

Recognizing The Value Of Others

by Zac Poonen

This sermon emphasizes the importance of recognizing and valuing every member's role in the body of Christ, highlighting the need to avoid seeking personal gain or honor within the church. It discusses the significance of boundaries in relationships, respecting others' dignity, and not humiliating or seeking self-interest. The message stresses the need to acknowledge and appreciate the unique grace God has given to each individual, promoting humility, love, and selflessness within the church community.

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:21, 1 Corinthians 13:5, Philippians 2:19, Ephesians 5:25, Ecclesiastes 10:8, 1 Corinthians 12:24

Topics: "Unity in the Body of Christ", "Humility and Selflessness"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of recognizing and valuing every member's role in the body of Christ, highlighting the need to avoid seeking personal gain or honor within the church. It discusses the significance of boundaries in relationships, respecting others' dignity, and not humiliating or seeking self-interest. The message stresses the need to acknowledge and appreciate the unique grace God has given to each individual, promoting humility, love, and selflessness within the church community.

Transcript

It says in 1 Corinthians in chapter 12, you could never find anything like this in the Old Covenant, of recognizing the part that another member of the body has to play in the body, and no one can say, see it says in 1 Corinthians 12, 21, the eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of you, nor can the head say to the feet, I have no need of you. It's good for all of us to ask ourselves, in whichever church you are, do you feel that your ministry is so gifted and so important, that some of those other people, you can do without them. That is one of the clearest proofs, that you have not seen the body of Christ.

It's something you have to see, you know, there are people who, we see a lot of non-Christians, have not seen the way of salvation. They think they have to work and work and work and get forgiveness of sins, but God has opened our eyes to see the way of salvation, how free it is. It's something you see, God opens our eyes.

And I believe that God has to open our eyes, and He'll open your eyes if you are humble, to show you that you need that person. And especially those who are very gifted, and who have a sense of self-importance, and feel that they are very important to the body of Christ. It's very easy to feel, I don't need that person.

And it says here, on the contrary, verse 22, do you understand this? Ask yourself, the members of the body, which you think are weaker, are necessary. You look around at Christendom, nobody feels that way. The only one, the great preachers, the great healer, he's necessary.

What about the weaker members? They are there or not there, it doesn't make a difference. Who has understood the body of Christ? Who has seen the body of Christ, that the weaker members are necessary, which seem to be weaker. There's a ministry that some brothers can do, that even the most gifted brother in the body of Christ cannot do.

You need to understand that, especially those who are gifted. However gifted you may be in one area, there are many things you cannot do, which some other brother has to do to complete that ministry of the body. And if you have a church where every person recognizes that, you build the body of Christ.

And that's the purpose of teaching, is to enable everyone to recognize, I need my brother and he needs me. And where we value one another and don't think, you know the Bible says, everyone seeks their own. Love does not seek its own.

When we think of enduring in love until the end, in the next chapter it says, one of the characteristics of love in 1 Corinthians 13, 5, it does not seek its own. I remember preaching this in one church and somebody came to me and said, you think there's anybody who doesn't seek their own? Everybody seeks their own. I said, yeah, that is true in Paul's time also.

All sought their own, but there was a Timothy who did not seek his own. There are not many. Generally speaking, even in the church, all seek their own.

How will this benefit me? You know, you can join a church because you say, yeah, this is a good place for my children to grow up. Nice place. The children are well behaved and it's good for my children to be in this influence.

You're an utterly selfish person who has not understood ABC of the body of Christ. You're seeking your own. How will this benefit my children? My children can play in the music and they can develop.

Whatever you see in the body of Christ, do you feel that other person is necessary? Thinking of promoting ourselves, what will benefit me? The people are nice. They'll help you when you're in trouble. If you have joined a church like that, I want to say to you in Jesus' name, you have not seen ABC of the body of Christ.

And not only that, I want to say to you in Jesus' name, you're a hindrance to your local church. Because one fundamental truth of this body is, there's no part of this body that seeks its own. The hand does not seek its own.

The eyes, ears, they do not seek their own. Any part of this body that seeks its own is what the doctors call a cancer. My layman's understanding of a cancer is a group of cells that will take all the nourishment to itself and it will grow and grow and grow and grow.

That's a cancer. What can I get out of this? What can I get out of this? And you may not realize that the cancer is in the body of Christ. We have that spirit.

They do not realize that everyone is necessary. And as I said here, one characteristic of love is, love does not seek its own. 1 Corinthians 13 verse 5. I told you it's not surprising that in the Christian church most

people seek their own.

