

*Get Ready!*

## Our Church Body

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### Text

1 Corinthians 12:12-20; 27-28

### Key Quest Verse

“So in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.”  
Romans 12:5 (NIV)

### Bible Background

During the lifetime of Paul, Corinth was the chief city in Greece with a population of about 250,000 free persons and 400,000 slaves. Due to its location on the Corinthian isthmus, this commercial city was an industrial and seafaring metropolis that possessed great wealth and luxury. Its location made it a crossroads of trading and drew crowds of visitors from both the East and the West. As a typical Greek city, Corinth was steeped in culture, arts, and a pursuit for wisdom, as evidenced by its schools of philosophy and religious temples dedicated to various Greek gods. Unfortunately, these gods were gods of pleasure and lust. A carnal and wicked city, Corinth was a center of immorality.

In the midst of this impure setting, Paul established the church at Corinth. By reading Acts, chapter 18, one can see that Paul founded the church at Corinth while working as a tentmaker and preaching to both Jew and Gentiles before continuing to Ephesus to preach. God had blessed the new church with gifts of the Spirit to aid in the strengthening of the church and spreading of the Gospel. Though the church was talented, members had begun to use their gifts to gratify their pride and factions were setting in the church membership. In a corrupt city such as Corinth, it is easy to see why the immature church was experiencing problems.

While in Ephesus, Paul received words of the many problems occurring at the church in Corinth through visitors from Corinth. In addition, the church wrote to Paul, seeking counsel on their problems. This letter to the Corinthians is Paul’s advice to the church regarding many subjects. In chapter 12, he addresses the use of spiritual gifts and factions spreading in the church. His response clearly shows that every gift from God is to be used to spread the gospel and glorify his name. In addition, no gift or church member is greater than the other. Instead, each member forms an important part of the church, which is the body of Christ. The diverse gifts of its members compose a whole that can accomplish God’s purpose. In Christ, there is no distinction between individual members or characteristics, for all are important to the body of Christ.

*Get Ready!***Lesson Quest**

**What I want my students to:**

**Know:** Everyone is a member of the body of Christ, despite their talents or characteristics, and all can contribute to the church.

**Feel:** Confidence in their abilities to work for the body of Christ and gratitude for the diverse gifts of other church members.

**Do:** Demonstrate how to use their talents for the growth of the church and spreading of the gospel.

**Leader's Devotion**

God has given each of us tools to use in building His Kingdom. We don't all have the same tools, but God expects us to use whatever tools He has given to us. If we do, He will give us even more, but if we don't, He may take them away and give them to someone who will use them. Listen to the words of Jesus, "For everyone who has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him." We find so many excuses not to use the talents and resources that God has given us to help further the spread of His Word. Whenever I think of church bodies, I often think of a set of great tools, in the rain getting rusted. Encourage others in your church to use their talents. Is there someone who could help you in your Christian Education ministry? How can your teens learn to develop their talents in the church family? Pray that God can use you as an encourager to others to glorify and help spread the gospel.

Get Set!



**Option A**

**Materials:** An older, large book

**How many pages do you guess are in this book?** ( Then check and tell them.) Wow, that's a lot of pages. **Are any of the pages exactly alike? Of course, the answer is no. Some have pictures, some don't, and they all have different words. What holds all the pages together?** (You might get answers like glue, string, spine, or binding.) **Look at each other. Are any of them exactly alike. No--even twins aren't exactly alike. How about in the whole congregation? No two people here are exactly alike. Yet we have something that holds us together, just like this book has binding. There is a song called "Bind us together, Lord." (If they know it, you could have them sing it. If not, tell them these words from it): Some of the words from the song are "bind us together with love." It is God's love that binds us together. Even though we're all different, we all have God's love. We know God loves us and we share that love with each other. And that's what holds us together as a church. Just like the pages of a book are bound together with glue and string, God's people are bound together, as well. So, whenever you see a book, remember how it is held together, and remember that God loves you and wants you to share that love with others, too. When we are bound together with God's love we care for one another, and take care of each other, and pray for each other. So remember that you are a part of a big family here at church and all around the world. You're a part of God's family, and it is God's love that holds us all together. Let's take a look in the Bible and see what it says about the church family and the church body.**

GO TO THE BIBLE STORY

**Option B**

**Materials:** A large book

Place a large book on end on the table (e.g. a Bible dictionary) and invite the students to blow it over (check that it can't be, of course). Try it yourself and show that you can't do it either. **But there is a way! Place a large paper bag under the book and blow into the bag - as it inflates the book topples over. When the book stood on a firm foundation the book could not fall - but once it was standing only on the air in the bag it was unstable and fell. In our Christian walk, we need a firm foundation. We need to study God's Word, pray, and attend church. We are going to talk more today about what the Bible says about the church.**

GO TO THE BIBLE STORY

Get Set!



