

**JUDGES 5:1-2, 9**  
**WHEN LEADERS LEAD!**

Please turn in your Bibles this morning to Judges chapter 5 as we continue our study through the book of Judges.

In this chapter is the song of Deborah and Barak, a song that is sung after their victory against Jabin, the King of Canaan, who had them in bondage for some twenty years.

And we do see this in the Bible, songs sung unto the Lord for His deliverance in various situations.

Remember in our study of Exodus, we saw in Exodus chapter 15 the song of Moses as God gave the children of Israel victory over the Egyptian army.

Let me share with you just a few verses of that song, **“Then Moses and the children of Israel sang this song to the Lord, and spoke, saying: ‘I will sing to the Lord, For He has triumphed gloriously! The horse and its rider He has thrown into the sea! The Lord is my strength and song, And He has become my salvation; He is my God, and I will praise Him; My father’s God, and I will exalt Him. The Lord is a man of war; The Lord is His name. Pharaoh's chariots and his army He has cast into the sea; His chosen captains also are drowned in the Red Sea. The depths have covered them; They sank to the bottom like a stone. Your right hand, O Lord, has become glorious in power; Your right hand, O Lord, has dashed the enemy in pieces. And in the greatness of Your excellence You have overthrown those who rose against You; You sent forth Your wrath; It consumed them like stubble.’”** Exodus 15:1-7.

And you remember what took place.

After the ten plagues in Egypt, because Pharaoh refused to let the children of Israel go, with that tenth plague and the death of the firstborn, Pharaoh and the people of Egypt had enough and let them go free.

But, after he let them go, he realized that he let his slaves go free and thus, he gathers up his army, with chariots, and goes after them.

Let me put this into perspective for you, because what was coming upon the children of Israel was not just a few people.

It was Pharaoh and his army of 600 of the best chariots, with 250,000 soldiers according to Josephus, and now they were closing in on the children of Israel.

Keep in mind that the Jews that left Egypt numbered between two and three million people, so this was a large group of people. But they had no weapons of war, they were slaves!

And as they come to the Red Sea, there is trouble as they see the Egyptian army, the dust they were kicking up as they were coming after them, and now they were trapped. You see, the Red Sea was in front of them, mountains on either side, and coming up from behind was Pharaoh and the Egyptian army!

And the Lord told Moses to stretch out his hand and the Red Sea opened up and the children of Israel were able to cross over to the other side, on dry ground!

Now many say they crossed by the Sea of Reeds, which is only a few inches deep and if the wind blew just right, it would push the water aside.

But as you read this story it says there was a wall of water on either side, a few inches is not a wall unless you're an ant!

In Psalm 106:9 we are told, **“He rebuked the Red Sea also, and it dried up; So He led them through the depths, As through the wilderness.”**

In Psalm 66:6, **“He turned the sea into dry land; They went through the river on foot. There we will rejoice in Him.”**

And in Psalm 74:13, **“You divided the sea by Your strength; You broke the heads of the sea serpents in the waters.”**

Also, in Psalm 77:16-20 we are told, **“The waters saw You, O God; The waters saw You, they were afraid; The depths also trembled. The clouds poured out water; The skies sent out a sound; Your arrows also flashed about. The voice of Your thunder was in the whirlwind; The lightnings lit up the world; The earth trembled and shook. Your way was in the sea, Your path in the great waters, And Your footsteps were not known. You led Your people like a flock By the hand of Moses and Aaron.”**

We are told in Exodus 15:19, **“For the horses of Pharaoh went with his chariots and his horsemen into the sea, and the Lord brought back the waters of the sea upon them. But the children of Israel went on dry land in the midst of the sea.”**

Also, in Isaiah 43:16-17 we are told, **“Thus says the Lord, who makes a way in the sea And a path through the mighty waters, Who brings forth the chariot and horse, The army and the power (They shall lie down together, they shall not rise; They are extinguished, they are quenched like a wick).”**

And in Isaiah 51:10 we are told, **“Are You not the One who dried up the sea, The waters of the great deep; That made the depths of the sea a road For the redeemed to cross over?”**

What is my point? Simple, these were deep waters and thus, deep means deep! You see, great waters are not a few inches deep, I think you get the idea!

