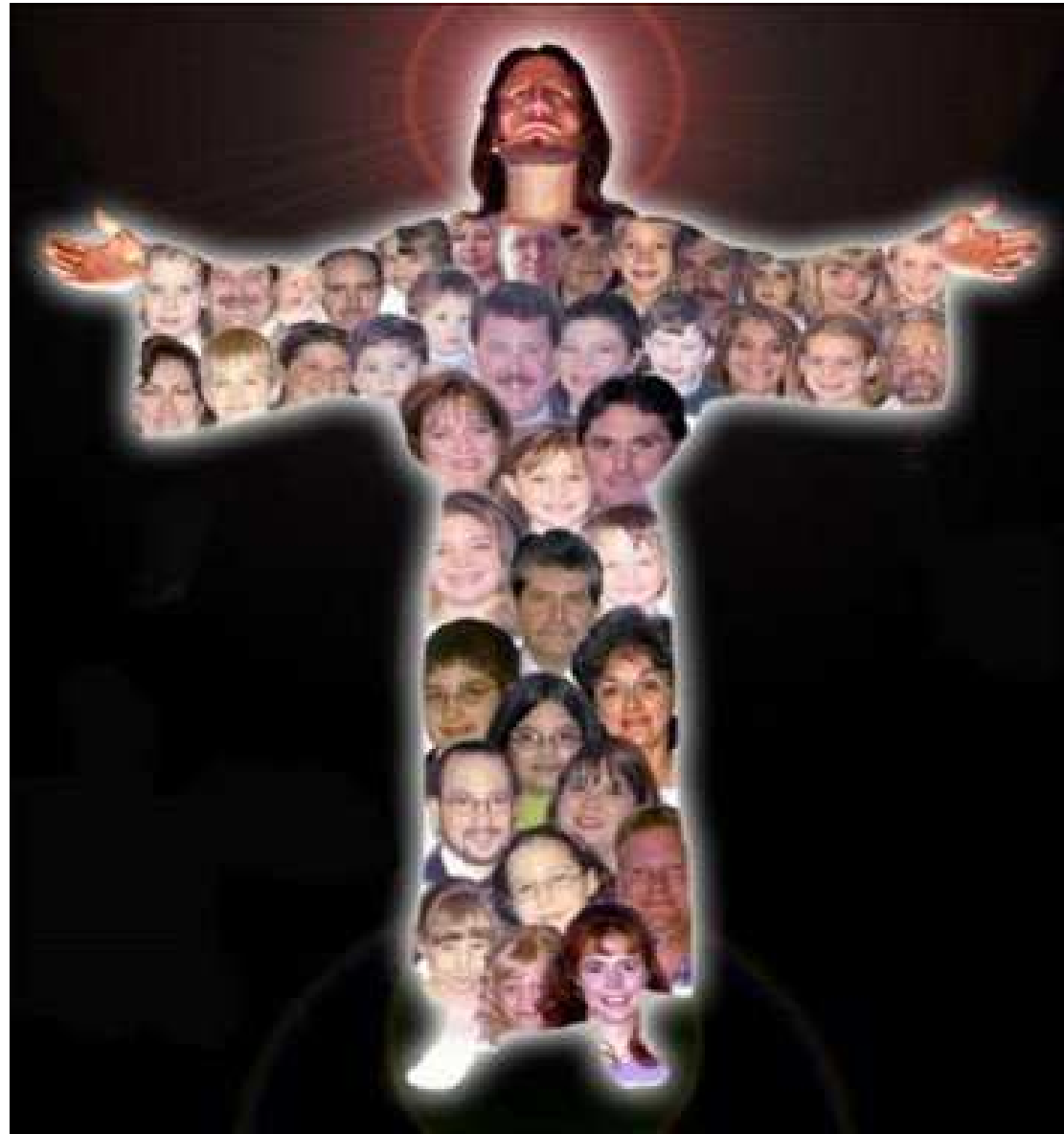


The Body of Christ.

