

Christians Gone Wild!  
**1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians, week 26**  
**One Body, Many Parts (1 Corinthians 12:12–26)**  
July 30, 2006  
Pastor Mark Driscoll

*But in fact God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be.*

1 Corinthians 12:18

First Corinthians 12–14 is one of the richest and most hotly debated sections of the New Testament regarding the church. The big idea of the entire section is that the church is a diversely gifted group of Spirit-led people who love Jesus and do life together in a way that honors Jesus, builds up Christians, and invites non-Christians to meet Jesus. In 1 Corinthians 12:12–26, Paul establishes four foundational principles for every Christian church to obey. After examining these four points we will explore four ways that Mars Hill Church will apply them in light of our upcoming ten-year anniversary on October 1, 2006.

### **Four Principles for Being One Body with Many Parts**

#### **Unity**

*<sup>12</sup>The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ. <sup>13</sup>For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.*

Paul begins by comparing the local church to a human body. Psalm 139:14 says that we are “fearfully and wonderfully made.” Amazingly, the human body has some 206 bones, 650 skeletal muscles, and 210 types of cells. The ability of the body to function as one is staggering. Just as the various parts of our body work together, so the church is to be filled with people who work together for God’s kingdom with the unified effort of a healthy body. This unity is to exist despite race, generation, gender, spiritual gift, ministry passion, culture, income, education, and other differences because the same Holy Spirit indwells, gifts, and empowers every Christian as the source of their unity.

#### **Diversity**

*<sup>14</sup>Now the body is not made up of one part but of many. <sup>15</sup>If the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body. <sup>16</sup>And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body. <sup>17</sup>If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be?*

Despite the unity that is supposed to exist in the church by the power of the Holy Spirit, there is still supposed to be a great diversity of people. Unity is not uniformity, but rather diversity that is brought together by the common characteristics of love for Jesus, submission to Scripture, commitment to the church, and mission to bring the truth and love of Jesus to people in the culture.

## Interdependence

<sup>18</sup>*But in fact God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. <sup>19</sup>If they were all one part, where would the body be? <sup>20</sup>As it is, there are many parts, but one body.*

Just as God has arranged our human body with its various parts to work together effectively, so He has also arranged the church body with diverse people to work together as one. This means that the specializations in the church should not lead to division but mutual love and respect. Practically, this means that everyone who calls Mars Hill Church their home should work toward church membership, where they can find the place that God intends for them as a vital part of our church body.

## Worth

<sup>21</sup>*The eye cannot say to the hand, "I don't need you!" And the head cannot say to the feet, "I don't need you!" <sup>22</sup>On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, <sup>23</sup>and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor. And the parts that are unpresentable are treated with special modesty, <sup>24</sup>while our presentable parts need no special treatment. But God has combined the members of the body and has given greater honor to the parts that lacked it, <sup>25</sup>so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. <sup>26</sup>If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it.*

Unlike the culture where various people are considered more valuable than others because they are beautiful, smart, talented, rich, etc., the economy of the church is altogether different. This means that every Christian is vitally important and contributes something to the church body, as God designed them to. Much like our own body, those parts of the church that are strong can help carry people who are weak. And, like the parts of our body that we need but do not like to show to others, our church includes important people who probably should not get a microphone and stage time any more than you should put a picture of your colon on your Christmas card instead of your face. In the church, every Christian who is willing to function as a part of the body is deemed worthy of love, respect, and participation because they bear God's image, are filled with God's Spirit, and are equally a part of the church family, though they may not be given the same level of public profile.

## Four Practices for Being One Church with Many Parts

While Mars Hill is certainly no perfect church, God the Holy Spirit has accomplished some amazing things through the various parts of our church body working together. *The Church Report* recently named us the twenty-second most influential church in the U.S. and the only church in the Pacific Northwest on the list of the one hundred most influential churches. Also, *Outreach* magazine recently named us the fifteenth fastest-growing church in the U.S. and the only church in Washington or Oregon (the least church states) on their top one hundred list. With our ten-year anniversary approaching on October 1, 2006, your elders want to inform you of the growing diversity and unity of our church as well as how vitally you are needed as a part of this church body.

1. Multi-Campus — Ballard, Wedgwood, Shoreline, and West Seattle
  - We own roughly \$20 million in real estate and \$3 million in furnishings with a total debt of roughly \$12 million
  - We have expanded from 40,000 to 110,000 square feet, plus 20,000 at Crista
2. Multi-Medium — Beginning October 1, 2006
  - Ballard Campus: 9 a.m. (live sermon), 11 a.m. (video sermon), 5 p.m. (live sermon), 7 p.m. (live sermon)
  - Shoreline Campus: 9:15 a.m. (video sermon), 11:15 a.m. (video sermon)
  - West Seattle Campus: 10:30 a.m. (live sermon)
3. Multi-Midweek
  - Shoreline Campus: **Tuesday** evenings at the Crista facilities beginning October 2006
  - Ballard Campus: **Wednesday** evenings beginning October 2006
  - West Seattle Campus: **Thursday** evenings beginning January 2007
4. Multi-Needs
  - Pray
  - Serve
  - Give \$1.2 million on October 1, 2006

Verses for next week: 1 Corinthians 12:1–31