

Junior Soldiers

Unit 4 : Lesson 8



One body: many parts!

PURPOSE : For children to explore and understand that even though those who follow Jesus are all different in some way, God loves each of us and we are all important and valued.

'The body of Christ has many different parts, just as any other body does.

Some of us are Jews, and others are Gentiles. Some of us are slaves, and others are free. But God's Spirit baptized each of us and made us part of the body of Christ. Now we each drink from that same Spirit. Our bodies don't have just one part. They have many parts.'

1 Corinthians 12:12-14

Consider & Prepare

Read:

1 Corinthians 12:1-13:7

Romans 12:3-5

The biblical teaching on the 'body of Christ' is an important teaching for all Christians to be aware of—every believer should know that there is a place for them in God's Kingdom, no matter how different we all are and with our unique abilities, personalities and flaws.

Having said that, even some adult Christians struggle with the analogy of the Church 'being' Christ's body, and so in this lesson we will seek to explain the symbolism in several ways so that, hopefully one way or the other, the concept will 'hit home' for the children we minister to. Be especially aware, through this lesson, of your use of language; as adults we can take some Christian concepts for granted when—for children—they are just plain confusing!

The Church is the body of Christ and each Christian plays an important part in keeping the body healthy and functioning, revealing Jesus to the world. When we (including Junior Soldiers) help and serve within the Church, we are proving ourselves to be a necessary part of this body.

God values each of us—including children—and the part we play in making the 'body of Christ' (i.e. the Church) functional, active, useful and healthy. God needs our diversity to create something that has a unity of purpose and aim.

Note, too, that 'being part of the body of Christ' does not equal 'having a job in your church'. Someone doesn't become part of the body of Christ when they become the home league secretary or the cleaner

or the bandmaster—we become part of the body of Christ as soon as we accept Christ and join his Kingdom. We each have gifts; we can each be used by God; we each have a role in his Church that may or may not be formally recognised by denominational leaders.

(On the off chance that you may have a child or child with a family member missing a body part from birth or an amputee, needless to say you will have to be very sensitive when talking about all body parts being necessary, the inability to survive without a part, etc.)

What you will need:

For 'Connecting In'

- Print out a picture of a full body to be used as a jigsaw
- Cut them up into jigsaw pieces
- Or use a jigsaw puzzle that you might already have (that only has about 20/30 pieces) for this activity
- Music (iPod, CD etc.)

For 'The Main Thing'

- Bibles
- Paper
- Textas or pencils for drawing
- Print the body parts sheet attached and cut into individual slips
- A container to put the slips of paper in
- A kidney (*from the local supermarket or butcher—I'd suggest buy it the day before, not a week before!*)

For 'Tying In'

- Leading up to the lesson, take a variety of photos of people within the church while they are using their gifts or doing ministry e.g. visitation/pastoral care, encouraging someone, making meals, singing in the worship group, driving the bus, typing up the newsletter, welcoming people to church, leading in kids church, making the tea and coffee, packing up, mowing the lawns, vacuuming, praying etc.
- Butchers paper
- Textas
- Bibles
- Squishy/soft ball

For 'Home & Beyond'

- Print off the Home and Beyond cards for each child



Connecting In

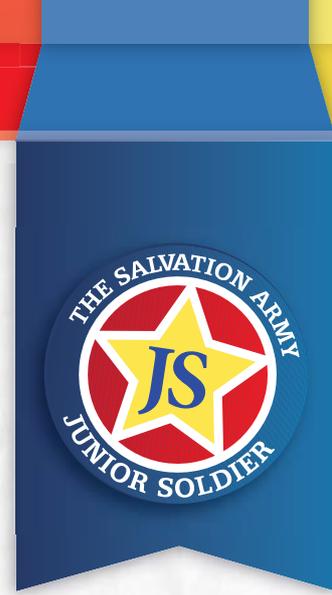
You need all the pieces...

- Print out a picture of a full (clothed!) body on an A4 sheet of card, you might be able to use a photo or picture from a magazine that you already have, or print one from the internet.
- Cut the picture up into jigsaw-type pieces.
- Each child and leader is to have at least one piece of the puzzle.
- Work together to make the jigsaw.
- One of the leaders is to secretly keep their piece out of the puzzle for the moment.
- Ask the children:
 - 'Is the picture complete? What does it need to be fully complete?'



- Eventually the leader can add their piece to complete the puzzle.
- Mix all the pieces up again, get everyone to choose another piece and have a go at doing it again, adding all parts this time.
- You might even like to time it, to see how quickly they can put it together.

Link: It is always fun playing with jigsaws but can be very annoying when you get to the end and find a piece or two missing, especially when there are 1,000 pieces! In order to complete the puzzle fully, you need all the pieces. The first time we did the puzzle it took a long time because the leader didn't add their part, the second time around it was much quicker and the puzzle was able to be completed because everyone was adding their bit.



