



The Prague Christian Fellowship POST

Monthly Newsletter of the Sbor Křesťanské společnosti PCF

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John Mullen, PCF Pastor

Together We Comprise Christ's Body

1 Cor 12:12-13 - *The human body has many parts, but the many parts make up only one 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 Christ's body by one Spirit, and we have all received the same Spirit.*

1 Cor 12:18-31 - *But God made our bodies with many parts, and he has put each part just where he wants it. What a strange thing 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 of the parts that seem weakest and least important are really the most necessary. And the parts we regard as less honorable are those we clothe with the greatest care. So we carefully protect from the eyes of others those parts that should not be seen, while other parts do not require this special care. So God has put the body together in such a way that extra honor and care are given to those parts that have less dignity. This makes for harmony among the mem-

bers, so that all the members care for each other equally. If one part suffers, all the parts suffer with it, and if one part is honored, all the parts are glad.

Now all of you together are Christ's body, and each one of you is a separate and necessary part of it. Here is a list of some of the members that God has placed in the body of Christ: first are apostles, second are prophets, third are teachers, then those who do miracles, those who have the gift of healing, those who can help others, those who can get others to work together, those who speak in unknown languages.

Is everyone an apostle? Of course not. Is everyone a prophet? No. Are all teachers? Does everyone have the power to do miracles? Does everyone have the gift of healing? Of course not. Does God give each of us the ability to speak in unknown languages? Can everyone interpret unknown languages? No! And in any event, you should desire the most helpful gifts.

Three things stand out from this passage in I Corinthians.

1) **We are to be one.** In the midst of our diversity, we have one thing in common—we share the same Lord. At PCF

we have 14 nationalities in the membership alone. Who knows how many if you count attendees who aren't members. Not only do we come from different countries, but also we come from different church backgrounds. It is a taste of heaven on earth.

God loves diversity. Gen 1:31-2:1- *God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning--the sixth day. Thus the heavens and the earth were completed in all their vast array.*

The international church an expression of the end time church (comprised of every tribe and nation). I believe we glorify the creator when we gather together from many nations, cultures, and

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What's Inside?

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Dan Drápal, PCF Leadership Team

Some Pros & Cons of Postmodernism

The church has been here for nearly 2000 years. Many times it was announced that its time was over. As someone who was born a year after the Communist takeover of Czechoslovakia, I witnessed during my lifetime how the Communists hoped to make church obsolete. They hoped it would pass away altogether and during their tenure they did their best to relegate it to a sort of museum or skanzen.

The fall of Communism meant new hopes, but looking back I must say that it did not make evangelism easier – it is

actually much more difficult now (the reasons for which, this article does not have the space to address). The church faces new challenges.

The New Age movement, intrinsically deeply connected with postmodernism, which hit the United States three or four decades ago, hit Czechoslovakia like lightning. Its coming was very powerful – and to a large extent, successful. Many different spiritual movements blossomed on what used to be spiritual desert in Communist times.

Change from modernism to postmodernism was very abrupt here. Communism in all its forms belonged decidedly to modernism. There were some basic tenets on which Christianity and Communism agreed. Both said that TRUTH IS UNIVERSAL AND IT MATTERS. One question was if the Communists (or the Christians) lived up to this proclaimed conviction. On the other hand, trying to evangelize people who believe that “everyone has his or her own truth” is completely different from what we used to be accustomed to. Truth does

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Family Profile

Will Porter



Never wanting to be comfortable is one of the main reasons that I moved to Prague in July of last year. I had come to overly rely on myself and my own abilities, and started being very wary of this. After much seeking and praying, I decided that I should make a change. A change that would make me rely on Christ and not myself. A change that would challenge me in ways that I could never have imagined. I have had some sort of special place in my heart for Europe ever since I visited some time ago. I wasn't sure what this love was all about, but I knew that I wanted to be here somewhere. Not sure where this would take me, I ended up here in Prague teaching English as a second language, learning more about myself, and in turn learning more about others and the way that Christ sees his children.

