

1 Corinthians 12:12-31

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[0 : 0 0] There's not 31 chapters in 1 Corinthians, okay? It's actually 1 Corinthians chapter 12, verses 12 through 31. So there you go. Now you know the text this morning.

It's amazing what happens when you're trying to type those things. And I try to do it with clarity of mind. Sometimes my mind gets ahead of my hands, so to say.

But it is good to be together with you. So thankful. You know, two different times. As we're making our way through the book of 1 Corinthians, I was really praying through it as the Lord began to put this particular book on my heart and mind.

I was like, Lord, that's a really difficult book. And that's a really hard book. And he said, well, yes. As a matter of fact, they all are. Just because it's difficult doesn't mean we should avoid it. And I remember thinking to myself, there's a lot of things we will encounter in this book that is really just, I'm not, well, for lack of a better word, it's not in my wheelhouse, right?

It's not very comfortable. It's not easy text to get into. And it's not really something that we're very familiar with, even in our own, though we may have it in our Bible study, hearing it from the pulpit.

[1 : 0 3] And just really one of those things, he's just praying through, Lord, I really want to make sure this isn't my desire, but your leading. He made it very clear this is where he wanted us. And two different times since our course through this book, I really don't have to get into it, I've had people that were here, just happened to be here on particular Sundays, and it really spoke to their situation where they were at.

And to me, that's always an amazing thing to see how God wires it. I've had people say, you know, Pastor, you don't know me. I'm not here. I'm really not ever here. I'm just kind of making my way through and had the opportunity to be here.

This dealt exactly with what I had going on in my mind. This is really just confirming what God was telling me. And just really those things amazed me. Martin Lloyd-Jones had it right.

He said that the public declaration of the word of God is a spiritual exercise. This is why D. Martin Lloyd-Jones, one of the best preachers of all time, has a lot written on preaching and preachers.

One of my favorite handbooks in all of preachers is preaching and preachers. Really, it's a challenging book, and it's a hard book, but you will not find, unlike Charles Spurgeon or many of the others, you will not find many of Martin Lloyd-Jones' sermons written into book form.

[2 : 1 0] Though I appreciate that. I can read a lot of Tozer's sermons, and I read a lot of other sermons, but Martin Lloyd just wouldn't let that happen. He said, because preaching is a spiritual exercise. It's when the man of God stands before the people of God, and he declares the word of God, and the spirit of God speaks to the people.

That's why it's so important when we gather together, right? And so even though there were people that would transcribe or attempt to transcribe his messages, even in his day, he would not let them be printed in papers. He would not let them be written in book forms, because he said, you're not going to separate the spiritual from the practical.

And he said, really, there's no place to read a sermon as you would read a newspaper. It really struck with me, and it's amazing, because that is exactly what goes on. When we gather together, the Bible says there are two or more gathered together, the spirit of God is there as well.

I anticipate and I expect a spiritual exercise to take place, not because of who I am, not even because of who you are, but because of what the word of God is and what the spirit of God is.

And we come together to have an encounter with him. And to me, that is so amazing. I appreciate the affirmation that I have for that as I make my way through. So this morning, our text will be in 1 Corinthians chapter 12, starting in verse 12, which is where we left off.

[3 : 20] Reading to the end of the 12th chapter, we are about to get into a very familiar chapter to us, 1 Corinthians 13, the chapter of love. But 1 Corinthians 13, in case you missed it, is set between chapters 12 and chapters 14.

It's there for a reason. It's not there to be pulled out. And even though it is very applicable in weddings, I even use it in pre-marriage counseling, and it's applicable in that point, its place and its intended purpose was a church.

And Paul began addressing things that were going on with the corporate gathering. He is moved from dealing with individual believers and dealing with their problems and the matters that they had at hand, talking about really the corporate gathering together of the saints.

He spoke of it in the 11th chapter, even in their coming together for the taking of the Lord's Supper, coming together for eating of what they called love feasts or fellowship meals, and how they should have these the right way and the proper way, and keeping everything in right perspective.

In chapter 12, he talks about the corporate gathering. And when they come to exercise their spiritual giftedness with one another. And in context, this 12, 13, and 14, there was one gift that was being magnified above every other gift.

[4 : 25] We'll get to it. And this thing was being exalted and really was taking preeminence when it should not have been taken preeminence. And what happens in the 13th chapter is that Paul kind of levels everything out.

