

Members of the Body

Elders leading the Smoky Hill church

Members of the body

- Our current situation
- On individuals and societies
- Concerning the body of Christ
- The Smoky Hill church with elders

Our current situation

- We are now “in the process”
- Good time to think and study briefly about a *working church*

Members of the body

- Our current situation
- On individuals and societies
- Concerning the body of Christ
- The Smoky Hill church with elders

On individuals and societies

- In human societies, there is a natural tension between individual rights and group welfare
 - No human society can thrive without individual greatness
 - No human society can survive long without provision for the rest of us
 - A healthy human society balances individual liberty with a concern that needs of most of its members will be met
 - A society that gives most of the benefits to the great and most of the burdens to everyone else cannot long endure

On individuals and societies

- Spiritual societies should have less of this tension
 - God's kingdom needs people with ability
 - But it needs only one **great** person, and He has already come
 - Some of the men we are considering to be elders may be great men
 - If you think of men qualified to be elders, you don't have to think of greatness
 - In a spiritual society, the community is more important than the individual

Members of the body

- Our current situation
- On individuals and societies
- Concerning the body of Christ
- The Smoky Hill church with elders

Concerning the body of Christ

- The term “body of Christ”
 - One of many designations of God’s people
 - But not just another term that means the same as “church”
 - A group of Christians, as a community, doing the work of Jesus
 - We are members of the body of Christ because, and only when, we are ***doing the work of Jesus***

Concerning the body of Christ

- Individual achievement is indispensable
 - Salvation is individual
 - We cannot be saved merely by attaching ourselves to a working body of Christ
 - A body of Christ does not exist apart from the work of its individual members
- But in the kingdom of God, most of the emphasis is not on individual greatness but on communion in work

Texts (that you already know)

- ***The work of Christ is the work of His body, and that work is our work***
- And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all. **Ephesians 1:22-23**

Texts (that you already know)

- ***We can be confident that God will do His part***
- And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ ... **Ephesians 4:11-13**

Texts (that you already know)

- ***Functioning parts, with different functions***
- For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit. For the body does not consist of one member but of many. If the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body. And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would be the sense of hearing? If the whole body were an ear, where would be the sense of smell? But as it is, God arranged the members of the body, each one of them, as he chose. If all were a single member, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, but one body. **1Corinthians 12:12-20**

Texts (that you already know)

- ***Different abilities and perspectives, each important***
- For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness. **Romans 12:3-8**

Texts (that you already know)

- *Work, in one body, with those who are different, because we all stand in the same grace, and we all work by the same power*
- Who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another? It is before his own master that he stands or falls. And he will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make him stand. ...
Why do you pass judgment on your brother? Or you, why do you despise your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God ... Therefore let us not pass judgment on one another any longer, but rather decide never to put a stumbling block or hindrance in the way of a brother. **Romans 14:4, 10, 13**

Texts (that you already know)

- *Different metaphor, same people—we must not divide the body*
- Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you? If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him. For God's temple is holy, and you are that temple. **1Corinthians 3:16-17**

Members of the body

- Our current situation
- On individuals and societies
- Concerning the Body of Christ
- The Smoky Hill church with elders

The Smoky Hill church, with elders

- When elders are appointed, what will change?
 - Our responsibilities as members?
 - The men who are appointed?
 - The elders' responsibilities ...
 - Direction
 - Focus
 - Harmony
 - ... so that the body goes together in the right direction

The Smoky Hill church, with elders

- The rest of us will still be members of the body
 - Individually, we will stand before Christ to be judged
 - Individually, we will give account for how we have worked in harmony with other members of the body
 - Individually, we will give account for how much love and regard we showed for those other members of the body who were different from us
 - Let us take this church in the way of Jesus, follow His path, do His work