

THE BODY OF CHRIST

LESSON TEXT

1 Corinthians 12:12-13, 27;
Colossians 1:18

LESSON OBJECTIVES

- The students will explain why the church is compared to the human body.
- The students will identify and explain the importance of each person's role in the church.
- The students will talk with members of their congregation in order to understand different roles in the church.

MATERIALS NEEDED

For each student:

- pen or pencil
- For the teacher:*
- 1 copy of "Good News from the Kingdom"
 - globe or map of the world
 - dictionary
 - extra Bibles
 - large writing surface
 - marker (or chalk if using blackboard)
 - 1 length of rope or clothesline, 25 yards long
 - stopwatch or watch with a second hand

Reproducible Pages:

- Page A, 1 copy for each student
- Page B, 1 copy for each student

LESSON PLAN

Getting Ready

Faithful Instruction
Teacher Focus
Teacher Tips
Preclass Activity: Scrambled
Starting Up
Welcome and Singing
Opening Prayer
Victories
Good News from the Kingdom

Getting into God's Word

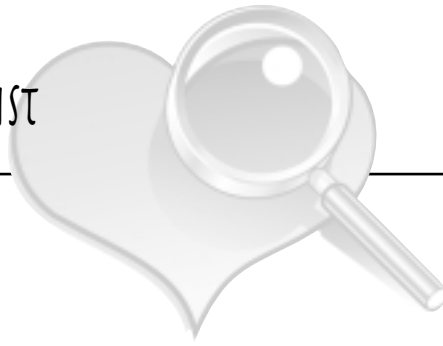
Story: "Cinderella"
Scripture Study
Activity: Amoeba Crawl

Getting It to Others

Scripture Memory: 1 Corinthians 12:18-20
Weekly Challenge and Snack Time
Conclusion

SCRIPTURE MEMORY VERSE

But in fact God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. If they were all one part, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, but one body.
1 Corinthians 12:18-20



FAITHFUL INSTRUCTION

TEACHER FOCUS

Take a few moments and remember a time when you were a part of a winning team. Do you remember the role or roles you played in the team's success? Perhaps your role was small or maybe it was very large. Looking back, which was more important, the role each person played or how well the team worked together? Although one person may have come up with the game plan, all of the individuals had to be unified to accomplish the goal. Preteens often feel insecure about their role in life. The goal of today's lesson is to instill within each student a sense of value and worth.

TEACHER TIPS

Pray about this lesson. Meditate on 1 Corinthians 12:12-13, 27 and Colossians 1:18. These are powerful passages regarding unity within the church. God's kingdom must be unified in order to spread across the world. You have been given a tremendous opportunity to teach these students that every one of them can contribute to the unity of God's church.

The students will need an old t-shirt with a blank back for the next class. Remind them to bring in one on which they don't mind writing.

PRECLASS ACTIVITY

SCRAMBLED

The students will begin to think about the body as a unit and will complete a puzzle of words relating to unity.

MATERIALS USED

For each student:

- pen or pencil

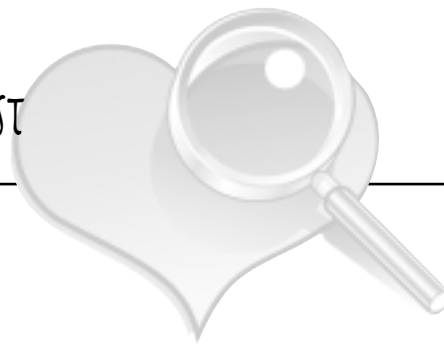
Reproducible Pages:

- Page A, 1 copy for each student

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Give each student a copy of Reproducible Page A (Scrambled) and a pen or pencil as they arrive.
2. Have them work at the puzzle individually.
3. Some of the words are difficult. Be prepared to give hints if needed, but do not do so too quickly.
4. Have the students work for five to ten minutes or until most of the class has arrived.
5. When everyone has arrived and has had time to complete the sheet, bring the group together and ask the students what words they found. See answer key below.

- | | | |
|---------------|-------------|---------------|
| 1. Unity | 5. Harmony | 9. With |
| 2. Oneness | 6. Team | 10. Accord |
| 3. Fellowship | 7. Together | 11. Wholeness |
| 4. Join | 8. Unison | |



STARTING UP

WELCOME AND SINGING

Call the students together in a circle. Welcome everyone by name, being sure to recognize anyone who is visiting. Let them know how glad you are to see them and how much you looked forward to being with them. Sing a few great songs.

