



THE BODY OF CHRIST

God's Incredible Plan • U10#3 1st-3rd Grade • May 10, 2026

Concept

God is the creator/designer who uniquely gifts and fits together those in the Body of Christ.

Goal

Students will learn that anyone can become a part of the Body of Christ by starting a relationship with God.

Passage

1 Corinthians 12; Ephesians 4:11-16

Key Verse: "For the body is not one member, but many." 1 Corinthians 12:14

Planning Ahead

Lesson Supplies	Craft Supplies
<p>Activity Stations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>My Body Inside and Out, Dr. Anne Townsend</i>• <i>2 magnifying glasses</i>• <i>11" x 17" skeleton</i> <p>Learning Activity #1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cookies, 1/student <p>Learning Activity #2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Small nerf or plastic balls, 1/student</i>	<p>Activity Stations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Manila tagboard die-cut body parts, 1 set/student• Paper fasteners, 6/student• Markers, crayons• Scissors• <i>Gel pens distributed evenly among classrooms</i>• <i>Various shape paper punches distributed evenly among classrooms</i>• <i>Several sheets of bright-colored paper</i>• Wiggly eyes, 2/student• Pompoms, 4-5/student• Yarn for hair

*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/Teacher Helps

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This lesson teaches the value of the role of each member of the body of Christ. "All that Jesus Christ is (his fullness) is to be seen in his body which is the church. ...There is the holy mystery of the church--it is the dwelling place of God. He lives in his people. That is the great calling of the church--to make visible the invisible Christ." [1] The church is to act, literally, as Jesus' body on earth! In order for the church to fulfill these functions and Jesus' command to grow the church (Matthew 28:19, Acts 1:8), the members must be spiritually growing and active. There must be qualitative growth as well as quantitative growth.

Ephesians 4:15 and 16 state that ". . . we are to grow up in all aspects into Him, who is the head, even Christ; from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by that which every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love [*italics mine*]." Taken together, verses 11-16 make an important point: when each member of the body works properly, so does the church.

First Corinthians 12:12-27 teaches that the Spirit gives the gifts "for the common good," for the sake of others, not oneself (see 1 Corinthians 12:7). "As the human body must have diversity to work effectively as a whole, so the members of Christ's body have diverse gifts, the use of which can help bring about the accomplishment of Christ's united purpose. Each must properly exercise his gifts or effectively use his position for the good of the whole."² Therefore, the students will be challenged to consider their contribution to others and the group as a whole as well as the importance of the contribution of all others in the body.

As you meditate on these points and prepare for the lesson, consider how to help the students learn to value other types of people, as well as how to be excited about what special part God has given each of them to play in God's Incredible Plan. Also, consider how to communicate that there is nothing more significant or fulfilling than playing a part in this plan. Are you aware that God has entrusted you with a role--a stewardship--to use for service to the Lord? What motivates or excites you about this knowledge?

[1] Ray Stedman, *Body Life* (Ventura, California: Regal Books, 1972, 1984), pp. 15, 16.

[2] NIV Study Bible, 1985, Zondervan Publishing Co., footnote on 1 Corinthians 12:14, p. 1751.

Incorporation Lg. Group

Introduction Lg. Group

Transition

Learning Activity#1 Lg. Group

Transition

Activity Stations

- **Craft – The Body**
 - **Instructions:** Lay the bodies, arms and legs on the table. The students will select all of the parts to assemble a complete body using the paper fasteners. Decorate as desired with provided materials.
- **Science – God's Marvelous Design**
 - **Instructions:** Look at My Body Inside and Out with the students. Thumb through the book; read and discuss questions. Look at the drawing of the skeleton and discuss the intricacies of the bone structure of the body. Use the magnifying glass to look at their fingerprints.
- **Missions Prayer**
 - **Instructions:** Talk about and pray for the Oasis Giving campaign.

Who can tell me what the church is? (It's people who have asked for forgiveness through Jesus' death on the cross, who have the Holy Spirit inside them.) Our key verse last week was Acts 1:8, "You will be my witnesses—in Jerusalem, in all of Judea, in Samaria, and in every part of the world." Based on this verse, what is one of the main things the church is supposed to do? (It is to tell others about Christ.) If you are a Christian, you are a part of the "body of Christ," the church.

The Drama Team will now present 2 skits about the body of Christ.

Drama

"NoBody Life" & "The Real Thing" skits presented by the drama team Debrief

In 1 Corinthians 12:12, 27, the Bible compares the body of Christ to a human body. Just as our human bodies have a lot of different parts, so the body of Christ has many different parts. Each part has an important role to play in the body. In the first skit the Bible study was sort of like a mouth, all by itself, with no arms, legs, or anything else. Information was given, but nothing else happened. In the second skit when every person played the role God intended, the body of Christ worked well. Our key verse is 1 Corinthians 12:14, "Now the body is not made up of one part but of many." The Holy Spirit gives every Christian special abilities along with unique roles to play in the body of Christ. God uses all willing people in many different ways—ways different from others and yet helpful and necessary to the body.

Let's do an activity now to help us learn 1 Corinthians 12:14, "Now the body is not made up of one part but of many."

Learning Activity# 2 Lg. Group

Game

Goal: To recognize that every part of the body is important.

