

1 Corinthians 12:12-21, 26-27

Epiphany 3; January 27 & 28, 2019

Did you know that there are many things that we can learn from minions? You know who minions are? Right? They are those little yellow animated followers that originated in the animated film – *Despicable Me*. There is a lot that we can learn about teamwork from those little yellow guys. Let's watch a short clip. (Show clip)

Love them or hate them, you can't deny that the Minions definitely work together as a team. Former professional basketball player Michael Jordan has said, *"Talent wins games, but teamwork and intelligence wins championships."* Regardless of the circumstances, the Minions work as one unit, communicating with one another in a language that linguists are still struggling to decode.

The creators of the minions were not the first people who spoke about the value of working together as a team. If you look through the pages of Scripture, God has a lot to say about teamwork. One of those places in the Bible that God speaks about the value of teamwork is found in the words of our text this morning. Paul begins: **"Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ."**

Christians are different and unique people. That seems obvious. Yet, it is true. We have different personalities. We have different skills and weaknesses. Some are good at planning and others are not. Some people are good at standing up in front of people and others would be terrified. We are wired different. We think differently. We react to things differently. We come from different backgrounds. We might consider ourselves as blue collar while others may consider themselves to be white collar. Some of us have been a believer of Christ for our entire life. Some may be very new to the Christian faith. It isn't any different in the church. We are different. Just because we are different, it often doesn't mean that one is good or bad.

But it does mean that Satan will often try to use differences to divide that Christian Church. That was going on in the congregation at Corinth. If you read through the chapters of Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, you will see that happening. There were factions that had begun to happen in the church. Some were following the Apostle Paul and others were following a man named Apollos. There were people in the Corinthians church who coveted what another person had. There were people who were jealous and envious. There were people who were proud and there were people who were not. There were people who were blessed with financial gifts and others who were not. There were people who were arrogant and others who were not. There were people who felt like they were being looked down upon. There were those who were doing the looking down. There were those who felt they were under appreciated. There were those who were filled with apathy. The list could go on and on. They were not any different than any other group of people who gather together. Paul says that it isn't any different in the church. The body of Christ is made up of many different parts. Satan likes to use those differences to divide and not to build up. So, what happens? We drive each other crazy sometimes. I'm not any different than any other person here. I can be self-centered. I can be jealous. I can put my needs above the needs of others. Sometimes, I can be that little minion who stood off on the side laughing at other people. I think if you peeked into your heart, you would see the same thing.

God saw that playing out in this congregation in Corinth. He saw the dangers. He knew what Satan was trying to do. He knew how hard it is for people to think of themselves as one. Yet, God loved his people more. He wanted them to know that he puts people together in the Christian Church to build one another up, to encourage one another, to work together. He wants his people to be like those little minions who began to stand on each other to solve the problem of a burned out light bulb.

So, he brings people together into one body. **"So that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it."** Paul uses the picture of the human body in our text this morning. Think of what a miracle it is for the human body to work. The average heart will beat 2.4 billion times in a lifetime. It will pace itself. It will alter itself in response to lifestyle changes. When it needs to beat more, it will. Your liver is detoxifying your blood. New cells are being formed while other cells are dying. All of this your body is doing automatically. You don't even think about all the

things your brain is controlling all by itself. Every part of your body is important. Every part is joined together to function together. Paul says that just as the human body is united, so the Church is united in Christ.

How does Christ do that? **“For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.”** Think of the melting pot that the Christian Church is. Think of how remarkable that is. Think of the cultures that the Holy Spirit brings together. For Paul’s readers it was Jews and Gentiles and slaves and free people. The cultures would be different today, but the result is the same. The Holy Spirit brings us to drink Jesus. Whether it is through the waters of baptism or the simple words of the Bible Jesus wants to teach us to trust and to believe in him. One of the ways that he can do that is through Christian education. He wants people to know him for whom he is. He wants us to know that he loves us more than we can ever imagine. He wants you to be his child. He wants your heart. He wants you to know that He is willing to do whatever it takes for that to happen. He wants you to see who you really are – a child of God.

When we see that, we see that we really are not all that different. We all share the same background – sin. We all deserve the same punishment from our God – death. Yet we also share the same solution to the problem of sin – Jesus. He has died the same death for the person that sits next to you as he did for you. He has placed the same faith into your hearts.

The Christian Church was put together with a plan. A plan that began back in the Garden of Eden with a promise; a plan that sent Jesus to this world at exactly the right time; a plan that sent Jesus to the cross; a plan that paid the perfect price for our sin; a plan that was carried out for you and for me. That’s what our God does for us. You see, we might be very different people, but in Jesus, we are so united together. So, together let us be minions working together to bring to this world the light of Jesus. Amen.