

Coach House Church BEACONS

IMPORTANT PARTS

11TH JUNE 2021

How are you feeling today? Do you feel useful? Are you happy with your contribution in life? I know that in our household we often “discuss” who is doing the most washing up or the most ironing. Of course this isn't what we are really discussing, the real agenda is “I'm doing more than you, you ought to do more”. We are not alone in this, everybody, at some time in their lives will have felt put upon, and overworked. Over time this feeling leads to sadness or even bitterness. Conversely, sometimes, we can grow to feel that we are more important than other people, we can feel that our contribution is greater and that makes us somehow superior.

At the worst of times we can feel that there are things that we can't do. We see things that others do and we know that we can't do as much as them or do things as well as them. This makes us feel inferior. We feel devalued. Whatever we do or don't do it seems that we have the opportunity to make ourselves unhappy. Now if we think about our own body I am sure that many of us will be unhappy with various bits of it. Maybe there are bits that we don't even know what they are there for. Take the appendix, for example, I have read plenty of medical books but no-one seems to know what the appendix is for. In fact, if you have had it removed I am certain you won't be missing it. But if it gets infected you certainly know it is there, you cannot overlook it or ignore it.

I was thinking about this last week when I saw what had happened to one of our Beacon contributors. He had injured his foot and it needed to be wrapped up in a big protective boot. Most of the time we don't like our feet. They smell and are often funny shapes. You would rather overlook them and hide them away. But when something happens, a part of your body that was insignificant suddenly takes centre stage. It is stopping you doing things the way you want, in this case he was limping slowly and couldn't stand up for too long.

In the first letter to the Corinthian church Paul wrote about parts of the body. "The human body has many parts, but the many parts make up one whole body. So it is with the body of Christ. Some of us are Jews, some are Gentiles, some are slaves, some are free. But we have all been baptised into one body by one spirit, and we all share the same spirit. Yes the body has many parts not just one part. If the foot says "I am not a part of the body because I am not a hand" that does not make it any less a part of the body. And if the ear says "I am not a part of the body because I am not an eye" would that make it any less a part of the body. If the whole body were an eye how would it hear? Or if your whole body were an ear, how would you smell anything? But our bodies have many parts, and God has put each part just where He wants it. How strange a body would be if it had only one part! Yes, there are many parts but only one body. The eye can never say to the hand "I don't need you" The head can't say to the feet "I don't need you" In fact, some parts of the body that seem the weakest and least important are actually the most necessary. And the parts we regard as less honourable are those we clothe with the greatest care. So we carefully protect those parts that should not be seen, while the more honourable parts do not require this special care. So God has put the body together such that extra honour and care are given to those parts that have less dignity. This makes for harmony among the members, so that all the members care for each other. If one part suffers, all the parts suffer with it, and if one part is honoured all the parts are glad. All of you together are Christ's body and each of you is a part of it"

In this passage Paul is comparing people to parts of the body. He is doing this because he has recognised that we are all different. It is our differences that are what causes us to consider whether we feel worth more or less than others. We know that it is wrong to think like this but we can't help ourselves sometimes.

Paul is telling us that we are who we are. We can't be someone else because that isn't how God made us. We shouldn't want to be someone else. The Ear is the Ear and the Eye is the Eye, even the foot has been appointed by God. The differences between us should not lead to the kind of discussion about who is next to do the ironing. Rather, a recognition that God has need of all sorts of different people in His church. In recognising this need we should stop considering what other people are doing and do our little bit to the best of our ability.

It is easy to recognise when we think more of ourselves than we ought and then repent and ask God to forgive us. But what about when we feel inferior? When we feel bad about ourselves or we feel of low worth? You see this isn't a situation where repenting or asking gods forgiveness is going to help. In fact thinking that we need to repent will probably make the situation worse. If you feel like this then you will know just how difficult it is to be in this situation. In this situation it will be hard to solve this problem yourself. Our friend did not find his foot wrapped in a heavy boot all by itself. He needed to seek the help of someone who knew what they were doing.

In the passage we just read Paul highlights the fact that when you are not functioning as you should the whole body feels this. So it is with us, when a member of the church feels low, depressed, worthless, and this is known to the body, we all feel the same pain. In the same way that our whole bodies respond to an infection, so the whole church can respond to a brother or sister in need.

One of the most important things to remember is that all of us, who are in Christ, are heading to the same place. The outcome is the same for all of us, rich or poor, healthy or unhealthy, confident or anxious, when Jesus calls us home we will all be complete in Him. In heaven there will not be any of the differences between us that we imagine there are in this life. Nobody will think badly of you, nobody will be concerned about who does the most or who's contribution is worth more, all will be equal and all our inequalities will gone.

You see there is no point trying to be like someone else. It won't get you a different outcome. All you need is faith in Jesus, if He died for your sins and you trust Him then, whatever part of the body you are in this world you will be a part of His body in the next. And because of this, right now, you are an important part.



STEVE ADSHEAD



Coach House Church

leadership@coachhousechurch.org // 0161 432 5604

the coach house church, 222 wellington road north, stockport sk4 2qn