OPENING PRAYER

Who would like to say a prayer to start today's time together? Let a few students lead the prayer. Encourage the students to mention missing students, special church activities, illnesses and to be especially thankful for the chance to be together.

VICTORIES

Take the time to have the students share about the challenges they were given at the end of last week's class. *Did everyone complete their challenge? How did it go? What fears did you face as you met the challenge to put the lesson into practice? How did everyone do with having consistent quiet times? Would anyone like to share something they learned this week?*

Praise and encourage all the students' efforts, especially noting any area of significant growth. Offer help and suggestions so they can have even more victories in the coming week.

GOOD NEWS FROM THE KINGDOM

MATERIALS USED

For the teacher:

- 1 copy of "Good News from the Kingdom"
- globe or map of the world

INSTRUCTIONS

Now let's take a few minutes to share "Good News from the Kingdom." Be excited as you read about what is happening around the world. Have a globe or map ready, pointing out the location as you share. Remind your students that the kingdom of God is worldwide and that the victories of our brothers and sisters in other countries can inspire us and spur us on.





STORY

"CINDERELLA"

The students will not really act out the story of "Cinderella." They will simply learn that all roles need to be filled, or the play cannot be done. (But don't let them know that the play will not actually be acted out.)

Instead of having a story today, we are going to act out a story that all of you have known from the time you were little kids—"Cinderella."

First, we need to get the roles assigned. Who wants to play the role of Cinderella? (Hopefully many girls will raise their hands. Look around at everyone who wants to play the role. Think a minute.) Oh, many of you want to play the role of Cinderella. Okay. All of you who raised your hands can play Cinderella. (If students say something like, "Hey, how can we all play Cinderella?" just say, "I just want people to be able to play the exact role they want to play.")

Now, who of the boys wants to play Prince Charming? (Again, hopefully many or most of the boys will raise their hands. Look around again.) Hum...many of you boys want to play the role of Prince Charming, huh? Well, okay, all of you who raised your hands can play the role.

Continue to assign the following roles in this same fashion until you run out of students to play the roles: (Hopefully that will happen quickly.)

- fairy godmother
- step-sister #1
- step-sister #2
- step-mother
- king
- queen
- 4 footmen
- king's attendant who brings the glass shoe to the house
- (make up more roles if needed)

When you run out of students to play the roles, say, "Wow! We don't have people to play these roles. With so many of you playing Cinderella and Prince Charming, we don't have enough people to play the other roles. We can't do the play without people to play the roles. Sorry."

Then ask them what they learned from this. Make sure they come up with the following insights:

- You cannot have a play unless you have people to play the different roles.
- The lead roles are not the only roles in the play.
- Everyone needs to be willing to play whatever role they are assigned.
- All roles are important.

SCRIPTURE STUDY

MATERIALS USED

For the teacher:

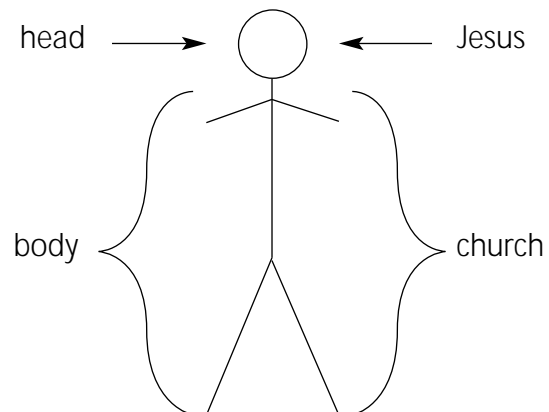
- dictionary
- extra Bibles
- large writing surface
- marker (or chalk if using blackboard)

Have the students turn in their Bibles to Colossians 1:17-18. Select a student to read the passage aloud to the class.

- *In these verses, who is "he"?* (Jesus)
- *Of what is he the head?* (the body / the church)
- *Why do you think the church is described as a body?* (Take responses, then read the definition of "body" from the dictionary aloud. The definitions to focus on are: [1] a number of persons, concepts or things considered as a whole, a group; and [2] the center or main part of something).

