

The Glorious Body Of Christ

Pastor Ken Birks

Section I – The Many Membered Body.

This study will focus on the "Glorious Body of Christ" beginning with "Christ's Many Membered Body," and then showing how our personalities, relationships, giftings and servanthood all work together to produce the Glorious Body of Christ in the earth.

Hebrews 10:5 *Therefore, when He came into the world, He said: "Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, but a body You have prepared for Me.*

When Jesus walked on this earth almost 2,000 years ago, He was the full embodiment of Christ, the manifestation of God in the flesh. He came in the express image of God the Father with the brightness of the Father's glory indelibly stamped upon His personage. He was given the Spirit without measure that He might fully express the Father's image and glory to all who witnessed His coming.

John 3:34-35 *For the one whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God gives the Spirit without limit. The Father loves the Son and has placed everything in his hands.(NIV)*

I. Jesus, the Manifestation of the Body of Christ.

- **Jesus was the anointed One sent from God to show us God in all of His majesty, power and grace.**

John 1:14 *And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.*

Jesus showed us the true character of God and what it means to truly love, care and minister to others with the fruits of the Spirit pouring forth out of His life. He showed us the awesome power and majesty of God through the gifts of the Spirit that were manifested in His life. He showed us what it is to operate in the authority of God through His anointed teaching, casting out demons and speaking with wisdom to those who opposed Him. He was certainly the embodiment of God in the flesh. He manifested God's power, character and authority in an amazing way. Yet He did all of this as a man totally submitted to the fullness of the Spirit working through His life.

Philippians 2:5-7 *Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a servant, and coming in the likeness of men.*

It's important to understand that when Jesus came to earth, He never ceased being God. He was and is the second person of the Godhead. But what He did do was this; He made Himself of no reputation by allowing Himself to be stripped of His power to act as God. He became dependent upon the Holy Spirit working through Him just as you and I must do. That's why it says, "*Let this same attitude be in you*". You see Jesus came to show us how to be the many membered Body of Christ.

- **The Divine Seed had to be planted in the earth.**

The time came when the Divine seed of God that had come to fruition in the life of Jesus had to be buried in the earth, so that it could bring forth a more glorious expression of God's fullness.

You see Jesus was limited by space and time. God needed a vehicle or expression of His image that was not limited by space and time. And for this reason Jesus had to die so that the Divine seed could multiply and bring forth a greater harvest of sons. His purpose was to bring forth a many membered body that would be much more glorious than the single expression of His Body in Jesus.

John 12:23-24 *But Jesus answered them, saying, "The hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified. "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain.*

II. The Purpose of Christ's Death.

- **Our sins had to be purged and atoned for.**

The death of Christ was an eminent part of God's overall plan to bring many sons to glory. In order for us to be made acceptable in God our sins had to be atoned for.

Hebrews 2:10-11 *For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the author of their*

salvation perfect through sufferings. For both He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified are all of one, for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren,

Hebrews 1:3 *...who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high...*

Revelation 1:5-6 *...and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth. To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.*

Before God breath His Holy Spirit into us and cause us to be born again of the incorruptible seed of God's own Divine nature, we, first of all, had to be cleansed by Christ's blood.

- **He broke down the middle wall of partition between us.**

Because mankind is made up of many races, tribes, cultures and other things that divide, the wall of partition between us had to be broken down. If we are to be united together in Him to bring forth a more glorious body than the body of Christ Himself, all of the issues that divide mankind had to be broken down. This too, was accomplished through His death!

Ephesians 2:14-16 *For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of division between us, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity.*

Through the death of Christ, God provided the means for the two greatest obstacles of His body coming together in the fullness of Him -- our sin and our differences.

III. The Many Membered Body.

- **God is calling for unity out of diversity.**

Romans 12:3-5 *For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think*

soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith. For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another.

When God's call of salvation goes out to people, it knows no boundaries. It goes out to all peoples of all races, cultures, backgrounds, genders, personalities, classes, political backgrounds, etc. God's idea is to create one new man out of all these diversities of people. This is where the fun begins and where the work of the cross comes into play.