He says, the greatest of these things is love. And he is speaking of the love of Christ, the love we have for one another. And then he goes into the 14th chapter of just the application of the spiritual gifts. But he's dealing with it really in particular in chapter 12, where he's talking about the body of Christ.

Last week when we were together in the first 11 verses of chapter 12, we looked at the fact that the body of Christ is a gifted body of believers. It's a gifted body of believers. That you have, the moment you accept Christ as your Lord and Savior, you are redeemed, you are forgiven, and you have been entrusted with a grand gift from your Lord and Savior.

You have been given this spiritual gift for the benefit of the body so that it may be exercised and demonstrated within the body of God's people known as the church, the local church.

And we have seen that that giftedness is not necessarily for our own benefit, though when we live out that giftedness, it edifies us, encourages us, it excites us, it moves us.

[5 : 37] There are things that I do that really are necessary, and I do them out of need. I don't do them out of excitement. Then there are things that I do out of just pure joy and excitement, things that I think God has called me and gifted me to do and equipped me to do.

And really there's joy in that. Not always comfort, not always ease, not always painlessness, but there's joy, right? Not always happiness. Happiness is derived from circumstances.

Joy is derived from a presence. So there's the joy of the Lord in doing that. Maybe at times it's not very, I'm not happy, but there's a joy that comes into the heart. As we exercise that giftedness, and we continue that theme, not only that it is a gifted body, but that every part, if you had to have a title this morning, is a place in the body.

There is a place in the body. So if you're physically able and desire to do so, I'm going to ask if you would join with me as we stand together and we read the Word of God. Found in 1 Corinthians 12, starting in verse 12.

Very lengthy section, but it really has every reason to be. We want to read it all the way to the end in verse 31. Paul says, For even as the body is one and yet has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ.

[6 : 48] For by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we are all made to drink of one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many.

If the foot says, Because I am not a hand, I am not a part of the body, it is not for this reason any the less a part of the body. And if the ear says, Because I am not an eye, I am not a part of the body, it is not for this reason any the less a part of the body.

If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? And if the whole were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? But now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body just as He desired. But if they were all one member, where would the body be?

But now there are many members, but one body. And the eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of you, or again the hand to the feet, I have no need of you. On the contrary, it is much truer that the members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary.

And those members of the body which we deem less honorable, on these we bestow more abundant honor. And our less presentable members become much more presentable. Whereas our more presentable members have no need of it.

[7 : 56] But God has so composed the body, given more abundant honor to the members which lacked. So that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another.

And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it. If one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it. Now you are Christ's body, and individually members of it.

And God has appointed in the church, first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, various kinds of tongues. All are not apostles, are they?

All are not prophets, are they? All are not teachers, are they? All are not workers of miracles, are they? All do not have the gifts of healings, do they? All do not speak with tongues, do they? All do not interpret, do they?

But earnestly desire the greater gifts. And I show you a still more excellent way. Let's pray. Well, we thank you for this day, and we thank you for every opportunity we have of gathering together as your people.

[8 : 58] I pray, Lord, as we have read your word, and we've heard it, Lord, now you would speak to our hearts and minds. You would help us to come to a greater understanding. Lord, that that understanding would move, and shape, and conform us more to your image for your glory.

We thank you for the clarity which it brings, and Lord, I pray that there would be no hindrance, or cause for offense, or stumbling found within me. But Lord, that the word would speak clearly to every heart, and every mind, and every soul.

And we ask it all in Jesus' name, amen. You may be seated. The grand passion that God put upon my heart the moment I accepted Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior was a passion for the local church.

Now, sure, in hindsight, I can look back and say, well, he put a passion and a desire for the local church within me because he had a grander plan that even I knew about that he would call me into the pastorate. It was the farthest thing from my desire was to ever be a pastor.

I never longed. I never sought it. I didn't seek it out. I didn't ever think that God would ever call me to proclaim the gospel. But rather, he gave me a love for the local body of believers called the church.

[10 : 06] I think it was so important because at that time, I needed it. Being a new believer, not only did I need the encouragement that came from fellowship with other believers, but I also needed the rebuke that came from a pastor who would challenge me in his word.

I needed the correction that came from others who would look at me and say, well, you're a little bit off from that. I needed the encouragement when I had done things right. I needed the body of Christ. That love for the local church caused my wife and I to completely shape and transform how we did life.

