

This Is Us
Community
The Church
1 Corinthians 12:12-20,27

“The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts, and though all its parts form many, they form one body. So it is with Christ. For we were all baptized by one spirit into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free, and we were all given the one spirit to drink. Now the body is not made up of one part but of many. If the foot should say, because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body, it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body. If the ear should say, because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body, it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body. 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 arranged 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, one body. Verse 27, Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.”

- Today I want to talk to you about the church and how you fit into it.
 1. **The first thing I want you to see this morning is that “YOU BELONG”.**
Look at **verse 27 “Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is part of it.”**
- You are not this weird sixth finger that doesn't quite fit. You belong! Look at the person next to you and say, “you belong here.” “You are the Body of Christ.”
- In high school I never fit into any particular crowd. I was athletic and played a lot of sports so I hung out with the athletes. Also did a lot of partying so I hung out with the party scene. Also hung out with the stoners, not because I stayed stoned but just because I thought they were funny. But it wasn't until I gave my life to Christ that I truly felt like I fit and had a place that I truly belong. Not because I was athletic or particularly gifted in any way. There is a common thread that brings us all together and the common thread is Jesus. No matter what we've done, or what our past looks like, we belong.
- I love to hear how people's terminology changes after they've been coming to New Freedom for a while. It goes something like this; Pastor Jimmy you have an awesome church. I think I like this church. I've been attending this new church. Then after a while the way you talk about the church changes to you taking ownership of your church when you say things like, I love my church, you should come to my church, and thank God I belong to an amazing church.
- Embrace where you go to church because you belong here.

2. The second thing I want you to see this morning is **“YOU ARE NECESSARY.”**

- What do I mean by that? It means you are strategically gifted to be a blessing to the local church. We can't do it without you. Turn with me to **Romans chapter 12:4-8** **“Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. If it is serving, let him serve, if it is teaching, let him teach. If it is encouraging, let him encourage, if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously. If it is leadership, let him govern diligently. If it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.”**
- That's right, you are gifted, and valuable, and essential, and necessary to the health of New Freedom Church. That's right I said, you are gifted.
- Oh, and by the way, your gift is not for your personal edification only. Notice again what verse 5 says, **“So in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.”** What does this mean? It means you have the responsibility according to your gifting to use it to bring others up and encourage the church with what you have. I hope that this message is changing the way you see yourself in this church. All of us are gifted and all of us have a part to play. There are no benchwarmers in the body of Christ. Michael Jordan once said, “Talent wins games, but teamwork and intelligence win championships.” Phil Jackson, the former coach of the Chicago Bulls said, “The strength of the team is each individual member. The strength of each member is the team.”
- The only way you can be benched in the body of Christ is to desire somebody else's gift and despise your own.

3. The third thing I want you to see about community is **YOU ARE LOVED.”**

- **Romans 12:10** **“Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves.”**
- We must be concerned for our brothers and sister's welfare, and spiritual condition, sympathizing with them and helping them in their sorrows and troubles not because we have to but because The love we have for one another compels us to.

- In **John 13:34-35** Jesus himself commands us to love each other. Listen to what he said to his disciples, **“A new commandment I give to you. Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”**
- Some of you might be saying “but I hardly know anybody here,” but the Scriptures do not teach that we have to get to know one another to love each other. Scripture commands us to love one another.

4. The fourth thing I want you to see is that “YOU HAVE A MISSION.”

- **Matthew 28:18-20** Jesus is talking to his disciples before he ascends into heaven. He says, **“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”**
- This is the commission that Jesus himself gave to all believers of every generation. The good news is we do not have to do it by ourselves we have each other. This is an enormous task that cannot be done alone. Not only is this a task for the local church but also as individuals. We are carriers of the hope of Christ everywhere we go in the greatest of all of this is, Jesus is with us. His parting words to us brings us hope as we accomplish the mission he commissioned us to do and that is, **“And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”**
- Individually and corporately may we make good on this great commission that Jesus himself has given us to accomplish while we are alive. Let’s work together to see our community come to Christ by our examples individually and our efforts corporately. To God be the glory.