

## This Is Us

### Part 2: All Inclusive

---

**Ice Breaker:** Share a time when you felt like you were “at the back of the line.” Perhaps you felt excluded, or ridiculed, or unfairly criticized, or discriminated against in some way.

What does the average person think of when they hear the word “church”?

How would you define the word “church?”

#### **READ: 1 Corinthians 12:12-27**

“The human body has many parts, but the many parts make up one whole body. So it is with the body of Christ. Some of us are Jews, some are Gentiles, some are slaves, and some are free. But we have all been baptized into one body by one Spirit, and we all share the same Spirit. Yes, the body has many different parts, not just one part. If the foot says, “I am not a part of the body because I am not a hand,” that does not make it any less a part of the body. And if the ear says, “I am not part of the body because I am not an eye,” would that make it any less a part of the body? If the whole body were an eye, how would you hear? Or if your whole body were an ear, how would you smell anything? But our bodies have many parts, and God has put each part just where he wants it. How strange a body would be if it had only one part! Yes, there are many parts, but only one body. The eye can never say to the hand, “I don’t need you.” The head can’t say to the feet, “I don’t need you.” In fact, some parts of the body that seem weakest and least important are actually the most necessary. And the parts we regard as less honorable are those we clothe with the greatest care. So we carefully protect those parts that should not be seen, while the more honorable parts do not require this special care. So God has put the body together such that extra honor and care are given to those parts that have less dignity. This makes for harmony among the members, so that all the members care for each other. If one part suffers, all the parts suffer with it, and if one part is honored, all the parts are glad. All of you together are Christ’s body, and each of you is a part of it.” 1 Corinthians 12:12–27 (NLT)

How is the church “the body of Christ”?

What part of this passage most stands out to you?

What parts of the body does Paul say more consideration should be given to?

How can we give more honor and consideration to those parts of the body?

Pastor Jim talked about “back of the line” people and “front of the line” people. What did he mean by that?

When it comes to your Christian faith where would you place yourself - more toward the back of the line or more toward the front of the line? [They don't have to answer that if they don't want to]

Fill in this sentence: Jesus has a special place in his heart for those [at the back of the line] . Do you agree or disagree? Why?

How does that change or impact your relationship with God? ...with others?

Who did pastor Jim use as a possible example of a “back of the line Christian?”

[A: Joseph of Arimathea]

Why might he be a good example?

[For your reference, here are the passages in the Gospels about Joseph of Arimathea:

Matt 27:57-60, Mark 15:42-43, Luke 23:50-51, John 19:38]

Pastor Jim quoted a verse from the book of Isaiah: “A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out.” Isaiah 42:3 (NIV)

What does this verse mean?

Have you ever felt like a bruised reed or a smoldering wick? [Invite those who are willing to share]

**READ: 1 Corinthians 1:26–31 (NIV)**

“Brothers and sisters, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth. But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. God chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things—and the things that are not—to nullify the things that are, so that no one may boast before him. It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption. Therefore, as it is written: “Let those who boast boast in the Lord.”

What stands out to you in this passage?

**READ this quote from Accidental Pharisees**

*Jesus didn't come to thin the herd. He didn't come to recruit “special ops” Christians. His goal was to expand the kingdom, to bring salvation to people who previously were excluded. He came to seek and find the lost, including a large group of folks no one else wanted to invite to the party. Everything about Jesus' ministry was designed to make salvation and the knowledge of God more accessible. It started with his incarnation. It included his choice of a backwater place like Galilee to call home, and the motley crew he picked to be his apostles. Nothing about Jesus or his followers was elitist. Everything was common, accessible, and well within the reach of the typical man, woman, or child.*

Osborne, Larry. *Accidental Pharisees: Avoiding Pride, Exclusivity, and the Other Dangers of Overzealous Faith* (pp. 74-75). Zondervan. Kindle Edition.

If we as the church are the “body of Christ”, what kind of church should we be?

What does the word “disciple” mean? [A: “Learner”]