Explain that just as a human body is made up of many parts that are grouped together as a whole, so the church is many members grouped together to create the body of Christ.

At this point, use the large writing surface to draw a stick figure that will help your students understand this concept. (See diagram below.)





- *What role does a head play on a human body?* (It houses the brain, which directs and guides the rest of the body. Nothing else in the body can function without it. In fact, everything else dies.)
- *Why does it make sense that Jesus would be the head of his body, the church?* (Jesus guides and directs the church, and he leads us toward God. He enables us to function in the way God wants us to. He is the reason we are spiritually alive.)

Select another volunteer to read 1 Corinthians 12:12-13 aloud.

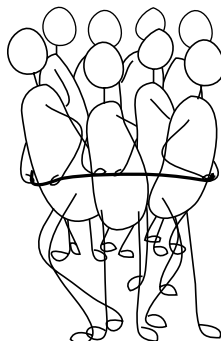
- *How can the body be "one" and yet be made up of many parts?* (All the parts come together to make up one whole.)
- *The word "one" is used four times in these two verses. Why do you think Paul chose to repeat this word?* (It is important that the body come together, i.e. unite as one under Jesus' leadership. Our tendency as human beings is to think of ourselves apart from others, to do what we want to do. Jesus wants us to join our hearts and lives with others as we live for him.)
- *What would happen if a human body had two heads?* (It wouldn't know which way to go. / It would be confused. / It couldn't get anything done.)
- *What would happen if the church decided to follow someone other than Jesus (another head)?* (confusion / wouldn't know which way to go / not united in faith or actions)

Read aloud 1 Corinthians 12:27 to the class. Emphasize that, as members of the church, we are also members of, or parts of, Christ's body. Therefore, we have an obligation to help the body stay united as it grows.

ACTIVITY

AMOEBIA CRAWL

The students will complete an obstacle course while being tied together as a unit. The point is that they must work together to get the job done. No one person can go across the finish line alone.



MATERIALS USED

For the teacher:

- 1 length of rope or clothesline, 25 yards long
- stopwatch or watch with a second hand

PREPARATION

Arrive early to the classroom in order to prepare an obstacle course to challenge your students. NOTE: The course must be large enough to accommodate a group of approximately ten to travel together as a unit. Consider safety when setting up the course. If a larger space such as a gym is possible, the activity will be even easier to do.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Divide the class into groups of eight to ten students each.
2. One group at a time, have the members huddle together. Tie a rope around the waists of each entire team, being careful not to tie too tightly. (Some students will need to hold on to the rope.)
3. Explain that the challenge is for each team to move through the obstacle course while tied together. (Remind them that team members cannot untie themselves or endanger any other team members.)
4. Tell them that everyone must help to navigate the course and cross the finish line. (Show the teams the route through the obstacle course.) The teams are to figure out the best way to cross the finish line in the least amount of time.
5. Tell them that you will time each group. The one with the best time wins.
6. Let them work through the logistics for a few minutes. The teams should eventually determine that in order to be efficient in the obstacle course, they must follow a specific leader as he guides.
7. Once the teams have figured this out, have them race to determine which team can complete the course the fastest.
8. Ask the students the following questions:
 - *What happened when everyone was going his own way?*
 - *Why was it important to have a leader, one who directed everyone else?*
 - *If everyone had done his own thing, would you have ever finished the course?*
 - *What did this activity teach you about how the body must function together?*



SCRIPTURE MEMORY

But in fact God has arranged the parts of the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. If they were all one part, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, but one body.

1 Corinthians 12:18–20

MATERIALS USED

Reproducible Pages:

- Page B, 1 copy for each student

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Give each student a copy of Reproducible Page B (Memory Verse).
2. Divide the class into groups of four students each.
3. Give the groups five to eight minutes to create rap songs that will help them to memorize the verse.
4. Once each group has a song, have them “rap” the verse in front of the class.

WEEKLY CHALLENGE AND SNACK TIME

If your students bring a snack, allow them to eat as you explain the challenge for the week.

In order to help your students understand the body of Christ and each of its parts more clearly, the challenge this week is for each student to talk with as many disciples as possible about their particular role in the church. Since people play many different roles, the students should talk to as many disciples as possible. As they have their discussions, have them list each of the roles of the church members and give a short description of the roles. Have a contest to see who can come up with the longest list of roles.

