

# A Healthy Body

by Dean Stump

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*The sermon encourages believers to actively participate in the local body of Christ by recognizing and using their spiritual gifts for the edification of the church.*

**Duration:** 1:26:55

**Topics:** "Body Of Christ"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of walking worthy of the calling that believers have received from God. He urges the congregation to not only be saved but also to be delivered from bondage and besetting sins. The preacher warns against being easily swayed by charismatic speakers and encourages the congregation to seek guidance from their elders and to pray for them. The sermon also highlights the transformation that occurs when one is in Christ, moving from being without Christ to being brought near by the blood of Christ.

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## Transcript

Hello, this is Brother Denny. Welcome to Charity Ministries. Our desire is that your life would be blessed and changed by this message.

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These messages are offered to all without charge by the free will offerings of God's people. A special thank you to all who support this ministry. Amen.

Not only covered, but blotted out. Removed from us. What was that song we sang this morning, The Church is One Foundation? I thought I knew it, but I'm not finding it here.

What's that number? 379. I'd just like to call your attention to some beautiful words in this song, which seems to go well with the message this morning. The Church is One Foundation is Jesus Christ her Lord.

She is His new creation by water and the Word. From heaven He came and sought her to be His holy bride. With His own blood He bought her, and for her life He died.

Elect from every nation, yet one or all the earth. Her charter of salvation, one Lord, one faith, one birth. One holy name she blesses, partakes one holy food.

And to one hope she presses, with every grace endued. I'll read the last verse yet. Yet she on earth hath union with God, the three in one.

And mystic, sweet communion with those whose rest is one. O happy ones and holy! Lord, give us grace that we, like them, the meek and lowly, on high may dwell with Thee. And I'll probably refer back to that later.

But I'd like for us to turn to Ephesians chapter 4. Ephesians chapter 4. And maybe we could call it a healthy body, a functioning body, the true body. I'm not sure. But I would like to look a little this morning at the body of Christ.

And in particular, the local body of Christ. Before we read this scripture, let's kneel together for prayer. Father, we bend our knees to You, the only true and living God.

We thank You this morning, Father, for our bridegroom, Jesus Christ, our Lord. We thank You this morning that we can have a lively hope. We thank You this morning, Father, that You've not left us here alone, wandering around as sheep without a shepherd.

But You've given us a true shepherd, one who has given his life for the sheep. How we praise You, Lord, that Your love has laid hold on us. How we praise You, Lord, for this opportunity this morning.

You have revealed to us the mystery which in ages past was hid. Here we are this morning, as a body. One in Christ Jesus.

With one hope, one faith, one God. And pressing for one holy place. Hallelujah.

Thank You, Jesus. Father, we thank You for this blessed opportunity. With ready feet, we love to appear this morning.

Here in Your presence. Lord, make this time a precious time to us, Lord. As we open the Word, anoint my lips.

Make me a channel. And give us all ears to hear this morning, Lord. Your precious Word.

Your Word of truth. Your Word of life. Father, we thank You for giving us the Holy Spirit.

To guide us into all truth. I pray that You would guide and direct our thoughts this morning. I ask it in Jesus' name.

Amen. Let's read the first 16 verses of Ephesians chapter 4. I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called. With all lowliness and meekness.

With long-suffering, forbearing one another in love. Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one spirit.

Even as ye are called in one hope of your calling. One Lord. One faith.

One baptism. One God and Father of all. Who is above all.

And through all. And in you all. But unto every one of us is given grace.

A very key phrase here this morning. But unto every one of us is given grace. According to the measure of the gift of Christ.

Wherefore, he saith, when he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive and gave gifts unto men. Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens that he might fill all things. And he gave some apostles and some prophets and some evangelists and some pastors and teachers.

Why? For the perfecting of the saints. For the work of the ministry. For the edifying of the body of Christ.

Till we all come in the unity of the faith. And of the knowledge of the Son of God. Unto a perfect man.

Unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. That we henceforth be no more children tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine. By the slight of men and cunning craftiness whereby they lie in wait to deceive.

But speaking the truth in love may grow up into him in all things. Which is the head, even Christ. From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth.

According to the effectual working in the measure of every part maketh increase of the body. Unto the edifying of itself in love. What beautiful language we have here in Ephesians.

I would like to draw our attention this morning to mainly verses twelve through verses sixteen. I would like us to see the importance of the body. Of the local body.

Praise God for the worldwide body. For those who are redeemed out of every tribe and tongue and nation. Praise God we can send brother Tanner over to the Goanja people here very shortly.

And we pray that God would make him fruitful over there among the Goanjas. And that a people would be born there from his labors that will glorify God here upon the earth. And become a local body over there.

So we want to take a look here this morning at what our part is here. As part of the local body. And brother Tanner I was thinking as you were sharing here with us in our time of worship.

We will miss you. You are a part of the body. And we will miss you.

We will miss that part which you supplied. I will miss it. And I believe each one of us will miss it.

And yet we're happy to be able to send you. But I pray that through the word this morning that we'll see that each one of us have a part to play. Maybe you can't fill Tanner's spot up here in leading songs.

