Grace Baptist Church/ CIC/ CIC again Dr. Rick Griffith

7 March 1999/ 21 Sep 2008/ 7 April 2013 Message 19 of 25

NIV 35 Minutes

**Whom Do You Need?**

Title

***1 Corinthians 12:12-31***

**Topic:** Spiritual Gifts

**Subject:** Why do you need everyone in this church?

**Complement:** You are only one part of the body!

**Purpose:** The listeners will express their need for someone else at GBC in a tangible way.

# Introduction

### [We can easily be deceived into thinking we don’t need others.]

Cally

#### Hong Kong actress Cally Kwong stunned the entertainment industry by declaring only 18 months after marrying actor Sam Hui that they were filing for divorce.

##### “Women should have their own careers,” she told *The Straits* Times (26 Jan 98], “Never rely on another person,” she noted. Not even if that person is next-of-kin, she added. “People migrate, fall ill, or they simply die. Life is so unpredictable. You can only love and live with yourself.”

##### Ironically, the singer was best known for her hit, *Easily Hurt Woman.* Well, what do you think of that? Kind of sad, isn’t it?

##### Yet she goes on to talk about how she keeps herself busy by flying to LA and Las Vegas to do shows with her friends. She may not need a husband, but I guess she needs colleagues!

Colleagues

#### Those of us who live in Singapore ought to understand better than most people how much we *all* need each other. Due to its small size, Singapore realizes how much it needs other countries (for water, food, natural resources, etc.).

Singapore

#### While there is a greater emphasis on being self-sufficient (in water, in defense, in IT, etc.), let’s never think that we are self-sufficient as a nation, as a church, or as individuals.

Water pipes

### So whom do you need? Perhaps you’re convinced that you need *someone*, but Scripture goes beyond this: It says that you need everyone! That’s the point of your message notes. But why? And more specifically…

Whom do you need?

Everyone!

### *Subject*: Why do you need others in *this* church?

This church

### Here’s where the latter part of 1 Corinthians 12 can help us. Beginning at verse 12 Paul discusses the church under the image of a human body to point out its diversity amidst its unity.

• 1 Cor 12

### He notes in verses 12-13 the first reason you need others in this church…

# I. It takes all the different gifts for the church to exist (12-13).

MP

# [If we don’t have gifted members, then we don’t even have the church itself!]

## A human body has different parts (12a).

12 man

### How many of you brought only part of your body to church today? I suspect no one, unless you left your dentures at home! But even these are not really part of the body!

### The point is that our bodies come as a unit and act as a unit.

### Some of you already saw this when you ate lunch today. You saw how your body was probably the most amazing example of teamwork in the world. Every part needs each other. The stomach was hungry, the eyes saw the food, the feet walked over to the table, the hands grasped the spoon and scooped your food into the mouth where it went back to the stomach. Now that’s what I call teamwork!

eating

(Believers also function this way in the church. If they didn’t, then the church wouldn’t even exist. Notice how Paul says at the end of verse 12 that…)

## Believers are different but still part of one body (12b-13).

12:13

### The church is a body—not a building.

#### In ancient Athens, the citizens were very appreciative of their privilege to be a vital part of the city-state––and they recognize their responsibility as well. When a herald would call a meeting of the citizens, each would close his shop, drop what he was doing, and walk out of the city, past the Acropolis and to the next hill for a meeting. This group became known as the *ecclesia*, or “called out ones.”

• ecclesia

• arrow

• agora

Athens

#### Some citizens, of course, loved the *privileges* of being part of the city-state but felt no *responsibility* for it. They left their shots open and refused to join so the latter called them *idiotes*, or ones who did their own thing for selfish purposes. We derive our English word “idiot” from this group of lazy people characterized by self concern and social irresponsibility (CHURCH definition of—“called out ones” by Stuart Briscoe, Singapore missionary retreat, 1992).

• idiotes

#### For the first three centuries of Christianity, the body of believers was always called the *ecclesia*. Only in the time of Constantine in the fourth century did term *kurioikos*, "house of the Lord" come about, from which through the Latin we arrived at our English word “church” (CHURCH body, not a building by W.A. Criswell at DTS chapel). They saw themselves only has the *ecclesia*, or “called out ones” – called out from the world to be God’s own people!

• kurioikos

### This body in verse 13 that every Christian is a part is the entire church throughout the world, often called the universal church.