CONCLUSION

End the class with prayer. Let your students know that they will need to bring an old t-shirt from home to use in next week’s activity (Core Class). Preferably, the shirt should have not writing on the back and the student should be willing to have other students write on the shirt.

WEEKLY CHALLENGE

This week, talk to as many disciples as possible, either in fellowship or over the phone. Ask each disciple about his role in the church and the responsibilities of that role. Keep a list of the responses.

THE BODY OF CHRIST

LESSON TEXT

1 Corinthians 12:12-27; Romans 12:4-8; Ephesians 4:11-16

LESSON OBJECTIVES

- The students will explain that God has assigned different roles in the church.
- The students will understand that each role in the church is equally important in God's eyes.
- The students will talk with members of their congregation in order to understand different roles in the church.

MATERIALS NEEDED

For each student:

- old t-shirt with no writing on the back
- 1 large paper grocery bag

For the teacher:

- several extra old t-shirts
- fabric markers, 1 for every 1-2 students
- extra Bibles
- 1 deck of playing cards for every 4-5 students
- 1 blindfold for every 4-5 students

Reproducible Pages:

- Page C, 1 copy for every 4-5 students

LESSON PLAN

Getting Ready

Faithful Instruction
 Teacher Focus
 Teacher Tips
 Preclass Activity: Talented T-Shirts
 Starting Up
 Welcome and Singing
 Opening Prayer and Review
 Great News Sharing

Getting into God's Word

Scripture Study
 Activity: Body Building

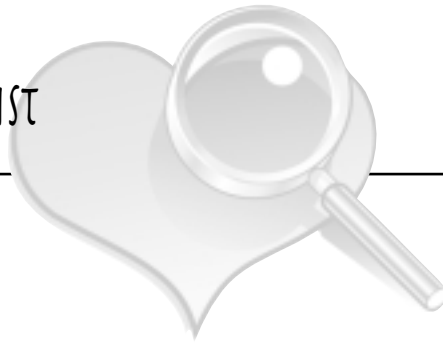
Getting It to Others

Scripture Memory: 1 Corinthians 12:18-20
 Weekly Challenge and Snack Time
 Conclusion

SCRIPTURE MEMORY VERSE

But in fact God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. If they were all one part, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, but one body.

1 Corinthians 12:18-20



FAITHFUL INSTRUCTION

TEACHER FOCUS

Pray about this lesson. Meditate on 1 Corinthians 12:12-27, Romans 12:4-8 and Ephesians 4:11-16. These are powerful passages regarding unity within the church. You have been given a tremendous opportunity to teach your students that every one of them can contribute to the unity of God's church.

TEACHER TIPS

Take a few moments and remember a time when you were a part of a winning team. Do you remember the role or roles you played in the team's success? Perhaps your role was small, or maybe it was very large. Looking back, the role each person played was not as important as how well you and your teammates worked together. Although one person may have come up with the game plan, all of the individuals had to be unified to accomplish the goal. Preteens often feel insecure about their role in life. The goal of today's lesson is to instill within each student a sense of value and worth on God's team.

PRECLASS ACTIVITY

TALENTED T-SHIRTS

The students will create t-shirt designs that emphasize the talents they have to offer to God.

MATERIALS USED

For each student:

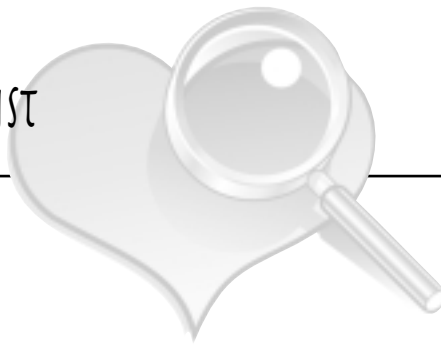
- old t-shirt with no writing on the back
- 1 large paper grocery bag

For the teacher:

- several extra old t-shirts
- fabric markers, 1 for every 1-2 students

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Have each student put on their t-shirt over their clothes with the paper grocery bag underneath it. (This is to keep the pen from bleeding through to their clothes.) Tell the students to be careful to write only on a part of the t-shirt that has the paper bag underneath it.
2. Give the students the fabric markers.
3. Have the students think of a great quality or talent that each of their classmates brings to the church. Have them write that word or phrase on the back of each person's t-shirt, along with the "writer's" initials.
4. Have every person write on everyone else's shirt. It is okay to write the same thing several times if desired.
5. Make sure that your presence is felt as the students are writing. They should not write anything inappropriate.
6. After everyone has written on everyone else's shirt, have the students remove their shirts and watch as they are encouraged when they see how much they bring to the church.
7. See next page for sample t-shirt.