Instructions: Give the class the following instructions to contrast limited use vs. full use of body parts.

Suck your thumb without bending your elbow. Now suck your thumb while bending your elbow.

Sit down without bending your knees. Now sit down while bending your knees.

Look behind you without moving your feet, turning your head or your body. Now look behind you with full movement.

Pick up and carry a ball across the room without using your hands or arms. Now you can use your hands and arms.

Debrief

Did you find these instructions difficult to follow? All of the tasks were easy when you could use all the parts of your body. But the ones you could do took a lot longer and greater effort when all the parts weren't used. How often do we think about the parts of our body like our eyelids, or even our ears? Life would be very tough without these body parts because we depend on them to function. Missing just one part of the body changes everything because every part of the body is important. In the same way, each part of the body of Christ needs to willingly and actively play its role for the body to function the way God intended.

Transition

Lesson Lg. Group

Everyone get a Bible so we can look at 1 Corinthians 12.

When a person trusts God and uses the abilities God gives him, the body actually grows stronger and more effective in sharing the good news with those who don't know Christ. Every person who has asked for forgiveness through Jesus has a special ability/abilities and a special role to play in the body of Christ as the body works out God's plan together to save people.

Let's look at one or two of the gifts we saw in the skit. What about the gifts of teaching and serving? In the skit, Carol's role was to teach the Bible. Jim used his gift of service to bring cookies to share and to help Shelley.

So how do we know what "body part" we are? It's not as if God gives each person the name of an actual body part. He doesn't say, <<name>> is a hand, <<name>> is a nostril, and <<name>> is a big toe, or anything like that. Maybe some of us don't know our gifts and roles. It takes time to know what gift or gifts God has given us. As we ask God to show us ways to help people and to be a friend, we'll start to notice certain special ways that God uses us most often. If we're willing, God will use our gifts and abilities to help the church grow bigger and better. God will use each person in a special way, to help people get to know God and trust Him.

Lesson Continued

Follow along as I read 1 Corinthians 12:14-19. Do you ever wish you were different than you are—your looks, abilities, personality? Do you ever look at other people and wish you could be like them in some way? Do you ever feel unneeded or unimportant? God says, "Now the body is not made up of one part but of many" (1 Corinthians 12:14). He says that even the parts people might not notice or think about are super-important to the health of the body, the church. So we should never think that just because we aren't like a certain person or can't do a certain thing we aren't important. God gave everyone the exact gifts, looks, and abilities He wanted to—just how He knew the body would work the best. So if we each play the role He's given us, we'll do just what we're supposed to do. In that way God's body grows!

Every single person is an important part of the body of Christ, and we need every other part, even the ones we don't notice or think that much about.

Can you think of some roles in Oasis that you don't notice? There are people who pray for this meeting every week, people who clean and set up the classrooms so we can meet, people who write and present the skits, people who plan and organize the crafts. And think about the teachers. Some are good storytellers, some are good at explaining the craft or organizing the games, and some are good listeners and like to hear about your week. We are all parts in the same body; we need each other. When one part of our body isn't working well, the whole body suffers; the whole body misses out on that person's special God-given role.

Good News

1 Corinthians 12:14, "Now the body is not made up of one part but of many." God has given each Christian in this room a role to play. If we, together, each use our special gifts we will be privileged to be a part of God's Incredible Plan. There is nothing more exciting than the fact that God wants to use each of us in a unique, special way, to influence the lives of other people forever!

If you want the privilege of God working through you in a special way, you must first become a part of the body of Christ. To become a part of the body of Christ you must first admit that you sin and need forgiveness. If you tell God you need His forgiveness and ask Jesus' death on the cross to pay for your sins, He'll forgive you and come and live inside you forever. Then you will be part of Christ's body on earth and will have a special role in God's Incredible Plan.

Let's do another activity now, to learn even more about 1 Corinthians 12:14, "Now the body is not made up of one part but of many."

Transition

Learning Activity#3 Lg. Group

Game

Goal: Recognize that one part is not enough to accomplish a task.

Instructions: The students will need to follow your instructions as you give them, or they'll be disqualified for that round. This time, instead of leaving out one body part, they can only use one body part! This is much more difficult.

Cross the room using only your nose.

Say "hi" to three people using only your eyelids.

Carry a book across the room using only your knees.

Tell a friend about your week using only your elbows.

Read a page out of a book or Bible using only your ears.

Debrief

It's sometimes possible for one part of the body to accomplish a task by itself. Those of you who tried to carry the book across the room on your knees found it very time-consuming and hard on your knees. It's much better to walk on your feet and carry the book in your hands. Each part has a role to play. Feet are good for some things, but not for everything. Hands are really great, but they need elbows. They need the rest of the body parts. And this is the way it is in the body of Christ.

Let's get into small groups to talk more about this.

Follow along as I read 1 Corinthians 12:20-23a, 26-27.

- What does this passage say?
- Do you ever think the roles others play are less important than the role you play?
- Do you ever think the roles others play are more important than the role you play?
- What are some roles you could play in this class to make it work better?

Let's pray

- Return to activity stations.
- Talk to those you think might be non-Christians. Ask them what they think about the body of Christ, heaven, God, etc.

Transition

Learning Activity#4 Sm. Groups

Optional Activities