12:13

#### When you trusted Christ, you were initiated or baptized into this universal church. The Spirit is the one who did this for us all.

jumpers

All baptized

#### So if anyone asks you if you have the “baptism of the Spirit,” what do you say? So many aberrations of this exist today—even “swimming in the Spirit”!

swimmers

##### I say, “There is no such thing as the baptism *of* the Spirit. Scripture never uses this phrase. But if you mean am I baptized *by* the Spirit, the answer is YES—every Christian has been baptized by the Spirit into the body of Christ.”

Of Spirit

##### Different translations render this verse "baptized with, in, or by the Spirit" while in the Gospels and Acts it's always "baptized with the Spirit.” Either way, all are baptized! There are NOT two types of Christians.

Two types

• with, in, by

##### The basic idea is simply this: Believers are different but still part of one body.

One type

(Perhaps it’s even more accurate to say it this way…)

## If there were no members, there would be no church!

5 people

### Just as the human body wouldn’t exist if it didn’t have its various parts, so the church can exist only if it has members.

### So why do you need others in this church? Because if you didn’t have others, then you wouldn’t even have a church in the first place!

MPI

(Verses 14-20 give us another reason we need others—particularly those with the serving gifts…)

# II. It takes serving gifts for the church to function (14-20).

MP

# [Without behind-the-scenes people, we couldn’t function at all.]

## The church has many people with different gifts (14).

14 title

### I noted these gifts in the past two messages in two categories: speaking and serving.

+ chart

### The speaking gifts are teaching, exhortation, evangelism, and pastor-teacher.

### The serving gifts are administration, faith, giving, serving, and showing mercy.

(Paul now underscores especially this second category—serving gifts. Because people with these ministries serve behind-the-scenes, they can often feel inadequate compared to the “up-front” gifts. So Paul says in verse 15-16…)

## Believers with less honored gifts shouldn’t feel unneeded (15-16).

15-16

### Get the idea here? Feet and ears don’t get the attention that hands and eyes get and could feel resentful and inferior…

#### Most of us don’t get too excited about feet.

feet

##### Have you ever met a woman who wanted to be a model? Perhaps, but have you met one who’s life ambition is to be a *shoe* model?

##### If a foot could talk, perhaps it would say in a more depressing time something like, “Some appreciation I get! You cover me all day with a shoe so I can hardly breathe and then put the whole weight of the body on me all day! Then you wonder why I have a stinky attitude!!” Feet can often feel unimportant.

• Shoe model

#### Most of us don’t get too excited about ears either.

ears

##### You ladies have had someone compliment your eyes—but not your ears.

##### I don’t ever recall even saying to my wife, “Susan, what wonderful ears you have. I have always enjoyed how the lobe extends at just the right height—oooh, and hey, baby––what curves!”

##### Yet which of us doubts the importance of the ear? Without it you wouldn’t have even hear me say this!

### Our church body also has “feet” and “ears” in order to function.

Feet & ears

#### Most of the footwork in terms of practical tasks here is done by the “feet”—those gifted in helps, noted in verse 28. Praise God for you!

#### Our “ears” may indicate those gifted in the service ministry of prayer—they hear what God is saying and trust Him for these directions.

#### We couldn’t even function without these “feet folks”—people like those who count the offering—and the “ear folks”—those who listen to the Lord and pray in behind-the-scenes ways, before our service, etc.

(We need all these people because…)

## Diversity in the church makes it more effective (17-20).

17-20

### I once asked a friend how church was the day before. “Oh, great!” he said, “The pastor told us that we all need more faith!” I asked him a few weeks later, and he said that the pastor was still speaking on faith. Even a few months later—the same response. All the pastor ever spoke on was people needing more faith. That’s an “eye church.”

Faith

### More common is the church that wants to be a “tongue” church. Everyone must speak in a tongue! Think of what that body looks like—not like a body—more like a bunch of tongues hanging out.

Tongues

(So are you needed in the body? Of course! Verses 12-13 says that it takes all the different gifts for the church to exist—and this is underscored in verse 19. Then we saw in verses 14-20 that it takes the serving gifts for the church to function. Now notice a third reason you need others in the church in verses 21-26…)

MPII

MPI

# III. It takes humble use of all the gifts for the church to care (21-26).

MP

# [We show concern for one another by meekly using our gifts.]

## “Up-front” believers, don’t pridefully say, “I don’t need you with less honored roles” (21).

21

### The eye is typically more noticeable than the hand, right? But that doesn’t mean it’s more important and has cause for pride.

### This is a caution to us more visible folks (eyes) not to express disdain for those who do the practical work (hands). We need you folks!

(In fact, verses 22-24a say that…)

## “Up-front” believers should shun pride because we especially honor “behind-the-scenes” believers (22-24a).

### Weaker gifts are indispensable (22).

22

#### Some of the weakest parts of our human bodies are our nerves. These very sensitive parts are necessary to help us feel pain. Why is pain so important? Because it tells us when something is wrong.