### Bible Story

**Teacher Tip:** Provide markers for students to highlight portions of the story in their Bibles

Have students read the lesson text aloud as a class. Then, the teacher will read the Key Quest Verse to the students. Last, the students will repeat the Key Quest Verse back to the teacher.

**“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. 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. Now the body is not made up of one part but of many. 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. 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. 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? But in fact God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. If they were all one part, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, but one body...Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. And in the church God has appointed first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, also those having gifts of healing, those able to help others, those with gifts of administration, and those speaking in different kinds of tongues.” 1 Corinthians 12:12-20; 27-28 (NIV)**

**Go!****Kleenex Church****OBJECT LESSON**

**Materials:** A box of tissues

**Quest Connection**

**Procedure:** As you speak, remove one tissue at a time, in order to illustrate what you are discussing. **Churches today are like a box of Kleenex. In a box of Kleenex, one tissue always stands ready, waiting for the call to carry out its job. It uses its assigned characteristics, such as softness and scent, to perform its role. As you use a box of Kleenex, it seems as if you will never run out and that there are always more to come. However, as the tissue on top waits to perform its job, there are others on the bottom of the box that support the top tissue and lift it up. Have you ever thought about the tissues in the bottom of the box? They wait patiently for their turn to work and are never jealous of the tissues on top. Instead, they are content to support the others as they do their job. That’s the way a church is.**

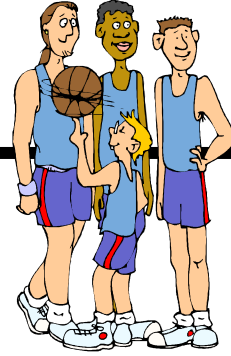
**This box of Kleenex teaches us what our church should be like. We should each be like this Kleenex floating at the top of the box. It is waiting to do its job. We should always be ready and waiting to use our talents for the church. We never know when our talents and gifts may be needed to bring comfort, to show praise, or to assist the church. And, it seems that as we look around our church, we will never run out of gifts or talents! (Name some of the talents of your students and other church members.) Everyone has a gift that will help our church and spread the word of God. And, we’re a lot like the bottom tissues. There are times when we cannot see what talents we may have or how we can contribute to the church. Instead, we have to wait patiently for the Lord to use us. As we wait, we need to support and encourage others as they serve the church right now. We are all part of the same group and work towards the same goal. Thus, we must forget about ourselves as individuals, and be willing to help our fellow church members. Someday, we too will be the top Kleenex, ready to work for the body of Christ.**

**Close**

**Who are the “top tissues” in our church that we can lift up and support? Let’s brainstorm some ways we can encourage and help them before we leave class today.**

**Go!**

**Be a Team Player**



**VIDEO**

**Materials:** video of a sports team, television, VCR

**Procedure:** Before class, videotape a 5-7 minute clip of a sports team, not a single athlete, in action. Make sure that the clip shows the players working together to meet a goal, such as a football team making a touchdown or a basketball team shooting a basket.

At the beginning of class, tell the students that they will be watching footage of a sports team. Instruct them to watch how the athletes play the game. Do they try to single-handedly win the game or do they work together? For instance, do they make passes to each other? Have them count how many people are involved in making one play. Show the video clip to the class.

**Quest Connection**

What did you notice most about this team? The item that stood out to me is that they all had to work together to accomplish a goal. In this team, there are no individual stars. Did you count how many people had to participate to make that play? No one did it by himself or herself. Instead, it was a team effort! Each of these athletes possesses strengths and weaknesses. Despite their athletic abilities, none of them could play the game by themselves. They all come together and use their individual characteristics to form a strong team. That is how our church is. We are each a member of God's team! As a church, we all have a common goal to work towards, which is spreading the good news. And, though we each have individual talents, none of them by themselves will win everyone to Christ. Instead, we have to work together to put our talents to use. We each contribute our talents to the church to become a strong team working for God. That is how our church must operate—as a team!

