
Worship as a Lifestyle

1 Corinthians 12:12-18

“Moving beyond the pew”

Jim was content with his Anglo church in the deep South. He was involved in the church life there. He worked hard, gave to the church and was involved in the youth programs. One thing about this church—it was very white.

Jim had everything going for him. God had obviously “blessed” his efforts and Jim was comfortable with his religious identity. Many thought of Jim as a “godly man.”

Then it happened. A black family, moving to town to join ministry efforts with their friends, showed up at church one Sunday. The congregation didn't know how to react. Neither did Jim. In fact, because he didn't know what to say, he avoided them. Sadly, the pastor did too. So, they visited but were ignored. But they weren't daunted.

This family walked right up to the pastor and asked him about the church's programs and offerings. It was obvious they were there to stay.

Reflection

Today's passage teaches that all parts of a body are important. If you have allowed a lifestyle or mindset which excludes certain groups of people or “parts of the body,” you are wrong! God wants us to view each and every person as a member of his body.

What do you think of Jim's reaction in the story?

What type of reaction do you think God would desire? How would you react?

What does the Scripture passage teach you personally?

Accountability and Application

God is way ahead of us. His Spirit is preparing the hearts of those he will bring into our lives to respond to the message of his love. However, our hearts must be prepared not only to teach that love, but also to live it out. Jesus stepped out of the cultural and religious norms of his day in order to respond to the call of God's love. So did Peter. So should we!

Write an incident in which you are, or were, stretched to step out of the cultural norms. Why was it difficult? Write a commitment to God to be open to move “religion” out of the pew and into real life.

PRAYER: Lord, I have locked myself in rituals that guarantee my spiritual comfort. I need and want a deepening relationship with you. I now see that if I am to have it, I must step out in faith into areas that stretch me beyond comfort. Help me to do so.

1 Corinthians 12:12-18 (English Standard Version)

One Body with Many Members

¹²For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ.

¹³For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body— Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.

¹⁴For the body does not consist of one member but of many. ¹⁵If the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body. ¹⁶And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body. ¹⁷If the whole body were an eye, where would be the sense of hearing? If the whole body were an ear, where would be the sense of smell? ¹⁸But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose.