



WE ARE THE BODY OF CHRIST!

We live in a very individualistic culture. “Be your own person.” “Pull yourself by your own bootstraps.” “Discover your own voice.” “Pave your own way.” While work ethic certainly has virtue, we can all too easily lose our **shared** identity found in community. But think about this — the vast majority of promises and encouragements in the New Testament weren’t written to an individual but to a family of believers called to share life together. You are not just an *isolated* child of God. You are a member of something much larger that he compares to the parts of a body. When each of the smaller parts and systems walk in unity toward the same goal, great things can happen, but no part of your body has ever achieved independent longevity and success. Think about it. When was the last time you saw a detached arm pitch in a baseball game, disembodied legs run a marathon or lone lips deliver a commencement address? For any part of your body to succeed, all of your systems must communicate, agree and work together as one. For *you* to experience the fullness of everything God placed within you, you need others, too. After all, you are just one part, but together, we make a glorious *Body* to carry Christ to the whole world!

“Now *you are the body of Christ*, and each one of you is a part of it” 1 Corinthians 12:27 – Emphasis added.

“God placed all things under his (Jesus’) feet and appointed him to be head over everything for *the church, which is his body*, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way” Ephesians 1:22-23 – Emphasis added.

“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” Ephesians 4:11-13 – Emphasis added.

QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION:

1. *Read 1 Corinthians 12 in its entirety. We live in a culture that all too often pressures us to know all the answers, be proficient in all skills and to become our own island, not needing anyone else. How does it comfort you to know that you were not designed to figure everything out or be an expert at everything on your own but that you belong to a Body?*
2. *Since you are a part of the Body of Christ, ask God what part you are. What do you bring to the Body as a whole?*
3. *Who are some specific members of the Body of Christ whose gifts, perspective and anointing make you stronger? Take a moment and write them a note of encouragement!*

