

Sunday November 11, 2018
Sermon Series: UNSELFIE: Serving In A Selfie World
“Serve Me” Pt 2
I Corinthians 12:11-26

Video intro.

Turn to I Corinthians 12.

This is part 2 of “Serve Me.” ...God’s response to someone who says “Here I am, send me.”

- Abide in Me
- Love Like Me
- Identify with Me
- Serve Me (emphasis on Spiritual gifts)

I Corinthians 12:11-13

These verses teach us that every believer is spiritually gifted by God for serving Him. That gifting for ministry occurs after salvation. We have all been baptized into one body **vs 13**. (not water baptism here.) Think of this imagery as more like a spiritual pot of soup. Lots of diverse ingredients all put together. Individually, each soup ingredient is valuable, but by itself, it is just a one-dimensional ingredient. But strategically merged with other ingredients *together*... what you have is a wonderful soup, full of diverse ingredients of different consistencies, shapes, colors and tastes. And the end result is something truly special and satisfying! That is what this baptism of the Spirit accomplishes at salvation. You get put into the “spiritual pot of soup” – functioning as an important ingredient in the overall product.

Vs 13 says that this body of Christ is One – Jews or Greeks (ethnically diverse), slaves or free (different social and economic backgrounds). And though things like this are often dividing lines in our world, they create a fantastic context for the unified body of Christ.

I. **Embrace Unity Amidst God-Given Diversity**

Comparison to the physical body. The physical body struggles when there is a deficiency or abnormality. The physical body is entirely affected if there is an illness in an organ, or an injury to a bone or an amputation of a limb. Not only is that member of the body affected, the entire body is affected. But when a person is healthy and is not struggling with an illness, injury or abnormality – that is when the entire body is at its best and accomplishes the most.

This is how God has designed the body of Christ. Many members – 1 body. Many functions, 1 purpose. Many parts, 1 unit.

The church should celebrate its God-given Diversity

- Race
- Age
- Gender
- Spiritual Giftedness

When we are one-dimensional in any of these areas, we limit our ability to fulfill our mission of connect, grow, serve.

If we expect everyone to be a cookie-cutter version of each other, we'll be in trouble. Take for instance our attire. While the Bible speaks of modesty for both men and women, it does not dictate the color, the style, the type of fabric, or the expected accessories. I love that we have an environment that is a judgment-free zone about this issue. A person could wear jeans or shorts or a suit, a dress or pants, flip flops or dress shoes, a tie or no collar and nobody cares. We're not here to gauge spirituality or maturity on what someone does or doesn't wear. You might say we are ok with diversity. Even that we support it. But there are a lot of Christian environments where that is not the case. In a lot of environments, you are judged if you don't look the part. You'll sadly never be actually be accepted into the body if you dress different than the cookie-cutter norm of that environment. A big deal has been made over something that's not a big deal. In those contexts, the members of the body are only embraced and

celebrated when they all conform and look the same. Diversity is discouraged.

We could apply this reasoning to many areas of community life, but the point of the Scriptures here is this: The Body of Christ is made to be diverse – but it's also made to honor the Lord in that diversity.

If our attempts at diversity violate Scripture – particularly New Testament commands, then we are not honoring the Lord. There are lots of areas of diversity in our world that do violate God's standards as defined in the Bible. We must always call sin – sin and be unified as we do so.

But, regardless of a person's spiritual gifts, age, gender, race, economic status, music preference, dress habits, hairstyles, whether they have tattoos or not, piercings or not – regardless of any of those things – *we have been baptized into one body by the same Spirit. We must never allow areas of diversity to bring division.* The Body is intended to be diverse so that it can accomplish more in the hands of God. We must embrace unity amidst our God-given diversity.