STARTING UP

WELCOME AND SINGING

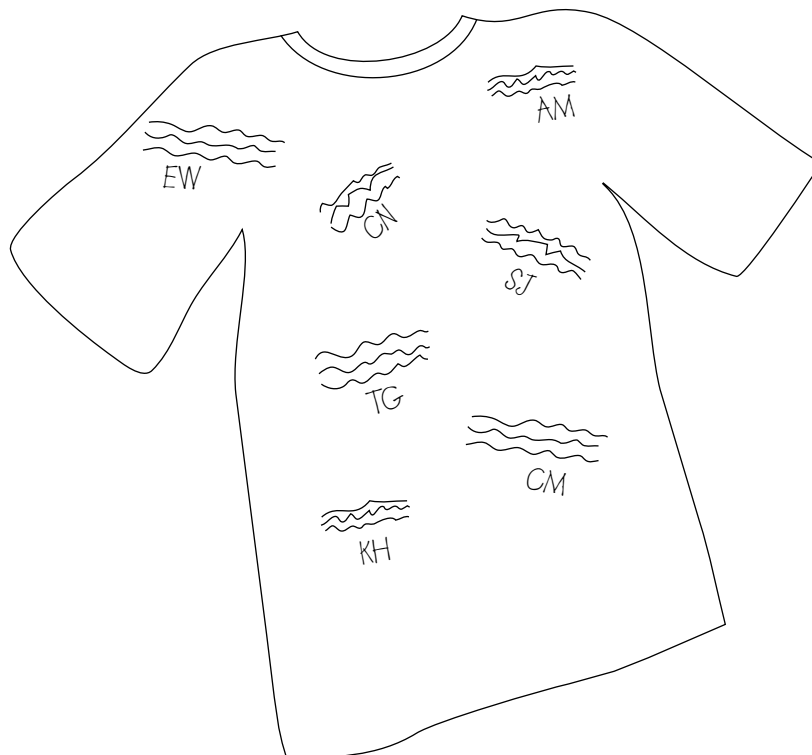
Call the students together in a circle. Welcome everyone by name, being sure to recognize anyone who is visiting. Let them know how glad you are to see them and how much you looked forward to being with them. Sing a few great songs.

OPENING PRAYER AND REVIEW

- Open with one of the students praying for each preteen to pray about and find their special role in the church and for the church as a whole to be unified under Christ.
- Have one student recite the memory verse for this lesson: 1 Corinthians 12:18-20.
- Have a student briefly review the previous lesson (Core Lesson).

GREAT NEWS SHARING

Allow several minutes for the students to share great news about their lives. This could be about a family member who became a disciple, someone healed from an illness, someone studying the Bible, great grades, etc. Remind the students to be brief so that as many as possible can share.



TALENTED T-SHIRT



SCRIPTURE STUDY

MATERIALS USED

For the teacher:

- extra Bibles

In your last class, you talked about the church being the body of Christ. The church is compared to a body because it has many parts that come together to form one unit. In today's lesson, we are going to find out just how important each of those parts is individually and how the parts contribute to the body as a whole.



Have the students open their Bibles to 1 Corinthians 12:12-27. Select several volunteers to read, breaking down the passage as follows:

Verses 12-13:

- *This passage re-emphasizes what you have already learned. We are all part of the body of Christ, because we have the same God, the same Spirit, the same baptism and the same Lord, Jesus Christ.*

Verses 14-20:

- *Can you imagine the parts of a body having a discussion like this? What does this passage say about the importance of each part of the body? (Every part is equally important. / No one part is worth more than the others.)*
- *Who has given each person the role they have in the church? (God)*
- *Since this is so, how should each of us feel about the role we have been given by God? (encouraged / blessed / content)*
- *What did you learn in your last class about the importance of all the roles? (In the story "Cinderella" you have to have all the parts or you cannot act out the story.)*

This passage says "God has arranged the parts in the body...just as he wanted them to be." It should make us feel encouraged and special to know that God has a special plan for our lives, and he takes great care to give us the roles that are right for us.