#### I think those with mercy are a part of our church body that is weaker in strength. But how indispensable they are! These folks help us *feel* what most of us would otherwise miss—the nerves among us.

### Less honorable gifts are honored (23a).

23a

#### We honor parts of our body that are indispensable but not often talked about—we honor the stomach with food, we honor the muscles and heart with exercise.

#### Likewise, we honor those behind-the-scenes people like our custodian Teck Wai and Adeline with salaries in appreciation for their using their gifts of service and administration.

### Gifts never to be seen are guarded with modesty (23b).

23b

#### When I think of the parts of our bodies that we never show, our reproductive organs come to mind. But are they important? Absolutely!

#### And are not our reproducers in the church body not equally important? Those gifted in evangelism are vital to the growth of the church, but they may not want the attention for each person brought to Christ—so let’s treat them with the modesty they desire.

#### Givers also come to mind as needing modesty.

##### I’ve been in churches where they publish in the bulletin how much each person gave last week.

##### I once made a commitment to give to a organization and soon noticed everyone’s pledge published for hundreds to see! I was so glad I turned my card in late and missed the printer’s deadline so my name didn’t appear!

### Yet the “up-front” believers need less acknowledgment (24a).

24a

#### At first this statement of Paul’s confused me. I thought, “Actually, it seems that many presentable parts need a lot of special treatment—think of how much special treatment women give to their faces! Some more than others, of course, like my father-in-law said, ‘If the barn needs painting, paint it!’” He’s an old farmer boy.

#### But now I realize what Paul is saying here is that typically we don’t need to make a special deal over the up-front folks. Preachers like me generally get enough strokes, in contrast to one person who I heard say at a previous church that she never got a single compliment for serving in the church for 15 years!

(In contrast to our neglect…)

## God gives greater honor to “behind-the-scenes” believers (24b).

24b

### This shows God’s priority on those whom we can often forget to honor.

### And why does He honor these gifts?

## God honors serving gifts so we’ll care for them too (25-26).

25-26

### God wants us to show unity and mutual care (25).

### He wants us to share in others’ suffering (26a).

#### The last time my throat needed to go the doctor, the rest of my body went too!

#### As a healthy church, we also will walk with those who are hurting.

proverb

(An old Swedish proverb says, “Sorrows shared are halved, joys shared are doubled.”)

### He wants us to share in others’ honor too (26b).

#### When you are rewarded at a commencement exercise for your brilliant mind, the whole body gets to go forward to get the award.

#### Don’t you rejoice with those who found work after a time of unemployment? Those promoted?

(You and I need others in this manner. There are lots of reasons we need others. We’ve seen three so far, but the last is in this final section. We need others because…)

# III. It takes all of our gifts for the church to be diversified (27-31).

MP

# [A variety of gifts in the church makes us a healthy, balanced body.]

## The church is composed of diversified members (27).

27

## The hierarchy of members shows that all don’t have the same gifts (28-30).

28-30

### The expected answer to these questions in verse 29-30 is “no.” All do not and should not have any of these gifts—despite the fact that many today teach that all believers should prophesy or speak in tongues or do miracles.

### Does this hierarchy of gifts in verse 28 contradict what Paul said earlier about all gifts being important? No, it just means that we should, as verse 31 says…

## Emphasize the gifts that edify the most members (31).

31

### Why would Paul tell us to desire greater gifts when he has just told us in verse 18 that *God decides* which gifts we get?

• desire

### “Desire” here is second person plural: “you all,” not second person singular: “each of you.” So this is not a command to individuals to seek certain gifts, but a command to the church to desire to emphasize the greater gifts of apostleship, prophecy, and teaching.

• Edify!

• greater

# Conclusion

### So here are four reasons that we need others Paul addresses in 1 Corinthians 12:

4 reasons

#### It takes all the different gifts for the church to exist (12-13).

• exist

#### It takes serving gifts for the church to function (14-20).

• function

#### It takes humble use of all the gifts for the church to care (21-26).

• care

#### It takes all of our gifts for the church to be diversified (27-31).

• diversified

### So why do you need everyone in this church? You are only one part of the body! (MI).

MI

### Ask Yourself: How can I better show my need for others at this church?

CIC

#### Have you *given* or *received* more encouragement here?

#### Is there someone here that you think you *don’t* need? Ask God to show you what He wants to show you through that person.

