



You're Welcome
1 Corinthians 12:12-26
December 16, 2018

One of the best gifts you can give others is the kind of acceptance that makes them feel like they belong and are welcome. Scripture uses the metaphor of a human body to teach us that even though we are different we all belong.

We belong because we were all baptized, by the one Spirit, received that same Spirit, and so form one body (vv. 12-14). Paul knew of diversity in ethnicity (Jew, Gentile), status (slaves, free), and spiritual gifts (v. 13, 27-31). There is much diversity among us as well, similar to the diversity among human body parts. Still, we are joined together as one body through our baptism, and each of us belongs. You're welcome here.

Sometimes, though, our differentness may make us feel inferior. So we need to remember that God says we all belong (vv. 15-16). It just wouldn't work if we were all the same (vv. 17-20). I want you to know that you belong regardless of your ...

Everyone is invited and welcome to walk with us at NorthWest, regardless of those differences. It's great to know that God accepts and welcomes us. We must be careful, however, not to use the message of "you're welcome" to justify sin. God makes clear that some attitudes and actions are not acceptable to Him. He will forgive us, but He does call on us to change our ways. And we believe He is as right about this as He is when He says "you're welcome." Don't cry "foul" when God says you need to change your ways.

While differentness may make some people feel inferior, it makes others feel superior. They may think they don't even need other parts of the body (v. 21). Don't dare have this arrogant attitude! Whatever we are or have, we received it from God, so we have nothing to boast about (1 Corinthians 4:7).

What's more, just as we treat the parts of our body that seem weaker with special care (vv. 22-24a), so God has decreed special honor on parts of the church that we may think are not so important (v. 24b). He did this to curtail division (v. 25). We act on God's decree by caring equally for all parts of the body, regardless of what worth we may be tempted to think they have (vv. 25b-26).

I have to confess that both I and we fall pretty short of God's ideal far too often. Still, we believe His way is right. Today I primarily wanted to state clearly and openly God's truth that are seeking to live up too: You're Welcome.