And as the Egyptian army went after the children of Israel, into the Red Sea, God caused the waters to come crashing down upon them.

Now for those who believe they crossed at the Sea of Reeds in only a few inches of water, explain to me how all of the Egyptian army and their horses, drowned in a few inches of water. How bad were they at swimming?

You see, the water came crashing down upon them and they drowned. A wall of water from both sides, 1,000 feet high came crashing down, and, of course they drowned, no one could survive that.

And that mean's Pharaoh and his entire army were destroyed in the Red Sea. And think about this, in a split second over 250,000 Egyptian soldiers were gone!

And it is out of that event, what God did, that we see this song of Moses about how the Lord saved them and they are singing this song, **“ . . . ‘I will sing to the Lord, For He has triumphed gloriously! The horse and its rider He has thrown into the sea!’ ”**

And here in Judges chapter 5 we see this song of deliverance as God gave the children of Israel victory over King Jabin and his commander, Sisera.

Again, the children of Israel were in bondage to Jabin the King of the Canaanites for twenty years because of their rebellion against God. And it took them twenty years to repent before the Lord and as they did, God raised up Deborah, a prophetess in Israel to Judge them.

And I truly believe that God also called Barak to step forward for He told Barak what needed to be done to achieve this victory, but Barak hesitated, did not go forward and thus, Deborah calls Barak and shares again what the Lord already told him to do.

And she tells Barak, “... ‘Has not the LORD God of Israel commanded, saying, “Go and deploy troops at Mount Tabor; take with you ten thousand men of the sons of Naphtali and the sons of Zebulun; and against you I will deploy Sisera, the commander of Jabin’s army, with his chariots and his multitude at the River Kishon; and I will deliver them into your hand”?’” Judges 4:6-7.

You see, the Lord already spoke to Barak and told him that the victory was assured, and what he was to do, but he did not do it. And now Deborah is reminding him and then his response to what Deborah said is interesting.

He said, “... ‘If you will go with me, then I will go; but if you will not go with me, I will not go.’” Judges 4:8.

Wow, not much faith in God for Barak. He won’t go to battle unless Deborah goes with him!

Now some see no problem with what Barak did, they even think it was smart to take Deborah because she was a prophetess and could help them in this battle.

But the Lord did not tell Deborah to go to battle, but for Barak to gather the troops and He would give them the victory!

And the key for me is what Deborah tells him, it shows me that he was not doing what God wanted and he was going to lose out because of that. We are told, “So she said, ‘I will surely go with you; nevertheless there will be no glory for you in the journey you are taking, for the Lord will sell Sisera into the hand of a woman.’ Then Deborah arose and went with Barak to Kedesh.” Judges 4:9

Because of his lack of faith and unwillingness to walk, a woman would get the glory for this victory, not Barak, and that is exactly what took place.

Sisera, the commander of Jabin's army, was on the run because the children of Israel were winning this battle.

And he goes into what he thought was a friendly camp and asks Jael, Heber's wife, if he could rest there. Keep in mind that Heber was a traitor to Israel as he told Sisera exactly what the children of Israel were up to.

So Sisera felt safe and he asked for some water and she gave him some warm milk and off to sleep he went, eternally you might say. You see, Jael took a tent spike and drove it through his skull, and, of course, he died instantly!

And it was Jael who got the glory for this victory as she killed the commander of Jabin's army, Sisera.

And we are told in Judges 4:23-24, **“So on that day God subdued Jabin king of Canaan in the presence of the children of Israel. And the hand of the children of Israel grew stronger and stronger against Jabin king of Canaan, until they had destroyed Jabin king of Canaan.”**

And it is out of this victory that we see this song of praise and thanksgiving unto the Lord for the victory that He had given them.

I am going to take some time going through this song of Deborah and Barak because I think there are some great lessons we can learn from it.

The focus of our study this morning is going to be, ***WHEN LEADERS LEAD!*** And you will see what I mean as we go through this study.

Make no mistake about it, leadership is an important topic because where are you leading people, what are you moving them to do?