Verses 21-26:

- *Are there any parts of the church that have no value or little value to God? (no)*
- *What happens when we start to believe that we are not important to God or the church? (start to pull away from the body / divisions happen / unity falls apart / feel discouraged ourselves and discourage others)*
- *God says in this passage that we need to have "equal concern for each other." Why is this important? (When everyone feels cared about and needed, the body stays close and unified.)*
- *How do we practice "equal concern for each other"? (praying for one another / encouraging one another / challenging one another / not just caring about those who are our best friends)*

Being unified helps us to be what we need for each other. We can share our victories and our defeats, and, because we are one body, we can encourage each other to meet challenges and keep growing. In this way, God's church keeps growing and advancing.

Read verse 27 aloud to your students, with great emphasis.

- *Even though you are not yet baptized, you play a very important role in the kingdom. You are the next generation of leaders, teachers, HOPE workers, singers, etc. It is important to be praying now about the special talents you bring to the kingdom and looking for ways to encourage and unify the body with them.*

Select another volunteer to read Romans 12:4-8.

- *What does this passage mean by "we belong to each other"? (We are members of the same body. / We care for and watch out for each other just as family members do. / If something belongs to you, you try to take good care of it.)*
- *This passage also re-emphasizes that we all have different gifts. What are some of the gifts mentioned? (prophesying—sharing the Word / serving / teaching / encouraging / meeting needs / leading / showing mercy)*

The basic message of this passage is that God expects us to use our gifts (whatever they are) to the best of our ability to love each other, make disciples and bring him glory.

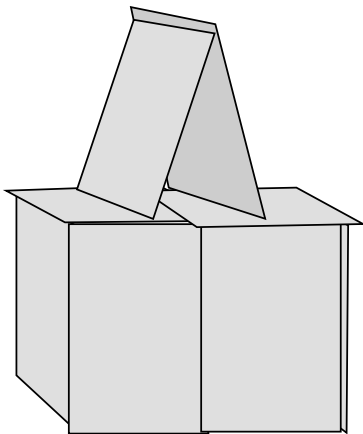


ACTIVITY

Finally, select one more volunteer to read Ephesians 4:11-13.

- *What is the purpose for the roles mentioned in this passage?* (to prepare God's people for works of service / to build up the body / to reach unity in the faith / to become mature)
- *We may never be evangelists or teachers in the church, but what can we know is always the purpose of any role we are given?* (to serve others / to build up the body / to help people to know Jesus and to become more like him / to help people to mature spiritually)

These are the goals we want to help each other attain. The members of Christ's body can only reach maturity by being united and helping one another grow closer to God on a daily basis.



BODY BUILDING

The students will build houses of cards with a focus on understanding the concept of roles in the church.

MATERIALS USED

For the teacher:

- 1 deck of playing cards for every 4-5 students
- 1 blindfold for every 4-5 students

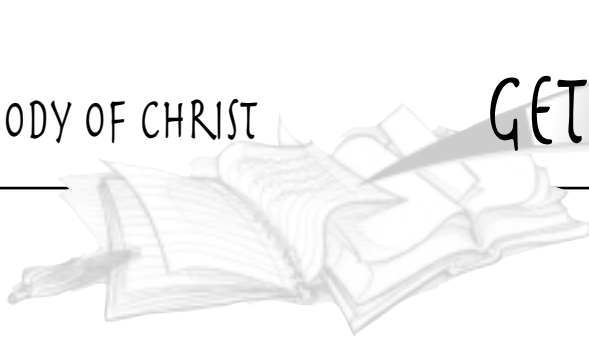
Reproducible Pages:

- Page C, 1 copy for every 4-5 students

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Divide the class into groups of four to five students. Give each group a deck of playing cards and a copy of Reproducible Page C (Building Codes).
2. Tell the groups to shuffle the cards and deal out the whole deck to the team members. Then, using Reproducible Page C (Building Codes), have them assign roles to the different team members based on the cards they are holding.
3. Once the roles are determined, the "Right Hand" in the group will take back all the cards. Each group will then attempt to build a house of cards using only the determined actions for each member's roles.
4. Give the teams eight to ten minutes to work on their structures, then call the class back together for a discussion.
 - *Which role is most important in house building?*
 - *Which role listed in Ephesians 4:11 is the most important?* (Reread the list the class.)
 - *Which role is the least important?*
 - *How important is it that all the members are involved in the church?*

Remember that every part is valuable and special. God has chosen each of us to play a special role in his kingdom. New Christians play the role of encouraging the older Christians. All roles are not "assigned" except by the basic commands we are given in Scripture to encourage, pray for and meet needs. Everyone should realize that God is using them to affect someone else in the body.



