

EVERYBODY IS IMPORTANT

Simple Strategy Series #3

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Intro:

* We have said that...

- **EVERYBODY is Invited**...

- **EVERYBODY is Included**...

* Today **EVERYONE is IMPORTANT**. (I hope I can communicate this today)

* It might be a little hard for us to get our arms around this message today because we are Americans...because the **goal of the American Dream is to be autonomous**.

* "Autonomous" = I can do whatever I want.

* **Point of the message- Peace & satisfaction in life COMES not in AUTONOMY** but because they are Christians (small parts of a bigger part) & they are connected to something bigger than them & they can plug into the local church.

* There is NO peace & contentment apart from doing what God INTENDED for you to do.

1 Corinthians 12

Bckgrd. Letter written that they are a little part of something bigger- here he gives a word picture...

12:27 The conclusion first then I'll go back...

1. (v 27a)"You are the body of Christ" think about that for a second.

You are the physical representation of Christ on the earth - NOW.

(v 27b) "Members in particular" part of a "division or a share"

* **The closest you will EVER GET to being with Jesus on this earth is when you & I gather together with a bunch of Jesus followers in the local church. WOW!**

*** This is HUGE - in our AUTONOMOUS SOCIETY - **we accept Christ as our savior & then I go off & live MY little Christian life... NO, NO, NO!**

*** **You WERN'T saved as an INDIVIDUAL to FUNCTION as an INDIVIDUAL.**

You were connected to other Christians (like it or not).

Mat 18:20 "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the **midst** of them." The next two verses illustrate this principle. (v 21 & 22)

* In the midst- not the Lone Ranger Christian.

Now go back to the top 1 Cor 12:12...

1 Cor. 12:12

1. "So it is with Christ" - interchangeable Christ & the church

12:13

1. (**v 13a**) One body when baptized (Eph 4:5 "... one baptism.") when I got into Christ 1968 I got into you - if you were saved then... if you got saved after then you got into me!

One universal multi-cultural body.

2. (**v 13b, c**) "Jews or Gentiles" the same... others the same. (the cool body & the plain?)

The stiff legalistic church - same as my cool liberated body)

12:14-16

1. Humor here... what foot or ear has EVER spoken?

- Or maybe you don't feel like a part because you don't know your function.

12:17

1. EYE- is extraordinary, complex, BUT if all the body an eye... in other words if EVERYBODY has the SAME ROLE- why it is no good? Because the body can't function.

* Point - NEVER have purpose & identity outside of learning your function in the local church body.

12:18-20

1. Revolutionary truth if we can get it... when you became a Christian God placed every single person in a body the WAY HE wants it to be & if you get this you will find how IMPORTANT you are & how SIGNIFICANT you are to accomplishing God's PURPOSE on this planet.
 - * COSMIC SIGNIFICANCE! You are INDISPENSABLE.
The greatest thing you can do is get involved in church UNTIL you find your SWEET spot.
 - * This answers the question-
- "Why don't I feel close to God anymore?"
Because you are not working close to the body - never feel closer to God than when working with other believers.
 - * You have a role to play in the CONTEXT of the body.

12:21

1. See the parts arguing-
"I don't need you hands- yeah, how you going to put your contacts in?"
 - * In the church how we feel sometimes. All are NEEDED!

12:22-23

1. You're connected with the other parts - so "Lord where is my slot that makes me indispensable."

12:24-26

1. The little parts are so important- like a little bone in you hand or foot.

Where we began

12:27

A foot by itself & hand that tries to function by itself is GROSS!

- * Some Christians like the lone foot or hand, just trying to find their PURPOSE ALONE!
YOU WON'T FIND IT!
- * In this world of AUTONOMY- you won't find purpose or peace & contentment...
- * **Three question you'll NEVER get answered if you function autonomously:**
 1. **"Why don't I feel close to God?"**- You must be CONNECTED to the BODY.
 2. **"Why am I not growing?"** - How much does a hand or foot if disconnected from the body?
 3. **"Why don't I sense my purpose in life?"** - You can't find in apart but in the body.

* This is incredible.

1. You need to find your place in the body- because the goal is to get connected not autonomy.
2. You are an important part of that body & together we can accomplish things that we never could do by ourselves.
3. And it is God's will for you & God's will for me that we function as a BODY!

* Together we can accomplish God's will on the earth & apart from that we WON'T!
And we will always struggle with those three questions.

So have you allotted a little time to spend in the church to connect with the body of Christ?
So where are you?
What part are you?
Where will you look to find your place in this body.

- * God wants to do something dramatic in this city that is not connected to a "feel good church"
- * That is not just to learn the bible but to function in Christ's body.
- * What if every Christian in this place today would get this point what could happen?

* The church is the body of Christ...
EVERYBODY is INVITED
EVERYBODY is INCLUDED
EVERYBODY is IMPORTANT!