1 Cor 12:27.

*Now you are the
body of Christ,
and each one of
you is a part of it.*



The Body of Christ.

Ephesians 4:11-16.

So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming.

Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.



The Body of Christ.

In most congregations, there are varying degrees of commitment among the members...

a. **The faithful few** who can always be counted on to do whatever is needed

b. **The fairly faithful** who attend somewhat regularly, but are not as dependable

c. **The C&E group** who attend only on Christmas, Easter, and other special days

d. Then there is **the FPO group**
(using a church for funeral purposes only)

- *There are those whose ministry is one of support while other ministries get more of the lime light, but those ministries are absolutely vital and without them the body would collapse.*



The Body of Christ.

1 Corinthians 12:12-28.

Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ. For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. Even so the body is not made up of one part but of many.

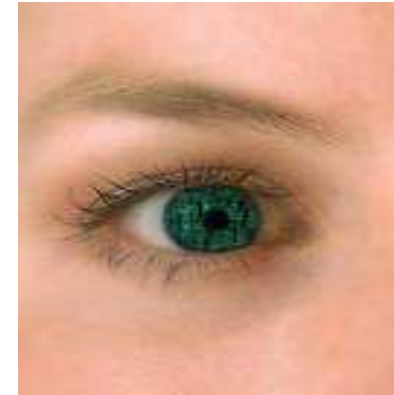
Now if the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason stop being part of the body.



The Body of Christ.

1 Corinthians 12:12-28.

If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. If they were all one part, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, but one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, “I don’t need you!” And the head cannot say to the feet, “I don’t need you!” On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and the parts that we think are less honourable we treat with special honour. And the parts that are unpresentable are treated with special modesty,



The Body of Christ.

1 Corinthians 12:12-28.

while our presentable parts need no special treatment. But God has put the body together, giving greater honour 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 honoured, every part rejoices with it. Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. And God has placed in the church first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, of helping, of guidance, and of different kinds of tongues.



The Body of Christ.

We tend to view things in the Church (Body of Christ) from the vantage point of our own gifting or ministry.

- ❖ The Evangelist sees empty chairs.
- ❖ The Teacher sees empty heads.
- ❖ The Pastor sees empty hearts.

Each one of these ministries is vital and instead of competing with one another, we should complete one another.



The Body of Christ.

1. Too often, churches are like football games...

- a. The players on the field could use a rest from their exertion
- b. The spectators in the stands need to exercise more

2. Churches likewise have "players" and "spectators"...

- a. The players are active members, faithfully supporting their local church
- b. The spectators are members who benefit while expecting others to carry the load

3. Do we really love and appreciate the church of our Lord...?

For which He shed His blood? **Ac 20:28**

Then let us fulfil our responsibilities to the church, both universal and local!

Support your local church by being an active and involved member. Not only will you bless others in doing so, but you will be richly blessed in return...!

"For God is not unjust to forget your work and labour of love which you have shown toward His name, in that you have ministered to the saints, and do minister." - Heb 6:10

The Body of Christ.

**How important is the body of Christ
(Your local Church) to you,
are you there to serve or to be served?**

1 Corinthians 10:31-33

*So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do
it all for the glory of God.*

*Do not cause anyone to stumble, whether Jews,
Greeks or the church of God even as I try to please
everybody in every way.*

*For I am not seeking my own good but the good of
many, so that they may be saved.*