Maybe you can rise up to that. Maybe you can't stand up and expound the word of God like brother Rick can to us on Sunday mornings. But maybe you can rise up to that.

And maybe you can't all minister like my wife does. You sisters. But maybe you can rise up to that.

And I guess the burden of my message is that you don't just sit there. That you don't just become a piece of the machinery so to speak. With no purpose, with no drive, with no feelings.

God wants each one of you to be a very meaningful part. He has given each one of you a gift. If you have been born again, it says here in verse 7. But unto every one of us is given grace according to how he sees fit to measure it out.

He has gone, but he has given you gifts. He has given each one of us gifts. Are you using your gift this morning? I know very well the feeling.

I speak to you out of weakness. It's very easy for me to let someone else do it. It's very easy for me to let someone else take the responsibility.

And I need to be reminded of this this morning. I need to be quickened in my spirit this morning. I do speak to you out of weakness.

I would much rather let Brother Rick come up here and preach this morning. Or any of you for that matter. And yet, I want to be used of God.

I want to use the gifts that God has given me. I want to be faithful in that which is least. And if God wants me to come up here and share the Word of God.

Praise God, I get to preach the Word of God this morning. You pray for me. That God would give me a voice.

And would give me an understanding of His Word. Well, in order for us to understand this beautiful picture here. Of the body that we have here in Ephesians chapter 4. And I guess in order for us to have a foundation.

In which to build this beautiful body. That is fitly joined together. And compacted by that which every joint supplies.

In order for us to grasp the possibilities that are there. The possibilities that are there for you. To become a part of that body.

And to be an integral part of that which every joint supplies. In order for you to be able to enter into that. In the local body.

And understand your place and your abilities in Christ. I think it's important for us to just take a peek at the foundation. That's laid here in the first three chapters.

Notice that in verse 1 of chapter 4 here. He starts with therefore. He's referring back to what was said before.

I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you. Beg of you. Greatly desire of you.

That you walk worthy of this vocation. This calling with this job that you are called to. I beg you, he says, to walk worthy of this vocation.

This occupation, if you will. This job that you are called to by God. There's a beautiful foundation that's laid here in these first three chapters.

And we can't go into it in any depth. But I just want to point you to it. And encourage you to do a study of this amazing foundation.

That is laid here for us. To build this beautiful body upon. You think that.

Well, just yesterday I was talking to a man. Who is very passionate about what he believes. And very passionate about many things.

And was a professing Christian. And he said, I have fought more in the church than I have outside of the church. Well, I also have been told by an older sister when I first became a Christian.

It's just, she sort of had the idea of, it's just not the way it should be. But you just sort of come to accept it and expect that church life is a life of arguing and fighting. And not being able to get along with one another.

But that didn't sit right in my heart. I knew because of what God did in my heart that it didn't have to be that way. And I would like to provoke you this morning to not settle for that.

And that if you're having a struggle being a brother here in the church. Or if you're having a struggle being a sister here in the church. That God has much more for you.

He has an abundant life for you in the body. Not just you and God. You do need your personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

And it does need to be sweet. But it doesn't stop there. You're stopping way short of what God has for you.

And I want to convince you by the word of God this morning. That you are stopping way short of what God has for you. If you are not receiving.

If you are not giving and receiving and being a part of the body this morning. I'm preaching to us here this morning. You know I know we could preach to a lot of people that are out there.

That are all alone. That may be by themselves. And for one reason or another.

I'm not here preaching to them this morning. I'm preaching to us. I think it's very possible for you to be sitting here this morning.

And coming here every Sunday. And not being a part of the body. Not being what it says here.

In the conclusion. Here that we read. From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth.

According to the effectual working in the measure of every part. Maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love. And note that.

Note those words. All. Every.

The whole body. That which every joint supplieth. So.

Let's take a look at the foundation that was laid. Just take a peek at it. Paul.

Paul starts here in Ephesians chapter one. The first half of the chapter. He's praying a prayer.

And it's a prayer of praise. He's lifting up a prayer of praise here. In the beginning of the chapter.

And it's very important to note what he praises God for. He's praising God. That we were chosen in Him before the foundation of the world.

Brothers and sisters. We're not just an afterthought to God. We were chosen in Him before the foundation of the world.

We have been predestinated unto the adoption of children. God. Already.

Adopted us into His family through Christ Jesus. We have redemption. There's redemption here he's praising God for.

Redemption through His blood. The forgiveness of sins according to the riches of His grace. So.

We have been chosen. We have been predestinated. We have been redeemed.

In verse 9. He's made known unto us the mystery of His will. According to His good pleasure which He has purposed in Himself. I was thinking that it said there that it was hid.

In ages past. I guess it says that somewhere else. But.

He has made known to us the mystery of His will. And. I'm not going to go into that now.

But that would make a very interesting discussion. And I would love to hear some discussion on that. A little later.

About the mystery of His will. But that's a beautiful mystery that's been made known. We have obtained an inheritance.

In verse 11. We. We have been sealed.

In verse 13. That's enough right there. Brothers and sisters.

We've been chosen. Predestinated. Redeemed.