That is, rather than conforming the church to our world, we began to conform our world to the church. That's just a reality. We had, when I came to Christ, one young child, another one on the way very soon, had three, and just the family just continued to grow from there.

But one thing that stayed constant was our commitment to and our dedication to the local church. I don't say this to be bodacious. I don't say it to be braggadocious or to puff myself up.

I say it because I needed the church. In all of my weaknesses and my humanities and all of my failures and all of my stumbling, I needed the church. And I needed to be connected to it.

[11 : 17] The church wasn't perfect. Rather, it was a lot of times where we just said, well, I'd rather not. But still, there was this attraction and this drawing to the local church.

Then God began to call and ended up calling me into the ministry. I understood that. The local church really had shaped and conformed. I ended up having the great privilege, and many of you know it, pastoring my home church, the church I came to Christ in, the church that I needed so much.

As a new believer, I ended up being their pastor. One of the most difficult things you've ever done, by the way, is to pastor the church that you came to Christ in. Because if these people have shaped you and molded you, then it's hard to be their pastor and correct and rebuke them.

It made deacons meetings challenging. It made, because these men were deacon before I were believers, right? And they knew that. They were there. And yet, it was this challenge, but still this love for the local church.

Paul has a love for the local church. And he encourages the church, and he writes to it. And he is not only a church planner, he's a missionary going around, raising up elders and preachers and teachers and pastors and deacons and other leaders in the church.

[12 : 28] We find it in every letter which he writes. He's writing to a local body of believers. And every promise that we find in the New Testament is connected to this local body of believers.

And here, Paul is reminding the church at Corinth that every part of that body has a place within the body. That there are none that are more significant than others.

There may be positions and places which seem to be more presentable because they are seen more, but that does not mean they are more significant. He is reminding them that not only are they a gifted body, but that everybody has a place in the body.

And that's important. Because until we realize, and this was the story of my life, that I had a place there, or that we have a place in the body, then the church is always just something we do.

It's just something over there. Something we attend, something we are entertained by, something that we do if it's convenient, or if it's something that we have an opportunity, then it would be nice.

[13 : 39] It's something. But when we realize we have a place in that, and that it cannot be the church unless we fulfill our place, then it becomes a little bit more essential. As long as we see something that we are attending rather than we are connected to, then we do not hold church in its priority.

See, there are two great dangers. One, that has happened throughout church history. It happened very quickly in church history, and it's happened even later on. And that is the professionalization of ministry.

Let ministry be done by the professionals. Another way of saying that are hirelings. That's what we pay them to do. Where the book of Ephesians says that the work of the ministry is to be done by the saints.

So that's a danger. And the other danger, that's a danger to the people in general because everybody says, well, that's their job. That's their job. That's their job. The other danger in that are the professionals who look out and say, well, that's our job, and we're just glad you came here to support us in our job.

And there's danger on both sides. But the reality that Paul is addressing here is that everyone has a place in the body. And that place is of utmost importance.

[15 : 01] And hopefully by the time we get through with this passage, we understand that if we're not fulfilling that place, then we're leaving a void. First thing I want you to see here is your confidence of place.

Your confidence of place. Some say, well, I'm just a poor sinner saved by grace. Well, welcome to the club. So are we. The Bible calls you a saint. I love that. One of the things that encourages me beyond anything is the introduction to the book of 1 Corinthians.

I read it again today. Some of you are following the same reading plan I am. You open up 1 Corinthians chapter 1 today. You'll read it again if you haven't read it already. And I love how Paul addresses the believers at Corinth to the saints which are at Corinth.

And then in the next chapter, he begins to tell you everything these saints are doing. And we understand that they are not saints by practice, but they are saints by position because they are redeemed. They have been saved.

He makes it very clear in the first chapter. They are saved by the Lord Jesus Christ. And their salvation has put them positionally in the place of being saints. Their practice is putting them in the position of being hypocritical.

[16 : 05] But the hypocritical practice does not change the positional sainthood. So they are saints by calling. And he begins to exalt them as to who they are in Christ because the exaltation of our standing in Christ reminds us of our exaltation, our position, our place within the body.

And it gives us confidence as to who we are. Why? Because the enemy of our souls likes to remind us of what we do. Christ likes to remind us of who we are. And we need to be reminded of that.