Growing up in Mississippi afforded me several things: close family values, a nice intelligent sounding accent ☺ and of course, being in church any time the doors were open. My family made sure of the latter, if not all three. This was all fair and good until I started growing up a bit and growing out of the church bubble that I felt that I had been confined to. As I graduated high school and subsequently university, I started feeling like I not only knew loads, but that I could handle most everything on my own. I ran from the God that I knew, and followed these feelings to St. Louis, MO in the winter of 2001. This was miles away from all I knew, and it was quite a nice feeling. Three years of running later, after losing my only grandfather and seeing my only brother get married, I felt God dealing with me. He kept



whispering that no matter what all I had done and no matter how far I tried to run, he was right there with me. After many sleepless nights and tearful prayers, I grudgingly packed my things and moved back home. I finally came to terms with God and told him that as I would make good on my promise, and finally gave the reins over to him.

Opportunities were put before me, and led me to fall in love with about 40 kids, who let me act exactly how I felt. I found myself working with a youth group and learning more than I was probably teaching them. Over that last year and a half, back in Meridian, MS, I continued to seek exactly what it was that I was supposed to be doing. Somehow a door to the Czech Republic opened up and here I am. I still find myself seeking his face everyday and am learning that waiting on God is very much an active thing. I want to continue to serve him and see how many challenges he throws in my way. I pray that he continues to change my heart, and helps me to love his children more like he does. It really hurts sometimes, these changes that are being made in me, but the feeling of finding that new skin beneath the tough outer part is quite nice. ■

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not matter any more to many people.

I think the irrelevance of truth is very bad and it is one of the points where the church cannot go along with the developments of this world. On the other hand, there are some side-effects of postmodernism, which are basically positive.

If the post-modern world thinks truth does not matter, what matters is *experience*. I studied theology in Prague from 1967-1972 and during my studies (and long after) "experience" was a bad word. To say you had an experience with God made you a fanatic or lunatic at worst or someone hopelessly addicted to subjectivism at best.

In this, we can (and have to) adapt to this world. We can speak about our experience with Jesus (of course, if we have one). If we don't, our "truth" about God would not be that much interesting anyway.

I would like to mention one development of which post-modernism is detrimental to the church (and actually to human life in general). These days, last-minute tours are prolific. If people go to a tour, or if they go to a conference, they usually decide at the last minute if they are going to participate or not. The rationale behind this is; "What if something more interesting comes my way just after I apply? So let me relegate the application to the last minute possible."

This "last minute atmosphere" is un-
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HAVE YOU CONSIDERED....

The best way to keep up with your giving for TAX records or to simply "keep up" is via bank transfer.

Please consider this option; it will be easier for you and you'll make the church accountant happy.

PCF Bank Info:

**Sbor Křesťanské společnosti
PCF, ČSOB a.s., Kamenická 26,
Prague 7**

Account No. **181730394/0300**
Variable symbol: 10261

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church traditions to worship Him. Jesus says His house will be a house of prayer for ALL NATIONS.

John 17 talks about bringing glory to God. Maybe you remember the prayer of Jesus just before His betrayal. He prays that we might be one as He and the Father are one. "The ultimate goal for our existence is to glorify God, and we are most like God when we are in union with one another just as the members of the Trinity are in union".

Jesus goes on to pray that we might be one so that the world may believe that the Father sent Him. "Here, in one verse, is the link between the unity of God's people and the fulfillment of God's mission in this world. Our ability to preserve unity is directly related to people's coming to Christ. If the watching world observes the love of God holding believers together, they are confronted with the glory of God in His people. It is the glory of God that penetrates the darkness of their lives so that they are brought to a point of decision. But if they see broken relationships, schisms, gossip, and people exploiting one another, a message about God's power and love will have little effect." The glory of God and the impact of the gospel are tied to our ability to love each other.