Let me show you what I mean. We are told,

All morning, an instructor on my staff had been explaining leadership to a class of police recruits. Calling a man to the front of the class, he handed him a piece of paper on which was written: “You are in charge. Get everyone out of the room without causing a panic.”

The recruit was at a loss for words and returned to his seat.

The second man summoned tried: “Everybody outside. Go!” No one moved.

A third man glanced at the instructions, smiled and said, “All right, men. Break for lunch.”

The room emptied in seconds.

- Howard Dean

I guess food will get people moving or the mention of it!

With that as our introduction, let’s begin reading in Judges chapter 5, beginning in verse 1 and let’s see what the Lord has for us this morning as we study through His Word and we look at this topic - ***WHEN LEADERS LEAD!***

## **JUDGES 5**

### **VERSES 1-2, 9**

As we have read through these verses, I think you can see the idea of leaders leading the people. And we have covered this topic of leadership in a few of our studies already.

This morning I would like to take a different approach to leadership, and this is just as important.

Make no mistake about it, no matter how you slice it, no matter how you look at this topic of leadership, it is important! And it is especially important in the work of God.

People will follow where they are being led but if the leadership refuses to go, so will the people!

Let me share this with you and as you listen to this story, I think you will see where I am going regarding this topic of leadership.

I want you to think of leadership like this, as a conductor in an orchestra.

You see, a conductor of an orchestra is the one who is leading them and as the orchestra follows the conductor, as they are working together, beautiful music is made.

But, if they all did their own thing, it would be a mess.

The same is true in any Christian work, in any Christian church, may we not forget that!

Listen to how this all plays out, no pun intended here. We are told,

At a meeting of the American Psychological Association, Jack Lipton, a psychologist at Union College, and R. Scott Builione, a graduate student at Columbia University, presented their findings on how members of the various sections of 11 major symphony orchestra perceived each other.

The percussionists were viewed as insensitive, unintelligent, and hard-of-hearing, yet fun-loving.

String players were seen as arrogant, stuffy, and unathletic.

The orchestra members overwhelmingly chose “loud” as the primary adjective to describe the brass players.

Woodwind players seemed to be held in the highest esteem, described as quiet and meticulous, though a bit egotistical.



Interesting findings, to say the least!

With such widely divergent personalities and perceptions, how could an orchestra ever come together to make such wonderful music?

The answer is simple: regardless of how those musicians view each other, they subordinate their feelings and biases to the leadership of the conductor.

Under his guidance, they play beautiful music.

- Today in the Word, June 22, 1992

We see that here, in our story, with Barak. Listen to what we are told in Judges 4:10, **“And Barak called Zebulun and Naphtali to Kedesh; he went up with ten thousand men under his command, and Deborah went up with him.”**

How in the world do you get ten thousand men, from two different tribes; Zebulun and Naphtali, to work together and be victorious?

You have to have a leader who is willing to lead them, and he needs to lead them in such a way that they will follow!

Think about that for a minute.

Today, in the military, if the soldiers did not follow their leader, their commander, there would be chaos! It would be very difficult to obtain victory if everyone did their own thing!

That means that they need to trust what their leader is telling them, even though they might not understand it, they may not agree with it, but they are willing to follow their commander because they trust what he is doing!

In sports, a football coach sends in the plays to the quarterback and those plays are then relayed to the rest of the team to follow.

Now, if the quarterback made his own play, came up with his own plan and did not listen to the coach, things would be a mess! In fact, if all the players did what they wanted, it would be a mess!

Let me show you what I mean.

Many of you know that Roger Staubach was the quarterback for the Dallas Cowboys. He was a great quarterback who led the Cowboys to a world championship in 1971.

The struggle for Staubach was that he was a quarterback who didn't call his own signals, his own plays and this was a source of trial for him.

Every play that was sent in came from Coach Landry. Roger was told when to pass, when to run, and only in an emergency situation was he ever allowed to change the play.

And, if he did change the play, he better have called the right one!

Don't get me wrong, Staubach felt that his coach, Tom Landry, had a "genius mind" when it came to football strategy.

The problem was pride, for it kept telling him that he should be able to run his own team, he was the quarterback!

Roger later said, "I faced up to the issue of obedience. Once I learned to obey there was harmony, fulfillment, and victory."