We've had. God's revelation. Made known to us.

We have obtained an inheritance. In Him. And He has sealed us.

He has given us of His Holy Spirit. What more do you need. To become.

Active. In the body of Christ. What more do you need.

To. Become a minister of the gospel. Well.

There is much more. The foundation didn't stop right there. Now.

He prays. He continues to pray here. And the prayer.

Changes. From a prayer of praise. To a prayer.

For perception. That we may know. Here is.

Herein lies an important part. Of us. Becoming.

A fruitful part. In the body. The reason we need to.  
Go. And tell. The lost about Christ.  
Is because. They don't know. They need to have a knowledge.  
Of who Jesus is. That's why. We're sending Tanner over to the Gonja people.  
That they may know. Who is their Savior. That they may know.  
That a Savior has come. That they may know. They don't need to die in their sins.  
Well. Here is. Paul's prayer for us.  
That we may know. That we may perceive. And understand.  
First of all. What is. The hope of his calling.  
I'll just read the whole prayer here. And then we'll touch on it a bit. That the God.  
Of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Father of Glory. May give unto you.  
The spirit of wisdom. And revelation. In the knowledge.  
Of Jesus. The eyes of your understanding. Being enlightened.  
That you may know. What is. The hope of his calling.  
And what the riches. Of the glory of his inheritance. In the saints.  
Is. And what is the exceeding greatness. Of his power.  
To us were. Who believe. According to the working of.  
His mighty power. Which he wrought in Christ. When he raised him from the dead.  
And set him at his own right hand. In the heavenly places. So we have.  
A prayer. That we may know. What is the hope of his calling.  
That we may know. What the riches. Of the glory of his inheritance.  
Is in the saints. And that we may know. What is the exceeding greatness.  
Of his power. The question is. Do you know.  
What is the hope of his calling. It's given there. That we may know.  
What is the hope. Of the riches. That we may know.  
What the riches of the glory of his inheritance. Is in the saints. Did you know.  
That you are part. Of God's inheritance. And there's a. A beauty and a power.

Just in. Understanding. That point.

God wants us to understand that. It's in his word. What the riches.

Of the glory of his inheritance. In the saints. And what is the exceeding greatness.

Of his power. To us who believe. That power.

That. God. Had.

In raising up Christ from the dead. In. Giving him.

A glorified body. Against. All the powers.

Of the enemy. Against all the powers of darkness. He gave Jesus.

He raised him from the dead. Gave him a glorified body. And it didn't stop there.

A little while later. He raised him up into the. Into the throne room.

There to be with him. In heaven. Well.

That same. Power. Is available to us.

To those of us who know. Who perceive and understand. Chapter 2. More of this foundation.

It speaks of. Our condition. Before Christ.

And over against that. What God has done. For us.

And what we are now in Christ. And who we are now in Christ. We have in verse 1. Spiritual death.

We have in verse 2. Subjection to Satan. In verse 3. Flesh bound affections. And under condemnation.

Not a pretty picture. But over against that. We have in verses 4-10.

God quickening us. God making us alive. God.

Giving us a new heart. Taking that. Old man.

Taking that stony heart out. And giving us a new heart. Quickening us.

Making us alive again. To quicken means to revive. It means to.

Bring back to life. That. That life that disappeared.

When Adam sinned. Can now be revived. Through the amazing grace of God.

Even when we were dead in sins. Has quickened us. He has raised us.

In verse 6. He raised us up. And he has made us. To sit together in heavenly places.

In Christ Jesus. I don't know. Are you building upon that solid foundation? This morning.

Verse 11. And 12. Speaking of the first four verses.  
The death. The bondage to sin. Being under Satan's rule.  
He says at that time. Ye were. Without Christ.  
But in verse. 13. But now.  
In Christ Jesus. Ye who sometimes were. Far off.  
Are made nigh. By the blood of Christ. So you have the.  
At that time. But now. You see the difference? In verse 19.  
Now therefore. You see. At that time.  
Ye were without Christ. But now. You are made nigh.  
Through the blood of Christ. Now therefore. Ye are no more strangers.  
And foreigners. But you are fellow citizens. In the household of God.  
And yes I know. Much more could be said. And whole messages can be preached.  
From each one of those. But I'd like to provoke you to. Read and study this.  
In light of. The message this morning. That we have in chapter four.  
And then. The foundation. Gets even stronger in chapter three.  
We have in. And I guess that's where we have the. Revealing.  
Of the divine mystery. That it says here. Unto me who am less in verse eight.  
Than the least of all saints. Is this grace given. That I should preach among the Gentiles.  
The unsearchable riches of Christ. And to make all men see. What is the fellowship.  
Of the mystery. Which from the beginning of the world. Have been hid in God.  
Who created all things. By Jesus Christ. Now.  
I'm not going to go into that. But I've had some. Very interesting.  
Studying on that. And it's a beautiful. Revelation.  
Revelation. That God has revealed to us. In Christ Jesus.  
And I. I believe we are. Speaking of it here. In our message this morning.  
And then we have. A receiving of the divine fullness. In chapters.  
Or in verses thirteen through twenty one. And. Paul's prayer.