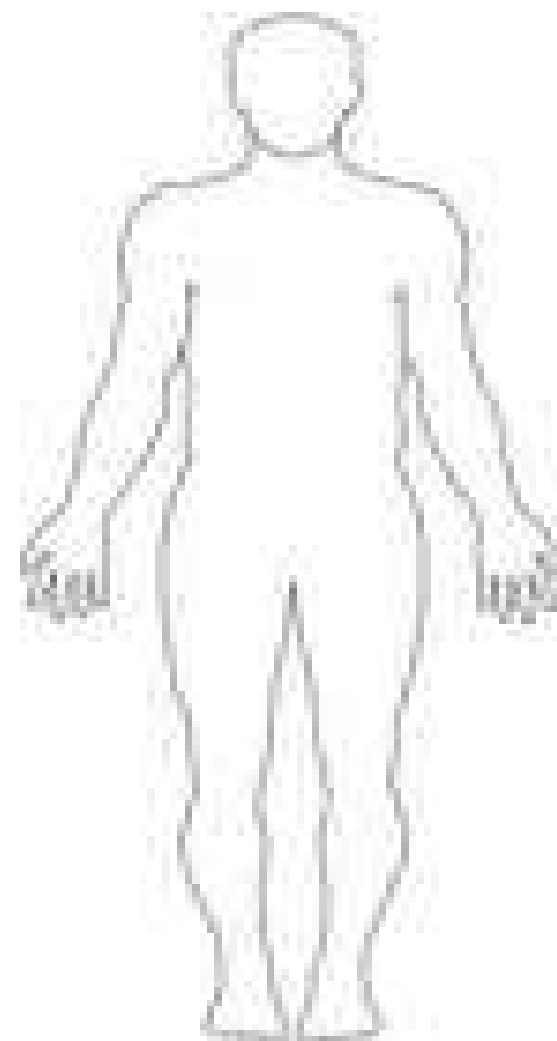
The Body of Christ.

Colossians 3:14-16

And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace.

And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.



The Body of Christ.

Ephesians 5:25-32

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church- for we are members of his body. "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh." This is a profound mystery-but I am talking about Christ and the church.

(we need never doubt how much we are loved)

The Body of Christ.

Serving Together Through Your Local Church by Susan Mathis

At a recent meeting of our small group, we talked about praying for several young families who have lost their jobs and are in need during the holiday season.

Prayer requests quickly turned into specific ways to serve them – our church family. Our "Jerusalem." Couples caring for couples; families caring for families – it's a natural way to love others. We planned to get these families Christmas gifts and holiday food, to show them we care and to be a witness of God's love for them.

The biblical mandate to be Jesus' witnesses "in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" is inspirational, but what does that have to do with serving together? Everything!

The Body of Christ.

Serving is all about being a witness.

It's about setting aside time in our busy schedules to share God's love with others. It's about looking beyond your to-do list, your calendar of events and your dirty floors to meet the needs of others in your church, your neighbourhood, your community and your world.

My husband, Dale, and I serve as greeters and Sunday school teachers in our local "Jerusalem." Through these small acts of service, we grow closer as a couple, get to know our church family better and enjoy being used by God to touch others' lives. Truthfully, I'm not sure who's blessed more – those we serve or my husband and me!

Yes, it takes time, a little planning and a bit of sacrifice, but serving together deepens our relationship, causes us to communicate on levels we normally wouldn't and helps us look beyond our own little world to the needs of others. There are many, many ways you can be a witness in your church/"Jerusalem."

RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE CHURCH.

A. ATTITUDES TO MAINTAIN...

1. Concern for one another. **1Co 12:25-26**
2. Humility, lowliness of mind. **Php 2:3**
3. A peaceable spirit. **Ro 14:17-19**
4. Appreciation for others and their work e.g. **1Th 1:2-3**
5. Willingness to cooperate, work together. **1Co 12:21**
 - a. "It marks a big step in a man's development when he comes to realize that other men can be called on to help him do a better job than he can do alone." **Andrew Carnegie**
 - b. "Coming together is a beginning, keeping together is progress, working together is success." **ibid.**
6. Friendliness, warmth. **Phm 1:7**
7. Gentleness, meekness. **Ga 6:1**
8. Forbearance, longsuffering, patience. **Col 3:12-13**
9. Forgiveness. **Col 3:13**
10. Love. **Jn 13:34-35**

Such attitudes will insure that involvement in a local church will be a great blessing!