Now, sure, he comes to us and confronts what we do, as Paul does in the Word. But we are also reminded that we come to the body of Christ with great confidence. And it tells us, for even as the body, in the 12th verse, is one and yet has many members and all the members of the body, though there are many, are one body, so also is Christ.

So Paul uses the imagery of the human body in relation to the church body. And he goes a little further, for by one Spirit, we are all baptized into one body. Now, the word baptized there is in the past tense, which means we are not looking for a baptism of the Spirit.

I know that's something that you can read in a lot of different literature and you can read some very good people throughout church history, but the word, you need to understand it, in the text, the word baptized is in the past tense and it's in its original Greek that you were baptized by the Spirit.

[17 : 29] Now, that's a work of Christ because John the Baptist says that I baptize you with water, but there's one who's coming that will baptize you with Spirit and with fire, right? So we understand this that the baptism of the Spirit is the baptism of Christ.

Now, what I want you to see, stay with me, you can nod your head like this, it's okay, there's not that many people on this side, especially you can go glory, hallelujah, nobody's around you. Over here, you need to be a little bit more, you know, confined with your arms, it's okay, but just because there's a few of us doesn't mean that we ought to stifle the Spirit.

We understand it, what we see here is that everybody gets into the body the same way. Do you notice that? No one can claim special entrance into the body of Christ.

For we were all baptized by one Spirit. No one says, well, we hear people all the time, man, they had this extraordinary, this amazing testimony of how God met them in a supernatural way, called them to himself and they redeemed him.

I mean, we meet the Damascus road, Paul, right? Paul riding on a horse on his way to Damascus and this bright light comes and the Bible says that they all saw the light and they all heard the voice.

[18 : 46] Only Paul, at that time being referred to, saw response to that. What an amazing testimony, right? And then we get Timothy who was raised by his mother and his grandmother fearing the Lord and they knew the word and they imparted him the word and the most amazing thing we read about Timothy is that Paul circumcised him.

You know what the same thing is there? Anywhere between the Damascus road and Timothy is the same spirit that brings us into the body of Christ. There's no special entrance other than the work of Christ who baptizes us by one Spirit.

One entrance is not greater than another. You say, well, my testimony is not so amazing. If you know Jesus as your Lord and Savior, go ahead and settle this, that is an amazing testimony.

If God spared you the heartache and the sorrow of the depths of sin, what an amazing testimony. If you've been to the very uttermost, in the guttermost, to the depths of sin and he called you out of that, what an amazing testimony.

But the reality is, is that we all have the same confidence because we're all a part of the body the same way. We've been baptized by one Spirit.

[20 : 04] There is a common entrance. Now, we're not looking for a baptism of the Spirit. To be baptized by the Spirit means that we have been overcome, that the Spirit now has us.

Right? That we are sealed until the day of redemption, Paul would write. He is our engagement ring. He is the pledge. Now, the baptism of the Spirit is one thing. That's something that happens the moment we're saved.

The filling of the Spirit, because of one Spirit we all drink, he says later, which means that we give the Spirit a little bit more control of us. We all need to be filled with the Spirit in a greater way.

We all need that daily. We're not looking for another baptism of the Spirit. We're looking for a greater filling of the Spirit. There's a big difference there because our baptism by Christ is our entrance into the body.

And we're looking at the confidence we have. It says, by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether, look at this, Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free.

[21 : 02] And we were all made to drink of one Spirit. So, within this grand body of the church at Corinth, this great conglomeration of individuals who would not belong together in society, Paul is showing them that each and every one of them can have confidence.

Jews, Greeks, slaves, free, he would write elsewhere, men, women, that in the body of Christ the barrier walls have been knocked down, that in the body of Christ that we all have confidence that each and every one of us has a place.

And the reason that's important because until you're confident that you have a place within the body, you don't do anything in that place. You say, well, I'm just glad I'm here. In 1925, the Scopes trial, often referred to as the Scopes monkey trial, those who were trying to defend common ancestry with apes and monkeys and all those wonderful things, declared very publicly in the midst of the trial that there were 180 useless insignificant parts of the human body.

He said that the human body had at least 180 parts parts that served no purpose whatsoever. Unfortunately, for those who made such a bold declaration in the years that followed, each and every one of those parts have been found to have a reason for their existence.