There is. I guess in. In my thinking that.  
He's going deeper. He's going higher. And.  
He's taking us. To even greater depth. Than in chapter one.  
And chapter two. And he is. Preparing us.  
For the practical. Part of the Christian life. Which.  
His. His. The church.  
The local body. Is part of. Here and starts out with in chapter four.  
It's a lofty prayer. That is being prayed. And you.  
May be tempted to. Throw up your hands. And God knows.  
That temptation. Is there before you. And God knows.  
That. You'll face many temptations. Therefore.  
We have verse twenty. Unto him. Who is able to do exceeding.  
Abundantly. Above. There's not enough adjectives.  
To describe. Exceeding. Exceeding.  
Abundantly. Above. All that we ask or think.  
According to. The power that worketh in us. And now we know.  
What power worketh in us. It's the same power. That God.  
Worked in Christ. When he raised him from the dead. Well.  
Brothers and sisters. There's no need for us. To be discouraged this morning.  
It's okay to lift up a high standard. Because. He is able.  
The Lord Jesus is able. To do exceedingly. Abundantly.  
Above. All that you ask or think. One.  
One of my neighbors told me this. This week. Speaking in the natural sense.  
It's not. It's in. It's in what we will.  
He said. My dad taught me it's. It's.  
On whether I will. To do it or not. And.  
You know. In the Christian life. Yes.

Yes. There is the divine. Guidance of the Holy Spirit.  
The filling of the Holy Spirit. And. An empowering of the Holy Spirit.  
But there's also. An engaging of our will. Do you will.  
To do. The will of God this morning. Do you will.  
To know. What is. This power.  
That was wrought in Christ. When God raised him from the dead. Do you.  
Will. To have a love. A compassion.  
Beating in your breast. For your brothers and sisters. Do you will it this morning.  
Do you. Will. To know.  
All. That God has prepared for us. In chapters one through three here.  
The beautiful foundation. That he has laid for us. In Christ.  
And. If you. Will get a hold of.  
And grasp. And understand. The foundation that is laid for you.  
Then you can build. And you can become. An effective part.  
That which every joint supplies. You can. Be.  
A healthy limb in this body. You can be a healthy. Part of the body.  
I therefore. Beg you. Beseech you.  
That you walk worthy. Why does he say. That you walk worthy.  
Because. There is. The temptation for each one of us.  
To. Instead of. Building.  
A beautiful building on this. Foundation. That we settle for.  
Just a little cottage. You know maybe in the natural. It's okay for you to settle for a little cottage.  
But it's not okay in the spiritual. Brothers and sisters. God wants you.  
To build a palace. God has prepared. A beautiful foundation.  
For you. To build upon. He has given you.  
All the resources to build. And. It's not possible for you.  
To be. The whole body. Yourself.

You are a part of the body. You are only. A part.  
And. You are not going to experience. Life as God.  
Has provided it for you. In Christ Jesus. Unless you are part of the body.  
Unless you are. An active part. Unless you are.  
A giving part. Unless you are. Using your gifts.  
There is. There is. No other way.  
To walk worthy. Of this vocation. Wherewith you are called.  
You are called. To blend your hearts. Brothers and sisters.  
You are called. To live that sacrificial. Dying to self.  
Forgiving one another. Loving one another. Blessing one another.  
Forbearing with one another. Endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit. With one another.  
And how many more are there? 17 of them brother Rick. I think. Are the one another's.  
37. 37 brother Rick says. There are of the one another's.  
In the bible. In the bible. And don't be discouraged by that.  
There's been a beautiful foundation. Laid for you. You can rise up.  
And build. And your house will stand. If it's on this beautiful foundation.  
Of Christ Jesus. He has given. Each one of us gifts.  
Well first of all. Let's just point out that. It is possible.  
It is possible. For this body. To be fitly joined together.  
Because. There is. One body.  
One spirit. One hope. One Lord.  
One faith. One baptism. One God and Father of all.  
Who is above all. And through all. And in you all.  
So there. Again. Is part of the foundation.  
From which we build upon. There is a. Unity. In Christ.  
And there needs to be. An endeavoring. Here as it says.  
In verse three. There needs to be a fighting. Spirit within each one of us.

To keep. The unity. Of the spirit in the bond of peace.  
That should be. A. Passion in each one of our hearts. We should be.  
Passionately desiring. To keep the unity of the spirit. In the bond of peace.  
So we have Christ. Ascending up on high. But in doing so.  
He gave gifts. Unto men. He left us here.  
To do the job. To finish the job. He left us here.  
To. Become. His ambassador.  
He left us here to. Be his image. And how do we do that? Jesus said.  
By this. Shall all men know. That you are my disciples.  
By how? How do we know? How does the world know? That we are. Jesus disciples. If we love one another.  
If we. Blend our hearts with one another. And he gave.  
Some apostles. Now we are speaking of these different gifts. And some prophets.  
And some pastors. And teachers. And teachers.  
I like the way that one song says here. Says in this song. Awake, awake o earth.  
Lift. Up thy gates with praise. And robes of joy.  
Put on. The Lord of life and death. Hath risen to his throne.  
He hath gone up on high. And giveth gifts to men. He lives no more to die.  
He lives. He lives again. He has gone up on high.  
And giveth gifts to men. And here we have it. In Ephesians chapter 4. He has gone up on high.  
And he has given gifts unto men. And. He has not left anyone.  
Without giving you gifts. He has given you gifts. Everyone it says.  
He has given these gifts. Some. Fulfill.  
An apostle role. Some a prophet. Some evangelist.  
Some pastors. Some teachers. But it's all for one purpose.  
For the perfecting of the saints. For the work of the ministry. For the edifying of the body of Christ.  
Till we all come. In the unity. Of the faith.  
And that's. What that endeavoring in verse 3 is all about. And of the knowledge.