God has given to each person in the body a measure of faith and gifting in Him, but for the body to come together as the glorious body of Christ that He has destined it to, there must be a meshing together.

1 Corinthians 12:13-14 *For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body; whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free; and have all been made to drink into one Spirit. For in fact the body is not one member but many.*

- **We must endeavor to walk together in unity now that we have been baptized into one body.**

Ephesians 4:1-7 *I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to have a walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift.*

In the midst of all of our diversities, we must now learn how to walk together in unity and have the same care for one another. This is what knits the body together and causes it to be the glorious body that God has ordained. We have many differences such as:

- | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------|-------------|--------------|
| ▪ personalities | ▪ race | ▪ politics | ▪ weaknesses |
| ▪ backgrounds | ▪ gender | ▪ giftings | ▪ class, eg. |
| eg. drug,
gang, good
kid, etc. | ▪ culture | ▪ strengths | rich, poor |

1 Corinthians 12:25 ...that there should be no schism in the body, but that the members should have the same care for one another.

▪ **How is this accomplished?**

In Christ we are not to know each other after the flesh, but rather after the new creation we have become.

2 Corinthians 5:16-17 Therefore, from now on, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know Him thus no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

God's desire is to have a fully functioning body that continually edifies itself in love with each member contributing to the overall growth and encouragement of the body.

Psalms 50:2 Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God will shine forth.

.....

Section II – Receiving One Another

In this study we are looking at the Glorious Body of Christ. God is doing a mighty work in the hearts of His people all over the earth. He is raising up His Body that shall be the most glorious entity on the face of the earth.

Psalms 45:13-15 The royal daughter is all glorious within the palace; Her clothing is woven with gold. She shall be brought to the King in robes of many colors; The virgins, her companions who follow her, shall be brought to You. With gladness and rejoicing they shall be brought; They shall enter the King's palace.

Revelation 19:7 "Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready."

Just as the Son came in the express image of the Father, the royal daughter or the bride is now being prepared in the same way. The day is coming when she will have on all of her wedding garments and shall appear in the brightness and the glory of the Father as well. She's being changed from glory to glory into His image.

2 Corinthians 3:18 *But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.*

This not only pertains to us as individuals, but it also pertains to the body as a whole. The many membered and diversified body shall be changed into the image of Christ, bearing the brightness and the glory of the Father.

In first section we saw how Jesus came in the full expression of the Father to give His life as a seed to bring many sons to glory -- giving birth to the many membered body. We saw that the many membered body of Christ is full of many diversities, but in Christ's death He broke down the walls of partition that divide. Some of the divisions and diversities that we looked at were as follows: Personalities, backgrounds, race, culture, gender, politics, giftings, strengths, weaknesses and class.

In today's message I want to talk more specifically on the importance of receiving and accepting one another no matter what the difference may be. We are all part of the body and have baptized into the same body and have been given a grace and gifting that relates to the whole.

Ephesians 4:7 *But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift.*

Ephesians 4:13...*till we all come to the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ...*

When we receive and accept one another we further release the grace and gifting in each other's lives and this adds to the glorification of the body of Christ. If we are to see the Body of Christ come into the stature of the fullness of Christ as it says here, there must be a receiving and accepting of one another.

I. Receiving And Accepting One Another.

Romans 15:5-7 *Now may the God of patience and comfort grant you to be like-minded toward one another, according to Christ Jesus, that you may with one mind and one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore receive one another, just as Christ also received us, to the glory of God.*

There are many things that go into making the body work and function in the manner in which God has designed and ordained it. The primary ingredient is not necessarily our giftings or talents, but it is our love for one another.

1 Corinthians 12:31 *But earnestly desire the best gifts. And yet I show you a more excellent way.*

Colossians 3:14 *But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection.*

- What does it mean to really love one another and receive one another in the body of Christ? This is what we will want to look at more specifically.

