



# BODY LIFE

Disciples & Early Church • U10#4 1st-3rd Gr. • May 18, 2025

## Concept

God has uniquely gifted and placed believers in the body of Christ.

## Goal

Students will learn that every Christian is a part of the body of Christ, each with an important role to play.

## Passage

Romans 12:3-8

Key Verse: "...so it is with Christ's body. We are many parts of one body, and we all belong to each other." Romans 12:5

## Planning Ahead

Lesson Supplies	Craft Supplies
<p><b>Learning Activity #2:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Party favor, 1/student</li> <li>• Small cups, 1/student</li> <li>• <i>Pitcher for water</i></li> <li>• Small paper plates, 1/student</li> <li>• Little Debbie cakes or similar, 1/student</li> <li>• Napkins, 1/student</li> <li>• <i>Balloons; crepe paper</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>Activity Stations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>My Body Inside and Out, Dr. Anne Townsend</i></li> <li>• 3' length of butcher paper</li> <li>• Crayons, markers, pencils</li> <li>• 4 patterns of sitting person</li> <li>• 8½" x 8½" pieces of white paper, 1/student</li> <li>• 10 pencils</li> <li>• Scissors</li> </ul>

### \*TEACHERS PLEASE NOTE

For clarity, the italicized areas in the Planning Ahead section indicate supplies that are in—and should be returned to—your classroom SHARED SUPPLY bag.

# Background Information (for the teacher)

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"To the one who lives for the Lord and is delivered from self, the most important part of his external life is that he might manifest his function in the church. Most certain is it that each member in the body of Christ has his place. If you as a member fail to express your function, it only proves that outwardly you have not lived for the Lord nor inwardly have you been delivered from yourself. ...If in fact you have been delivered from yourself and truly are living for the Lord, one thing in your life will be most certain, which is, that you will automatically manifest in the body that portion of a special function or office which you have as a brother or a sister.

"Never for a moment think that because the grace you have received is so insignificant you therefore have no place in the church. As long as you are a member, you have a definite function. There is no one having the life of God who is not a member of the body of Christ, and no member is so small as to have no function of his own. The less than the least of the members still has his function in the body, and that particular function cannot be replaced by any other member. No matter how tiny is that function, no one else can substitute it. Not even the greatest function in the body can stand in for the smallest one: none can take the place of the other: you cannot be a substitute for me, nor can I be a substitute for you. Oh, if we could see this we would leap for joy!

"... our Lord is so great that it requires believers of all ages and from all nations to express Him. Do please understand that the outflow of life is the expression of Christ; and the body of Christ is where this life is manifested in all of its varied beauty and glory through the body's members.

"Frequently, what one brother can do, no one else can do it in quite the same way. With respect to a certain matter in the church, you must seek out a certain brother; whereas with respect to another matter, you must seek out a particular sister. But just you change the brother or the sister and the result will be that that matter will not be done. As a particular member in the body, you have your specific office. And the office which is operative in you as the life of Christ flows into you is something which no other person can be a substitute for. Regardless of how small you as a member are, you have your place." [1]

Paul says that when we become Christians, God gives each of us spiritual gifts to be used within the context of the body. God uses these gifts when we're together and gives the world a picture of Him. The Bible says that they will know we are Christians by our love. When the members of the body have this perspective, the body works together and a picture of God is revealed.

**Additional Reading: 1 Corinthians 12; Ephesians 4**

[1]Watchman Nee, *The BODY OF CHRIST: A Reality*, ©1978 Christian Fellowship Publishers, Inc., pp. 44- 46, 48.

## Set Up

**Instructions:** Decorate the room for a party with the balloons and crepe paper. Fill the pitcher with water, pour in the cups and group on a table so that they are easily accessible. The cakes should be on plates and grouped next to the drinks. The party favors should be likewise grouped.

### Activity Stations:

- **Design a Machine**

- **Instructions:** As students enter, have them get in small groups to do a group drawing of a machine. Each person will draw one part, then pass it to the next person. Keep circulating the drawing around the group (or the group around the drawing) by adding more and more detail. The participation of each member will result in a creation unique to each group. Put the finished drawing up for the next class to see.

- **The Human Body**

- **Instructions:** Use My Body Inside and Out to learn about the function of various parts of the body. Consider all the parts of the human body that work together in order to brush your teeth, walk across the street, ride on a skateboard, etc. How many parts of the body can you identify? How is each part essential to the proper working of the other parts? What would happen if one or more of the parts didn't work? Read page 20 of the book for consideration.

- **Craft – Joined Together**

- **Instructions:** Fold the 8½" square piece of paper in half diagonally. Fold the paper in half again. Trace the figure. Cut it out, being sure to leave the hands and feet attached at the folds. Open it up. Draw faces, clothes, shoes, etc. on the figures.

Last week, we talked about how, through God's love, we can form an inseparable bond with Him that lasts forever. Who can tell me why we need to form a bond with God? (To help kids respond, remind them of gospel bracelet from last week.) God tells us in His word that all people sin and fall short of His glory. Because our sin separates us from God, we don't have a relationship with Him. But because of His love for us, God sent Jesus to earth to die on a cross as payment for our sin. God says that anyone who believes that Jesus is His Son, and asks that Jesus pay for his or her sin, will form an inseparable bond with Him. Jesus is God's gift to us, and we need only to accept that gift in order to be with God forever. Every person has the opportunity to receive His gift any time or any place.

