

CHRIST HAS NO OTHER BODY

31 MAY, 2026

SUMMARY

This message explores the profound theological truth that the Church is not merely an organization or gathering of believers, but the actual body of Christ. The message distinguishes between Jesus (the person who walked on earth) and Christ (the risen, glorified Lord who reigns), emphasizing that believers are united to the resurrected Christ in such a way that His life, mission, and presence continue through them. Rather than viewing church participation as individuals contributing their gifts to an organization, this teaching presents a transformative understanding: wherever believers are - at home, work, school, or anywhere - the body of Christ is present. The message challenges the modern tendency to view faith as private and personal, instead presenting the biblical vision of believers so deeply united to Christ that His concerns become their concerns, His mission becomes their mission, and His presence becomes visible through His people. This is not about talented people doing church work while others watch; it is about every baptized believer being the living presence of Christ in every moment and location of their daily lives.

KEY POINTS

- The Church is the body of Christ, not merely followers, supporters, or admirers of Christ
- There is a significant distinction between "Jesus" (the person who walked on earth) and "Christ" (the risen, anointed one who reigns)
- The body exists to express the life of the head; Christ's desires become our desires, His mission becomes our mission
- To wound believers is to wound Christ; to encounter them is to encounter Him
- Modern Christianity often reduces faith to something private and personal, but the New Testament presents it as corporate and communal
- Being the body of Christ is not about bringing individual gifts to make the whole work. It is about being His presence wherever you are
- Every member matters; when one part ceases functioning, the whole body feels the loss
- Modern people think of church as something they attend; the New Testament presents church as something they are
- Wherever a believer is present, the body of Christ is present, whether changing diapers, teaching, working, or caring for others
- Gifts are not given for personal fulfillment but for mission, service, and continuing Christ's work

- Culture is caught, not taught; transformation comes through carrying the presence and culture of Christ

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES:

- 1 Corinthians 12:27 - *"Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it"*
- Acts 11:27-30 - The prophecy of Agabus about famine and the Gentile believers sending relief to Jewish believers
- Acts 9 (implied) - Paul's conversion on the Damascus road where Christ asks, *"Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?"*

STORIES:

- The story from Acts 11 of Agabus prophesying a famine during the reign of Emperor Claudius (41-54 AD), and how Gentile Christians in Antioch sent relief to Jewish believers in Judea, demonstrating the universal nature of the Church
- Paul's conversion on the road to Damascus, where Christ identifies so completely with His people that persecuting them is persecuting Him
- The example of a married couple in a United States church who were very busy in their careers and could only attend services and participate in a small group, yet spoke of everything the church did as "we do this" and "we do that," understanding their identity as the body of Christ
- The example of Louise, an almost homebound woman who sensed God calling her to pray, comparing herself to St. Thérèse of Lisieux, patron saint of missions, who never left her convent
- Reference to saints like Mary MacKillop, Don Bosco, and Francis of Assisi, who weren't born with their eventual impact but responded to what God placed before them, one step at a time
- The vision for the IMPACTERS ministry to purchase a \$7 million facility, with the first \$50,000 contribution coming from a faraway place that had been blessed by the ministry's outreach

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SMALL GROUP GUIDE

This guide is designed to help your small group dive deeper into the message.

OPENING PRAYER

Invite the Holy Spirit to guide your discussion and open hearts to God's transforming work. Pray the IMPACTERS Community Prayer .

ICEBREAKER

Share a time when you felt truly part of something larger than yourself - a team, a project, or a community. What made that experience meaningful?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Opening Questions

1. What stood out to you most from this message? What challenged you?
2. Before this message, how would you have described what it means to be "the body of Christ"? Has that understanding changed?

Going Deeper

3. On Jesus vs. Christ:

- Why is the distinction between "Jesus" (the person) and "Christ" (the risen, reigning Lord) significant?
- How does understanding that we are the body of "Christ" (not just followers of "Jesus") change our perspective on church and mission?

4. On Identity:

- The message states: "The body exists to express the life of the head." What does this mean practically in your daily life?
- Reflect on this statement: "Modern people often think of the church as something they attend, while the New Testament presents the church as something they are." Which perspective do you typically operate from?

5. On Presence:

- How does it change your perspective to know that when you change a diaper, go to work, teach a class, or care for someone, the body of Christ is present there?
- Share an example of a "mundane" activity in your life. How might viewing it as "Christ present through you" transform how you approach it?

6. On Participation:

- The message addressed the concern: "I don't know what I can do or where I fit." How does understanding that we ARE the body (not just DO things for the body) address this concern?

- Discuss this quote: "It doesn't matter whoever is doing it, we are doing it. Whoever is doing it, I am doing it." How does this challenge individualistic thinking?

7. **On Saul's Conversion:**

- When Jesus asked Saul, "Why do you persecute ME?" (not "my followers"), what was He revealing about His relationship with the church?
- How does Christ's identification with His people impact how we treat one another?

PERSONAL REFLECTION

This Week:

Choose ONE action step to take this week:

- The message mentioned that gifts are given "for the body," not primarily for personal fulfillment. What has God entrusted to you for the sake of the body?
- Are there areas where you've been viewing yourself as "outside the body" because you're not doing visible ministry activities? How might God be calling you to recognize Christ's presence in your current season?
- Louise, who is homebound, felt called to pray as her contribution. What is God specifically calling you to contribute in this season of your life?

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

1. **Daily Awareness Practice:** Each day this week, pause three times to remind yourself: "I am the body of Christ. Christ is present here through me." Notice how this changes your awareness in different settings (home, work, errands, etc.).
2. **Reframe Your Activities:** Choose one "ordinary" activity you do regularly (cooking, commuting, working, caring for others). Before doing it, pray: "Lord, make Your presence known through me in this moment."
3. **Body Language:** Practice using "we" language when talking about what others in the community are doing. Instead of "They're doing great work," say "We're doing this together as the body."
4. **Prayer Assignment:** Spend time asking God: "What have You entrusted to me for the sake of the body?" Journal what comes to mind.
5. **Examine Your Thinking:** Notice when you slip into "spectator" mode— watching others do ministry rather than recognizing your participation as a member of the body. Pray for transformation in your thinking.

GOING FORWARD:

- **For those feeling "I have nothing to offer":** Remember that your presence, prayers, and daily faithfulness ARE the body of Christ in action. You are not excluded from the mission.

- **For those who are busy with "ordinary" life:** Recognize that caring for family, working faithfully, and living with integrity in your daily sphere IS the body of Christ being present in the world.
- **For those active in ministry:** Remember you're not doing this alone—you are part of a body, and others participate in what you do simply by being united to Christ.

CLOSING PRAYER

Pray together:

- Thanking God for incorporating us into the body of Christ through baptism
- Asking for grace to truly understand and live this reality
- Inviting the Holy Spirit to make Christ's presence visible through each person in the group
- Praying for the specific commitments group members have made