It was true in Paul's day. Please turn to Philippians chapter 2 in verse 19 to 21. If you want to find an outstanding example of a godly young man, it's Timothy.

Philippians 2.19 I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you shortly because, listen to this, Paul had so many co-workers. He's not talking about unbelievers. If you say unbelievers are seeking their own, that's understood.

All unbelievers seek their own. Or you say these carnal believers, they seek their own. But when Paul's co-workers, they are seeking their own.

Somebody wants to be known as, earlier on in Philippians he says, because I'm in prison, some people are getting a chance to preach because Paul is in prison and say, great, now we can prove what great preachers we are because Paul is out of the way. They're seeking their own. And here he says, I don't have anybody else other than Timothy.

Paul, you've got so many co-workers here with you, none of them? No. He's not talking about his entire team of co-workers like Titus and all the wonderful people. They were somewhere else.

Or Luke and all that. But the ones who were with him there, among them, he says, Timothy is the only one I can say. I don't have anybody like that who is genuinely concerned for your welfare.

When you look around at Christendom today, you have preachers who are concerned for their own welfare. How will this benefit me? If I become a pastor of this church, how will it benefit me? If I go here, how will it benefit me? How will it benefit my children? But to be concerned for the welfare of others, and then it says, everybody seeks after their own interests. Not those of Christ Jesus.

And if we belong in that category, that I'm seeking my own interest, not the interest of Christ Jesus, I'm a hindrance to the body of Christ. And that's why we don't see the body of Christ being built in many places. Because it's very difficult to find people like Timothy.

It's very rare. Like I said, every part of the body seeks the good of the other. And I want to say, brothers and sisters, it's an amazing thing that Jesus came to build the body.

And when we love the church, we will do what Jesus did, as we read in Ephesians 5. Christ loved the church and gave himself for it. Ephesians 5, 25. Many of you belong to local churches.

Can that word be written about you that you love your church, your local church so much that you give yourself for it? You don't want any honor, you don't want any gain. Of course, we always teach that we don't want any money. But I fear that many people who do not want money do want honor.

And that is as bad as wanting money. Many, many people, even in our churches and similar churches, say, oh, I don't preach for money. But you want honor, brother.

There's zero difference between seeking for honor and seeking for money. Absolutely not. You can find fault with that other preacher who goes on television seeking for money.

If you're seeking for honor, you're just in absolutely the same category. Your money is honor, that's all. His money is rupees.

Your money is honor. But true disciple of Jesus Christ would love the church and give himself up for it. And if God can find two or three people like that, He can begin a church anywhere.

And the devil will always seek to corrupt such a church by introducing people in there who seek their own. And so if this is the case, we all need to recognize what we've emphasized in the church about boundaries. A humble person is one who recognizes that I have a boundary.

Every part of this body has got a boundary. It can only operate in that area. And the New Testament speaks a lot about that.

I must recognize my boundary in my relationship with my wife. And a lot in Indian culture, you know how the husband is like a king. His wife has got no boundary.

Boss over the wife. A true child of God will recognize that my wife has got a boundary. I cannot go inside that boundary.

It's like going into somebody else's territory. There's a verse in Proverbs that says don't remove the ancient boundary marks. You know, the way they marked property was by putting a stone there and a stone here and a stone here.

That's the boundary. Don't move it. That means don't go into that person's boundary.

And I don't think any of you would do it in terms of property. You will not move a property marker to take your neighbor's property. You will never do it.

But you can go into the boundary of your wife or go into the boundary of a brother. I'm not supposed to. I must respect it.

Even children have boundaries. I must respect that. I must never humiliate a child publicly.

I was very careful about that in disciplining my children when there were visitors around and if one of them misbehaved. I would never punish him then and say, okay, we'll deal with that later. Because if I punish him then, it's a double punishment.

I'm humiliating him before those visitors. He's got a dignity as a little child. It's a boundary I must not go into.

I must not humiliate him. I have to punish him as a father but not humiliate him. Like I said about my wife.

Maybe there's an area that God has given to her in the kitchen perhaps or other areas of the house. I must not go in there. I must respect her just like she respects me.

And even in the church. We must recognize people's boundary. And that's why every person has a certain dignity about him that God has given.

I must recognize that. I must never humiliate a person by making him feel small in the eyes of others. That is recognizing my boundary.