If you were to go to New York City and you were to walk into America's Museum of Natural History, there's a picture of the human tailbone and a little bitty bone at the bottom of the human tailbone, the coccyx, and there's a sign that says this useless part of the human body is proof that we have come from a common ancestry of animals.

[22 : 54] It's in a museum. This bold declaration that there's no part for that body, that part of the body. Just a little bitty part tacked on to the end of the tailbone.

It shows where the primate tail used to be and now it's been absolved and we have evolved and now this thing is just hanging out the problem is the museum curators didn't do their due diligence and find out that that useless part tends to be the one that holds, it doesn't tend to be, it is the one that holds every one of your muscles and your tissues together and it does something as insignificant as hold all of your internal organs in place.

And it also serves as a third leg of the tripod so that when you sit there you don't fall over. Now it can be surgically removed but the moment it's surgically removed people say they have a problem setting up and have all these other complications.

And what's so significant about this little insignificant part is it's different in men and women. If it was something that just evolved we wouldn't find this, evolution doesn't do this, but what we find in unique design is that little insignificant part of the body in men and women are different.

It's more pointed in men. And the reason is so that when women give birth it doesn't stab the fetus on its way out. And that portion of a woman's body is a lot more flexible.

[24 : 16] It actually moves when it doesn't move in men so that the birth canal can be opened up so that when giving birth there is a way. Yet the museum says we don't know what this thing does.

Friend listen to me, in the body of Christ I don't care if anybody ever tells you you don't have a part, you need to have the confidence that you have a part in the body. Even if that part is so insignificant is making sure all the internal organs don't fall out.

Because that's pretty important by the way. Maybe you're not seen, maybe you're not heard, maybe you're not noticed much, but you need to have the confidence that if Christ has baptized you into the body, he has a reason for you being a part of the body, and when you have that confidence, it can lead us to the second thing that is a commitment to purpose.

because unless you are confident that you have a reason for being here, you will not be committed to fulfill the purpose for why he put you here. You say, well, I don't even know why I'm here.

I don't know why I'm a part of the body of Christ, maybe I'm just here so that I can learn, and that's part of it, but that's a small part of it, because, let's go back to Ephesians, Ephesians 4, verse 12, remember that those of you that were with us on the retreat should know it really well.

[25 : 34] Ephesians 4, verse 12, gives my job description. Now, if he's calling you into the ministry, this is your job description, but if he's not calling you into the ministry, then this is solely my job description in the room. My job description is God has given some to be pastors and shepherds and teachers.

Pastors, teachers, the same word there, it's one word, it's one combination of gifts, so pastors are to teach, but Ephesians 4, 12 says, so that he may equip the saints to do the work of the ministry.

So, you say, well, the reason I'm here is so that I can learn. Right. The reason I'm here is so that I can teach you, so that you can learn, so that you can be committed to do what it is he put you in the body for.

That's just a part of it. See, until we are absolutely confident that we have a place, we will not be committed to the purpose, but rather we would be as what Paul says in verse 15, if the foot says, because I'm not a hand, I'm not a part of the body.

It seems absurd, right? Foot looks at the hand and says, well, I'm not like you, I guess I'm not a part of the body. He says, well, that doesn't make sense, where would the body be? And if the ear says, because I'm not an eye, I'm not a part of the body, it is not for this reason any less part of the body.

[26 : 45] If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? Look at what verse 18 says, but now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body just as he desired.

And he goes into this discourse of just because you can't see it doesn't mean it's not there for a purpose and it needs to fulfill that purpose. It needs to do what it was designed and created to do. The reality, we have this reminder here, but now God has placed.

So, the moment you accept Christ as your Lord and Savior, and the moment you feel this leading to be connected to a local body of believers, and you understand, well, I don't know why I'm here, I don't know why God's leading me, and I don't know what the reason for that is.

I just happen to be here. I don't believe in circumstances, I don't believe in coincidences, and I don't believe in I just happened, okay, I just want to let you know that. I believe in sovereignty, and sovereignty is the divine leading hand of God, that God controls everything, that he is absolutely intimately involved in all of creation, that he when Carrie and I were at a conference, I began to do this.

This gentleman said, you know, I've started believing in the sovereignty of God so much that I started asking him, God, since you're sovereign, you know the needs of the church body that I have in front of me, so he started praying to a sovereign God for God to move those people to the body, and I've done that, I've started doing that, right?

