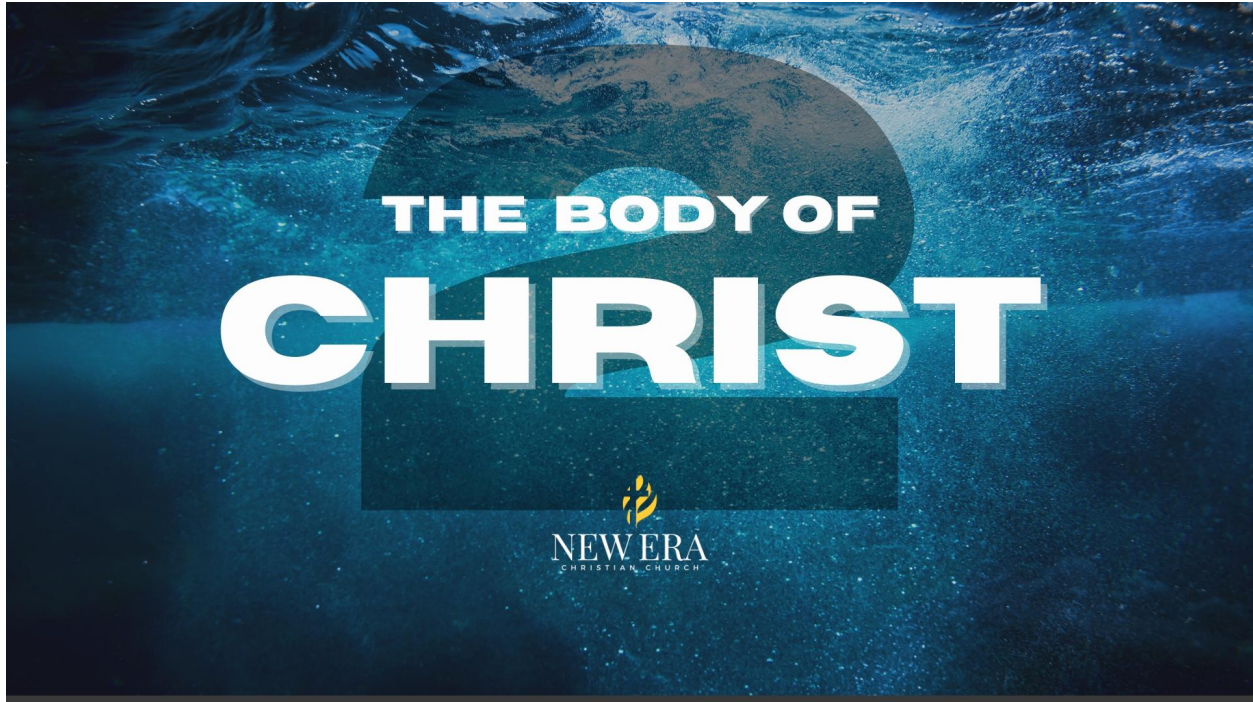




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1. What is the Body of Christ?

The Body of Christ” is a metaphor for the Church (**all those who are truly saved**). The Church is called “one body in Christ” in (**Romans 12:5**), “one body” in (**1 Corinthians 10:17**), “the body of Christ” in (**1 Corinthians 12:27**) and (**Ephesians 4:12**), and “the body” in (**Hebrews 13:3**). The Church is also equated with “the body” of Christ in (**Ephesians 5:23**) and (**Colossians 1:24**).

Paul wrote to the Corinthian church, a local body of believers, ***you are the body of Christ***, and individual members of it.

(**1 Corinthians 12:27**) Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.

The Human body is a great metaphor for the church: Paul uses this picture over and over again in the Scriptures to **describe the Church as the body of believers** in relationship to Christ, as the head of the church.

2. Why did God compare the Body of Christ to our physical body?

- ***The Human body is a great metaphor for the church***: Paul uses this picture over and over again in the Scriptures to **describe the Church as the body of believers** in relationship to Christ, as the head of the church.
- Just as your physical body needs every part in order to experience a normal and healthy life, the church depends on every member in order to live a normal, healthy church life.
- No member can say of any other member, "**I don't need you.**"
- Apart from the other members of the church (***the body***) you will not be able to experience the fullness of life God intends for you.
- When one member is missing or is not functioning as God designed, the rest of the body will miss the fullness of life God provides for the church.

