

SERMON TRANSCRIPT

SERMON TITLE: YOU ARE SOMEBODY IN HIS BODY

SERMON REFERENCE: 1 CORINTHIANS 12:12-27

LWF SERMON NUMBER: #2199

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Would you take God's Word and turn to First Corinthians chapter 12. Find verse 12, and when you've found it, look up here. The title of our message, "You Are Somebody in His Body."

Now, there a lot of terms for the church, a lot of ways that the church is described. For example, the church is described as the bride of Christ. He is the bridegroom and we are the bride. The church is described as His building, not these physical buildings, but a spiritual building, with Christ the foundation, we are living stones. The church is described as an army, and Christ our victorious King, and we march under His blood-stained banner. Hallelujah. The church is described as a flock of sheep and we're His people, the sheep of His pasture, and Jesus is the Good Shepherd who leads His flock along. But the way that I want us to think about the church today is the church is also described as His body, B-O-D-Y. He is the head and we're the members and I want you to keep that in your heart. Now I want to say of all of these things, whether it be a bride or a flock or a battalion, whether it be a building, whatever it is, all of these speak of community. And none of it speaks of individualism. It speaks of togetherness. Folks, we're in this together. The Bible teaches that we are members one of another.

Now if anybody says, "I believe in Jesus, but I don't believe in the church," they're showing their ignorance. Jesus and the church are not identical, but Jesus and the church are inseparable, like a bride, a groom; a head, a body; a foundation, a building; a shepherd, a flock. All of these go together. So don't say, "Jesus, yes," and "The church, no," because when you say that, very frankly, you're displaying your ignorance and you say, "Well, I love God but I don't love the church." May I tell you something plainly and I hope I don't hurt your feelings, but if you don't desire fellowship with the saints here, you have no prospect of fellowship with the saints there. I'm telling you, just as clearly as I can tell you, that love for Jesus and love for what Jesus loves are inseparable.

Now, let's look at the Scripture that tells us that the church is a body. Do you have your Bibles open? Alright, First Corinthians chapter 12 verse 12, *"For as the body is one and hath many members, and all the members of that one body being many are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free and have been all made,"* a double I, *"to drink in the one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot shall say, 'Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body', is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear shall say, 'Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body', is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole body were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the members, every one of them in the body as it hath pleased Him."*

I'm gonna stop reading there, we're gonna read some more Scripture later on, but there're four thoughts that I pray God the Holy Spirit will help me to write indelibly upon your heart today if you're a member of this church. And by the way, if you're not a member of a New Testament church, you ought to be, if not this one, one somewhere. So this is good for everybody, wherever you are, by television or later by tape, or on the radio, whatever. I want you to listen to these four wonderful principles that are taken right from this Scripture.

Now, first of all, I want us we think of the church as a body, the body of Christ, in a body, in a body there is **a manifested person**. Do you know who's manifested by my body? I

am. I am. May I tell you that all you know about me, you know through this, my body? You don't know a thing in the world about me apart from my body. Nothing. Or you say, "Well, yes I do. I could read what you've written." My body wrote that. You could say, "I could know about you by what you say." My body is saying this. You can say, "Well I know about you by the way that you walk." It's my body that is walking. All you know about me, you don't know anything about me apart from my body. What my body has done or is doing is the only way you can know me.

Now, there is in this body a manifested person. The person who is manifested by this is the person who lives in this whose name is Adrian, and you know me through my body. How does the world going to know the Lord Jesus Christ? Through His body. Through us. Hey, that's kind of frightening in a way, isn't it? I mean, when you think about it, how is this world going to know the Lord Jesus Christ? God is a spirit and a spirit is invisible. My spirit, the real me that lives inside this earthly house, is invisible. Jesus lives in His body, which is the church and Jesus is manifested by His body. We are to manifest the Lord Jesus. In a body there is a manifested person. The church is the visible part of the invisible Jesus, and Jesus is the invisible part of the visible church. And together we manifest the life of the Lord Jesus Christ. In a body there is a manifested person.

