

STUDY 23

LIFE IN THE FAMILY OF CHRIST

A Heterogeneous Fellowship

IV. THE PROCESS - C. The Body of Christ - 1. What It Is: How It Functions Best

As a Christian you've learned how to live in a framework of priorities, not pressures. You've learned about your privilege of being alone with the Creator of the universe and talking with Him daily. As a Christian, the Creator who became your Savior, also gives you a special identity.

One of the exciting parts in becoming a Christian is that you now belong to God's family—a large family which includes all those who believe in Jesus Christ. "Brothers" and "sisters" in God's family are there to encourage you, help you, teach you, listen to you, share with you, love you and build you in your relationship with Jesus Christ.

The Bible refers to this family of Christians as the "body of Christ," the "Church," "the household of God." The next few studies are designed to give you a better understanding of the body of Christ—its purposes and functions, the importance of encouraging attitudes of love and commitment to other believers, and the need to develop godly habits of praying for other Christians, meeting regularly with them, and actively serving them.

As you learn more about the body of Christ, ask God to work that knowledge into your life in very specific ways. Share what you learn with brothers and sisters in God's family so they can be encouraged by it. It will help you remember what you're learning too!

1. Today as you come to God and His Word, ask Him to give you a better understanding of His family and your part in it.

2. Study 1 Corinthians 12:12-27 and make the following observations:

What is the body of Christ?
function best?

How does it

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3. Verse 26 describes sympathetic love among believers. Who are two Christians whose joy or sorrow you need to share this week?

a.

b.

4. Think about times when you will be with these people in the next few days, or times you could be with them. Ask God to help you to feel their joy or sorrow with them and to help you minister to them in very special ways during this time. List below any specific things you know right now that you want to have God help you do. Maybe you can phone them, write a note, or just be with them before the day is over.

5. What "functions" of the body of Christ seem most difficult for you to take part in?

6. Talk with Jesus. Ask Him to give you the desire and ability to "function" even in these hard areas.