3. How do we determine our place in the Body?

- God places members in the body as it pleases Him. If He makes a person an "eye," the Holy Spirit will equip him to see. If God makes a person an "ear," the Holy Spirit will equip her to hear. If He makes a person a "hand," the Holy Spirit will equip him to function as a hand.
- The Holy Spirit's work enables people to function in the assignment where God puts them in the body. Not every member is an apostle, a prophet, a teacher, and so forth, but each one has a God-given assignment.
- Each one serves where God puts him or her in the body so the whole body works together as it should.

4. Why do you think so many members of churches don't understand how God intends for the church to function?

Our thinking

a. I think we should clean up our church's rolls and get rid of the names of people who don't attend anymore.

b. They got themselves into trouble by breaking the law. It serves them right to spend time in jail.

c. I think I should be elected as the chairman of the deacons. After all, I have been a member of this church for 25 years.

d. *If I can't be a Sunday School teacher, I'll quit coming to this church.*

e. *I don't care that the rest of the church thinks God is leading them to ask me to serve in that role. I have never been a _____, and I know I couldn't do it. I don't have the necessary skills."*

God's word (Answer)

a. *The body is not complete without all the members God has given the body.*

- The first question this church needs to ask is, are these people members of the body of Christ—are they Christians? If God added them to your body because that is where He wanted them (**1 Cor. 12:18**), do we have a right to delete them? A church needs all the members God has given the body. This church should pray and ask God to show them how to reclaim these wayward members into active fellowship.

b. *Members of the body should have equal concern for one another.*

- When one member suffers, everyone feels the pain (1 Cor. 12:26), even if the suffering is the consequence of sin. Members of Christ's body are commanded to love one another. Read 1 Corinthians 13 to see how love should respond in the body. We should show concern for all members of the body.

c. *Members of the body do not determine their roles in the body.*

- This could be a self-centered desire. We serve in the church by God's assignment. **We do not choose our own function.** If God intends for you to serve in a particular capacity, the Head, Jesus Christ, can bring the rest of the body to recognize that. Will you trust Him to do that through your church?

d. *Members of the body do not determine their roles in the body.*

- Church members need to be sensitive to what others sense God may be leading them to do. Remember, God is the One to decide where someone functions in the body. Trust Him to let the body know. A church-leadership positions must prayerfully discern God's will. Both the individual and the church must carefully seek God's will and trust Him to make His will clear.

e. *The Spirit decides whom to give assignments and enables members to accomplish His work.*

- The Holy Spirit enables people to carry out any assignment God gives them. Just because you have never done something before or because you don't think you have the skills does

not necessarily mean God is not giving you that assignment. Moses gave some objections like this one when God was calling him at the burning bush. Take very seriously your assignment in the body. Talk to the Lord about what and where you should function in the body and trust God to guide you.

- Be willing to respond as to the Lord. Serve with all your heart as to the Lord. That assignment in your church could become an exciting place of God's activity. Don't do it just to fill a job. Do it because your Lord has led you to.

5. Do you think God is concerned with the condition of the Body?

God's Concerns for the Body of Christ

1. Jesus is the Head of the body. The body ought to be Christ-centered.
2. God wants the body to maintain unity and oneness of heart.
3. Love like that described in **(1 Corinthians 13)** should prevail in the church. Members of the body ought to love one another as they love themselves.

a. What is one thing you think God would like to change in the way your church functions as a body?

b. What is one thing you think God wants you to do differently as you relate to other members of the body of Christ—your church?

(John 17:20–21) My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message,²¹ that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me.

SUMMARY STATEMENTS

- *Jesus is the Head of the body.*
- *God is concerned about the body maintaining unity.*
- *Godlike love ought to prevail in the body.*

- *God decides where I ought to function in the body.*
- *I understand God's will for my church when I listen to the whole body express what it is experiencing in the life of that body.*
- *Each member is precious to God.*