That is being concerned, not seeking my own but seeking the good of the other. I've often thought of this verse in Ecclesiastes where it says in Ecclesiastes in chapter 10 that when God has put a boundary wall around you and you break through that wall it says in Ecclesiastes 10 and verse 8 the last part, a serpent

can bite you. God has drawn a boundary wall around you beyond that is the boundary of your wife or the boundary of a brother or someone else.

And I say, well, I don't care. I want to assert myself. A serpent will bite you.

And that's how many people have lost the grace of God. A serpent has bitten them. Because they have not recognized the grace God has given to somebody else.

I want to encourage all of you brothers in your local churches please recognize the grace God has given to that weak brother to the one who cannot speak as well as you can. God gives honor to that weaker person. And if you are like God you will give honor to that weaker person.

If you ignore that and break the boundary wall and go it says you're a serpent will bite you. And that's the reason some people suffer sometimes from even sicknesses because they've gone outside their boundary. Let me repeat that verse in 1 Corinthians 12 where it says, you know you want to be like God we all want to be like God and it says one characteristic of God is in the body 1 Corinthians 12.24 1 Corinthians 12.24 God gives more abundant honor to the member which lacks gift.

This is very different from Christendom. In Christendom most honor is given to the one who's got a gift. He's got a gift of preaching.

He's got a gift of healing. Oh, great honor to him. Anybody can do that.

In the world they do that. In the world they give honor to the one who's got gift. But God is different.

He gives honor to the member which lacks gift. That's why Jesus would pick up little children. They had no gift.

Little children, what could they do? They can't sing, they can't talk, they can't give any money. He picked them up and said, the kingdom of God is like this. If you can be like a little child you can enter God's kingdom.

And if you want your church to be like the kingdom of God it'll be like the kingdom of God if everyone in there is in his heart attitude like a little child. Not in understanding. The Bible says in understanding be mature.

But in your attitude of spitefulness or revenge or backbiting you should backbite. Small two-year-olds can't backbite. Be like little children.

Recognize your boundary. Recognize and recognize the grace God has given to another person. Sometimes it can be jealousy.

I've seen people who want to promote their own children in the church. Somehow give them some prominence. They'll never do that to another brother who may be more gifted.

They want to promote their own children. It happens all over. All over Christendom.

Such people do not know the Lord. I don't believe they know the Lord at all because with God there is no partiality. I want to say to you elders of CFC, you try to promote your children.

You're not like God. I'll tell you in Jesus' name you're not like God. You're a partial person who is seeking your own.

And you will destroy the body of Christ in your locality. Get rid of that attitude. Love Jesus more than you love your son and daughter.

I'm telling you what I've seen. Very, very important. I saw this We wanted to get a list of potential leaders in our church and some people sent the names of their own children.

Little kids. Potential leaders. Can you believe it? And ignore all the others? These people have been in CFC so many years.

What have they learned? God, with God there is no partiality. You can be many years in CFC and seek your own, seek your own, seek your own and get no light on it. It'll be a great day when God gives us light on areas of our life where I'm seeking my own and not recognizing the grace given to somebody else who is not my relative, who is not my son who is not connected to me who may be different from me in so many ways but I recognize God has given that person a grace.

Maybe he's not educated like I am. God has given him a grace. If we recognize that, we can build the body of Christ in our locality.

Maybe your wife is not so smart as you are. Recognize the grace given to her to be your helper. God saw that you needed that type of wife to be your helper.

Value. I believe that if we recognize the grace God has given to other people, we'll value them. I want to value every brother and sister that God has given me in the church.

I want to value my wife, I want to value the children God's given me. Even if God's given you or you have a child who is retarded in some way, value that child. In God's great wisdom, he gave you something.

God never makes a mistake. Recognize your boundary that's limited perhaps now because of that child in your home. Good.

God has limited your boundary. Praise the Lord. Lord, I accept it.

Of course, do your best to get whatever treatment you can for that child. That's fine. But recognize God's hand in all these things trying to limit you and humble you so that he can give you grace.

Let's pray. Our Father, there is so much we have to learn. After so many years, we have accumulated knowledge like anything.

We can teach and teach and teach and teach and yet in the ordinary relationships of life, very often we cannot recognize the grace given to someone who we feel is inferior to us or doesn't know as much as us. Please have mercy on us, Lord, in all of our churches. Help us to be free from partiality.

Help us to humble ourselves. Give us grace, we pray. In Jesus' name, amen.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/zac-poonen/recognizing-the-value-of-others/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net