

The Christian Walk

Walk in Unity

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Ephesians 4:1-3 – “I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, urge you to **walk** worthy of the calling with which you were called, ² with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, ³ endeavoring to keep the **unity** of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” (NKJV)

Unity in Diversity – The body of Christ (body of believers)

The Christian Church has been compared to many things in Scripture, literature and hymns - a ship, a mighty army, a bride and a family. Probably one of the most interesting comparisons is found in I Corinthians 12:12-27. It likens the Church, which is referred to as the Body of Christ, to the human body - a complex arrangement of many different members designed to contribute to the well being of the whole.

DIVERSITY

Romans 12:3-6a.

- We are all members of the same body, but have different functions, abilities, gifts – but we are to USE them!

I Corinthians 12: 4-16.

- We have different GIFTS, talents and abilities; different areas of MINISTRY; different activities; but ONE Spirit, Lord and God. Our gifts and abilities are given for the common good and profit of the church family. And they are distributed as the Spirit sees fit.
- The Body of Christ (as is also the human body) is made of many parts - but we are all controlled by one Spirit. This is true for the universal Church as well as local congregation.
- Just because one body part is not like another - and determines that it is no longer a part of the body because of that - it still does not cease to be a part of the body!

I Corinthians 12:17-20.

- Here Paul points out how ridiculous it would be for the human body to be made up of the same body part - an eye or an ear. It would cease to function as a “body”.

I Corinthians 12:21-24.

- All body parts are necessary - even the weaker or less honorable parts. Granted they are to be treated and cared for differently (special) - but all are necessary for the body to function properly.

UNITY

We have the church as a “body” of believers, and compared it to the characteristics of the human body and concluded that the beauty, proper operation and stability of the Body of Christ (as well as our own bodies) were actually dependent on the diversity of its members and each member functioning in their role. In fact, remember that one of the primary purposes of each member of the body is to contribute to the well being of the whole.

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Growth, knowledge and maturity

- *I Corinthians 14: 12* - Strive for spiritual gifts that build up the church.
- *Ephesians 4:11-16* - God's model for gifts, unity and service in the church
 - *Ephesians 4:(11) - 14*. To prepare God's people for service so that the body of Christ might be built up. We are to strive (again) for 1) Unity in the faith, 2) in the knowledge of the Son of God, and 3) spiritual maturity.

The healthy body takes care of its members

- *Ephesians 4: 15-16*. Paul closes this passage with another powerful "body" illustration. The mature, healthy body GROWS and BUILDS ITSELF UP, as each part does its work.
- *I Corinthians 12:25-26*. All parts of the body should have EQUAL concern for each other.
- See also *Acts 2:44-47*

Conclusion

- *I Corinthians 12:27*. We are the Body of Christ! And each believer is an important, valuable, contributive member/part.