1. We Must Understand That We Belong To One Another.

Romans 12:5 *So in Christ we who are many members form one body, and each member belongs to all the others (NIV).*

The nourishment and the blessings that God desires to pour into our lives often flow through the life of the body. The more we are connected to one another through a sense of belonging the easier it is for us to receive from God. Paul warns the Colossians about this.

Colossians 2:19...*and not holding fast to the Head, from whom all the body, nourished and knit together by joints and ligaments, grows with the increase which is from God.*

When we are baptized into the Body of Christ we enter into covenant with the body where we are now being joined together to form one body. This means we give up our personal rights and come into a relationship with one another whereby we actually belong to one another. When I have a true understanding that I belong to you and you belong to me, it makes it easier for me to receive and accept you no matter who you are, race, background, gender, strength, weakness, etc.

2. We Must Recognize Our Need For Each Other.

If we are to fully receive one another and the grace and gifting God has put into each person's life, we must recognize our need for what each person has to offer as another member of the Body.

1 Corinthians 12:21 *And the eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you"; nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you."*

Our problem is that we have been groomed in a society that breeds independence and some of us honestly do not feel the need to be connected to the other members of the Body in the way Christ has designed it. For us to remain in this mode will mean a lack of growth and development in our faith. The truth is the more we begin to drink of God's Spirit and accept the changes He is bringing into our lives, the more we will begin to realize our dependence for one another. His Spirit will create the need within us.

Circumstances will push us beyond our limits and we will need the care and concern of those around us to be healthy and walking in God's blessing and inheritance. God's blessings do not flow through a spirit of independence.

3. We Must Maintain a Forgiving and Forebearing Attitude.

It's important to recognize that we are all imperfect and incapable of doing and saying the right thing all the time. We are going to offend one another from time to time and even come to dislike certain things about the people we are related to. This is where forgiveness and forbearance have to kick in.

Ephesians 4:32 *And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ also forgave you.*

Colossians 3:12-13 *Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do.*

The natural thing to do when these things come up is to withdraw or put up walls in the relationship, but God's way is to continue to build the relationship in a godly way.

Proverbs 27:17 *As iron sharpens iron, so a man sharpens the countenance of his friend.*

Jesus was able to look beyond our sins and shortcomings when He received us; and we must do the same for each other. We are no longer to focus on the natural man, but rather on the new man that God is creating.

2 Corinthians 5:16 *Therefore, from now on, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know Him thus no longer.*

It's important to understand that there are many hurting people, who have come into the Body of Christ after years of abuse from the world. Hurting people have a tendency to hurt others, but as you love and forgive them in the midst of their hurt by continually receiving and accepting them, you become an agent of healing in their lives.

4. Esteem Others More Important Than Yourself.

Philippians 2:3-4 *Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.*

By esteeming the needs and concerns of others more than your own, you automatically enter into a relationship of receiving and accepting others.

5. Be Hospitable To One Another.

1 Peter 4:8-10 *And above all things have fervent love for one another, for "love will cover a multitude of sins." Be hospitable to one another without grumbling. As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.*

Romans 12:13...*distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality.*

It's pretty hard to receive and accept one another if you never take the time to be hospitable to each other. Take the time to invite various members of the body to your home for dessert or something. February is Hospitality month. Invite someone over you don't know very well.

Let's keep in mind it is only as we receive and accept one another that the Body of Christ is truly joined together and can become the glorious body of Christ that God ordained.

.....

Section III – Spiritual Gifts & the Body of Christ

In this study we are looking at the glorious Body of Christ. God is desiring the Body of Christ to express the fullness of Christ throughout the earth.

Ephesians 1:19-23...and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come. And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

God's desire is to present His church unto Christ as His Bride and that it would be a glorious church without spot or wrinkle or any such thing.