[28 : 05] So God, since you're sovereign, and you're absolutely in control of putting your body together, you know what we need, this is what I need you to do. I've been amazed over the past couple of months, the past couple of years, to begin to see how sovereign God is absolutely in control of that, right?

And we understand that God places us in the body. You say, well I'm just here because it's close to home. Well that's all well and good, you can say that if you want to, or I'm just here because somebody invited me, that's all well and good, I appreciate their invitation, but the reality is that God organizes the body.

And we understand what it says here, for God puts the body, he has placed the members, each one of them, which means individually, each and every one of us, in his sovereignty, God has so arranged the circumstances and all the things that happened in our life that brought us here, my story is unlike yours, right?

The reason I'm at War Trace Baptist is so different than yours. You say, well Pastor, you're here because we needed a pastor. You're here because we had a pastor search committee. Yes, but I tried not to be here. I mean, that's the reality. See, where I was pastoring, I'd been pastoring for 10 years and I was right down the road and I'd made this declaration, I would never pastor a church, by the way, I found this in personal life or especially in pastoral life, God loves it when we tell him what we're not going to do, right?

So I say, God, I don't ever want to pastor a church close to where my first pastorate is. I don't want to do it. I don't want to cause division. I don't want to create a divide. I don't want to create harm. If you're going so far away from here, that it'll never be a thing.

[29 : 39] That was what I wanted and that's what I desire and God's like, yeah, okay, that sounds good. And so I started doing that. I knew he was moving me and all these other things, long story short, I really thought he was moving me hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of miles away.

My wife, kids, everybody was on board. We were going, we were going and then God says, yeah, right, and boom, in the middle of the sleep, it's so embarrassing because I didn't even do anything to make it happen. In the middle of the night, I ruptured a disc while sleeping.

Now, the most inactive you can ever be is sleeping. So I was sound asleep and I fell out of the bed and I ruptured a disc. And so, you know, I didn't do anything manly, I wasn't lifting weights, I wasn't picking up heavy stuff, I was literally asleep and I fell out of the bed and God put me on my face for 11 weeks.

I said, now where do you think you're going? The answer to that was nowhere. That was seven years ago, do the math people, seven and a half years ago, I've been here seven years now. Okay? God has a way of moving us, has a way of purpose.

Now, and because of that, I'm absolutely confident that God called me here. And since I'm confident, I understand what he's called me to fulfill and I'm committed to my purpose he's called me to do. So, we understand that if God puts the body together, but now God has placed the members, and I'm just as confident that he's put you here the same way.

[30 : 53] You say, well, my back didn't rupture. Praise be to God. If it has, I'm sorry. I didn't ask that he would do that to you. But we understand he, in the same sovereign leading, he does it.

Each one of them in the body, and just in case you forget it, just as he desired. You say, well, I wish he would have called me this, I wish he would have made me this, and I wish, it's not your desire, right?

It's his, he desired, so he put you in the body to do that, to be committed to that purpose. Whatever it is, he's given you a fire for, however it is he's gifted you, your spiritual giftedness.

Go back, first 11 verses, and you see that you have a place in the body, and your place you need to be committed. I need to do this. Just as with me, there have been times, I mean, I could not lie to you, I think every pastor has done it, I've had pastors ask me before, there have been times where you wanted to quit preaching, absolutely there have been times where I wanted to quit preaching, absolutely.

There have been times I want to walk away from the ministry, and I just want a quote unquote normal job, I mean, it's just reality. I've never experienced more spiritual battlefields, I've never experienced more hardships, I've never experienced more heartache, I've never experienced more stress than I ever have in the ministry.

[32 : 00] There have been times where I just want to quit, I just want to give it up, throw my hands away, me if I do not preach the gospel.

Why? Because this is the fire he's putting inside of me, this is the passion that he's given me, and this is something he's committed me to do. Each and every one of you should have that same type of fire. And if you don't, then it's not a pastoral thing, it's a believer thing, right?

Lord, what is it you want me to do? Maybe your passion is to pray, then you need to be committed to praying, maybe your passion is to serve, you need to be committed to serving, maybe it's administration, maybe you need to be committed, maybe it's helps, maybe you just need to come along beside somebody, whatever that passion is that he puts inside of you, that you can't get away from, you need to be committed to that purpose.

And the reason we need that commitment is because the diversity is good. Look to be committed to my purpose is because it creates diversity.