Did you get that?

For Roger Staubach, he understood that obedience, or I should say the lack of obedience to his coach, was just a pride issue.

Once he was able to let go of his pride and surrender to the plans of his coach, "Once [he] learned to obey there was harmony, fulfillment, and victory."

Again, listen to what we are told in Judges 5:2, **“When leaders lead in Israel, When the people willingly offer themselves, Bless the LORD.”**

Look at the harmony that is going on here as the leaders lead and the **“people willingly offer themselves.”** And this blesses the *LORD!*

I think the same can be said of our Christian life.

Once we surrender to our Coach, our Master, Jesus Christ, we will have harmony, fulfillment and victory as we are obedient to His leading.

On the other hand, when we are disobedient to the Lord, we have no harmony to His will, there is no fulfillment in life, we are always searching and there is no victory!

Make no mistake about it, Jesus Christ is the head of the Church and we are to follow Him.

But, within church, God has placed leaders who are to watch over the people, protect the people.

Listen to what Paul said in Hebrews chapter 13 in regard to leaders in the church, **“Remember those who rule over you, who have spoken the word of God to you, whose faith follow, considering the outcome of their conduct. . . . Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you.”** Hebrews 13:7, 17.

I believe Paul is speaking of godly men who were teaching sound doctrine, healthy doctrine, the Word of God.

And Paul is admonishing them to follow godly leadership, not leaders who are moving you away from God, leading you away from His Word.

I hope that is clear!

And in Hebrews 13:17 we see the focus is on *SUBMISSION*.

We are to be submissive to those who are in leadership over us in the church.

Now the question is, “Are we to follow everyone who is a leader over us, all pastors?”

Obviously not.

We are to follow those who are following what Hebrews 13:7 says, “**Remember those who rule over you, who have spoken the word of God to you, whose faith follow, considering the outcome of their conduct.**”

That should just make sense.

They are teaching the Word of God and they are living what they say they believe.

Thus, when a pastor speaks with the authority of God’s Word, they have the right to say how we are to live, how we are to walk after God.

The reason that is true is because if they are speaking according to the Word of God then this is not their feelings, their ideas or the philosophies of the world!

But some have taken that to an unbiblical extreme like with the Shepherding Movement.

There the people have to bring all they do before the pastor or elders. They can’t get married, buy a car, change jobs without the okay from the leaders of the church.

Let me show you how bad this can get, and this is happening today. We are told,

Imagine you had a private conversation with ordained clergy, confessing your sins. Then imagine those clergy members secretly recorded that call and later chose to anonymously put that info online in order to punish you.

That’s what Apologia church leaders did when Tim Hurd called them to confess some ill-will in his heart and apologize for certain things he had said about them and why.

**In most denominations, that breach of clergy-penitent privilege would be enough to revoke one's ordination.**

Confidence between clergy and the sin-confessor has been considered 'inviolable' [never to be broken] and has even been recognized by United States law (since at least 1813). It's certainly expected that confessions of sin would not be made public unless it's a matter of church discipline or criminal behavior when there is a victim in immediate danger.

The thought of **the church intentionally recording that conversation as a club to beat him with later**, should he ever find a need to criticize them in the future, is **beyond the pale of clergy misconduct.**

- <http://bit.ly/2SHTQaV>

That is obviously wrong in so many ways!

You hold your people hostage by recording their sins!

And for those that are into movements like this and the shepherding movement, how do you grow in the Lord?

And if the leader dies, then your god has died, who are you going to go to?

As a pastor I am to teach you the things of God and you are to take those things to heart.

Now I do understand that many reject it because it goes against what they want to do – and that is wrong.

You search the Scriptures to see if what I say, what others are teaching is from the Word of God and then apply those truths to your life if they are!

And this is so important today because we see pastors, leaders that are leading people away from the truths of God found in the Word of God.

You see, the word “**watch**” here in Hebrews 13:17 speaks of always being awake, being alert to the needs of those in the church.

Leaders are to watch over their flock, warn them, teach them, help them to grow in the Lord by giving them the things that will help them to grow in the Lord.

