

What About Me?

Long Beach Alliance Church • November 15th, 2009 • Pastor Chris Lankford

Then I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, “Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?” Then I said, “Here am I. Send me!”

~Isaiah 6:8 (NASB)

1) Encouragement To Live Outloud For Jesus Christ

- A) As an encouragement to the local church, Paul describes how the diversity of many people can unite together under Jesus Christ for maximum effectiveness (inreach & outreach) in church ministry (1st Corinthians 12).
- B) The church is pictured like a human body (12:12ff), with different parts/functions working together for the “common good” (12:7) of the whole.
- C) Paul is careful to describe the function of the church in terms of God, Christ, and Holy Spirit (Trinity, 12:4-6). It is the same Spirit of the Godhead which indwells and provides correct function to the church (12:7-11).
- D) Personal care for others, even to the point of shared success/failure (12:26), is the measure of our unity (12:25). When this occurs, the church is most organically “Jesus in the flesh” (12:12 & 12:27) for all to experience.

2) The Call Of Followership

- A) Clarifying the essence of the body metaphor, Paul emphasizes that the individual members of the church function as Christ's body (literally) in the world (12:27).
- B) Since Christ "created" the body (church), Christ has ordered the function of the body in a specific fashion (12:28ff).
- C) The function of the church is presented in a hierarchal manner (1st, 2nd, 3rd...) beginning with the apostles (eyewitnesses of Christ's earthly ministry) and concluding with tongues (12:28).
- D) Remember that each function of the church is significant and important, with seemingly weaker functions receiving greater attention from Jesus Christ (cf. 12:22-24). Hierarchy DOES NOT translate into significance!
- E) Christ's organizing of the church in this manner communicates that followership is an essential quality of Christ's body. Followership is crucial within Christ's church!

3) Downwardly Mobile

- A) You will recall that the higher up the "church foodchain" you find yourself, the more you are "scum" (cf. 4:11-13), serving others as much as possible (3:18-4:1).
- B) In this spirit of functioning as Christ's body, each member should ask if it is possible to serve one another, whether apostle or one who speaks in tongues (12:28-30).
- C) In our following, we are to serve, and as such we are most like Christ, seeking to love others in His name (12:31...).