**Close**

Romans 12:5 says, 'So in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others'. This verse means that we all must work together and be accountable to one another. This week, let's remember to play hard for God's team!

**Go!****Job Shadowing****CHRISTIAN LIVING****Materials:** Students, church members**Quest Connection**

Students have been learning about teamwork in the church. In addition, they have discussed different roles in the church body. Now, they will have an opportunity to experience what it feels like to participate in a helping role for the church body. They will learn about the importance of every member and their contributions.

**Procedure:** Before class, recruit church member willing to volunteer time working with students from your Sunday School class. Explain the lesson text and that you have been discussing the roles in a church body. You would like your students to see all of the talents and work that goes into forming the church into a cohesive unit. Try to get one church volunteer per student. Have these volunteers come to your Sunday School class on the designated day.

When students arrive, introduce the volunteers. Explain to the students that they will be job shadowing this person. During Sunday School class, the volunteer is going to take them around the church to demonstrate and explain what job they do for the church and how they do it. The students will get to experience first-hand what it is like to work for the church body. For example, a choir member could take a student around to show them how they prepare for the worship service and what they do during the worship service. An usher might show the students how he greets people and assists them in finding a spot in church. Other volunteers could include a deacon for sharing information on serving communion, the pastor to share how he prepares his sermon, a deaconess showing how she prepares the communion, or a secretary showing how she prepares the bulletin and church reports. Pair the students with a volunteer that matches their interests. Then, allow the students the majority of class time to job shadow that person.

**Close**

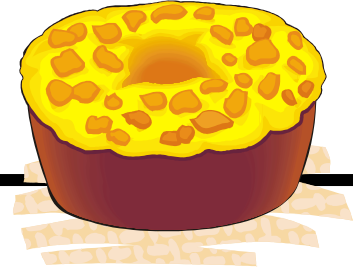
Have the students return to class. Allow them to share information about the job that they shadowed and how it contributes to the church body. Then, review the key quest verse with the students. **“Heavenly Father, thank you for all of the people who give their time and talents to our church. All of our individual strengths and gifts help make our church a strong body in Christ. Please help us find our way to serve in the church body. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”**

*Go!*

### Importance of Everyone

#### FOOD

**Materials:** Two cake mixes, water, eggs, oil, two bowls, spoons, mixer, two cake pans, oven, kitchen, forks, aprons



### Quest Connection

Students have learned that the church body is composed of many members. Each of these members is important to the church body. In this lesson, they will see that even everyone is important to the church body, despite its characteristics.

**Procedure:** Before class, prepare the church kitchen for this lesson. The students will be working on two groups, so lay out the ingredients in two areas for the students to work at. Preheat the oven to the designated temperature on the cake mix box.

When students arrive in class, explain that today they will be making cakes! Divide the students into two groups and take them to the church kitchen. Explain that the first group will be using all of the ingredients. The second group will be using all of the ingredients except for the eggs. Explain that you just don't see the importance of eggs in a cake. **“They’re runny and gross looking, so you don’t want them in your cake. What could it hurt? A cake will still taste good without the eggs, right?”** Have each group mix their cake according to the directions on the box and put their cakes in the oven.

While the cakes are baking, have the students complete one of the worksheets or the journal page. After the cakes are finished baking, have the students remove them from the oven. Let each student take a bite out of each cake. The second cake, the one without eggs, doesn't look or taste good! The eggs help hold the ingredients together. Explain to the students how eggs hold the cake together and play an important role in baking a cake, even if they don't seem too important. Compare this to our roles in the church body. Even though we may not see the importance of our actions or abilities, we are still members of the church body. What we do is important to the church and can help it immensely.

### Close

Ask each teen to share one way that they currently help the church. Then, have the students recite the key quest verse together.