That is why I warn you so much of the dangers that are out there, the dangerous teachers and teachings and it is why I teach you the Word of God!

So leaders have a responsibility to lead people, the ones that God has entrusted to them, according to the Word of God and to teach them the Word of God. It is so simple, and Paul truly lays it all out in those verses we read in Hebrews.

Listen to them again, it is important. He wrote, “**Remember those who rule over you, who have spoken the word of God to you, whose faith follow, considering the outcome of their conduct. . . . Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you.**” Hebrews 13:7, 17.

Now there is another point here and it does relate to all of us. You see, as Christians, we all have roles or positions in the body of Christ. That means we need to work together and see the music, you might say, that God can make as He works in us and through us!

In I Corinthians chapter 12, a section of Paul’s letter that deals with spiritual gifts that covers I Corinthians chapters 12, 13 and 14, Paul is rebuking them for being self-centered and exercising these gifts for their own person gain instead of for the betterment of the body.

Now I am not going to focus on these gifts here, we have covered them several times over the years in our Foundation of Faith series and our study of I Corinthians to name a few.

What I find interesting here is that in the middle of speaking of these spiritual gifts or these grace gifts, Paul talks about the body of Christ and how it is to function.

And as strange as that may sound, it fits in perfectly because each of us have been given a gift by God and we are to use it to not only glorify Him, but to minister to the rest of the body of Christ!

And let me also say this, if you are a Christian, you are a leader, people are watching you and how you treat them, what you do and say, will affect others. Let me show you what I mean.

We are told,

Don't take a position of leadership in church unless you are prepared to be honest, pure, and loving in your lifestyle. Leadership is a privilege, and with privilege comes responsibility. God holds teachers of His truth doubly responsible because we who lead are in a position where we can either draw people toward Christ or drive them away from Him. This is illustrated in the life of the famous author Mark Twain.

Church leaders were largely to blame for his becoming hostile to the Bible and the Christian faith.

As he grew up, he knew elders and deacons who owned slaves and abused them. He heard men using foul language and saw them practice dishonesty during the week after speaking piously in church on Sunday. He listened to ministers use the Bible to justify slavery.

Although he saw genuine love for the Lord Jesus in some people, including his mother and his wife, he was so disturbed by the bad teaching and poor example of church leaders that he became bitter toward the things of God.

Indeed, it is a privilege to be an elder, a deacon, a Sunday school teacher, or a Bible club leader. But it is also an awesome responsibility. Let's make sure we attract people to the Savior rather than turn them away.

- Source Unknown

How true that is. I don't care who you are, what position you have. It is not okay to yell at people, put them down, mock them, make fun of them. That is not what we are about. In fact, Jesus said in John 13:34-35, "**A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.**"

Love is the key in showing that we are a disciple of Christ. Isn't that interesting. It is not how many Bible verses you know, how smart you are, it is that *AGAPE* love or that unconditional love you have for people. If you don't show it, if that is not how you treat people, your walk with the Lord is off. I don't mean to offend anyone, but it is good for all of us to do a heart check on this one!

Now, listen to what Paul tells us, how we are to function as a body of believers. We are told in I Corinthians 12:12-27, "**For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body - whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free - and have all been made to drink into one Spirit. For in fact the body is not one member but many. If the foot should say, 'Because I am not a hand, I am not of the body,' is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear should say, 'Because I am not an eye, I am not of the body,' is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where would be the hearing?**"



**If the whole were hearing, where would be the smelling? But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased. And if they were all one member, where would the body be? But now indeed there are many members, yet one body. And the eye cannot say to the hand, ‘I have no need of you’; nor again the head to the feet, ‘I have no need of you.’ No, much rather, those members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary. And those members of the body which we think to be less honorable, on these we bestow greater honor; and our unpresentable parts have greater modesty, but our presentable parts have no need. But God composed the body, having given greater honor to that part which lacks it, that there should be no schism in the body, but that the members should have the same care for one another. And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it. Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually.”**

Remember what we read in Judges 5:9, **“My heart is with the rulers of Israel Who offered themselves willingly with the people. Bless the LORD!”**

In other words, they all worked together for this victory and in the end, they were blessing the Lord by their actions.

