

MAIN POINT

Like a human body, each church member is a necessary part of the whole.

INTRODUCTION

What is the most common body ache or pain that you deal with?

How does this affect your day-to-day life? What do you do to compensate for it?

Isn't it amazing how something like a headache or toothache can alter your attitude and change your behavior? Our bodies work best, of course, when every part functions correctly. Paul used the body as a metaphor for the church in 1 Corinthians 12. In order for the church to be an optimal body, it must have every part doing its job.

DISCUSSION

> READ 1 CORINTHIANS 12:12-26.

Why do you think Paul chose the "body" imagery to describe the church? Do you think this is an effective metaphor? Why or why not?

It's easy to identify how different parts of the body function differently. What are some unique and different gifts you have recognized among our group or our church body as a whole?

How can these different functions in a church create unity?

Where might our church be if each individual member had the same gift or tried to function in the same role?

Why do you think we are so tempted to compare our gifts or roles in the church to those of others? Why might we consider some to be "weaker" or "less honorable"?

According to these verses, how is God's view of these roles different? How might we embrace this mindset at our church and in our group?

How did Paul emphasize the importance of community by describing the church as a body?

Why is it important to suffer with someone in the body who suffers and to rejoice with those who are honored? What makes this difficult in our setting?

APPLICATION

Given what you've learned about how crucial each member of our church is, are there any roles you feel you could seek to fulfill as a part of the church body? How will you take steps toward that this week?