Of the Son of God. And that knowledge. Is given to us.  
In chapters 1 through 3. Unto a perfect man. Unto the measure. Of the stature.  
Of the fullness of Christ. Now. Here's the.  
Crux. Of the whole matter. Brothers and sisters.  
And the reason. I believe. It's impossible for you.  
To. Be a Christian. By yourself.  
He says. For the perfecting of the saints. Now.  
I deduct from that. That this is how God. Perfects us.  
This is how God. Disciples us. Yes.  
We do receive. From God. And the scripture even says.  
That the Holy Spirit. Will teach us all things. And yet.  
We need to balance that. What God has put in place. Which is.  
His body. Functioning together. And.  
And meeting together. And exhorting one another. And caring for one another.  
Praying for one another. It says in Hebrews chapter 10 there. Not forsaking the assembling.  
Of ourselves together. As the manner of some is. But so much the more.  
As you see the day approaching. For if we sin willfully. After that we have.  
Received of the goodness of God. Of the grace of God. There remaineth no more.  
What is it? There remaineth no more. Sacrifice for sin. Now.  
I don't claim to. Understand that. In its fullest.  
But one thing again there. That I take from that. Is that.  
You are treading on dangerous ground. If you have the idea. That.  
Yes I'm a Christian. I was born again. No I don't go to church.  
Or if I do. I don't really become a part. Or I'm not really.  
Putting my heart into. The body. Becoming a part.  
Well. The danger of that is. That.  
You just may fall away. According to Hebrews chapter 10 there. And.

And we have here. In verse 14. That we be.  
That we henceforth. Be no more children. That are tossed to and fro.  
And carried about. With every wind of doctrine. According to this verse.  
There are men. Out there. Lying in wait for your soul.  
They will devour you. As they have opportunity. They will deceive you.  
And. My understanding of this scripture. What I believe it's saying.  
Is that. If you do not plug in. If you don't become a part.  
Of what is going on. And. If you don't.  
Exercise your gift. You are going to be caught. Off guard one day.  
You are going to be swept away. By some wind. Of some new doctrine.  
That comes along. We need. Each other.  
We. It's just part of the humility. That.  
Of God. That needs to be a part of us. Did you see how the chapter started? This walking worthy.  
Of the vocation wherewith we are called. Is how? In humility. With all loneliness of mind.  
And. That's where it has to start. If you are not humble.  
You can't. Blend your heart with a brother. You can't.  
Give the benefit of the doubt. You can't sit at someone else's seat. Become vulnerable to one another.  
Go minister. Go wash the saints feet. Pride doesn't do that.  
But let me tell you. That pride goes before a fall. And.  
It's a must. I. Am so blessed. In reading.  
Through the martyr's mirror right now. I never did that. And I. I'm trying to.  
I'm trying to do that right now. Read through the martyr's mirror. And.  
And. Well the first thing. That is so striking.  
Is how solid they are. On the word of God. They were not carried about.  
With every wind of doctrine. If it was. If it was in the word of God.  
If it was. If it was part of the word of God. Then they were willing to.  
Joyfully die for it. But. No matter.

What tyranny came against them. If. If it was just man's idea.

The one. The one man. Asked.

The one interrogator. Asked the one brother. What he thought of the sacrament.

And. He said. I think nothing of your burnt God.

And. And. And they just had such a. A boldness.

And you know these things infuriated. These men. And they knew that they.

It's going to cost them their life. To be honest. To be truthful.

But they were so frank. And they loved the word of God. One man.

Well the reason I'm bringing this up. Is that. Has to do with the local body.

They. Loved one another. They cared for one another.

And one of the things. It seemed like one of the. Things that the.

Catholics were always trying to. Get out of them. Is who baptized them.

And. Who taught them. They were always trying to.

Lay hands on the next person. But. I'm not saying it never happened.

But. According to many of these reports. Those people were faithful.

They would not. Budge in giving information out. To.

Their interrogators. Even though. It cost them their life.

They loved their brothers and sisters. And it cost them something. What is it costing you this morning.

To be a part of the body. What are you giving up of yourself. To be a part.

Of the body. What have you sacrificed. Lately.

To be a part. Of the body. Yep.

It's a dying to self. But it's. It's the principle of the cross.

Like Jesus said. The way up. Is down.

