

Make a Difference: Be the Body of Christ
1 Corinthians 12:12-31a
November 1, 2009

A discovery has been made that when the roots of trees touch, there is a substance present that reduced competition. This unknown fungus helps link roots of various trees, including dissimilar species. A whole forest may be incorporated together in this manner. If one tree has access to nutrients, another to water, and a third to sunlight, the trees have the means to cooperate with one another to live.

This is just one example of how God created this world so that there is a need for cooperation and support for one another. In 1 Corinthians, Paul gives us a great example of how the Body of Christ – the church – functions best when it works together.

First, Jesus is the head. It is His body, so it is His will that gives character and direction. The unifying power of the Spirit of Christ is what keeps us together. When that unifying force is not allowed to be present, the entire Body falls apart. Therefore, you and I must constantly seek the Spirit's help in putting aside any idea that we are individuals who are meant to build ourselves up. Instead, we must understand that we are more like sea coral. We are a collection of individuals who can bond together under the name of Christ to form a massive Body. It has been said that the Great Barrier Reef is the largest living object in the world – it can even be seen from space. But I believe that it is the second largest living object in the world – the Body of Christ is the largest – and you and I are a part of it.

Many times, though we don't act like one being. It's because we have many times when we are far away from Christ.

On a blank leaf of a grandmother's Bible was drawn a circle with several radii converging at the center which was named Christ. The picture looked like a bicycle wheel with spokes meeting at the center. On the radii the grandmother had written the names of various Christian denominations. Underneath the circle she had written, "The nearer the center, the nearer to one another."

It's true, the nearer we are to Christ, the nearer we are to one another. When we are closer to Christ and closer to one another we become more aware that our contributions to the Body matter. They matter a great deal. We all have something to contribute, and when we don't give of what we have or of who we are, then we weaken the Body. Also, if we find that we aren't willing to contribute in a sacrificial way to the Body of Christ then we would do well to discern how close we are to the center in the grandmother's illustration – to Christ.

In a couple of weeks you will be invited to pledge your time, your talent, and the treasure that God has put under your management to the mission and ministry of the Body of Christ at Sunrise church. From today until that Sunday, please enter into a time of prayer and discernment. Ask God how close He wants you to be to the center that is Christ. Ask Him how he wants you to cooperate and join with the other parts of the Body to accomplish good for His Kingdom. Then ready yourself to make that commitment – to Him and to your brothers and sisters here. You are an important part of this Body, we cannot function well without you.