That is the body of Christ, or at least it should be. Working together for the victories or working together to bless the people and in the end, it blesses the Lord!

And we see here that Paul speaks of the body, one body that is made-up of many parts and, even though all those parts are different, they work together for the betterment of the body, it blesses the body!

Think of it like this. DNA is the building blocks of our body and yet how vastly different each body part is, it does different things, but it is still one body.

In Christ there is a diversity of people with gifts and yet we still are one body!

Now, in I Corinthians 12:15-19 Paul shows how we all can't be doing the same thing, it just wouldn't work.

And Paul starts out by pointing out that some of the Corinthian believers were jealous of the gifts that others had. They were not satisfied with what God had given them.

He uses the illustration of a foot. And let's picture this back in Paul's day, the sandals that they wore.

And this foot is not happy, he wants to be a hand, and since he is not a hand, he doesn't see himself as part of the body. "The foot is dirty, stinky, it does not get washed often, I could have or should have been a hand!" he might say. And then he does nothing!

As foolish as that sounds, it does happen, not with our feet, but in the body of Christ.

And think about it. If there was no foot, it would be hard to walk. So as insignificant as the foot may feel, without it we would have a difficult time walking!

We need to be thankful that God is using each of us and be thankful where He has us!

It is as Paul said in Romans 12:3-6a, **"For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith. For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them."**

What happens in many churches is they become an organization because people are not doing the work and thus, the foot may be called to do the work of the hand.

They let the professionals do the work and they sit back.

The church is not an organization but a living organism and that means that every single member of that organism needs to be involved, for the betterment of the body of Christ!

And, as Paul said here in these verses we just looked at, “**But now indeed there are many members, yet one body.**” I Corinthians 12:20.

And then Paul makes this point, “**And the eye cannot say to the hand, ‘I have no need of you’; nor again the head to the feet, ‘I have no need of you.’**” I Corinthians 12:21.

Think about this for a minute. How could your human body function if its members were constantly fighting with one another?

And let’s play this out because we see this today with the many diseases that are out there.

We have these auto-immune diseases where the body is fighting against itself. And that is not a good thing. Some even feel that diabetes is an auto-immune disease where your body sees the cells that make insulin as a foreign body and they attack it and destroy it.

And then we see cancer, and with cancer what happens is that certain cells begin to mutate or become something that God never intended them to be, and they start attacking and consuming the other cells.

And cancer will eventually devour and destroy a physical body if it is not dealt with.

That is what is going on in Corinth. There were divisions, schisms, fights between one another, and even with the Spiritual gifts! Make no mistake about it, envy and division will eat away a body of Christians until that church is destroyed.

Listen to what Warren Wiersbe wrote on these verses,

God's desire is that there be no division (schism) in the church. Diversity leads to disunity when the members compete with one another; but diversity leads to unity when the members care for one another. How do the members care for each other? By each one functioning according to God's will and helping the other members to function. If one member suffers, it affects every member. If one member is healthy, it helps the others to be strong.

- Warren Wiersbe

And here is another important point. We also tend to make some parts of our body more important than others.

Think about it, how much time do we spend fixing our hair and yet some of you have lost your hair or are losing it and you still do fine without it.

And yet, the liver, not a very pretty organ, less desirable than hair, I mean how often do you hear someone saying, "Let me run my fingers through your liver!" I don't want to know!

And yet, the liver is vital, without it we would die! It is more essential to us than our hair and yet it is not seen, it is hidden, but still important.

We tend to think of the upfront ministries as important and those that are not seen, like cleaning the church, prayer, Sunday School Teachers, Nursery workers, those in the radio and sound room, and-so-on, as less important.

The exact opposite is true.

You see, some of the most vital ministries in the church are those that are not obvious, those that are not seen. And the reality is, in the body of Christ we work together, caring for each other, using the gifts for the betterment of the body!

Spurgeon had this to say, “I want every member of this church to be a worker. We do not want any drones. If there are any of you who want to eat and drink, and do nothing, there are plenty of places elsewhere, where you can do it; there are empty pews about in abundance; go and fill them, for we do not want you. Every Christian who is not a bee is a wasp. The most quarrelsome persons are the most useless, and they who are the most happy and peaceable, are generally those who are doing most for Christ.”