The way to save your life. Is to lose it. There was a time when.

There was. Twenty. Of these brothers and sisters.

Caught together. And put in prison. And the day was coming for their execution.

And it was. It was just around the corner. A couple days away.

And. There was these two brothers. That were.  
Not Christians. But they had a brother. Who was one of the ones in prison.  
And they. They got together. They decided that.  
You know. Our brother. Has.  
Sacrificed. So much. So much.  
We saw his life. We know. That.  
He is being unjustly. Tried. We know that he is unjustly.  
Losing his life. And it's not right for us. To sit here and do nothing about it.  
And they. Committed to each other. That they were going to.  
Go. Go at the expense of their life. And.  
Try to rescue their brother. And anyone else. Who may be.  
Part of his group there. That were in the cell with him. And even though.  
They knew that it would cost them. Their life. They risked their lives.  
And. Went to the castle. Where these men were.  
Where their brother was. And all 20 of these people. And they rigged up a rope.  
With a fish hook. On the end. Flung it up to the window there.  
And broke in with a crowbar. And rescued their brother out of there. And a number of others.  
But. The point that I. See there is that. We see.  
That principle in action. Where Jesus said. By the love that you have one to another.  
The world will see. That you are my disciples. And that even though.  
These men. Were listening to teachers. That were saying.  
These men are heretics. They knew in their heart. By the life that they lived.  
By the love that they showed. Towards one another. That.  
These men are for real. They just knew it. And so they risked.  
Their lives for it. Well we know. That a house.  
Has many different. Parts to it. And many different people.  
With different. Skills. To build the house.

Especially today. You know. We have the surveyor.  
We have the excavator. We have the mason. To lay up the foundation.  
We have the framer. That comes in and frames the house. We have a roofer.  
That does the roofing. That does the roof. We have a siding guy.  
That does the siding. We have trim guys. That trim the inside of the house.  
And. Even have deck builders. To put the decks on the houses.  
And the deck builder. Is not very skilled. To lay up the walls.  
And the trim guy. Doesn't do very well. Usually at doing the framing.  
And. We wouldn't let the roofer. Build our decks.  
But. At the end. When everyone has worked together.  
We have a beautiful house. Ready for someone. To live in.  
To feel secure in. That's. I guess what I am trying to.  
Lift up to you all this morning. That. You have a part to play.  
If this is going to be. A healthy body. You must plug in.  
You can't just sit here. You can't just. Take shots from the sideline.  
You can't just. Fuss. When a decision is made.  
That didn't go your way. Endeavoring. To keep the unity of the spirit.  
In the bond of peace. Are you endeavoring. Are you endeavoring.  
To walk worthy of the vocation. Wherewith you are called. Are you endeavoring.  
To whatever you do. To make sure. That it counts.  
In the building. If you have criticism. Are you sure.  
That it's constructive. If you have. A word.  
To say to someone. Are you sure. That it's.  
For his salvation. If you're coming to me. To tell me about.  
Your brother or your sister. Here at church. With this fault.  
Or that fault. Do you have his best in mind. Or are you just trying to be destructive.  
Examine your heart. Let no corrupt. Communication proceed out of your mouth.

But that which is good. To the use of edifying. That it may minister grace.  
Unto the hearers. Let all bitterness. And wrath.  
And anger. And clamor. And evil speaking be put away from you.  
With all malice. And be ye kind. One to another.  
This isn't just a children's verse. Brothers and sisters. And be ye kind.  
One to another. Tender hearted. Forgiving one another.  
Even as God for Christ's sake. Has forgiven you. And don't wait for the brother to come.  
And ask you to forgive him. Forgive him now. Yes.  
We are flesh and blood. And we do. Say things sometimes.  
That we shouldn't say. We do offend sometimes. But.  
Purpose in your heart. That when someone says something to you. That graded you the wrong way.  
That was hard for you to accept. That offended you. Yes.  
It's hard to say that sometimes. That offended me. Purpose in your heart.  
The next time someone offends you. That you are going to release them. You are going to forgive them.  
You are going to forgive them. And you are going to. If the feelings keep rising up.  
Pray for them. Pray that. God would give them grace.  
To have victory over their tongue. If they are saying things they shouldn't be saying. If they are too harsh  
with you.  
Or if they are giving you the cold shoulder. Or whatever it may be. We are real people.  
And we have real tests to take. But I exhort you. Brothers and sisters.  
Forgive one another. Don't hold someone. Captive.  
In your heart. Let them go. Let them free.  
So you can be free. There is freedom. In Christ.  
The foundation that was laid. Is a strong foundation. It's one that not only.  
Saves you. But delivers you. From bondage.  
Delivers you. From that besetting sin. If you will be free.  
If you will to be free. What a beautiful picture we have here. Brothers and sisters.  
No more. Children tossed to and fro. One day thinking this.

And the next day believing that. And. And.

Going after the latest. Charismatic man in town. Whatever.

There is lots of great orators. In our day. That can speak great swelling words.

And great lying wonders. But here is a good test to take. Give them about five years.

Before you listen to their message. Give them five years. If they are for real.