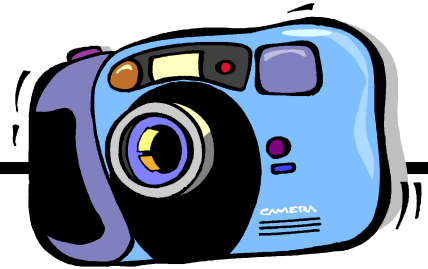
**Go!****Back in the Day****GUEST QUEST****Materials:** none**Procedure:** Invite a member of your church that was one of the first members to start attending or had a family member/friend that was involved in starting your church**Quest Connection**

Allow time for students to ask your guest questions about the start of the church. Maybe your church is young; great, use one of your students as a special speaker! Make sure to prompt questions about how and why the church began. How is different now? How is it the same?

**It's important to know our church history in order to realize the impact we all have on the future of our church. Without the efforts of our guest and others, we would not be able to worship together today. The same responsibility applies to us now, to continue building our church and praying for God's spirit to dwell in it and in us. It's exciting to know our history because it gives us hope for our future!**

**Close**

Take five minutes and let the teens make a few predictions for the future based on what they learned today. If they are negative predictions, challenge your class to make a difference and positive change.

**Go!****The Chief Cornerstone****PHOTO SCAVENGER HUNT**

**Materials:** 2 sets of pictures, taken and developed ahead of time, of different places in and around your church building, pens, paper, a special snack

**Note:** Pictures should not be of an entire object in order for the search to be necessary. For example, take a snapshot of the edge of drinking fountain spout, not the entire fountain. Be sure to take one picture of part of an object in your church that represents Jesus Christ, maybe a picture, a cross, or part of the foundation.

**Quest Connection**

**Procedure:** Divide your class into two teams and present them with envelopes that hold the pictures inside, a piece of paper and pen. They must search the church building to find where each picture was taken and write it down on the paper. The first team to label all the pictures correctly wins and gets to go be served a special snack by the other team (ex: donuts and milk).

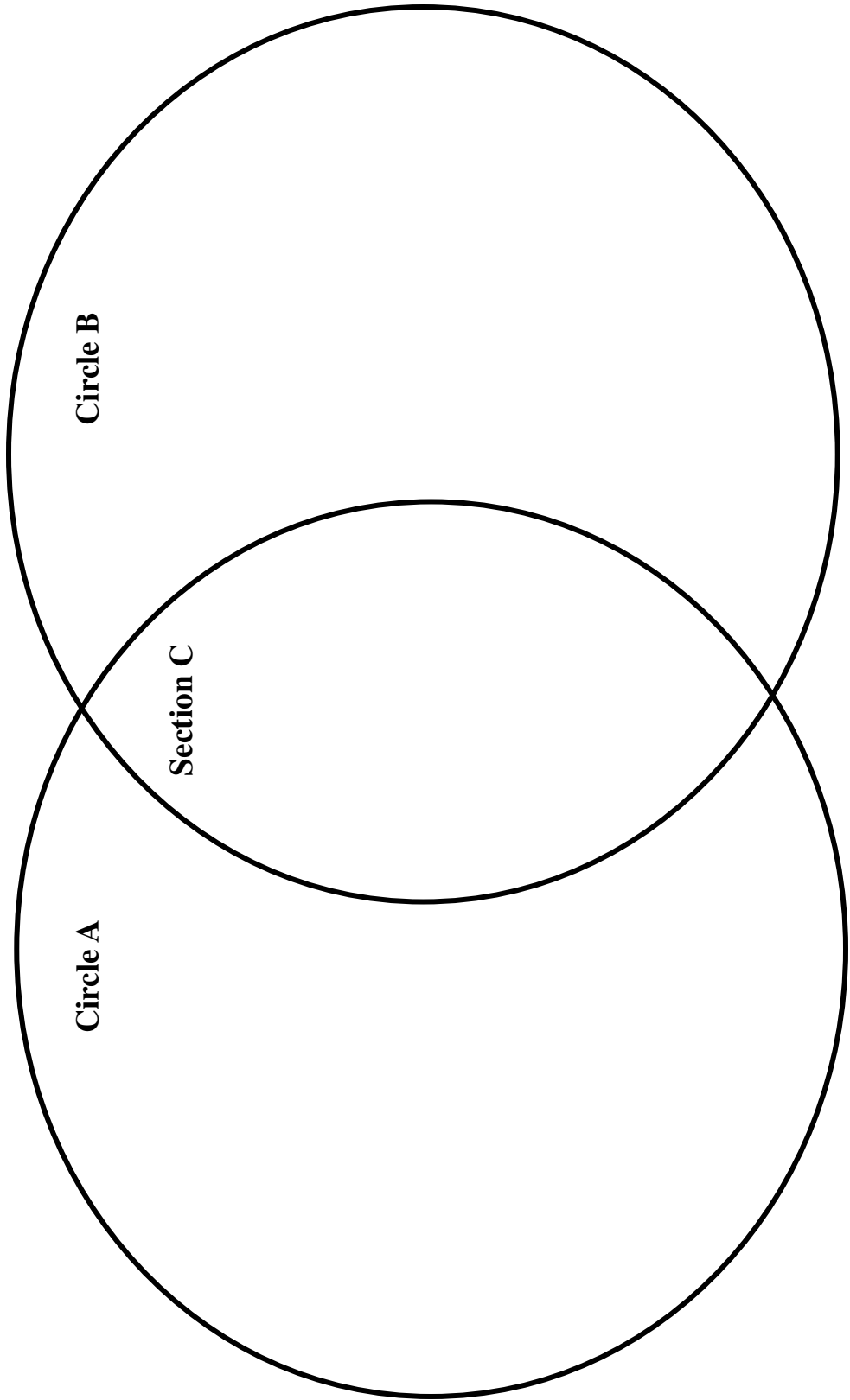
Congratulate both teams for their effort and excellent detective work. Ask: **Which were the hardest pictures to find? The easiest? Which picture do you think represents what is most important to this church?** Explain that the picture representing Christ is the most important because He is the foundation on which our church is built. If we lose Christ, if we give up serving Him, we might as well close our doors.