And think about the human body, it is truly amazing. What happens when you cut yourself?

Let me show you what happens, it is amazing. I may not read all of this, but as you will see, wow! We are told,

Ouch! You just got a paper cut on your finger. What happens now? Besides the sting you are feeling from the cut, there are germs on that paper that are preparing to invade your body. For your immune system, this means war.

As soon as the paper cuts into the cells of your skin, your body springs into action. First, blood cells called platelets join together at the paper cut and form a clot to stop the bleeding. The platelets then release chemicals called cytokines into your bloodstream. Cytokines attract the attention of certain cells to start healing your cut. They also alert your immune system to scan for infection in the injured area. You will notice the injured area swelling and getting red as all the cells that the cytokines called rush to the scene. This swelling is called inflammation.

As the germs from the paper begin to attack your body, several different immune cells also come to help fight them off. There are cells that hang out just beneath your skin and wait for germs.

These cells are called neutrophils and macrophages. Neutrophils are a sort of jack-of-all-trades white blood cell. They can defend against invaders by eating them, firing anti-microbial proteins at them, or by setting web traps outside of the cells, to catch and kill them.

The macrophages are “big eaters” that function like dump trucks. They go around underneath your skin and collect all the “garbage” that isn’t supposed to be there. The “garbage” can include damaged cells or bacteria that can cause infection.

Neutrophils are the most common white blood cell in your body, so an invading microbe is most likely to meet a neutrophil first. Neutrophils start fighting the invaders, and send off signals to attract other neutrophils and other cells.

Macrophages also come into contact with the invader pretty quickly. They start eating the invaders that they can, and they report their findings to the lymph nodes.

Two types of cell defenders, inactivated T-cells and B-cells, live in your lymph nodes. Here, they wait for a chain of communication to begin.

The macrophage has to report its findings to a dendritic cell that is also waiting inside the lymph node. The dendritic cell then reports the information to the T-cells and B-cells. Then these cells can activate, and jump into action.

The lymph system is a special route through which immune cells can move around the body.

The major parts of this system include the lymph nodes, the thymus, spleen, tonsils, and bone marrow. In these organs, immune cells grow, multiply, or are recycled, keeping the immune system running. Lymphatic vessels run alongside your veins, delivering immune cells throughout the body.

Neutrophils have many ways to try to fight off an attack.

At the start of any infection, all invaders are treated the same. Macrophages can eat individual germs, but usually aren't able to destroy all of the germ invaders, so they have to go get help from other cell defenders. After a macrophage eats a germ, it takes the most unusual pieces of the germ, called antigens, to your lymph nodes. Here it meets the dendritic cells again.

Dendritic cells will take the antigens (like ID tags) from the macrophages and show them to the inactivated B-cells or helper T-cells.

The neutrophils also try to stop the invasion quickly, but they also call for back up. While swallowing some invaders and spraying others with chemicals, neutrophils send chemical messages to attract more cells to the wound.

The macrophage tells the T-cell what it found.

One of the other first defenders, a type of T-cell called the helper, acts like the "commander" of your immune system army. When the macrophage enters the lymph node, it finds the dendritic cell and reports what it found on its patrol of the skin.

The message moves again, up the chain of command. The dendritic cell reports the invaders to the inactivated helper T-cell commander. The helper T-cell now knows what kind of invader it's dealing with. It seems a war is needed. The T-cell activates into a full-fledged commander!

The T-cell makes a plan of action.

If the number of invaders is very, very small, sometimes the neutrophils and macrophages can take care of it on their own. This can stop a major infection from starting. But, once the macrophage presents information to a dendritic cell, the commander has to be told. A plan of action must be made.

Sometimes, the danger is great. During times like this, the body has special fighters. Just like wrestlers come in different age and weight classes to match an opponent, some T-cells are made for certain germs. The special fighter T-cells in your immune system are called killer T-cells. The helper T-cells can go into the lymph node and find the one killer T-cell matched to the invader and call them into the fight.

T-cells to the rescue!