In five years you will know it. Another test to take is. Learn to come.

Under the. Safety. Of your elders.

Who do know you and you do know them. Much more. Than you know the radio preacher.

Or whoever it may be. That you are running after. Learn to.

Learn to. Pray for. And.

Subject yourself to your elders. Get underneath them. Don't just try and.

Submit to them. Learn what is their heart. Like a. Faithful.

Child does to his parent. He doesn't only want to. Obey them.

He wants to. He wants to. Please them.

He wants to go the second mile. Go the second mile towards your elders. Pray for them this week.

If you are having a struggle. Wondering. Why they.

Did this or didn't do that. Pray for them this week. And.

Consider them. Consider the place that God has put them in. And.

Consider the place that God has put you in. Under them. See we want to be a body.

That's. Not tossed to and fro. And that's not going to be deceived.

By some crafty man. Who comes in. With.

A lot of nice sounding words. But. Instead.

Instead. We want to be. Speaking the truth in love.

We want to be growing up in Him. In Jesus. In all things.

We don't want just some of our life. To be right with God. We want everything.

Every issue that comes along. To be right with God. We want to.

We want to be lovers of the truth. Lovers of the truth. And that is.

Part of. That's one of the keys. Lovers of the truth.

Well. If. It's not the word of God.

Then. I don't have time for it. And those.

Brothers. That I was speaking of earlier. That I was reading about in the martyr's mirror.

They were. They were lovers. Of the truth.

They wrote letters. And. Unless they had one.

Secretly. I don't think many of them had. Bibles in their cells with them.

I guess I stand to be. Corrected in this but. I know they did sometimes.

But I believe for the most part. They didn't have Bibles. In there with them.

But when they wrote letters back. To their people. It was just scripture.

It just flowed in letter form. They had a verse here. And a verse there.

And just a whole letter. Almost a whole book sometimes. Of just quoting scripture.

And. I was. I am amazed.

I am challenged by their love of the truth. Their love of the word of God. And how they hid it in their heart.

It seemed they had the whole Bible. Memorized some of them. Men.

Some of those women too. They spoke the truth in love. They grew up into Him.

In all things. And that's my challenge. For us this morning.

Let's be lovers of the truth. And grow up into Him. In all things.

Let's not be swayed. By every new thing that comes along. But.

If that's gonna happen. We can't just sit back. And wait.

For the preacher to do it. How is it? From whom. The whole body.

Fitly joined together. It's. Every joint.

Supplying apart. And. Again let me exhort you.

That. If we are going to be a healthy body. It doesn't just depend.

On the preacher. Preaching the truth on Sunday morning. It has to do.

And it starts. With each one of us. Supplying apart.

Praise the Lord. Amen. This is a subject that I. Know is very.

Near to the heart of God. In the New Testament. It's part of the Word of God.

And the Spirit of God. And I. Say Amen to the message. I think several times.

Brother Dean made the point. And I believe it's true. That it's basically.

Almost impossible to be a Christian. And not be part of a body. And that doesn't mean just that we come to church on Sunday.

As he said. And sit down. In a seat.

But that we are actually engaged. And connected. To that body.

And. I don't know how to do all that for you. But.

I believe if you earnestly believe that. And seek that. And.

Get active in the church. Get active in other people's lives. God will.

Make it very clear to you. What you need to do. To be connected to the body.

So that you will. Feel and experience. That you are the measure of every part.

That you are a joint. That supply of. It's a beautiful picture.

The picture the word of God gives us there of a body. You know. How.

We can all just imagine. Which part of your body do you want to cut off and throw away. You know.

None of us want to do that do we. So. Which part of your body should.

On it's own. Want to throw itself away. Well none right.

And yet we see people. Who feel like they can either make it alone. Or they can come to church.

And just come to church. And then leave. And not really try to be part of something.

So. I think that's a good challenge for us today. It's something as he said.

He wanted to provoke himself. But it's something that we need to allow the spirit of God. And the word of God to provoke us.

Where we're really at. With the body of Christ. And with the local church.

And again. He didn't mention it. But.

Don't be deceived by this modern teaching. Well I'm just part of the universal church. You know.

That's not the picture we see in the new testament is it. We see the church at Corinth. And the church at Ephesus.

And the church at Thessalonica. And Colossae. They weren't just sort of drifting around.

In some nebulous pie in the sky church. They were part of a local body. That met house to house.