Ephesians 5:25-27 *Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish.*

As we saw in the first section, Jesus was the total expression of the Body of Christ with the full measure of God's Spirit working in Him. He expressed God's image in character, power, and authority. He had all of the gifts of the Spirit working in Him with the fruit of the Spirit fully developed in His life. God's authority was also fully released in His life as He was the apostle, prophet, pastor, teacher and evangelist.

In this section, I want to talk about the operation of the gifts of the Spirit and how important they are in relationship to the glorified Body of Christ.

1 Corinthians 4:20 *For the kingdom of God is not in word but in power.*

1 Corinthians 1:7...so that you come short in no gift, eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ...

1 Corinthians 12:1 *Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be ignorant:*

1 Peter 4:10 *As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.*

I. The Gifts Are For The Benefit Of The Whole.

The apostle Paul emphasized that the gifts of the Holy Spirit are for use within the Body of Christ, and each manifestation of the Spirit, whatever it may be, is for the common good or the profit of all. When the Holy Spirit manifests Himself through a gift to someone, it is not for the sake of that person, but for the good or profit of the whole body. Spiritual gifts, then, are given wholly for ministering to other people--though the ministry may be to one person, to several or to the whole body as the Lord knows and meets the needs. We see this in verses 4-7 of chapter twelve of 1 Corinthians.

1. God Wants To Manifest His Presence & Power Through The Gifts.

1 Corinthians 12:4-7 *Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all:*

There are two words in this passage of scripture that help us to see God's intent and purpose for these gifts and how He expects them to work in our lives.

- **God who works in all.**

The word “**works**” in verse six means active operation, effectual, powerful to be active, efficient, fervent, be mighty in, show forth.

- **Manifestation of the Spirit.**

The word “**manifestation**” in verse seven means to make visible, clear and known. The true meaning according to Vine's is to uncover, lay bare, reveal.

With these two definitions in mind, we can see that it is God's desire to be fervent and mighty in showing forth and making His power visible through the gifts of the Spirit. We as His people are to be fervent, active, effectual, efficient and powerful in manifesting the gifts of the Spirit for the benefit of the Body of Christ as a whole.

2. We Have Been Given a Measure of Christ's Gifting to Benefit the Whole.

Ephesians 4:7 *But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift.*

1 Corinthians 12:11 *But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.*

Romans 12:5-6 ...so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them...

Let's keep in mind that Jesus gave us many examples of how the gifts of the Spirit are to operate as He operated in all the gifts with the full measure.

II. The Gifts Of The Spirit And Their Function.

This is not intended to be an extensive study on the gifts of the Spirit, but rather a brief description to show you how they relate to the Body as a whole.

A spiritual gift can be defined as *"a special attribute given by the Spirit to every member of the Body according to God's grace for used within the context of the Body"*.

Spiritual gifts are not latent talents or trained abilities brought to heightened expression.

Each Christian has been given at least one spiritual gift from God to use for His glory and for growth and care of His Church, the Body of Christ. A manifestation of the Holy Spirit may occur through someone regardless of background, experience or education.

1 Corinthians 12:8-10 for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues.

The gifts of the Holy Spirit can be broken down into four areas: The revelation gifts, power gifts, vocal gifts and service gifts, which are found in Romans 12.

1. The Revelation Gifts.

The revelation gifts are the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge and the gift of discerning of Spirits. Collectively these three gifts are supernatural manifestations of the Spirit of God. Through them we may know anything God chooses to reveal. They are fragments of God's knowledge, wisdom and discernment to meet a particular need, answer a particular challenge or to

determine the source of spiritual activity in a person's life as to whether it be human, demonic or divine.

Jesus gave us many examples of how these gifts were used. eg. the woman caught in adultery -- word of wisdom, the woman at the well -- word of knowledge, the boy who was convulsing -- discerning of spirits.

2. The Power Gifts.

The power gifts are the gift of faith, working miracles and the gifts of healing. They are supernatural manifestations given by God for a particular time in a particular place. These three gifts will show forth God's glory, His power, His greatness, His majesty and His victory over sickness, diseases in supplying the needs of His people. The power gifts are for deliverance and overcoming nature itself.