The Body of Christ.

B. ACTION STEPS TO TAKE...

1. Seek to join oneself with a faithful congregation .

Ac 9:26

- a. Drifters, "floating members", "members at large", are missing an important aspect of what it means to be a Christian
- b. The same goes for passive "spectators", those "just along for the ride", "permanent visitors"
- c. One places membership with the intent of being an actual, functioning member - not a mere appendage to the body
- d. It involves making real commitments to the group to work and serve

The Body of Christ.

B. ACTION STEPS TO TAKE...

2. Attend and participate in the meetings of the congregation. He 10:24-25

- The Christian enjoys and benefits from private and family worship, but must not neglect God's provision for collective, congregational worship and Bible study
- b. Every aspect of our assemblies is vital to the Christian
 - i. The Lord's Supper - **Ac 2:42; 20:7; 1Co 11:17-34**
 - ii. Praying - **Ac 2:42; 4:23-31; 12:12**
 - iii. Singing - **Ep 5:19; Col 3:16**
 - iv. Preaching and teaching - **Ac 20:7**
 - v. Giving as we have been prospered - **1Co 16:1-2; 2Co 8,9**

The Body of Christ.

2 c. Our assemblies provide opportunities for three different levels of involvement:

- 1) Providing for the assembly - cleaning the building, preparing the communion trays, leading in the service, etc.
- 2) Attendance at the assembly - attending every service is critical to the overall growth and health of the congregation (let alone oneself!)
- 3) Participation in the assembly - to the extent of one's ability
 - a) Worship is not a spectator activity
 - b) The crucial question is not "How did the preacher or song leader do?", but "How did I do?"
 - c) If one can do no more than listen, then listen in a manner that shows reverence and respect to God's Word! **Ac 17:11**
 - d) Assembling together is not merely a routine to perform, but a God-given provision for our spiritual good

The Body of Christ.

- i. Quibbles and questions about whether we have to, complaints, neglects, etc., reveal an attitude of taking lightly the opportunity for Christians to be together
 - ii. God wants to give us something in our assemblies - our involvement or lack thereof reveals much about whether we desire to accept what God has for us!
 - iii. To minimize this aspect of Christianity jeopardizes not only one's own soul, but the souls of others!
3. Engage personally and directly in the work of the congregation
- a. Evangelism - e.g., **Ac 8:4**
 - b. Edification - **Ro 14:19**
 - c. Benevolence - **Ac 2:44-45; 4:34-35**

The Body of Christ.

4. Contribute financially to the work of the congregation
1Co 16:1-2, 2Co 9:6-7
5. Pray for other Christians, especially those of one's own congregation -
e.g., **Col 4:12**
6. Help maintain unity in the congregation
1Co 1:10; Ro 15:5-7; Ep 4:1-3
7. Participate in the discipline of the congregation, both instructive as well as corrective
1Co 5:1-13; Ga 6:1-2; 2 Th 3:6-15
8. Extend courtesy and hospitality
Ro 12:13; 1Pe 4:9
9. Find an individual role and fill it
Col 4:17; 2Ti 4:5
10. Submit to the congregation's elders
1Th 5:12,13; He 13:7,17 –

Such action steps will greatly increase one's level of involvement in a local church

The Body of Christ.

The head controls the body and without it the body would die, likewise the Church apart from Christ is just a dead organisation.

Just as Moses was instructed to delegate authority to others to help govern Israel, so the Lord has delegated authority in different spheres.

If you are not under authority, you have no authority

- He has placed the man in charge in the home.
- The Elders (Overseers) in charge in the Church.
- The Government (King) in charge in the country.
- And even instructed slaves to obey their Masters. We know that Christians fought for the abolition of slavery and the evils that it was responsible for in society, there are harsh and wicked men who rule in countries and husbands who are dictators in the home, but we are clearly told in scripture that such cases do not exempt us from submitting.

Obedience is conditional, submission is unconditional.

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