#### Do you know your spiritual gift? Take the Spiritual Gifts Inventory.

SGI

### “Lord, we need you and we need each other. Help us to recognize both. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”

Black

# Preliminary Questions

**Verses Questions**

# Context What did the author record just prior to this passage?

### Paul has given us some of the basics regarding spiritual gifts, including a sampling of some of the gifts (12:1-11).

# Purpose Why is this passage in the Bible?

### Our tendency is to want gifts for personal fulfillment rather than to benefit the whole church body.

### Paul anticipates this problem so he warns the church not to see their gifts as too insignificant, nor indispensable.

# Background What historical context helps us understand this passage?

### The Corinthian church was not lacking in any of the spiritual gifts (1:7).

# Questions

### Why does he say, “So it is with Christ” rather than “So it is with the Church of Christ”?

### Is Paul referring to the local church or universal church in this text?

### Does every local church have all the gifts that God designs it to have?

### What sense does the “for” carry (13)? Explanatory? Causal?

### What is this Spirit baptism (13)?

### What gift is meant by “the foot” (15)?

### What gift is meant by “the hand” (15)?

### What gift is meant by “the eye” (16)?

### What gift is meant by “the ear” (16-17)?

### What gift is meant by “the head” (21)?

### What different subject does the new paragraph indicate at verse 21?

### What gifts are weaker and less honorable (22-23)?

### What are these presentable and unpresentable parts of the church (23b-24a)?

### Is an individual Christian the body of Christ (27)? Is the “you” here in verse 27 singular or plural?

### Does the hierarchy of gifts contradict what Paul said earlier about all gifts being necessary (28)?

### What is the expected answer to these questions in verse 29-30?

### Why would Paul tell us to desire greater gifts when he has just told us in verse 22 that the weaker ones are indispensable (31)?

# Tentative Subject/Complement Statements

Text

# Possible Illustrations

### Since God gave believers different gifts like He gave animals certain strengths, we shouldn’t all do every ministry.

### When you are rewarded at a commencement exercise for your brilliant mind, the whole body gets to go forward to get the award (I rejoiced when Georgina got her job at CalTex.)

### The armed forces can more easily achieve uniformity than unity.

### TH can publicly apologize to Joey to illustrate how when one part of the body suffers, the whole body suffers (26a).

### Due to its small size, Singapore realizes how much it needs other countries (for water, food, natural resources, etc.).

### Yet there is a greater emphasis on being self-sufficient (in water, in defense, in IT, etc.).

### Hongkong actress Cally Kwong recently gave this advice after her heart-breaking divorce: “Never rely on another person.”

### Ric Poolman did most of the worship service ministries on 24 January.

### People view self-sufficiency as a strength, but is it really?

### We tend to like people who are like us: “Birds of a feather flock together.” But even these birds need those of other feathers!

**Whom Do You Need?**

***1 Corinthians 12:12-31***

**Exegetical Outline**

# Exegetical Idea: The reason “behind-the-scenes” and “up-front” believers need each other is because both are needed for a healthy functioning church.

# I. The analogy of diversity within unity in the human body illustrates how different gifts constitute the universal church (12-13).

## A single human body as many varied parts (12a).

## The universal church is also varied but still baptised by one Spirit into one body (12b-13).

# II. The reason “behind-the-scenes” believers shouldn’t feel unneeded is because without them the church couldn’t function as a diversified body (14-20).

## The church has many people with different gifts (14).

## Believers with less honored gifts shouldn’t feel unneeded (15-16).

## Diversity in the church makes it more effective (17-20).

# III. The reason “up-front” believers shouldn’t feel proud is because they need “behind-the-scenes” believers for a caring church (21-26).

## Believers in more honored positions shouldn’t pridefully say they don’t need those with less honored roles (21).

## The reason “up-front” believers should shun pride is because we especially honor “behind-the-scenes” believers (22-24a).

### Weaker gifts are indispensable (22).

### Less honorable gifts are honored (23a).

### Gifts never to be seen are guarded with modesty (23b).

### Yet the “up-front” believers need less acknowledgment (24a).

## The result of God giving different gifts and greater honor to “behind-the-scenes” believers is a caring church (24b-26).

### God has given different gifts and greater honor to “behind-the-scenes” believers (24b).

### God’s diversity of gifting and greater honor to serving gifts results in unity and mutual care in both suffering and honor (25-26).

#### God’s diversity of gifting and greater honor to serving gifts results in unity and mutual care (25).

#### Suffering is shared (26a).

#### Honor is shared (26b).

# IV. The reason all believers need each other is because none of them individually can make a diversified church (27-31).