**Close**

Discuss what might cause churches to become distracted from serving Christ. Ask: **As followers that make up the body of this church, how can you avoid becoming distracted from serving Christ?**

### Venn Diagram

Directions: In Circle A below, write or draw talents that you possess. List those talents or gifts that you can use for the church. In Circle B, write or draw talents that other church members have but that you do not have. In the Section C, where the two circles overlap, write or draw items that all church members can do to help the church.



# How Well Do You Know This Church?

1. When was this church started?
2. Who was our first pastor?
3. Who picks out the songs that we sing each Sunday?
4. Who cleans off the parking lot when (if) it snows?
5. Do we have a prayer chain? Was is that anyway?
6. In how many buildings have the people in this church met?
7. How many exit doors does our building have?
8. Who are the elders of the church?
9. Name three ministries to be involved in at our church.
10. Do we have a place to be baptized here? If so, where is it?



## One Out of Many

**Directions:** Use the lesson text and key quest verse to find the answers that complete each of the following statements. After answering each question, place the first letter of each answer on the blanks below. You will find what each Christian belongs to!

We are all \_\_\_\_\_ by one Spirit into one body.  
(1 Corinthians 12:13)

In Christ, we form \_\_\_\_\_ body. (1 Corinthians 12:12)

We were all given the one Spirit to \_\_\_\_\_. (1 Corinthians 12:13)

Now, \_\_\_\_\_ are the body of Christ. (1 Corinthians 12:27)

Each member belongs to the \_\_\_\_\_. (Romans 12:5)

In Christ, we \_\_\_\_\_ one body. (1 Corinthians 12:12)

God has appointed different roles in the \_\_\_\_\_.  
(1 Corinthians 12:28)

If the whole body was an eye, where would the sense of \_\_\_\_\_ be?  
(1 Corinthians 12:17)

The key quest verse is in chapter twelve of \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_ Christ, we form one body. (Romans 12:5)

Some are given the gift of \_\_\_\_\_.  
(1 Corinthians 12:28)

God has appointed apostles, prophets, and \_\_\_\_\_.  
(1 Corinthians 12:28)

Out of many members, Christians form the...

\_\_\_\_\_

## *My Journal Page*

Think about talents and gifts that you possess. Then, choose two of them and how you could use them to contribute to your church. In what ways can you become an active member of your church body?



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2.

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