I Cor 12:14-20

II. Members Should Be Secure In Their Role in the Body

We can't all be the same. We can't all be the mouth or the eyes or the hands or the feet. If the whole body was an eye, how would we speak? If the whole body was an ear, how would we walk? If the whole body was a foot how would we smell? *Obviously pretty bad.* 😊

Why can't a nose be 12 inches long? *Because then it would be a foot. Lol.*

Each part of the body must know its role based on its gifting and be secure in that.

Avoid measuring your worth and value by comparing yourself to someone whom God has called and gifted differently than you. If another person seems to be gifted in a more outwardly prominent manner than you – that's fine. You're not a lesser part of the body if that isn't God's calling on you.

One member might be spiritually gifted in hospitality. That person might be a super friendly greeter. Is that person of more value than the sound tech who isn't in the public eye? They're both very important. Experts say, the average guest knows within 5 minutes whether or not they're coming back. Both the greeter and the sound tech have a lot to do with that. They're both valuable in their own way – not just for the guests, but for all of us.

One member of the body might be a handyman who is great at fixing and building things. Another member might be great in the kitchen with culinary skill. Another might be skilled at computer work. Is one of greater value in the body? Does one belong and the other not belong?

One member might be financially well off and another looking for a job to make ends meet. If they are both gifted teachers or children's ministry volunteers, is one of more value or worth to the body than the other?

God's word is clear – regardless of how God places a person in the body, *we are all needed*. We all should feel secure in God's Calling and God's gifting. **Our 10th value is that every Jesus follower has a gift that we cannot fully function without.** Whether you are gifted to serve in a prominent role or a supportive, behind the scenes role, you are valued, you are wanted, and you are needed.

I Cor 12:21-25

III. God Honors Behind-the-Scenes Ministry (support ministry)

Nearly everyone who serves in the church does some degree of behind-the-scenes ministry... stuff that no one else sees or notices that enables others to fulfill their calling.

For instance, every Sunday, we have **coffee bar volunteers** who are here – often before 7 AM. And before they've served you as you come in at 9:07 or 10:38, they have served our worship and tech team for their early rehearsal around 7. No one sees that. No one knows about it. But our worship team loves it. And they need it. I've heard some of them try to sing or play before they've had their early morning caffeine. 😊 One behind the scenes ministry

helps a visible/prominent ministry succeed – because when they succeed, we all accomplish the church’s mission.

Our sound and tech team is a tremendous blessing. It is a behind-the-scenes role that helps us all so much. We have people in the office who spend hours making these slides. We have volunteers who come in on Fridays to program all of that. We have people dedicated to the computer, the light board and the sound board during all of our rehearsals and the services themselves. There are real hours put in and they put their heart and soul into it because what they do behind-the-scenes really speaks and really matters. We need new volunteers who love technology who will join this valuable behind the scenes team. Put *sound or tech team* on a connection card!

Our **custodial staff** is a tremendous blessing. They are here early and they are here late. They attend to restrooms. (there are 23 toilets between this building and the Fuse building). There is 40,000 square feet of space in this building and 7,000 in the Fuse. That is a lot of area to clean and maintain. From trash cans and doorknobs, to sinks and mirrors, to carpets and windows, we all want a thorough and quality job to be done behind the scenes. **One of our values (#3) is that we strive for excellence in everything we do.** The cleanliness and condition of our facilities needs to always reflect that. We need new additional people to join our part time custodial staff to help us always improve the surroundings where we worship and serve. Connection card.

These less prominent ministry roles give greater credibility and effectiveness to the more prominent ministry roles. **God Honors behind-the-scenes ministries of support.** We in the body are co-dependent on one another in our quest to Connect, Grow, Serve.

We all can’t do everything. We need to be willing to do anything in ministry. But what the area that we serve in should align with our spiritual gift mix.

Read Philippians 2:5-11

Jesus stepped up and met the need in our lives. And we become truly Christlike when we step up and serve Him.

He did this because People are so important. Have you received Him as Savior? Are you carrying out His mission of Connect, Grow, Serve?

Song. **Take My Life**

New Members testimonies

- Rhonda Anderson
- John & Donna Lurtz