

## Small Group Study Guide

### *Is the Cause of Christ a "Team Sport"?*

1 Corinthians 12:12-26

**Introduction:** Today we continue looking at 1 Corinthians 12 where Paul is talking about the nature of the body of Christ – the church. One thing that Paul makes emphatically clear is that the cause of Christ is a “team sport.” As Steve said on Sunday, Christ is committed to working through the body of Christ, not merely individual believers. This can at times run against the American – independent, “I don’t need anybody” – culture and so it is a lesson that we truly need to hear and apply to our lives.

**Question:** Did you ever play team sports? If so, what?

### **Read 1 Corinthians 12:12-26**

1. What are some of the truths that Paul teaches in this passage about the body of Christ?
  
  
  
  
  
2. In what ways is the church like a human body?
  
  
  
  
  
3. What is the point of 12:12-13 and how does Paul make the point?
  
  
  
  
  
4. What lessons are there in seeing the church as a human body?
  
  
  
  
  
5. What part do you sense that God has created you to serve in the body of Christ?

Steve said:

Those who are baptized with the Spirit are placed into one body. Since there is ***one Spirit***, it only makes sense that all who are baptized with this Spirit are part of ***one body***. Paul mentions “Jews or Greeks” and “slaves or free” to emphasize that people who in other contexts might have nothing to do with each other find themselves united in the body of Christ. ***All believers are united by the same Spirit into the same body of Christ.*** . . . If you belong to Jesus Christ, you belong to something much bigger than yourself. Whether you realize it or not, you are now part of the body of Christ and your well-being is tied up with the well-being of the whole.

6. In what way is your well-being tied up with the well-being of the whole?

7. What is wrong with an individualist approach to the Christian life according to this passage?

Steve said:

When it comes to your primary role in the body of Christ, there is no reason whatsoever to feel inferior to anybody else in the church. If God has designed you to be a behind-the-scenes person, serve behind the scenes with great joy and passion. You are absolutely essential to the cause of Christ. If you have the gift of administration – the ability to organize and structure things so that ministries function well – you need to know that your role is critical to the mission of the church. This is true whether we’re talking about the Alpha ministry or youth ministry or women’s Bible studies. Without people gifted in administration, there’s great frustration and stress; ultimately the cause of Christ suffers. ***Whatever your role, you should see your worth in the cause of Christ.***

8. Has it ever been hard for you to see “your worth in the cause of Christ?” Why?

Steve said:

Paul is challenging those who feel superior to others to “have the same care” for people that they deem unnecessary . . . Let’s get real with this. We deem others unnecessary in the body of Christ for a variety of reasons: they’re not like us in terms of interests, in terms of life stage, in terms of temperament. Sometimes people do things to push others away; we’re all very flawed and difficult at times. That doesn’t change the fact that God has designed the body of Christ so that there are no unnecessary members. Can you think of someone in the church (Faith EFC) that seems unnecessary to you and/or to others? Can you think of someone that you or others tend to write off?

9. What types of people are you sometimes tempted to deem unnecessary in the body of Christ? Why?
10. How can you begin to apply the truth that Paul is teaching in this passage here that there are no unnecessary people in the body of Christ to such people?
11. What is the main action point for you from this passage?