Now, there's only one who's ever lived the Christian life. You know what His name is? It's Jesus. He's the only one who's ever lived the Christian life. And if Jesus' life is being lived on this platform behind this pulpit, it'll be Jesus in Adrian doing it. It won't be Adrian; it'll be Jesus in me. If Jesus is manifested in your home, it'll be because Jesus is manifesting Himself through you. If you try to imitate Jesus, all you're gonna be is a little cheap, tin imitation of the Lord Jesus Christ. We see these kids wearing these bracelets and adults, too, What Would Jesus Do? Just the letters, W.W.J.D: What Would Jesus Do? And that's fine, I think that's great. But be careful; don't get the idea that you're supposed to cook up what Jesus would do. You haven't any idea what Jesus would do many times. As a matter of fact, what Jesus would do probably be opposite of what you think He would do. He'd surprise you.

And then secondly, you think, if you knew what Jesus would do, then all you have to do is do it? Do you think that you can do what Jesus would do? Do you think you have the strength, the power to do that? No, friend. Listen, nobody can be Jesus but Jesus, and it's Jesus in you that will do it. When you ask yourself, "What would Jesus do?" let Jesus tell you what He would do. And then when you say, "Jesus, it needs to be done," let Jesus do it. Does that sound mystical to you? Friend, that is the Christian life. It is Christ in you that is the hope of glory. And in a body there's a manifested person, and in His body, which is the church, Jesus Christ is to be manifest. Now have you got that? Let's move to the second point, because, really, this deals with you, so pay attention.

In a body there's also a **ministering purpose**, a ministering purpose. What is the purpose of my body? It is to minister to me. My body is here to serve me. My eyes are here to help me to see. My hand is here to feed me and to write for me. My legs are here to carry me around. My body is here to minister to me. What is Bellevue Baptist Church to do? We are here to minister to the Lord Jesus Christ. We are here to minister to Him.

Now my body is not to have any plans of its own. I would be afraid of my body if my body had plans of its own. My body is to serve me, I'm not to serve it. And it's only to serve me at my command. If I waked up this morning and my hand somehow had the ability to speak and say, "Good morning, Mr. Rogers." "Good morning, hand. How are you?" "I'm fine, thank you. Mr. Rogers, I have some plans today. I'm going to scratch your ear, I'm going to shave you, I'm going to take a pen and write some words for you, and I'm gonna shake some hands for you." I'd say, "Just be there. Just be there. I don't want you to have any plans of your own." I would be afraid of that thing! So many times we're telling Jesus what we're going to do for Him. He doesn't want us to do anything for Him. Does that surprise you? He wants to do something through you. Your body is here to minister to you! And this church is here to hear what the head says and to do it. That's what we're here to do. And therefore we must listen to what our Lord is saying. We are to minister to Him.

Now, we're talking about spiritual gifts, and we're going to show you that you're a gifted child, and all of us have been placed in the body of Christ in a particular function. And we're going to talk about different abilities. But I want to say without any stutter, stammer, apology, equivocation: the best ability is availability. That's it. Are you available? You want to discover your spiritual gift, are you available? I mean, are you responsive to Him? In a body there is a manifested person. The person who lives in the body is to be manifested. In a body there is a ministering purpose. The body is to minister to the person who lives in that body.

Over in Europe, after World War 2, there was a cathedral that had been destroyed by the Nazi bombs. Some American GI's were there and they had extra time and they were helping to restore the old cathedral. And out in the courtyard of that cathedral there was a statute of a likeness of Jesus. And the statue had been broken, was on the ground, and they were picking it up and putting it back together and cementing the statute back together, but they couldn't find the hands. They found every part of the statue but the hands, no hands! Finally, one of those GI's made a beautiful plaque and put it at the foot of that statue. It said, "He has no hands but ours." A lot of truth in that. We are His hands, we are His feet; we are the body of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, I'm talking to you today and I will be talking to you in the next two Sundays about discovering your spiritual gift. Are you available? Are you willing to let Jesus be the manifested person in you? Are you willing to let your body minister to the Lord Jesus Christ, to His desires, His needs? Or do you say, "Here am I, Lord. My hands are Your hands. My feet are Your feet"? God put you in this church, every one of you from this side to that side, down here, all the way across, young and old, mature and immature; God put you in this church to serve Him. And if you think you've done God a wild favor by coming on Sunday morning and listening to a sermon and you call this the service? This is not the service. The service begins when you leave here. Now, God put you here to serve Him.

