

# How to Know, Do, and Love In Jesus' Name: Part One

1 Corinthians 12:14-20

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Do you remember during May I asked you to pray about how our church can minister to people in our community? I know some of you have been praying about it. I've been praying about it. Almost as soon as I asked you to pray Jesus put something in my spirit. I'll get to that in a minute.

One of the most difficult challenges in life as a pastor is to get people to work together. Being the pastor of a church is like being a coach. It's similar to getting a group of athletes to work together. Some players, regardless of the sport, think they're the best and everyone should bow to their desires. Then there are players who just love playing the game, but aren't good teammates. There are also players that aren't very athletic, but only want to be with the other players.

It's the job of the coach to get everyone working as a team. The coach has to get every player focused on giving their best, doing their job, and being willing to put the team first.

***1 Corinthians 12:14–20 (NLT) Yes, the body has many different parts, not just one part. If the foot says, "I am not a part of the body because I am not a hand," that does not make it any less a part of the body. And if the ear says, "I am not part of the body because I am not an eye," would that make it any less a part of the body? If the whole body were an eye, how would you hear? Or if your whole body were an ear, how would you smell anything? But our bodies have many parts, and God has put each part just where he wants it. How strange a body would be if it had only one part! Yes, there are many parts, but only one body.***

**We have been uniquely created and empowered by Jesus.** No one person is more or less important than anyone else. We rank people according to their accomplishments. Tom Brady is the Greatest of All Time. That's what some people say. We have valedictorians, salutatorians, and everybody else. There are winners and losers. One winner and everybody else is a loser. We're not supposed to say loser.

Jesus made all of us as unique individuals. He gave everyone of us different traits. Some of us are taller than others. Some of us like math. Some of us run fast. Some of us have red hair. Some of us have deep voices. That means that there are short people, those who don't like math, who run slow, have blond hair, and high voices. Then there are the people who love singing, or painting a picture, or doing a dance. We like our individuality. Right now in history we're focused on our unique attributes.

Have you considered that you were born for something bigger than yourself? You were born to be saved by Jesus and to be a part of His body. That sounds weird, to be part of His body. Body sounds too personal, invasive, and unattractive. Jesus talked about His disciples. He talked about vines and branches. He talked about sheep and a flock. But a body is just something too relatable, too personal, too close to the heart.

Jesus created you exactly like you are. He made you male or female. He gave you personality traits and characteristics. He provided you with skills and abilities. He filled you with desires and cravings. He placed you in a specific family and with specific people.

You became the exact, right, perfect person once you were saved. What you corrupted with sin, He is cleaning off, fixing up, and transforming. You can't and don't need to change yourself. You need to be willing. You need to say yes, Jesus, yes.

Whatever we do, we do it with the power of Jesus. Whatever we are, is by the power of Jesus. Jesus made this very simple, uncomplicated. He said love God with all your soul, spirit, heart, mind, and strength. Love your neighbor as yourself. In all of your uniqueness love God and love others. According to your individual abilities love God and love others. As brothers and sisters of Jesus stand firm together, support one another, and work alongside each other.

**1 Corinthians 12:18 (NIV) *But our bodies have many parts, and God has put each part just where he wants it.***

**Can you see yourself as the precise part of the body of Jesus?** We may not understand that we are a part of the body. So often our faith in Jesus is about us. It's about being saved and what Jesus can do for us now. We like avoiding hell. We like being separated from the bad sinners.

It feels good to have a place to go where everybody knows your name, and thinks like you. It feels good to be able to say that we have a lot in common. It feels good to leave feeling good. But, we don't really want to be part of a team. We don't want to be part of a body. We don't want others telling us what to do. That's independence American style. Every American is guilty, we have the Christian form it. We don't want it to change. Honestly, even as preachers we have a fondness for our flock and don't want it to change too much.

All of that is a problem. Because it's not living for Jesus. It's not what Jesus taught. It's not what Jesus did.

We have minimized our part in the body of Christ. We've enlarged our part in daily life. We like Sunday to be for Church. We want Jesus to be with us during the week. We don't think we need the body of Christ during the week. That takes too much time. We would have to give up something else from our weekly and daily lives. We would have to rearrange our schedule. We would have to change our routine.

We are being squeezed by our world, our culture, our society. Everything is pulling us away from Jesus and His body. We're being told that we don't need Jesus and we don't need His church. This is happening in ways that are both blatant and subversive. Ideas have been planted in our minds. They have taken root in our hearts. They are lived out in our bodies.

The answer is not to change the system. The answer is to trust Jesus. Jesus will change the culture, not me or you, or any other person. Jesus will change the culture by working through His church, His body. While we are being squeezed by all the forces outside of our control, trust Jesus. While you live in the pressure cooker, trust Jesus. While you're feeling the stress, trust Jesus. He is bigger than our culture and our troubles. He has all the power and authority we need to stand firm when we trust Him. All the pressure that pushes against us cannot overcome Jesus. He has already defeated sin and evil. Therefore, stand firm in His victory.