The macrophage shows the ID tags (antigens) from the invader to an inactivated killer T-cell. This cell then activates and makes more and more copies of itself. This army of killer T-cells will follow the path of cytokines to the injury and begin the full-scale attack against the germs.

These activated killer T-cells scan all the skin cells around your paper cut. They try to find the special antigen that marks invader cells. The antigen can even alert them to an invader if its hiding inside of one of your skin cells.

Once that antigen is found, the killer T-cells shoot out cytotoxins that destroy the antigen and any skin cell it has infected. The macrophage then comes and gobbles up the dead, germ-filled skin cells to keep your system clean.

The B-cells catch wandering viruses.



Finally, depending on the type of germ, the helper T-cell can ask the B-cell to join in the fight. This last defender, the B-cell, is important because it can trap, or mark, the germs that haven't yet infected a cell.

The B-cell shoots out antibodies, which we can think of as nets. The nets are called immunoglobulins, and they look like the letter "Y". Germs are caught in the fork of the "Y" and neutralized so they can't infect your body.

Just like the killer T-cell, the B-cell will make more and more copies of itself in your lymph nodes before it heads to the infection. When we feel swollen lymph nodes, it's because our activated B- and T-cells are making armies to fight germs!

Germs that T- and B-cells have fought off successfully are remembered so they will be easier to fight in the future.

When all germs are destroyed, the battle is over. The B- and T-cells go back to your lymph nodes, and the macrophage returns to patrol the skin, looking for new infections. The B- and T-cells that have fought the infection in your skin now have experience fighting those specific germs so they become memory cells.

Memory cells give your body a great advantage if you get infected by the same germs. The memory B- and T-cells get a huge head start and can build their cell armies in half the time during the next germ invasion.

- <http://bit.ly/39uJFfI>

And that just happened by random chance?

I know that was a little long, but what I want you to notice is how the human body works. It works not for itself, but for the betterment of the body! If it didn't, if it just cared for itself, the body would be destroyed because of the selfishness of others!

And that is how the body of Christ should work, together, not focused on self but on helping others.

And as you can see, in I Corinthians 12:26 we see this played out for us as Paul reminds us, **“And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it.”**

This is so important for us to understand. We are all part of the body of Christ and thus, if one-person hurts, we hurt with them. If one-person rejoices, we rejoice with them. We are inner connected.

Think of it like this. Have you ever stubbed your toe before? I'm sure you have. Now is it just your toe that hurts? No, it shoots up throughout your body.

Paul's point is this. It doesn't matter how different you might be from another member, you are part of the body of Christ and if one hurts, you hurt, if one rejoices, you rejoice because that is how closely related to each other we are, as I have said.

Listen to how Paul put it in Philippians 2:1-4, **“Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.”**

In other words, put on the mind of Christ and be others centered and you will be blessed!  
We should be looking out for each other.

Paul also wrote in Galatians 6:1-2, **“Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted. Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.”**

Just as Jesus was in the restoration business, so are we. We want people to be restored to Christ and not destroyed!

But what happens many times is what Paul wrote in Galatians 5:13-15, **“For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ But if you bite and devour one another, beware lest you be consumed by one another!”**

We are in a war, not with each other, but with this world system, the flesh, and the Devil. May we work together, not looking out for our own interests but for the interests, the welfare of others!

And Paul sums it up for us in I Corinthians 12:27 as he wrote, **“Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually.”**

Just as the body is made up of many members, so is the body of Christ. One body that is made up of many individuals!

But think about it, apart we are nothing but together we make-up the body of Christ, a living organism that is impacting the world for Jesus!

You see, for those who think “I don’t need the church, I can do church at home!” you are wrong, and you are in rebellion to what God has said. Now I am not talking about those who are sick and can’t make it to church because of that. I am talking about people who choose not to come to church when they can come!

Paul said in Hebrews 10:24-25, “**And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.**”

We are the body of Christ! May we not forget that. And for those who can’t make it to church because of illness or whatever, they too are part of the body of Christ and we need to be praying for them as well, and they can pray for us!

And as we work together for the Kingdom of God, as we minister to the needs of others, as we function as a body of believers with our individual gifts, we will see the victories that God has for us, and we will ***BLESS THE LORD!***