Now here's the third thought. Remember I said there were four. In a body there's a manifested person. In a body there is a ministering purpose. In a body there is a **motivating power**, a motivating power. My body has to have something to motivate it. There is life in my body. If there were no life in my body, I have no power to move with. I would be a corpse. I would be a lump of clay down here on the ground. Look if you will in verse 13 of this same

chapter here. First Corinthians chapter 12 verse 13, *"For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free, and have all, and have been all made to drink into one Spirit."* Now the life of my human body is my human spirit. There is the breath. The Word, spirit, ruha in the Old Testament. It's the motivating power. God breathed into man's nostrils the breath of life. Man became a living soul; he's animated by the, the spirit that's in him. When Jesus died upon the cross, He gave up the spirit. And therefore His body then was lifeless for three days without the spirit. You see, a body has to have a motivating power.

Now the motivating power of the human body is the human spirit. The motivating power of Jesus' body is the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is to be the life of the church. The Holy Spirit of God. Without the Holy Spirit of God, there is no power in this church! Learn the difference between an organism and an organization. The church is organized, but it is not an organization. It is an organism. An organization does not necessarily have life. There's something different about a church. I pray God it'll be different. There is the life of God that is to be in us, *"For by one Spirit have we all been baptized into one body,"* and that one Spirit is the Holy Spirit of God."

Now, granted, you can get a group of people together, get a beautiful building, get a man who can talk well, get the folks together, get them organized around some causes, and call it a church, but it may not be a church. It may be a wonderful organization. It may do some good. But friend, I'm here to tell you there's an absolute, distinct difference, when the Spirit of Almighty God is working, moving among His people. And people need to come in here and see there is a spiritual dynamic, just as my human spirit is the life of my body that is motivating me right now, the Holy Spirit of God is to be the life of this church, and well we sing on Sunday mornings sometimes, "All is vain, unless the Spirit of the Holy One comes down." The church is not a corporation with Jesus as the president. It is a body with Jesus as the head. It is an organism. It has life.

Now the Bible says, *"For by one spirit,"* verse 13, *"have we all been baptized into one body."* He's not talking about water baptism, in my estimation, he's talking about Spirit baptism. We are baptized by the Holy Spirit into the body of Christ. When does this take place? When we believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, when we receive Christ as his personal Savior. The two things take place at the same time: we are baptized into the body of Christ and we're filled with the Spirit. We've all been baptized into His body and have all been made to drink into one Spirit. That is, the Holy Spirit of God, when I give my heart to Jesus, and I say, "Lord Jesus, I am a sinner, I can't save myself, You died to save me, You promised to save me if I would trust You, I do trust You once and for all, now and forever, forgive my sin, come into my heart, be my Lord and Savior," and then a miracle takes place, and the Holy Spirit says, "Now I'm placing you, Adrian, into the body of Christ, I am baptizing you into the body of Christ." Water baptism only symbolizes this Spirit baptism. I am baptized, verse 13, into the body of Christ. But not only am I placed into the body of Christ, the Holy Spirit is placed into me and I've been made to drink into one Spirit. Just as I take a drink of water, the Holy Spirit just comes into me, so I am in the body of Christ and the Holy Spirit is in me. That takes place when I get saved and that makes the wonderful transformation, that makes the difference.

And so when I am put into the body of Christ, there I receive my spiritual gift. When I'm put in the body of Christ. I'm put in the body of Christ maybe as an eye, to see things for Jesus; maybe as a shoulder, to bear burdens for Jesus; maybe as a hand to hold things for Jesus; maybe as feet, to go somewhere for Jesus; maybe as a heart, to love for Jesus. But God puts every member in the body as it hath pleased Him. He places us into the body of Christ and we're going to discover later on when we discover how to know our spiritual gift, that we received our spiritual gift when we were placed in the body of Christ. It's a birthday gift, when you were born again.

