

## **“The Church is Like an Embassy”**

1 Corinthians 12:12-27

Sunday, March 3, 2024

**Introduction:** The United States has embassies throughout the world.

- The people who work at the United States embassies are to live out the values of the United States.
- Each embassy is like a little bit of heaven a long way from home.

The church is like an embassy.

- The members of the church should live out the values of heaven.
- The members of the church should be like a little bit of heaven a long way from home.

**T.S.** In our Scripture today, God uses the analogy of the human body to explain how church members should live out the values of heaven.

**Text:** 1 Corinthians 12:12-27

- The word “body” occurs 18 times in the NKJ and 16 times in the NLT.
- Three times the word “body” refers to the church—the body of Christ.
- The other times the word “body” refers to the human body.
- “Jesus is head of the body, the church...” (Colossians 1:18).
- “Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually” (1 Cor. 12:27).
- The church, the spiritual body of Christ, is formed as believers are immersed by Christ with the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:13).

- At your salvation, the Holy Spirit is placed with you, and you become a member of Christ's body, the church.

Now the human body has many parts (1. Cor. 12:14).

- Some are external—hands arms, eyes, ears, legs, feet, etc.
- Some are internal—kidneys, liver, gallbladder, systems—digestive system, respiratory system, circulatory system, nervous system, the skeletal system, etc.).
- When all these are functioning properly, the human body is well. When one or more is not functioning, the body is not well.

The same is true with the spiritual body. When all the members of the body of Christ are functioning properly, the church is alive and well!

**Each member should be a (functioning) (member) of the body of Christ—the church.**

- The human body is alive and well when all the parts function.
- The same is true with the spiritual body—the church.

**Application:** Think what could happen in our church if every member functioned as God's word teaches!!

1. Prayer would be priority.
2. Daily time with God would be pleasure.
3. Sharing Christ would be a pattern of life.
4. Confession of sin would be personal.
5. Forgiveness would be practiced.
6. Tithing would be practiced.
7. Church attendance would be persistent.

**Application:** We classify church members as active or inactive. There is another classification that should be added. We should add a functioning church member. You can be an active church member and not be functioning church member.

**T.S.** To be a functioning church member you must guard against functioning on your own.

- Guard against (functioning) on (your) (own) (1 Corinthians 12:27).

**Illustration:** When I came here 34 years ago to be the pastor, there were ministers and ministry assistants who operated on their own. There were some members, not many, but some doing the same thing. They had their own agenda. In every church, there will be some who function on their own. They do not support or participate in what the church is doing. They do their own thing. They miss the blessing, and they hinder the blessings God has for His church.

- Guard against being a (detached) member.

**Illustration:** If the human body has a detached body part it is not what it would be if the part was not detached. The same is true with the spiritual body of Christ—the church.

**Illustration:** To the active, inactive members, and functioning members, we need to add another classification of members—detached members.

**Example:** An example of a detached member is a light bulb that is burned out. The bulb is in the socket, but no light comes through it. It just takes up space and provides no benefit.

**Application:** Detached members lose out on the blessing God has for them and burn out like a burned-out light bulb.

**Personal Word:** Regularly streaming church when you are physically able to come to church is a detached member. They miss the blessing of others and they miss blessing others.

- Guard against wrongly equating (visibility) with (value).

**Illustration:** The physical body has many parts (1 Cor. 12:12). The invisible is often the most valuable. My little finger is visible. My heart is invisible. My heart is more valuable than my little finger.

**Application:** In the body of Christ—the church, we wrongly equate visible with value (1 Corinthians 12:22).

**Example:** The video production room at our church is a good example. They are invisible, but they are valuable.