We are one, positionally, in Christ. But just as Jesus chose to make us co-laborers with Him, just as He left the working out of our salvation to us, just as He left the evangelization of the world to us, He also left the working out of unity to us. Unity is a gift from God that we have to develop and nurture, a gift we can only fully realize via the help of the Holy Spirit. We have to allow unity to flourish in our midst if we are to be a light to this world. Also, the Body of Christ **needs unity to be able to function as God intended.**

2) We are all separate and necessary. The Lord has given each one of us a "special gift" to do a "special work". We all play a role in what we call the Body of Christ. We need every body part, every organ, every tendon, every muscle, every cell, every strand of DNA. "The many parts" are all needed for the church to function as it should.

Ephesians 2:10 - *For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.*

Howard Snyder wrote in The Problem of Wineskins, "the church truly becomes the church when the spiritual meaning of spiritual gifts is recovered. The church whose life and ministry is not built upon the exercise of spiritual gifts, is, biblically, a contradiction in terms."

Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote about this passage in Ephesians: "How do these ordinary-sounding (teacher, administrator...) or, rather bizarre-sounding (miracle worker...) spiritual gifts aid in God's plan to fill all creation with his presence? Paul's answer is that they serve to create community."

In Romans chapter 15 Paul gives us an example of the uniqueness of God's purposes for his life. He knows his ministry role and shares his primary ministry gift of evangelism four times in 6 verses. He goes on to share that he desires to preach the gospel where Christ is not already known so he does not build on someone else's foundation. He was a pioneer, planting new churches, laying foundations, and exercising godly authority over them. In addition to evangelism, Paul also had an apostolic gift. Is everyone's ministry role like Paul's? No, yet we all have a unique, special role to play.

3) We are ALL called to do our share of God's work.

1 Peter 4:10 - *Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms.*

Paul wrote that *it is the responsibility of church leaders to equip the Body "to do God's work"... to do the work of the ministry.* That means "the professional church" model is not biblical. Church is **not** a spectator event. It is **not** a show financed by donations taken in the middle of the program. Church is a place where people discover their gifts and have the opportunity to serve and worship their King.

1 Tim 4:14 - *Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through a prophetic message when the body of elders*

laid their hands on you.

We can categorize gifts into three groups:

- Service Gifts** – Helps, Service, Administration, Faith, Mercy, and Giving
- Equipping Gifts** – Pastoring, Apostleship, Leadership, Evangelism, Teaching, Wisdom, and Exhortation
- Prayer and Worship Gifts** – Prophecy, Tongues, Interpretation of Tongues, Miracles, Healing, Discernment of Spirits, and Knowledge

SUMMARY

Do not neglect your gift which was given you. Discover your gifts! Take the time to discover your role, your ministry role that God has prepared in advance for you to do. You are created for good works! Get uncomfortable with watching and get equipped to serve.

The church is **not** healthy until EACH one of us has found our role and we are functioning in it. The Jesus model includes all of us. Everyone is important. Everyone is needed. Everyone serves.

1. Duane Elmer, Cross-cultural Conflict, p. 26
2. Duane Elmer, Cross-cultural Conflict, p. 27-28
3. Howard Snyder, The Problem of Wineskins, p. 138
4. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Life Together, p. 26



The following PCF members past and present will be having birthdays in the next few weeks.

Tracy Coles	March 1
Amanda Overwater	March 2
Joyce Lindstrom	March 5
Joseph Kupidlovský	March 5
Roger Harsh	March 6
Annabella Nickle	March 7
Charles Jolly	March 11
David Overwater	March 12
Darren Haig	March 12
Benjamin Eqbal	March 16
Richard Emercoha	March 18
Pavla Křížová	March 20
Chris Bauman	March 20
Dan Drápal	March 23
Cindy Ogundo	March 25
Allison Crawley	March 27
Jalen Kropf	March 28
Erik Maršoun	March 28
Eugenie du Preez	March 31