But also when you're saved, the Holy Spirit comes into you. *"You've been made to drink into one Spirit."* It's right there in that verse 13. The Holy Spirit of God is in me and I am in Jesus. Isn't that wonderful? And that same is true about you. Now, when I'm baptized by the Holy Spirit into the body of Christ, I receive my gift. When I'm filled with the Holy Spirit I receive the power to use my gift for the glory of God. And so in a body, there is a motivating power. Some people have the idea, and it's a false doctrine, false theology, that you get saved and then later on you receive the Holy Spirit. No sir. This verse says, *"For by one spirit have we all,"* every one of us, *"been baptized into the body of Christ and have all been made to drink into one Spirit."* As a matter of fact, I wanna tell you something very clearly. If you don't have the Holy Spirit, you're not saved. Absolutely not saved. The Bible makes that clear in the book of Romans, where the Bible says, *"If any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His."*

Now who is the baptizer? The Holy Spirit. Who is being baptized? The believer in Jesus. Into what is he baptized? Into the body of Christ. When is he baptized? At the moment of his conversion, the moment he gives his or her heart to the Lord Jesus Christ and no one is left out. We're baptized by the Holy Spirit into the body of Christ, Romans 8 verse 9, *"If any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His."* So, in a body, are you listening? Are you following along? In a body there's a manifested person, I'm manifested in my body, Jesus is manifested in His body, the church. In a body there's a ministering purpose. My body is here to minister to me, we're here to minister to the Lord Jesus Christ. In a body there is a motivating power. The power that animates and motivates my body is my human spirit. The power that animates and motivates the church of the Lord Jesus Christ is the Holy Spirit of God.

Now, here's the fourth and final thing of these things. In a body, there is a **mutual program**. In a body there is a mutual program. Now we've just read verse 13, let's pick up at verse 14 and read this and see what Paul is saying, *"For the body is not one member, but many,"* that is, there's no such thing as a Long Ranger Christianity. *"If the foot shall say, 'Because I am not the hand I am not of the body, is it therefore not of the body?' And if the ear shall say, 'Because I'm not the eye I'm not of the body', is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole body were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the members, every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased Him, and if they were all one member, where were the body?"* That is, if we were all just one great big eyeball or one great big ear like a rooftop antennae, where would be the body? *"But now are they many members yet one body."*

Now in a body, therefore, there's a mutual program. You see, we are here, all of us, to do one thing and that is to show the life of the Lord Jesus Christ to this community, to manifest

Him, and to minister to Him and it is to be a mutual program. A healthy body is coordinated. Now I'm not against organization. When I said the church is not an organization but an organism, don't for one moment think that I'm opposed to organization. I'm very much in favor of it because the Bible is very much in favor of it. God said, *"Let all things be done decently and in order."* And the analogy of the church is the human body. The human body is organized. It has organs. It is organized. As a matter of fact, if you study human anatomy and physiology, you will stand in awe at the organization of a human body. And when you see the church, you're going to say, "Thank God for the organization of the church." A healthy body is organized.

Now we're talking about mutuality. Let me show you three areas of mutuality. Three things. You know, we're all so different, we're all so different. Somebody said, "Only one out of three people is either handsome or beautiful." Look on either side of you. If it's not them, it's you. That's worth coming for, wasn't it? Alright now listen. We're different. We are so different, but let me show you, if you are truly a born-again child of God, three things that we all have in common.

Number one, **we have the same life**. Write it down, the same life. Beginning in, in verse 15 and 16, look. *"If the foot shall say, 'Because I am not the hand I am not of the body,' is it therefore not of the body? And if the eye shall say, 'Because I am not,' if the eye shall say, 'Because I am not, because I am not the eye.'" Let me put on my glasses. If the eye shall say, "I need no glasses, does it not yet need glasses?" All right. "And if the ear shall say, 'Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body,' is it therefore not of the body?"* What's he saying? He's saying that we're all in the same thing together, we share a common life.