SCRIPTURE MEMORY

But in fact God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. If they were all one part, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, but one body.
1 Corinthians 12:18-20

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Have the students get back into their groups from the last activity.
2. Have the groups work together practicing the verse until they can say it perfectly.
3. After they have practiced, have the "mouth" say it with help and prompting from the other "body members."

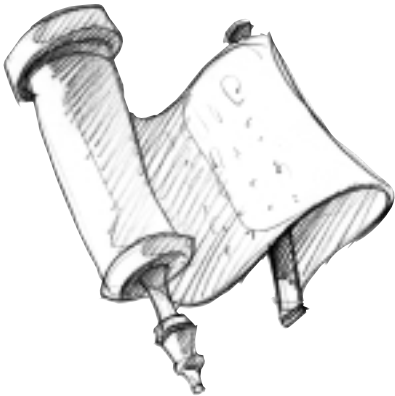
WEEKLY CHALLENGE AND SNACK TIME

If your students bring a snack, allow them to eat as you remind them about the challenge for the week.

The students were to talk with as many disciples as possible about their particular roles in the church. Since everyone plays some role, the students should be talking to as many as possible. As they have their discussions, have them be making a list of each of the roles of church members, giving a brief description of the roles. Remind them that the roles might not always be "assigned" roles. That is, someone might have the role of "encourager" simply because he or she is an encouraging person.

CONCLUSION

End the class with prayer.



WEEKLY CHALLENGE

This week, talk to as many disciples as possible, either in fellowship or over the phone. Ask each disciple about his role in the church and the responsibilities of that role. Keep a list of the responses.

SCRAMBLED

Find eleven words in the eleven scrambled words listed below. Spell them correctly in the blanks to the right of each word. Each of the words has something to do with unity. Some of them are really hard. Just do your best.

1. TNUIY _____
2. SESNENO _____
3. OWFLHISPL _____
4. NOIJ _____
5. MNOARYH _____
6. EMTA _____
7. GOETTREH _____
8. UONNIS _____
9. HIWT _____
10. DORCAC _____
11. HWOLESEN _____

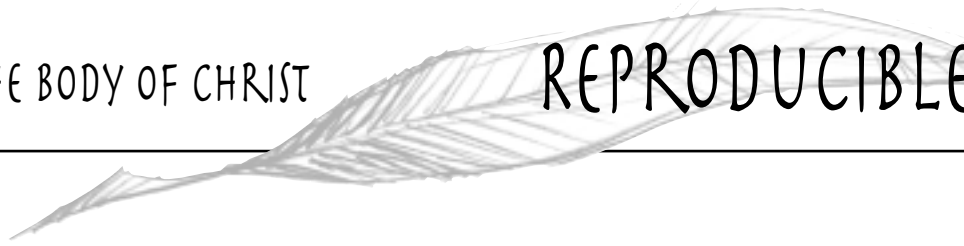
SCRIPTURE MEMORY VERSE

But in fact God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. If they were all one part, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, but one body.

1 CORINTHIANS 12:18-20

WEEKLY CHALLENGE

This week, talk to as many disciples as possible, either in fellowship or over the phone. Ask each disciple about his role in the church and the responsibilities of that role. Keep a list of the responses.



BUILDING CODES

CARDS IN HAND	ROLE	ACTION
If you have the most Aces...	You are the Mouth.	You are blindfolded. You can only repeat instructions supplied by the Eyes.
If you have the most Kings...	You are the Right Hand.	You must use your right hand alone. You can only listen to the Mouth's instructions. You may not speak.
If you have the most Queens...	You are the Left Hand.	You must use your left hand alone. You can only listen to the Mouth's instructions. You may not speak.
All others...	You are the Eyes.	You can only whisper to the Mouth as to what to tell the Hands.