The gift of faith is miraculous, like all other gifts of the Spirit. It is a supernatural manifestation which miraculously gives a sure of assurance and confidence, which sometimes arises within a person faced with a specific situation or need. eg. Jesus and the fig tree. He received a word of faith and as a result He cursed the tree and it withered and died. Peter and John received and spoke the word of faith and as a result a lame man was healed. The gift of faith usually precedes healings and miracles.

Miracles and healings not only benefit the person who is receiving, but they also help turn the hearts of unbelievers towards God. This is a good reason to desire these gifts.

3. The Vocal Gifts.

The vocal gifts are tongues, interpretation of tongues and prophecy. They are supernatural manifestations of the Spirit of which God can speak through man anything which He chooses to tell. The gift of tongues and interpretation of tongues are inseparable, because when a tongue comes forth in the congregational setting it must be interpreted.

1 Corinthians 14:27 *If anyone speaks in a tongue, let there be two or at the most three, each in turn, and let one interpret.*

The gift of interpretation of tongues is the God-given inspiration to speak in the language of the listeners, giving them the dynamic equivalent of that which was spoken in tongues. Interpretation of tongues is just that, an interpretation. It is

not a translation. Prophecy is an anointed utterance that communicates with and reveals God's mind and purpose to His people through a Spirit-filled individual.

1 Corinthians 14:3-4 *But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men. He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church.*

An important thing to keep in mind concerning the gift of prophecy is that there are levels of prophecy. There is a level in which the saints of God are encouraged to be released in, which is basically for edification, comfort and exhortation. There is another level of prophecy that is reserved for those who are prophets, which involves direction for people's lives and for the church.

- **These gifts are all for the edifying of the church.**

1 Corinthians 14:26 *How is it then, brethren? Whenever you come together, each of you has a psalm, has a teaching, has a tongue, has a revelation, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification.*

4. The Service Gifts.

Romans 12:6-8 *Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith; or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.*

Some of the gifts listed here are also listed in 1 Corinthians 12, but there are other gifts listed here that were not in that list, which are referred to as the service gifts. The service gifts build us up in love, prepare us for effective kingdom service and enable us to live between the miracles. These gifts actually have a greater capacity for consistently building the church.

There are no major or minor gifts in the charismatic outpouring of gifts. All the gifts are to be cherished, coveted, faithfully stewarded and graciously utilized as products of God's unmerited favor - Romans 12:6. The gifts listed here that were not in the other list are as follows: leadership, hospitality, ministry, giving, mercy, exhortation and teaching. These are all God-given abilities to do what the gift suggests.

III. Keys To Developing These Gifts In Our Lives.

1. There Must Be A Holy Ambition and Desire.

In *1 Corinthian 12:1* we are told to “earnestly desire the best gifts” and in *Chapter 14:1* we are told again to “desire spiritual gifts and especially that of prophecy” and in *verse 39* we are told to “earnestly desire to prophesy.” **This is a Holy ambition.**

The Bible tells us in *James* that faith without works is dead. Unless our desire for spiritual gifts is put to an active response, it will always remain an unfulfilled desire. *Romans 12:6* reminds us to “use them.”

2. There Must Be An Attitude of Expectation.

Hebrews 11:6 But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

3. Practice, Practice, Practice.

No one is going to be perfect when attempting to begin to function in your spiritual gift. But the more you are used, the more you begin to understand how it works in your life and ministry. *Romans 12:6*.

Ephesians 4:16 from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.

When we are faithful to function in the gift and the ministry God has given to us, it helps the body to be more glorious.

.....

Section IV – Ministries & The Body of Christ

In this study we are focusing on the glory God wants to reveal in the Body of Christ and the issues in the church that must be embraced for God to reveal His glory in the manner in which Jesus manifested the Father's glory.

Psalms 102:13 You will arise and have mercy on Zion; For the time to favor her, Yes, the set time, has come. {16} For the LORD shall build up Zion; He shall appear in His glory.