And he goes on to mention the foot and the hand. The foot and the hand should never be in competition. No part of my body can function as it ought apart from the other members of the body. A foot is not as noticeable in public as the hands. I dare say that probably nobody in here barefooted. There may be. I've seen them come to church barefooted, but I dare say most of you have shoes on today, right? And I dare say that most of you are not wearing gloves, but you may be. But I'm saying generally what? The feet are covered. The hands are bare. Most of you have rings on. Few of you have rings on your toes, but a few do. A few have rings on your toes and so forth. But generally the hands are more public and more noticeable than the feet, but both are necessary. God has made us where no one part of the body can function as it ought apart from the other. It's grotesque to us when one member of the body has been severed from the body. Now, look up here. See my hand? Does that particularly bother you? I don't think so, just waving at you. But suppose you look down in the aisle beside you and there lies a hand. Whoop! If you were to see just a human hand out there, severed! My eyes don't particularly bother you, I trust. But if you were to open a dresser drawer and find a dresser drawer full of them, good night! What has happened here? You see, the Christian is to operate along with other Christians. We need one another. Look in verse 17, *"If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole body were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body as it hath pleased Him."* So we need one another.

Now if you have parts of your body that you're not really aware of. Many times we teach boys and girls to thank God for their eyes and their ears and their hands, but this morning when you got up and prayed and thanked God for your blessings, did you say, "God, I just want to thank you so much for my pancreas? And Lord, I am so blessed by my kidneys today and my liver and my spleen." No, you didn't do that. You didn't say, "God, I'm so grateful for my pancreas." Friend, if you had pancreatic cancer and it got healed, you'd thank God for your pancreas, would you not? You see, there're parts of our bodies that function, we're not even aware of it, but thank God for it.

Now, we have a mutual life and therefore **we show a mutual love**. Look in verses 25 and 26 of this same chapter, "*That there should be no schism 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 honored, all the members rejoice with it.*" We have the same life, and therefore we have the same love. You're to love me; I'm to love you, why? We're in the same body. Now if one of my members is sick if my heart or my gall bladder or my eyes or whatever have trouble, that doesn't mean they're to be shut off, it means they're to be cared for all the more. We share the same love.

Now listen, listen to me. If you're in this body, you cannot be arrogant. Listen carefully. You cannot say, "Well look at me, I am the pastor. I'm not a custodian, I am the pastor." No, you can't be arrogant. Number two, you can't show envy. You can't say, "Because somebody has a gift I don't have, because he's an eye and I'm a liver I'm going to be jealous of the eye." No! There can be no envy, there can be no rivalry. The members of the body are not to be at war with one another. I don't have to get ahead of you. You don't have to get ahead of me. There can be no self-sufficiency. I cannot say, "I don't need you." You cannot say, "You don't need me." If I were to ask you to pick up a red card, the hand can't say, "I don't need the eye," because the hand can't feel color. The eye has to say, "That's the red one right there." We need one another. The eye can't pick up the card, however. We need one another. There can be no rivalry, no self-sufficiency, and there can be no disunity. We're in it together. Why? We share the same life, we share the same love, and **we share the same Lord**.

Look in verse 27 of this same thing, "*Now ye are the body of Christ and members in particular.*" You see, loyalty to the head, Jesus, has to be loyalty to one another. If this hand is right with the head and this hand is right with the head, these hands have to be right with one another. If you're right with Jesus and I'm right with Jesus, we've got to be right with one another. There can be no disunity. Loyalty to Jesus means loyalty to one another. Just like loyalty to the head means loyalty to every member of the body. You cannot, you cannot, you cannot be loyal to Jesus without being loyal to His church.

And that's the missing note today, friend, is loyalty. People think nothing about missing a church service, for example. They think, "Well, we had company to come today." So what? What if you go tomorrow to your job and tell your boss, "I'm not coming in." "Why not?" "Well, we had company to come." Ridiculous! And by the way, Joyce and I just don't have company to come on Sunday morning, unexpected. Do you know why? They know we're gonna be in church. And if you do have company to come, you say, "Make yourself at home. Come go with

us if you want, we'll see you later. Sunday's our day to be in the house of God." Loyalty! Loyalty to Jesus is loyalty to what Jesus loves. If you love Jesus, you're gonna love what Jesus loves.