## The church is composed of different members (27).

## The hierarchy of members shows that they all are not supposed to have the same gifts (28-30).

## Yet the gifts which edify the most members should be more emphasized (31).

**Homiletical Outline** (Cyclical inductive form)

# Introduction

### We can easily be deceived into thinking we don’t need others.

### Whom do you need? You need everyone!

### *Subject*: Why do you need others in this church?

# I. It takes all the different gifts for the church to exist (12-13).

## A human body has different parts (12a).

## Believers are different but still part of one body (12b-13).

# II. It takes serving gifts for the church to function (14-20).

## The church has many people with different gifts (14).

## Believers with less honored gifts shouldn’t feel unneeded (15-16).

## Diversity in the church makes it more effective (17-20).

# III. It takes humble use of all the gifts for the church to care (21-26).

## “Up-front” believers, don’t pridefully say, “I don’t need you with less honored roles” (21).

## “Up-front” believers should shun pride because we especially honor “behind-the-scenes” believers (22-24a).

### Weaker gifts are indispensable (22).

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## The result of God giving different gifts and greater honor to “behind-the-scenes” believers is a caring church (24b-26).

### God gives greater honor to “behind-the-scenes” believers (24b).

### God honors serving gifts so we’ll care for them too (25-26).

#### God wants us to show unity and mutual care (25).

#### He wants us to share in others’ suffering (26a).

#### He wants us to share in others’ honor (26b).

# III. It takes all of our gifts for the church to be diversified (27-31).

## The church is composed of different members (27).

## The hierarchy of members shows all are not supposed to have the same gifts (28-30).

## Emphasize the gifts that edify the most members (31).

# Conclusion

### Why do you need everyone in this church? You are only one part of the body! (MI).

### Ask Yourself: How can I better show my need for others here at GBC?

# Introduction

### We can easily be deceived into thinking we don’t need others.

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# II. It takes serving gifts for the church to function (14-20).

# III. It takes humble use of all the gifts for the church to care (21-26).

# IV. It takes all of our gifts for the church to be diversified (27-31).

# Conclusion

### Why do you need everyone at CIC? You are only one part of the body! (Main Idea).

### Ask Yourself: How can I better show my need for others here at CIC?

# Introduction

### We can easily be deceived into thinking we don’t need others.

### Whom do you need? You need \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_!

### *Subject*: Why do you need others in this church?

# I. It takes all the different gifts for the church to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (12-13).

# II. It takes serving gifts for the church to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (14-20).

# III. It takes humble use of all the gifts for the church to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (21-26).

## “Up-front” believers, don’t pridefully say, “I don’t need you with less honored roles” (21).

## “Up-front” believers should shun pride because we especially honor “behind-the-scenes” believers (22-24a).

### Weaker gifts are indispensable (22).

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### Gifts never to be seen are guarded with modesty (23b).

### Yet the “up-front” believers need less acknowledgment (24a).

## The result of God giving different gifts and greater honor to “behind-the-scenes” believers is a caring church (24b-26).

# IV. It takes all of our gifts for the church to be \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (27-31).

## The church is composed of different members (27).

## The hierarchy of members shows all are not supposed to have the same gifts (28-30).

## Emphasize the gifts that edify the most members (31).

# Conclusion

### Why do you need \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in this church? You’re only one part of the body! (Main Idea).

### Ask Yourself: How can I better show my need for others here at Crossroads?

**Rick Griffith**

7 April 2013

*Message 19 of 24 in “Becoming Who We Are” 1 Corinthians Series*

**Whom Do You Need?**

**1 Corinthians 12:12-31**

# Introduction

### We can easily be deceived into thinking we don’t need others.

### Whom do you need? You need \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_!

### *Subject*: Why do you need others in this church?

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# II. It takes serving gifts for the church to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (14-20).

## The church has many people with different gifts (14).

## Believers with less honored gifts shouldn’t feel unneeded (15-16).

## Diversity in the church makes it more effective (17-20).

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# Conclusion

### Why do you need \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in this church? You’re only one part of the body! (Main Idea)

### Ask Yourself: How can I better show my need for others here at Crossroads?

**Thought Questions**

1. Read 1 Corinthians 12:12-31 aloud. The most misunderstood verses here are verses 13, 24 and 31. What questions do you have about these verses?

12:13 All believers have Spirit baptism, so the post-conversion experience with two types of Christians is contrary to tongues being only for some people.

1. Is there such a thing as a “self-made man”? Why or why not?

The only self-made man is one the who changed his own diapers, taught himself how to walk and talk and read, etc.

1. What part in this church body do you play? Eye? Hand? Mouth? Etc.

I guess I am a mouth since I am teaching all the time.

1. How can you better show that you need *others* in our church body?

I need to affirm, affirm, affirm––even more than I am doing.