

Warm Up

Many of us at one time or another have been unhappy with our body. Which part of your body would you like to change? Lose a bit of excess tummy fat? More hair on your head? Be a bit taller? Why do we so often complain about our body?

Background and context

In this section of 1 Corinthians (Ch. 11-14), Paul is giving instruction on public worship. This new church had misunderstood the holiness and sacredness of worship and had been treating it the same as their former pagan worship. People were using status and authority to set themselves apart from others and treat them differently, often with disdain. Paul uses the analogy of the human body as a unit that needs all its parts to function together. He explains that the body is diverse, and every part is necessary and should be treated with love and respect. The Church will only thrive when the Spirit unites us in diversity.

Thinking it through: Main discussion/activity



READ 1 Corinthians 12:4-27. What are the surprising things in the passage? What is new?

What don't you really understand?

1. **Read John 14:9 and Col 2:9.** When people met Jesus and spoke to Him, who were they speaking to?
2. **In 1 Cor 12,** Paul suggests **we** are now the body of Christ. This is an enormous privilege. What does it mean in practical terms?
3. What is the difference between a dead body and a living person? **v13.** How are we made alive as a body of the Church?
4. How does the Spirit reveal Jesus through the body of the Church?
5. If our body parts cannot function independently of the body, why is it that there are Christians who believe they don't need to be part of a church community? What are the benefits of the church community?
6. How does the "body" metaphor change the way you view your role in the church compared to viewing it as an organization?
7. How does Paul address those tempted to think my role is "lesser" than someone else's?
8. **Read v23-24.** How can our church better honour the "less honourable" or "weaker" members?

Discipleship and Application



9. The challenge of the Church is for every member of the body to feel embraced, engaged in the work and honoured. How can **YOU** assist with this at VBC?
10. If the Church is functioning as a body, then non believers will feel welcome, not threatened by perfection, and feel safe to acknowledge their need for God. How well are we doing here at VBC?
11. How does the metaphor of the church as a body challenge the increasing fragmentation of society often caused by social media?

Try to leave 15-20 mins to talk about prayer needs of the group and to pray.



There are many creative ways of praying together: writing prayers, using candles as a focus, reading prayers or praying for each other in pairs.