



Harmonychurch.life

Each month we have a special memory verse and Life App. All of our stories revolve around those.

This month's Memory Verse is:

**"God's grace has saved you because of your faith in Christ.
Your salvation doesn't come from anything you do. It is God's gift."
*Ephesians 2:8***

This month's life app is

**Faith
"Believing what Jesus did can change me."**

Weekly, we have a different bottom line that goes with our story.

Week 1: **"The story of Jesus is for everybody."**

Week 2: **"The story of Jesus is bigger than every other story."**

Week 3: **"The story of Jesus changes how I forgive others."**

Week 4: **"The story of Jesus changes how I see my problems."**

This week's bottom line is;

"The story of Jesus changes how we work together."

Our story for this week is 'One Body, One Spirit'. (Ephesians 4:4-6, 16:16)

(There is an activity page (Body Heart) to use to help telling this story; Print page on red if possible.

Cut out the heart, then cut the heart into 4 puzzle pieces. Each body part a different piece.)

**Paul has been our focus this month—a man who started out hating Jesus and persecuting His followers. He would have them thrown in jail, sometimes even killed, but then he became one of those followers. He went from hating Christians, people who love and follow Jesus—to being one of them. He even started spreading the story of Jesus with anyone and everyone he met, no matter the consequences.

This eventually landed Paul in a lot of trouble. Many books of the Bible are letters that Paul wrote while he was in prison for sharing the story of Jesus. The book of Ephesians is one of those books.

Paul found out that the believers in that area weren't getting along like they should. He knew that all of the arguing and fighting wasn't good for anyone, it could actually even distract people from hearing the story of Jesus. So, Paul wrote a letter to the believers in Ephesus, and the message he shared is one we all need to hear!

In the book of Ephesians, our bible tells us what Paul wrote. *(Read Ephesians 4:4-6, 15b-16.)*

'There is one body and one Spirit. You were appointed to one hope when you were chosen.

There is one Lord, one faith and one baptism. There is one God and Father of all.

He is over everything. He is through everything. He is in everything. ...

So, we will grow up in every way to become the body of Christ. Christ is the head of the body.

He makes the whole body grow and build itself up in love.

Under the control of Christ, each part of the body does its work.

It supports the other parts. In that way, the body is joined and held together.'

(NirV)

Let's talk about that last part:

'Under the control of Christ, each part of the body does its work.'

Each part of the body? That's a strange way to talk about the church, isn't it? But Paul is making an analogy—he's comparing the way that a body works to the way that Jesus followers should work together. Each of us has a role to play, and when we know how the story of Jesus is changing the world, we can figure out what our role is in that story.

Let's talk about some of the different parts of the body and what they could represent in the body of the church. First up, hands. *(Show the picture with hands on it.)*

Some of you are the hands. You don't mind getting messy and dirty in the mud. You are willing to help people whenever they ask. For example, when you hold your little sister's hand as she crosses the street, you are being the hands of the body. When you share your snack at school with someone who forgot theirs, you are being the hands of the body. When you dig in and clean up after a party at home or school, you can be like the hands of Jesus. When you are the hands on the Body of Christ, you can help others do things they could never do on their own. They will feel encouraged and loved because of the help you give them.

Others of you are the feet. *(Show the picture of feet it.)* Now, I know what you're thinking: 'Feet?! Gross! I don't want to be stinky, smelly feet!' But we need our feet, don't we? For most of us, our feet get us from one place to another. Some of us are great at using our feet to bring God's love to others. When you walk around the park and pick up trash, you are the feet of the body. When you walk your neighbor's newspaper to their front porch for them, you are being the feet of the body. You're willing to go wherever God leads you to help others and make them feel loved.

But what about the ears? *(Show the picture of the ears.)* You have a personality that is a friend magnet. Not just because you like to have fun, but also because you are a good listener. Some people just need to a listening ear. They feel encouraged when you listen to their story and understand how they feel. Being an ear is super important. If everyone was talking all the time, and no one heard what anyone said, we'd be confused and angry because no one would be trying to understand anyone. Being a good listener is important to the Body of Christ.

Still others of you are like the eyes. *(Show the picture with eyes on it.)* You pay attention to what's happening around you. You see the needs of others. You notice that people are sad or happy. And you don't just see it; you do something about it. We live in a world where people are usually so focused on themselves that they don't ever see what's happening in the lives of others. We need the eyes in the Body of Christ to see what we don't see and remind us to do something about it.

And there are even more parts than this (Lay all four pictures on the table), clearly, we don't have a whole person here, but the important thing is that all of the body parts work together. When we work together, we can show everyone the love of Jesus! (Put pieces together to make a heart.)

There are so many things in this world that we can't do as well if we don't have each other. Let's re-read how Paul explained this to the believers in Ephesus.

(Open your Bible and read Ephesians 4:4-6, 15b-16.)

**'There is one body and one Spirit. You were appointed to one hope when you were chosen.
There is one Lord, one faith and one baptism. There is one God and Father of all.
He is over everything. He is through everything. He is in everything. ...
So, we will grow up in every way to become the body of Christ. Christ is the head of the body.
He makes the whole body grow and build itself up in love.
Under the control of Christ, each part of the body does its work.
It supports the other parts. In that way, the body is joined and held together.'**

(NirV)

Listen to this part again:

**'Christ is the head of the body. He makes the whole body grow and build itself up in love.
Under the control of Christ, each part of the body does its work.'**

In other words, this body—this church, this group of believers that we're all a part of—only works because Jesus is the head. He's in control, and when we don't fight Him for that control, when we let Him be the head, like He is supposed to be, everything grows and works and flows like it's supposed to in the rest of the body.

No matter what body part you are—wherever God has you, whatever He has for you to do—do it and do it well. Support the others around you who are fulfilling the role God gave them to do too. That might mean that you sometimes aren't the one in charge, and maybe sometimes no one even notices you're a part of the body at all! But the important thing is that the body works together to tell the story of Jesus in a way that we can never do alone.

Today's bottom line is:

"The story of Jesus changes how we work together."

Let's ask God to help us work together like the body He created us to be."

Dear God, we recognize that You made Jesus the head of the church—the leader we should follow. We know that we can trust You no matter what, and Your ways are best, so we are sorry for the times when we don't follow Jesus like we should. Thank You for making us a small part of Your big story. Help us to discover what part we will play and to encourage others in their roles in the story of Jesus, too. We ask these things in Jesus' name, amen."