**Mark 10:45–46 (NIV84) *“For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”***

**What would happen if we all understand that our mission is to serve others?** Jesus came to serve and not be served. He understood His mission. He was not going to be satisfied with being immensely popular, selling out every venue to standing room only. He was not satisfied that the demons on earth and the angels all listened to what He said.

His mission was to serve others. When He healed a man whose legs didn't work, He told the man to go home. When He forgave a woman who was publicly disgraced for her sin, He told her to go and do not sin. When a group of fishermen came home in the morning with empty nets, He sent them out to where the fish were swimming and their nets were filled. When there was a crowd on a hillside He multiplied the food, everyone ate, and there were leftovers. Jesus washed His disciples feet and told them to go and serve others. When He was nailed to that cross He took all the sins of the world and died as our sin. He said He came to serve and not to be served.

After He rose from the dead, ascended to heaven, His disciples went to the Temple. A man whose legs didn't work was begging. The disciples said they didn't have any money, but that the man should stand up and walk in Jesus' name. The man got up and walked. The disciples brought together what they had and shared it with those who had a need. They discovered their mission was to serve.

In Corinth there were Christians who could speak in tongues (a spiritual language), Christians who could interpret what was spoken, and those who could quickly discern spirits that were good from those who were evil.

There were Christians who had great spiritual knowledge and others who had great spiritual wisdom. It's possible that they wanted others to know they were spiritually mature. It's possible that others were a little envious of these great signs and wonders. What all this means is they forgot their mission: serving others. They knew they were each unique, but they weren't focusing on working together, doing what Jesus wanted.

It is so easy to get sidetracked. I'm guilty of chasing after rabbits, not serving others. It's all the reasons already mentioned.

But, when the body of Jesus is working together Jesus is glorified. That is each believer, trusting Jesus, to have made them unique. As each of us trusts that Jesus has made us unique for the purpose of serving others, then ministry happens.

Our uniqueness in the body of Jesus is intentional. We respect that uniqueness, and even celebrate that we are all different. We may all believe that Jesus has placed us together to serve others. But, we need to know who to serve. We need to know how to serve them.

The people who need to be served may not know us. They may not understand their need to be served. They may not even want to be served. That is not a dead end, but a beginning. It is our starting point. Serving others is what Jesus wants for us.

***Luke 22:27 (NLT) Jesus said, "Who is more important, the one who sits at the table or the one who serves? The one who sits at the table, of course. But not here! For I am among you as one who serves."***

**Take your uniqueness in Jesus' body and work with all His power.** I have this ministry idea. As I was praying for ways that we can ministry to the people in our community, this ministry idea wouldn't go away.

Conner Roahrig is the boys soccer coach at Coshocton High School. He is also the JV boys basketball and the JV boys baseball coach. Randy Roahrig is the chaplain for the boys soccer team.

There is an opportunity here that I believe has been given to us by Jesus. This opportunity existed a few years back with the boys football team when Jim Woodrum was coach. I couldn't see then how to bring our church into a ministry with the football team. I confess I missed it. I may not have been listening. I may not have seen what God put in front of me. I may have been caught up in being with the players as the chaplain.

Regardless, I believe Jesus may be opening a door for First Baptist Church to serve high school boys. Teenage boys need lots of direction. Everybody knows that. Everyone needs Jesus in their life. Some teenage boys don't know Jesus. So, I've asked the coach if his church could help. He said yes and welcomed the ministry opportunity.

Where could you help if I cooked a meal for the boys soccer team? You get a chance to ponder this idea. No answers are expected immediately.

Our Fellowship Hall is the perfect size for the soccer team and their coaches. Before they play their first game of the season, we could host them for a meal. I'll do the cooking. But what are you willing to do?

We've been talking about serving others, this ministry is that opportunity. I can imagine that the chaplain will share a message with the team. He will have a prayer for the meal and for the team. I can imagine that there are a few opportunities for the rest of us to serve the team. I can imagine some other things that the coach may need from his church family. We need to ask, what are we willing to do to help?

There are high school students who need lots of opportunities to follow Jesus. If they give us permission we can pray for them. Oh, we could pray for them anyway, right? I pray for people all the time and I don't ask permission.

For every player on that team to have someone pray over them is life changing. It is life changing for the prayer warriors. Anybody here think they might be able to add a few new people to their prayer list?

It is life changing for the players and the coaches. Jesus is listening and watching. I don't know how He can see and hear every person. As we claim His promise to ask and seek, He will answer. I don't know how the lives of young men will be changed. I don't even know these young men yet. But, a moment is coming for me, for us to encounter some people who need Jesus. We can be there to serve them.

Jesus wants to save young men, high school students. Jesus died for them to be in heaven with Him. He has carried their sins to the grave. He has left those sins in hell. Jesus rose from the dead so that each person, high school soccer players, could be forgiven of their sins.

Where is Jesus in your life? Have you given Him your life? Are you willing to help someone else give their life to Jesus?