

### **Following the King -- Body building (1 Corinthians 12 - 13)**

One of Christ's great commands is that his followers love one another. Therefore, trying to grow as a disciple of Christ outside of a relationship with his Body (the Church) is like trying to develop as a tennis player without a partner to play with. One of the problems that Paul had to address in his first letter to the Corinthian church was that some of its members were becoming so individualistic and proud that they were starting to despise their fellow brothers and sisters in Christ. As a result, other members were starting to feel unwanted and unnecessary within their own church. Therefore Paul said, "...*there should be no division in the body, but 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.* (1 Corinthians 12:25 – 26) Paul went on to explain how God's love is the thread that holds the Church together and enables Christ's body to grow and mature together. With this in mind, read the passages from Paul's letter below and answer the questions that follow. More extensive Bible study notes on this topic and passage can be found at:

[www.bible.org/seriespage/what-thing-called-love-1-cor-131-13](http://www.bible.org/seriespage/what-thing-called-love-1-cor-131-13)

Read 1 Corinthians 12:12 – 14. Although every Christian is an individual, what unites us as the body of Christ?

Read 1 Corinthians 12:15 – 21. Name or describe some negative attitudes that divide Christian communities and make believers feel alienated from their churches?

Read 1 Corinthians 12:22 – 31. How is God's attitude toward his body (the Church) different to our sinful human attitudes toward each other?

Read 1 Corinthians 13:1 – 3. Why is it impossible to grow as the body of Christ without love?

Read 1 Corinthians 13:8 – 13. Why will love outlast gifts like prophecy, tongues and knowledge?

Now go back and read Paul's definition of love in 1 Corinthians 13:4 – 7. Give some specific examples of how these qualities of love should be made evident in your church.