A pastor in Georgia was visiting in a home, a very affluent home, a beautiful home, they had everything, a young couple, but they didn't have any children in that home. But they had a little dog. Have you seen people kinda make fools of themselves over dogs? Had a little dog. That dog was praised, petted, loved, all of these things. And the pastor, sitting down, he said to the couple. He said, "You know, you have such a lovely home and everything is so beautiful. You have so much. I notice you don't have any children. Have you ever thought that perhaps some of the love that you're showing to that dog you could be showing to a child?" When he said that, the woman broke into tears and got up and left the room. He said to the husband, "I'm sorry, I know I said something terribly wrong. Tell me what it was." He said, "Well, you couldn't know, but we did have a son. And the doctor told us we'd never have another child, because there was difficulty at the birth of this son. And our son died. And this dog that we make fools of ourselves over was his dog. And he loved him with all of his heart. And before he died he asked us if we'd take care of his dog, and we promised that we would. And in a sense, the love that we're showing this little old dog is the love that we're showing to our son."

Friend, you can find a lot of faults in the church. I'm gonna tell you something. Jesus loved the church and I'm gonna love it with all of my heart. Because the church is his bride, it is His body, it is His building, He is the head! And we share a mutual program. We have the same life, the same love, the same Lord! We're in it together. So we're to discover our spiritual gift.

Now, I'm finished with the message, but let me tell you what I want you to do. Number one, I want you to discover yourself. That's why we're going to be talking about unwrapping your spiritual gifts. I want you to discover yourself. Listen, you have a spiritual gift. Next Sunday I'm gonna be talking about how to discover your spiritual gift. I want you to discover yourself.

Number two; I want you to accept yourself. When I first started preaching, I wanted to be like other preachers. One day I made up my mind I could never be W.A. Criswell, I could never be Billy Graham, I could never be anybody else except Adrian Rogers. I decide I'd be the best Adrian Rogers there can be. Not that I'm all that hot. But you know, I'm the best Adrian Rogers there is. Good or bad.

What I, what I'm saying is this: You need, number one to discover yourself. Number two, you need to accept yourself. Number three; I want you to give yourself. Every member of the body is both a receiver and a transmitter. We're here to receive from the other members and we're here to give to the other members. And when a cell in the body begins to receive and not give, they call that cancer. That's cancer. We're here to receive; I'm here to receive from you. But I'm praying God that, that I'll bless you today. And that my life, and your life, and our lives will be so co-mingled together that we will discover ourselves, accept ourselves, give ourselves, and be ourselves for Jesus. Every member, everybody is somebody in His body. You're important, way up there in the corner of that balcony. You sir, are important. Over here lady, you're important. You sir, are important. You are somebody in His body.

How do you get into that body? By receiving Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Savior and the Holy Spirit of God will put you in the body of Christ and the Holy Spirit of God will come into you, to help you to live like the Christian that He's made you to be.

Would you bow your heads in prayer? Heads are bowed and eyes are closed. Would you begin to pray for those around about you who may not know the Lord Jesus Christ? And if you want to be saved today, I want to tell you that if you'll put your faith where God has put your sins, on the Lord Jesus Christ, He will save you. Furthermore, He will keep you. Pray this, "Dear God, I am a sinner." Pray it, pray it and mean it. "God, I am a sinner, my sin deserves judgment. I'm bound for hell. But I want to be saved. Jesus, You died to save me and promised to save me if I would trust You, and I do trust You right now, like a child. I lay my pride in the dust. I receive You as my personal Lord and Savior. Come into my heart; forgive my sin, save me, Lord Jesus." Did you ask Him? Then thank Him. "Thank You for saving me. I receive it by faith like a child and that settles it. You're now my Lord, my Savior, my God, and my friend. And Lord Jesus, thank You for saving me. I don't ask for a feeling, I stand on Your Word. Give me the courage to make it public. In Your name I pray, Amen."