We don't want a bunch of uniformity around here. We want the diversity. I don't want my feet looking like my hands. I don't want my eyes looking like my ears. I need the diversification of my body so it would perform the way it should.

[33 : 25] I need it to be different. The body of Christ is the same way. He said first there is a man.

This is what happens when you fail to have diversity by the way. First there is a man and that man leads to a movement and there is a machine. You have a man who has a good enough plan and that man creates a movement around him where everybody is doing the same thing and that movement becomes a machine and man they are doing everything is dead.

See without diversity we may do a lot and we may accomplish a lot but we are only going to accomplish one thing my way or some individual's way and without diversity everything is going to be done the same way and it becomes a machine and then you have a monument but a living and breathing body needs diversification so you need to be committed!

to your purpose confident that connection to the other parts I'm convinced that I have a place and since I'm convinced of my place I'm committed to fulfilling my purpose but as I fulfill my purpose I'm connected to other parts which means I can't just disregard every other part I need to make sure that I belong I need that diversification around me he goes on to speaking about those parts which we seem to think that are less presentable but upon them we bestow more honor that bestow more honor means we put more clothing on you ever thought about that we put the prettiest clothing over the parts of our body we don't want anybody to see you say well that would just be unwise if we didn't right that's because we're trying to make our unpresentable parts more presentable we're trying to make everybody more presentable and

God has given them a greater honor I've told the story I don't know how many times I've told it before but when D.L. Moody went to Europe D.L. Moody decided he was going to go to England and do a revival crusade the problem is he went on a promise from a YMCA and he went many years after they made that promise and when he!

[35 : 44] got there he and so he went he and Iras think he went over there and they're going to have all these great revival crusades problem is England didn't ask him to come and nobody was waiting on him to come so it really flopped and he started preaching and started sharing something and he happened to go into this one local church and he went to this local church there was no success anywhere else but that morning he preached and the inquiry room was full people were coming to Christ people were coming to Christ and he couldn't tell what the difference was he didn't know what had happened what's different in this church and what's been different in the church why here finally a woman in the congregation came up to him and said Mr.

Moody if you don't mind I'd like to take you home and introduce you to my sister but she had read about this American evangelist named Dwight Lyman Moody D.L.

Moody who was doing wonderful things in America and many years prior to this she had started praying that Mr. Moody would come and preach at her church nobody knew it only her sister and she prayed for years and years and years that God somehow another would bring D.L.

Moody to her church to preach the gospel she and Moody was always an opportunistic and he never forgot an invitation that man forgot about it you know because you didn't just jump on the plane and fly across it took many months so some years later he ends up and the man forgot his invitation and said well we don't have a place for you there happened to be one church that he could find a place to preach in you that spent years praying in her bed for her church because she was connected to the body and she had prayed very specifically for that one individual and she committed to that and in that commitment she became connected she was connected to what was going on she was connected to the work and it just went on for years this great work of God drawing people to himself and that connection to that one division but that the members may have the same care for one another friend listen to me no part of my body has any right to say to any other part of the body

I don't need you no part no part of my body has any right whatsoever to say I wish you wasn't here because the reality is the moment something's not here something's missing in the church the connection to one another ought to be so strong it ought to be so moving that we have no thoughts no feelings whatsoever that well I really wish that they weren't here or I wish that so and so wasn't here or there's a reason for them being here now we may look at a part of our body and say well that part of the body is not functioning the way it should need to under support so there be no division in the body see division comes when other parts of the church body begin to look at the rest of the body and say well I don't need you that's when division comes and that's a dangerous place to be because you don't see like me and you don't act like me and you don't agree with me

[39 : 20] I don't need you I can do this on my own that's dangerous because remember that that man the movement machine the monument there are a lot of churches that had divisions that erected monuments because they didn't need the diversification they didn't need the separation from one another but it says that we ought to have the same care for one another and if one member suffers all the members suffer with and if one member is honored all the members rejoice with it that is whatever is happening to any other part of the body needs to be universal within the body that there ought to be this recognition that that's a part of us nothing happens to my right hand that my left hand doesn't know about right nothing happens over here on this side of my body that this other part of my body!

