

First Corinthians 12:12-20

Paul emphasizes that the many are the one—12:12-13 (Diversity in Unity)

- 1) What? ¹² *For just as the body is one, and has many body-parts, but **all** (emphatic) the body-parts of that one body, though many, are one body, so also is Christ.*
- 2) Why?
 - a) Jesus immerses all genuine believers in the Spirit—12:13a ¹³ *For even in one Spirit **we** (emphatic) all were immersed into one body, whether Jews or Greeks (ethnically), whether bondslaves or free (socially),*
 - i) Cf. Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33; Acts 1:5; 11:16
 - ii) A metaphor: the Spirit is the “element” in which Jesus immerses the believer.
 - iii) This unrepeatable event takes place at the moment of our salvation, resulting in every genuine believer being placed into the body of Christ. It is not a command to be obeyed; it is something that is done to us by Christ.
 - b) God causes all genuine believers to drink of/experience the Spirit—12:13b *and we were all made to drink in one Spirit.*
 - i) Cf. John 4:13-14; 7:37-39; 1st Corinthians 3:2, 6-8
 - ii) A metaphor: the Spirit is the “element” that Jesus enables genuine believers to partake of, thus permanently satisfying their spiritual thirst.

Paul illustrates the absurdity of uniformity—12:14-17 (Unity with Diversity)

- 1) Primary principle—12:14 ¹⁴ *For even the body is not one body-part but many.*
- 2) Illustrated from body **parts**—12:15-16
 - a) ¹⁵ *If (3rd class condition) the foot should say, “I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” does it not belong to the body because of that?*
 - b) ¹⁶ *And if (3rd class condition) the ear should say, “I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” does it not belong to the body because of that?*
- 3) Illustrated from bodily **functions**—12:17
 - a) ¹⁷ *If (1st class condition, assumed true) the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be?*
 - b) *If (1st class condition, assume true) the whole were hearing, where would the sense of smell be?*
- 4) Different functions in the congregation are NECESSARY.

Paul emphasizes the sovereignty of God over the congregation—12:18 (Unity and Diversity)

- 1) Theological truth—12:18 ¹⁸ *But now, God has arranged the body-parts, each one of them, in the body, just as He desired.*
- 2) Rhetorical question—12:19 ¹⁹ *And if (2nd class condition, assumed false) they were all one body-part, where would the body be?*
- 3) Primary principle—12:20 ²⁰ *But now there are **many** body-parts, but one body.*
- 4) Different functions in the congregation are INTENTIONAL.