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friendly to commitment. What people want is to enhance and maximize personal opportunities. But if you want to achieve something, to build something (e. g. a family or a church) you need *commitment*, not maximizing of personal potential. If you do not commit, you actually miss your chance to be a part of something greater – something which transcends your personhood. I think that the word of Jesus “whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it” (Mt 10:39) is very pertinent here. People who are of some use for the Kingdom of God are not necessarily those who realize most of their personal potential, but those who were willing to commit – maybe to realize the personal potential of others. This is another point where the church has to go against the stream. ■

Dan Drápal

(More articles available at www.dan.drapal.org)

Sixth Annual Úvaly English Day Camp

August 14th-18th

Czech or English-speaking volunteers are needed!

Contact **Kelsie Mullen** if you are interested.

Mobile: 777 150 802
Email: mullen@uvaly.net

PCF Finances

January 2006

24,053.00	Total Income
4,145.50	Internet & Communications
5,000.00	Office Rent & Electricity
8,500.00	Church Rent
2,266.10	Supplies & Equipment
0.00	Copying & Publishing
0.00	Salaries/Employer Tax
0.00	Evangelism & Teaching
0.00	Church Giving
922.00	Fees & Advertising
232.00	Miscellaneous
21,065.60	Total Expenses
2,987.40	Net Income
15,543.00	Current Liabilities

All amounts shown are in Czech Crowns.

The following statement was written by a coalition of Christian leaders with International Ministries discussing critical issues the church faces today.¹

“There is evidence that less than 10 percent of Christians know their callings, or ministries and far less are being equipped and released to function in them. Not only is it impossible to grow up to the measure of the stature of Christ that the church is called to, but it is also impossible for the body to be built up by ‘the effective working by which every part does its share’ if the members of the body do not even know their part.

It is improbable that any body could survive with less than 10% of its organs functioning, yet this is the present state of the body of Christ. We believe that is a primary reason for much of the discouragement, frustration, and backsliding of Christians today, a root cause of many church splits, as well as the relative paralysis and ineffectiveness of the church today.

The assertions that the modern church is more like a spectator sport where many gather to applaud the few who perform, or like a giant sheep pen where food is thrown at the sheep a couple of times a week, are accurate with but a few exceptions. It is imperative for this to change if the church is going to be relevant to our times.

This failure to equip believers to do the work of the ministry is also one of the primary reasons for the exceptionally high rate of burnout in the modern pastoral ministry. This burnout is because of the need to do all of the things that the people should be equipped to do. To rectify this problem we encourage all Christian leaders to focus more of their time, attention, and efforts to

equipping those entrusted to their oversight and discipleship than they do to performing ministry themselves.

Until every member of our congregations is functioning in the ministry we have not done our job, and will not be free to grow to the spiritual stature to which we have been called. The most powerful force for the gospel is an encouraged church. There are few things more encouraging for any Christian than to be used by God.” ■

¹ Rick Joyner, *The Morning Star Prophetic Bulletin*, Feb 2002, p. 7.



PRAYER REQUESTS

- Church Finances** – Please pray for provision to cover our expenses and wisdom in spending.
- Small groups** - Please pray for people to get the vision for sharing their lives in small groups.
- International House of Prayer Prague (www.ihopp.org)** - Please pray for the leadership as we transition into new structures.
- Peace of Jerusalem** – Please pray for Hamas to change their charter calling for the destruction of Israel.
- Richard in prison** – Please pray for his early parole in 2006!
- More laborers in the harvest / PCF** - Please pray so the Mullens can take a break sometime during their 10th year of ministry in Czech Republic.
- Christian International School of Prague (www.cisprague.org)** - Please pray for more students and more volunteer teachers to come and serve these kids and their families!
- Former PCF members involved with full-time ministry** such as Michael Stadler, Ewells, Gowers, Harshs and Snells for God’s total provision and protection in their lives. **“Always keep on praying for all the saints.” (Eph. 16:18)**

Should you have a testimony to share please email us. The deadline is March 20, 2006