
Words of Truth

It Is Good To Have Differences In The Body

By: Brian A. Yeager

I know the title of this article might cause some alarm. Do not fret. This article is not teaching anything about doctrinal, judgment, or spiritual thinking differences. Such would be false doctrine (Psalms 133:1, Amos 3:3, Mark 3:24, John 17:20-23, Ephesians 4:1-6, Philippians 2:2, Philippians 3:16, and II John 1:9-11). This article is not teaching the false doctrines of "unity in diversity" or "go along to get along". Therefore, now that your blood pressure is returning to your normal range, we shall begin a study that should benefit us greatly.

While there are to be no divisions among us and we must be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment (I Corinthians 1:10); each one of us is different. Each one of us has been given different abilities from God. The Parable of the Talents teaches us that (Matthew 25:14-30). God is the giver of our different abilities. Notice: *"If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen"* (I Peter 4:11).

In the context of spiritual gifts, we find something that is not parallel to today but definitely a context with which we can draw some applications. This context is the backbone of this article. Notice: *"For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. And if they were all one member, where were the body? But now are they many members, yet but one body. And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary: And those members of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness. For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked: That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues. Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of*

miracles? Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret? But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way” (I Corinthians 12:12-31).

If you were to continue reading into the next chapter of the text I quoted above, you would find that the spiritual gifts aspect of said text has come to pass (I Corinthians 13:8-13). However, the application of differences in the body of Christ being good has not passed. Each of us is different. I should not try to be you and you should not try to be me. Our different abilities come together to form a great working local congregation. We should appreciate our differences and not seek to try and make all members alike in every way.

Appreciating Our Differences

Similar to the text we read to the Corinthians, Paul wrote this to the church in Rome: *“For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another”* (Romans 12:4-5). The word translated “office” in verse four means, “act, function, deed” (Strong’s # 4234). That word is translated in other Scriptures as “works” (Matthew 16:27), “deed” (Luke 23:51), “deeds” (Acts 19:18 and Romans 8:13), and “deeds” (Colossians 3:9). Therefore, we are to understand that we are not all the same kind of workers in the kingdom. While we should share the diligence of being Christians (I Corinthians 15:58 and II Peter 3:14), we shall be busy in different ways.

Consider some things from the truths we have read thus far. Should you ever think another brother or sister in Christ should be exactly, in every detail, just like you? Won’t the correct answer to that question mean that some people will be busy in different ways than you? Since we are all different in talents, doesn’t that mean some people will learn at a different pace than you do/did? Since we all have different God-given roles in the body of Christ, doesn’t that mean you cannot expect others to be doing the same things the same way as you are? What does that mean for you if you are trying to force someone to be just like you in every way? Answer – that means you are stepping on God’s toes!

If you do not concur, go back and read through the Scriptures that we have seen in this article. Now, I am not writing this just for everyone else’s benefit. These principles are things I have to remind myself of regularly. I remind myself that not everyone is me. Not everyone is going to do the things I do the way that I do things. This is God’s design. Some brethren will be will be elders (I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9), deacons (I Timothy 3:8-13), evangelists (II Timothy 4:1-5), teachers (Ephesians 4:11 and Titus 2:3-5), weak or strong (Romans 15:1-3), supporters (Romans 16:1-4), supported (Galatians 6:2), etc. That list could go on and on.

Conclusion

There is only ONE body [church] (Ephesians 1:22-23, Ephesians 4:4, and Colossians 3:15; cf. Matthew 16:13-18 and Romans 16:16). Yet, within that body there are many different members who act and work in different ways. All of those different ways must be right with God (Ephesians 5:10), but they can differ from what I can do. It is good to have brethren that can step in and step up in areas wherein I cannot. Likewise, it is good that I can step in and step up in ways that others cannot. Let’s celebrate that. Let’s not try to make others like us when our differences in those ways actually benefit the work of the kingdom better!