

What Pleases God? Christians Functioning as Members of One Body

Ponder: What are you good for?

Scripture: “But now, God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased” (1 Cor. 12:28, NKJV).

Squirrels are great at climbing trees. Elephants can move tremendous burdens. Do we condemn elephants because they can’t climb trees, or censure squirrels for their inability to carry heavy loads? How silly! Everyone recognizes that elephants aren’t suited for tree-climbing, nor squirrels to be beasts of burden.

Just so, members of the body of Christ do not all have the same function. Paul reasoned at length about this in the context of supernatural gifts. Many Christians in Corinth had received miraculous gifts such as prophecy, healing, and speaking in tongues. Tragically, this became an issue of contention as some (particularly the tongue-speakers) thought they were superior to their brethren with different gifts. But God wanted them to use their gifts in humble service to the body.

No one living today has received a miraculous gift. We have no apostles to impart such gifts (Acts 8:18), and Paul plainly said they would pass away (1 Cor. 13:10). Paul’s point about Christians functioning together as members of one body, however, applies to ordinary abilities too.

We have no problem understanding this relative to our own physical body. We easily nod in agreement when we read how the hand and foot, though functioning differently, are both part of the same body; likewise the ear and eye (1 Cor. 12:15). Let us also recognize that members of Christ’s spiritual body, the church, also function in different ways. My job is not to criticize you because you don’t do the same things I do. Years ago I wrote a book on Genesis and needed art work for the cover. A good sister hand-drew just what I asked for. I struggle to draw a decent stick man, but she is a talented artist. We worked together like an eye and an ear.

Use your God-given abilities! Play to your strengths! Encourage others to do the same!

Song: “Each Day I’ll Do A Golden Deed”

Prayer: Gracious Father, we thank You for the abilities You have given us. Help us to use them with humility as we function together as the body of Christ. In His name, Amen.