The Bible tells us that when we receive His gift of forgiveness, the Holy Spirit immediately baptizes us into the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:13). The word baptize is a fancy way of saying that we are put into the body of Christ. That is, we automatically become members of the body of Christ. Can anyone tell me what the body of Christ is? (Allow students to respond.)

## Incorporation Lg. Group

## Introduction Lg. Group

## Introduction Continued

The Bible calls the body of Christ the church. Rather than a building, the church is people. So what's the big deal about being a member of the body of Christ? That's what we want to look at today.

## Transition

We are going to do an activity that will help us to understand this point.

## Learning Activity#1 Lg. Group

### **GAME -- Back To Back & Elbow To Elbow**

**Goal:** To have the students experience the need for interdependence and teamwork.

**Instructions:** Set up three chairs in a line for each group. Divide the students into groups of five, standing back to back. Have them hook arms at the elbow. Have the groups go to the designated starting point and follow the teacher's directions.

We're going to run an obstacle course in our groups. Each group will work together to zigzag through the chairs to the finish line. Everyone ready? Go!

## Transition

Let's see what the Bible says about the body of Christ and how it is intended to work.

## Lesson Lg. Group

The game we just played showed us the importance of working together to get from one place to another. Everyone needed to work as a team so the group would move in the right direction. In the same way, each member of the body needs to work with the others to accomplish what God has for the body to do. That is what God says about our roles in the body of Christ. God has decided to use the body of Christ to tell others about His love. He has given each of us important part in the body. Each of us needs others to play their roles in order to accomplish God's will. This is really important for Christians to understand. God has some very important work for us to do.

Please listen as I read **Romans 12:3-6**.

Our key verse is, "so it is with Christ's body. We are many parts of one body, and we all belong to each other" (Romans 12:5). Paul used the example of our physical bodies as an illustration of the body of Christ. Think about how our physical bodies work to make sure our bodies get the nutrition they need. We need our eyes to see, our hands to pick up and put food in our mouths, our teeth to chew the food, our throat to swallow, our stomach to digest, our blood to carry the nutrients to the rest of our body. In the same way each one of us has a role God has given us to play in the body of Christ. God says that each part is important to the other parts. We are distinct individuals who have unique roles in the body of Christ.

## Lesson Continued

In order for the body of Christ to work the way God intends it to, the members must work together just like all the parts of our physical bodies work together. This is one way the world sees what God is like. God wants to work through every person in His body to show His love.

Our key verse is Romans 12:5, "so it is with Christ's body. We are many parts of one body, and we all belong to each other." What do you think this verse means? (Give the class a chance to respond.)

## Transition

To help us understand how the body of Christ works, we are going to have a different kind of party that shows us how we can work together the way God wants us to.

## Learning Activity#2 Lg. Group

### Object Lesson -- Servant Party

**Goal:** Through the experience of having to depend on each other to serve, the students will gain a better understanding of the importance of interdependence and serving in the body of Christ.

**Instructions:** Explain to the class that the servant party will be like a birthday party with the exception of a few rules. The party will last for 10 minutes. Let the party start and keep track of the time. Do not interfere with the proceedings, but make sure they are following the rules. Observe and use your observations in the discussion that will follow. When 10 minutes have passed, let the students know that the time is up.

### Rules:

- You cannot serve yourself.
- You cannot ask for anything.
- You can only eat or drink what has been placed at your seat by someone else.
- You can do three of these jobs only one time:
  - Put a cup of water in front of someone.
  - Put a piece of cake in front of someone.
  - Put a favor in front of someone.

### Debrief

Everyone stay in your seats. We're going to talk to about what you learned while you finish your snack. If you didn't get something, one of the teachers will serve you.

- How did you feel when you learned that you couldn't get things for yourself?
- Were any of you afraid that you wouldn't get cake, some water or a favor?
- Was anyone served all three things?
- Was anyone not served anything?

## Learning Activity#2 Continued

This is called a servant party because serving each other is what makes the party work. Serving each other in the body of Christ is what makes the body of Christ work, too. If we think only about what we need, we don't see what the others around us need. The servant party shows us that if the body of Christ is to work properly, all the members need to put others first and do the job that God has for each to do. Who remembers our key verse? "so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others" (Romans 12:5).

It is hard sometimes to appreciate each other and our differences. Sometimes we are jealous of each other. Sometimes we think we can do things better than anyone else. Sometimes we don't think we have anything to offer anyone. All of this is wrong thinking that keeps us from working together as one body. When we believe and act as though each one of us in the body of Christ has an important role, we see God's work being done in ways we could never have imagined.

## Transition

Let's get into our small groups to talk a bit more and to pray.

## Learning Activity#3 Sm. Groups

- What was frustrating to you about the servant party? What was fun about it?
- Did it help you understand how the body of Christ should work together? How?
- Have you ever thought about a part God has for you in the body of Christ? What do you think it is?
- Has anyone ever told you, you are particularly good at something? How do you think you could put that to use in the body of Christ?

**Missions Prayer:** Talk about and pray for the Oasis Giving Campaign.

Let's pray now. Let's ask God to remind us that we all need each other and we are all very important in the body of Christ. To become a member of the body of Christ, all someone needs to do is ask for Jesus' death count for his or her sins. If you have any questions about what this means, please feel free to ask a teacher.