

We come to the final part of our series as we conclude with discerning God's voice in the church community. It is being part of the church, gathering with the church and learning with the church that we will hear God's voice more. Through faith in Christ, the church is a representation of heaven on earth, walking with the Lord as a new community believers. This is both a blessing and a learning as imperfect people walk together. This is what we see at the church in Corinth.

In order for the Corinthian believers to bear with each other and maintain unity in love, Paul needs to deal with every problem that is causing disunity. In this chapter, Paul is moving from the church gathering in chapter 11, to essential teaching to build the church up in chapters 12-13, before moving back again to the details of the gathered church in chapter 14. Having written about spiritual gifts, Paul appeals to the metaphor of the body. He uses the example of the human body to show that although we have different gifts, we are still important members of the body of Christ. Just as the body has many parts but is one body, the church has many gifts but must live in unity.

What makes a great community? What makes a great church community?

Read 1 Corinthians 12:12-27

1. V12-13. These first two verses give the theological basis for the body imagery that unfolds in the rest of this passage. Paul states that every part of the body is essential, because every believer is a member of the church. The word "body," is introduced in v. 12, how many times is the word used in the rest of the chapter? How many times does "one" occurs in vv. 12–13? How do these two words shape the main point of the reading?

2. How important is the picture of the church as the body of Christ? Paul mentions a number of practical consequences of this picture such as mutual dependence (vv. 14–20), unity (v. 25) and sympathy with one another (v. 26). How do these outwork themselves in practice?
3. Our culture thrives on the ideas of independence, freedom and self-sufficiency. In what ways can these ideals hinder church life? How can they help the church grow?
4. When it comes to hearing God's voice, why do we need one another in the body of Christ? How is this need expressed in practice?
5. If the Holy Spirit gives you a verse, a picture, a vision or words to share, how should we discern it? What is the best way of sharing what has been given?
6. How should we respond if something shared is incorrect? Think about this from the view point of the person receiving and the person who has shared? Think about the question again, but instead from the position if something shared was correct?
7. List the different ways God speaks to us? John 16 v 15, Ephesians 4 v 11-16, Luke 24 v 13-32, 1 Samuel 3 v 10, 1 Kings 19 v 12, Psalm 46 v 10, Acts 21 v 10-11, James 4 v 2, Acts 20 v 32, Proverbs 11 v 14, John 10 v 27, Judges 6 v 37, 1 Sam 14 v 41, Acts 1 v 26, Exodus 28 v 30, Luke 2 v 8-18, Exodus 13 v21, Kings 19 v 11, Daniel 1 v 17/ 5 v 12, Acts 10 v 10, 1 Corinthians 14 v 22-25, 1 Peter 2 v 12, Romans 2 v 15/ 9 v 1, Isaiah 58 v 19, Luke 1 v 79, Proverbs 23 v 19, Acts 17 v 16, Prov 16 v 9. **Why can diversity in the body tend to be stifled? How can we guard against this?**

Prayer Points

Pray for Janet Walsh, Helen (Janet's sister) and Rob Clephane and the family following the death of Patrick this week.

Monsoon rains in places like Bangladesh are increasingly happening earlier and in areas that have previously had less exposure. Pray for communities affected and that BMS partners can support them by understanding the changes and appropriate responses.

Sermon Notes

Why we need community

G_____

A_____

L_____

Practical ways to share

Do's

Don'ts

If you would like to join a Connect Group, please contact the church office 01424 730001



BIBLE STUDY

March 26th 2023

Hearing God:

Hearing God In Community: 1 Corinthians 12:12-31

'God spoke to me.' 'The Spirit spoke to my heart.' 'God revealed the idea to me.' Being close to God means communicating with Him, telling Him what is on our hearts in prayer and hearing and understanding what He is saying to us. It is this second half of our conversation with God that is so important but that can also be so difficult. How do we hear His voice? How can we be sure that what we think we hear is not our own subconscious? What role does the Bible play? What does the Bible teach in how the Lord speaks to us? These are some of the areas we will be covering over this next series, as we seek to grow in our relationship with Jesus.