isn't rejoicing it's another so we ought to have that type of connection now Paul goes into we want to address them starting in verse 28 and going through verse 30 not an exhaustive list of giftedness but I want you to understand that every letter has its original intention to a local church body so Paul is writing here what is going on in this local church body at Corinth he says and God has appointed in the church first apostles and second prophets and third teachers then miracles then gifts of healing helps ministrations various kinds of tongues when we get into the list of spiritual giftedness what Paul is not saying is that these are going to be in every church it's not what he says okay we can we do a lot of church history on this and probably next chapter we'll begin to break it down a little bit birth of the church did not necessarily exist throughout history of the church by the year 400

AD church fathers could tell you that the testimonial signs had passed off the scene that is the special office of apostles you say well there are churches today that refer to themselves as apostles right but not what we refer to as the biblical definition of apostles those who had seen Christ been with Christ lived with Christ and had a personal encounter with Christ that was necessary for the birth of the early church because you had to have eyewitness accounts because see there's something that happens in the 300 AD before 400 and that was the canonization of scripture when you had the fullness of the Bible compiled many of the miraculous testimonial signs were no longer I'm not saying that God can't do it he just didn't have to do it anymore okay you have that you had the apostles and the prophets that is the forth telling of the word that would people who get a great divine revelation and they would speak forth the word see how that was important before you had the canonization of scripture because until the fullness of scripture had been confirmed people were completely dependent upon an oral tradition and without a written word but now the book of

Hebrew says word so we have the canonization of scriptures and no longer is there a special office of prophets needing and teachers that would be those who teach or taught this is not the pastor teacher this is a special gift of those who could be the prophet could give a divine revelation and he could interpret that revelation again early church sign tongues would fall into that by this various kinds of tongues by the way means various languages various known languages unknown to that individual this is not just babbling this is a known language that was unknown to that individual is how we can interpret those in all of scripture the reason that's important to the early church is because the church was going into regions of the earth no one had ever taken the gospel to no one so there are signs and wonders here that were done I mean God allowed

Samuel to come back from the dead and talk to Saul God spoke through a bush that was burning that did not consume with flames he spoke through a donkey he used a rooster to crow God's done some amazing things throughout history and the birth of the church was accompanied with wonderful testimonial signs and gifts but that does not necessarily mean that we ought to stand and say well we have to see each and every one of these because we have a greater gift that the early church never had you have Genesis Revelation the fullness of the word of God the completeness we're not dependent upon an individual to walk in with a new sign or a new prophetic word from God because you can open up the word of God and you can read it we can instruct one another and encourage one another edify one another with the word of God we don't necessarily just depend upon a prophet of God to come and hoping that the prophet of God has seen the vision you have the opportunity to take the word of God and open up the word of God and what an amazing miraculous event it is you say oh well if I could just see this wonderful testimonial sign of the speaking in tongues or if I could see this wonderful display of a prophet standing up fulfilling the office of a prophet have you ever thought about how astounding it is that you can open up the

[44 : 41] Bible and anytime you open up the Bible the God of all creation speaks to you personally that he has an application and a truth that he wants to give to you through his word that was written years and years and years ago from people you'll never meet this side of eternity things that that really seem to have no application whatsoever to the world's time and you open it up and yet there you are how many of you read Lamentations this past week and you read Lamentations through you reading the book of Lamentations the weeping prophet Jeremiah writes the book of Lamentations and Lamentations chapters 1 and 2 are kind of like this is rough stuff right chapters 4 and 5 we're like this is rough stuff I mean you got mothers eating their children I mean it's bad right but right there in the middle of the book is Lamentations 3 but his loving kindnesses are new every morning and his mercies will not fail us and then look at this prophetic word how can man complain in light of our sins Lamentations 3 what right do I have to be mad at the creator in light of my sins and my failures because I deserve what I have sounds a lot like the gospel of

John right the fall of Jerusalem all of a sudden now has application to me today what a miraculous event see I don't need testimonial signs because I have the word of God speaking to my heart and my mind and he testifies to me through the power and presence of the spirit each and every day but the reality is is that we have a place in the body in our place in the body we ought to be confident of the fact that God has put us there we ought to be committed to fulfilling the purpose that he's given us and in that commitment we're connected to everyone else because we have a place in the body let's pray Lord I thank you for this day thank you for your faithfulness your goodness and your mercy towards us thank you for the love you poured out upon us in the body of Christ Lord help us to be men and women who long to serve you to worship you with other believers

Lord as we're just connected and we're growing closer and closer to one another and closer to you for your glory and honor we ask it all in Jesus name Amen so so Thank you.