So. Don't be deceived by that modern thinking. Well I'm just part of some universal church.  
But rather. As we're connected to the local body. That defines whether or not we're part of the church.  
Amen. Well if you. This morning.  
If you have something you'd like to share. Or add to the message. Or if you have a testimony.  
If you raise your hand. We'd be glad to get a microphone to you. Take a few minutes here.  
To share at the end of the message. This morning. The middle over there.  
I'm just going to testify. The message that Tommy shared here this morning. About the burning bush.  
And Moses. In the wilderness. Where he felt inadequate.  
To do the Lord's work. I believe. I can testify to that.  
We sometimes feel inadequate. To do what we should do. I can testify.  
I can testify. I should do more. I could do more.  
I believe Moses. So to speak. Cried to those people.  
We all remember the story. When the Lord was going to destroy them. And Moses pleaded for them.  
And the Lord didn't. He said the Lord had to repent. The Lord repented of what he wanted to do.  
And all throughout history. The Old Testament. Is full of stories.  
Where people prayed for the enemies. Like King David. Prayed for Saul.  
And all those stories. And the story that Dean mentioned. About the one that took the fish hook and the rope.  
And those people. They just didn't love. Like it says here in John.  
Like it says. Little children. Or in 1 John chapter 3. My little children.  
Let us not love in word. Neither in tongue. But in deed and in truth.  
I just want to say that. Because we should do. Let to do something.  
Not only say we should. Amen. Okay.  
We are also very thankful for the message. And the things that have been shared. And the time that we have been able to spend here.  
And it's been encouraging. And searching. And deep many times.  
Especially. Where we work there. With everybody.  
I tell them it's like a little church. Almost every day. It brings out.

A lot of things. And it's a marvelous blessing. And what I'm seeing in the word of God.  
And Dean's encouragement. I'm very very thankful for it. The Lord gave me.  
I believe through his word. Something that. Maybe relates.  
And. For some years now. For example.  
When Paul says that. He desires to be an elder. He desires a good thing.  
And sometimes we could believe. Or I could believe. That was like being proud.  
Or wanting something like that. But the Bible gives us an opportunity. Then he says.  
Be followers of me. As I am of Christ. But we always focus as he is of Christ.  
But he says be followers of me. And so I appreciate that. In Spanish it says.  
Be imitators of me. In the version that I have. And I really like that.  
And I've taken it to heart. That if God gives us a desire. He says he produces in us.  
Both to will and to do. And if God is not producing. In us the will.  
Or to do. We should really pray earnestly. Why God? Why am I not willing? Because Jesus says.  
Whosoever will. And so it's beautiful that in many areas. That gift I believe of an evangelist.  
Or of a pastor. Will begin to develop. As we want also.  
Because God is producing that want. I may be wrong. And I want to be corrected.  
That's just understanding. That the Lord has brought to my heart. And I really cherish it.  
And it has helped. In a lot of ways. And we are just thankful for him.  
And again something that came to me. The fact of the Holy Spirit. Not being out there in a cloud.  
Or descending every now and then. In a mist. But in the believers.  
In the believers. And that we would hear brother. And believe that the Holy Spirit.  
Is speaking through him. And we take it seriously. Because we sometimes.  
I don't know. These new teachings like they were saying. Could point to the fact.  
Oh well the Holy Spirit directed me. I don't know. And it comes from a breeze.  
I don't know what the belief is. But that we remember to see Christ. And ask Christ and the brothers.  
To see Christ in each other's eyes. And remember that. That Holy Spirit is residing in them.  
To help us. To correct us. To direct us.

And thank the Lord. I had struggled for quite some time. With fear of man.  
And witnessing. And I have renounced it recently. To the Lord.  
And I just. I also confessed it to brother Dean. And I just ask that you would.  
Help just pray for me. That you would. Lord would help me to be faithful.  
In witnessing and having courage. And boldness. And I also ask that you would just.  
Pray for me that I could. Be disciplined. In my using my time wisely.  
And redeeming the time. Thank you. Thank you for sharing sister.  
Amen. Alright. In the middle here.  
Yes I just want to say. Amen to the message. I am thankful for it.  
That is my heart. Although I think I would say. I have much to learn in it yet.  
But I want to press forward. As it says in Nehemiah. I just.  
Turn to that. Nehemiah 4.6 And it goes right with the thought. That which every joint supplieth.  
Compacting together. So we built the wall. And all the wall was joined together.  
Unto the half thereof. For the people had a mind to work. And that is where we want to be.  
We want to be plugged in. And part of the church. Even though sometimes.  
Maybe we don't know exactly. How to find our way and all that. But yet that is our heart.  
Martha over here on the sister's side. Well I want to. Make a confession.  
Before everybody. My parents have been. Teaching me a lot of stuff.  
In the area of submitting. And I have a very. Hard time submitting.  
I only want to submit. In the things that. I think are right.  
But I want to change that mind. And I want to submit everything. Whether I think they are right or not.  
And also. In the area that I struggle with. Is having input in my life.  
I really want to conquer. And. Have input in my life.  
Because I know it is right. And that is the only way. For me to be a Christian.  
Is to letting input in my life. I have confessed it to my family. But I also want to confess it.  
In front of the whole church. And let you know where I am. And I covet your prayers.  
Thank you. Amen. Any other confessions this morning? Or things you want to share? Yes in the back on  
the sister's side.

I want to take this opportunity to thank. Each and everyone that was involved. In our benefit sale yesterday.

I know a lot of time. And effort. Was put into it.

Donations. And I just want to wish. The Lord's richest blessings.

On each one who participated. In any way. We needed people to come by.

We needed people to make. Everybody pitched in. Thank you and God bless you.

Brother Dean talked about. One another in each other. And I think it was a prime example.

Of putting that into practical practice. One another in one another. Thank you again.

Amen.

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