

## All Members Included and Needed, Part II

Last week we began an article that I would like to continue today. All the members of Christ's Body, the Church should be included in the work of God and are needed. Last week we discussed:

### 1. All are important, no matter who we are.

### 2. When one hurts, we all hurt.

This week I would like to continue by saying:

### 3. We need to work together.

The Bible says, "*For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones*" (Ephesians 5:30). This is referencing Genesis 2:23, "*And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.*" As Christ's Bride, the Church is to understand that we are connected, not only to Him, but to each other. Ezekiel 37: 7 says, "*So I prophesied as I was commanded: and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone.*" As this pictures the natural and national restoration of Israel, the importance of connections to each other is vital to a whole, healthy body. I have always appreciated the African-American spiritual. One of my favorites is Dry Bones. Some of the words go like this: "Ezekiel cried, "Dem dry bones! "Oh, hear the word of the Lord. The foot bone connected to the leg bone, The leg bone connected to the knee bone, The knee bone connected to the thigh bone, The thigh bone connected to the backbone, The backbone connected to the neck bone, The neck bone connected to the head bone, Oh, hear the word of the Lord! Dem bones, dem bones gonna walk aroun', Dem bones, dem bones gonna walk aroun'." We are designed to work together. The bones, the sinews, the muscles, the organs all working together and following the orders from a strong brain. God want us to: "...grow up into him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ" (Ephesians 4:15).

### 4. We need to assure that we all are working.

*"That there should be no schism (split or division) in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular"*(I Corinthians 12: 25-27).

The Bible declares we are all members in particular. The word "particular" is from the Greek word, μέρος: "" which means a section or allotment; a division or share, a piece, portion, or a part. The Thayer

Greek Lexicon says "particular" is "a part due or assigned to one, a lot, destiny," or "one of the constituent parts of a whole." Every church member needs to see themselves as part of the greater whole. If injury or atrophy (because of not using the body part) takes place, strain is placed on the whole body. How sad to see a person limping when they could be walking.

One of the keys to keeping a body healthy is feeding and exercise. Hebrews 5:14 says, "*But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.*" As a child grows, his molars and permanent teeth come in, making him or her able to chew and digest food and grow even more.

A person training for the Olympics will not only eat appropriately, they will exercise to the max. Perhaps Jude had this mind when he wrote, *“But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost”* (Jude verse: 20). t calisthenics, weight lifting and push ups do for the body, prayer does for the spiritual life. Paul was referring to the athletes of his day who competed in the Isthmian Games when he said, *“Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway”* (I Corinthians 9: 24-27). So let us train and exercise that part of the Body of Christ allotted to us, so that we’ll not be spiritually incapacitated or crippled.

##### **5. We need to work together for common goals.**

*“And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; “For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ... From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love”* (Ephesians 4:11, 12 and 16).

Here is our assignment from our Lord. When we perfect, minister, and edify one another for the unity of our faith, we will grow in knowledge of Christ, centered in the perfect will of God. When we work together as the Body of Christ we see the Church make “increase” (Ephesians 4:16). This is how to see the Church grow numerically and in grace.

- Pastor Pope -

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