I believe we have entered into the time that has been set by God to manifest His glory in His church. This is something that is happening all over the earth and I believe God wants to favor this local church as well as any church throughout the land. Therefore we must prepare our hearts for His glory.

Isaiah 60:1-2 *Arise, shine; For your light has come! and the glory of the LORD is risen upon you. For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and deep darkness the people; but the LORD will arise over you, and His glory will be seen upon you.*

In the first section we focused on the many diversities within the Body of Christ and how Jesus came to break down the walls that divide. In the second section we focused on the importance of receiving one another in all of our diversities. And then in the third section we saw how the gifts of the Spirit must be recognized and released for the Body of Christ to grow and arise in God's glory.

In this section, I want to talk about the importance of each member finding his or her place in the Body of Christ and operating in the ministry God has given to each of us. It will take members being knit together in ministry to bring forth the glory God desires to pour out on His church.

1 Corinthians 12:18 *But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased.*

I. We Have All Been Given Ministries.

1. Some Are Called To Leadership Ministries.

Leadership ministries are very important in the local church and are very much needed. There may be some of you here today who are called to one of these ministries.

1 Corinthians 12:27-28 *Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually. And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues.*

Ephesians 4:11-12 *And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ...*

The five-fold ministry gifts have been placed in the church for the purpose of equipping and government and for bringing the Body of Christ into the unity of the faith as well as into maturity. They are also to bring doctrinal stability to the Body of Christ and to help see the Body knitted and joined together.

These gifts can be either in the category of elders or deacons and are filled by those who meet up to the elder and deacon qualifications in 1 Timothy and Titus. Elders and deacons are very much needed to help in the overseeing of the church. These are offices one can desire and work towards.

1 Timothy 3:1 *This is a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work.*

2. The Ministry of a Deacon.

Just as elders oversee the spiritual matters of a church, deacons are needed to oversee the natural and physical elements of a church.

Acts 6:2-4 *Then the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, "It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and serve tables. "Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business; "but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word."*

A deacon is to serve wherever a need may arise. If no one is available to perform the ministry, he is committed to doing it.

3. The Ministry of the Saints.

It is the saints of God who are called to do the major work and ministry in the Body of Christ. They are called to perform in a wide variety of tasks and ministries that enable the local church to reach out to the community around it.

Mark 13:34 *"It is like a man going to a far country, who left his house and gave authority to his servants, and to each his work, and commanded the doorkeeper to watch.*

It doesn't matter who we are, if God has called us unto salvation, He has also called us to serve and minister in some capacity in the local expression of the Body of Christ.

2 Corinthians 3:5-6 *Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as being from ourselves, but our sufficiency is from God, who also made us sufficient as ministers of the new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.*

II. Determining Your Area Of Ministry.

1. Discover What Your Gift Is.

It is important to understand that gifts and ministries are different. The gift God has given to you is to be used in the ministry He has for you.

1 Peter 4:10 *As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.*

If you are not sure what your gift is, I encourage you to take the Spiritual questionnaire and it will help you to determine what ministry you are best suited for.

2. Find Out What Ministries Are Available.

There are always ministries available in a local church. Find out which ones are available and be a volunteer and then do it with all your might.

Ecclesiastes 9:10 *Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might; for there is no work or device or knowledge or wisdom in the grave where you are going.*

▪ Ministries Available – These are just a few.

- | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| ▪ Elders & deacons | ▪ Evangelists | ▪ Children's workers | ▪ Building maintenance |
| ▪ Home group leaders & assistants | ▪ Visitor follow-up | ▪ Musicians Singers | |
| ▪ Youth workers | ▪ Convalescent ministry | ▪ Ushers & greeters | |
| ▪ Home visitation | ▪ Church office help | ▪ Drama | |
| | ▪ Intercessors | | |

Ephesians 4:16 *from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.*

IV. Concluding Remarks.

I hope this study has been a real benefit to you and that you are able to get a vision of what God has in store for you as you press into your personal calling and destiny in the Glorious Body of Christ.