Imagine that each of those pieces of puzzle represented a person within our church. Each of the pieces is different but they are all needed to help create the puzzle fully. To create a full picture of our church, we need all the different people to make it up.

Today, we're going to explore how the church is full of people that God has made unique and how important it is that we have a variety of people to share God's love. We need everyone to play their part in sharing this good news. God has created us each to be different and we can help to support the church, care for each other, and share the love of God in heaps of different ways.

Just like the puzzle, we all belong to God and He has given us all special ways and gifts to serve Him and share His love with others.

Multiple body parts game...

For this activity you will need to be able to play some music and have someone that can stop and start it throughout the game.

- As you play some music get the children to walk around the room, encourage some funky dance moves too using as many body parts as they can.
- When the music stops, call out a list of body parts and a number that the children will need to create in groups e.g. 2 hands, 3 noses and a foot, 4 fingers, 3 eyes, a tongue and a shin, etc. See how creative the children can be to make up the correct body parts and numbers while keeping everyone in the game at the same time.
- Continue playing till the song finishes

Link: Well it is always fun playing games with music and a variety of body parts.

Did all the groups of body parts look the same? (*Illustrate with a group of children how the same combination of body parts and numbers can look differently e.g. 2 hands, 3 noses and a foot—this might be a group of three people, one person putting in one hand, one nose and one foot, one person putting in a nose and a hand and the other person putting in just a nose or it could be a group it could be a group of six people putting in one item each.*)

Each body part was important to the challenge in the game and you needed each item to complete that challenge—if one part was missing then your team didn't win.

Church is a bit of a team effort, too. We all need each other to make our church the best place it can be. Imagine if everyone in our church was exactly like you: what would be really good and what would be really bad? What would get done lots and what would never get done?

Just like a body needs all its parts, the whole 'body' of our church needs all of its different people.

The Main Thing

1 Corinthians 12

- Read together 1 Corinthians 12

All sorts of parts...

For this activity you will need to print off and cut up the sheet attached that includes all the body parts outlined in 1 Corinthians 12: 12–27. Put all the slips of paper into a container for the children to draw out one by one. You will also need some paper for the children to draw on and some textas or pencils.

- Get the children to take turns in choosing a slip of paper from the container.
- After they have drawn a slip with a body part written on it, they need to draw that body part on their piece of paper.
- Choose another slip of paper and add that body part to your drawing.
- Continue until they've drawn five slips and have five parts to their body.
 - What does your body look like? (*It might have 2 heads, three feet etc.*)
 - Does it look like a person?
 - Can your person/body walk to the shops, buy a magazine and read it? If not, why not?
 - What can your person do? How would your person function as they are?
 - Would it be difficult to run with one leg and no eyes?

When we read 1 Corinthians 12 before, you will remember that all the body parts that we have been drawing were mentioned. (*Read the key verses where the body parts are mentioned again.*)

Think about our drawings and how difficult things would be if you didn't have all the body parts. I wonder if you might know someone who is missing a body part? There are lots of people in our world that have difficulty with everyday things because they are missing a body part or one of their body parts is not working well, e.g. people who are blind still have eyes but they are not working as they should. Perhaps you have even injured yourself, maybe breaking your arm or leg, and not been able to use a certain body part for a while.

- How would you cope with eating, showering, going to school?
- Do you think there is a part of the body that is more important than the others?

What the Bible was trying to say wasn't so much about human bodies, however, it was about understanding that even though we are all different, we are all important to God and we all have a role to play in helping people learn about God's love—just like the body has different parts that all work together to make a complete, functioning, healthy body.



It's all about being healthy...

What if we want to be a Christian but don't want to go to church?

Ask the children this (slightly gory) question:

- How long can a certain part of the body live on it's own once it has been separated from the rest of the body?

Because so many body-part transplants are done these days, doctors need to know how much time they have to use a body part before it starts to deteriorate. For example (if not kept on ice):



- A finger/toe About 12 hours
- An arm About six hours
- Ears About a day
- Noses About a day
- Foot About six hours

Remember, too, that we lose body parts every day. Our biggest organ is our skin, and we shed small flakes of skin every day. We also cut hair off and trim fingernails and toenails. For all of these parts of the body to stay alive, they must be connected to the body. Sure, if you cut your hair off, it's still hair, but it's no longer living or growing or healthy. For a Christian to be growing in their faith and spiritually healthy, they need to be connected to God.



Here is a kidney (*you may want to keep this on ice in a small cooler, etc. until you're ready to use it*), it used to be part of a body.

What is its job in the body? (*The kidney monitors your blood and body fluids, keeping your blood clean and healthy.*)

Why doesn't it work when it is not part of the body?

Just as the kidney needs to be attached to the body to work and help keep the body healthy, we need to be attached to the church (*what the Bible calls the 'body of Christ'*) to keep healthy. Sure, a kidney apart from a body is still a kidney, but it's not a healthy, live one. To maintain our spiritual health, we should attend church and keep our faith growing and alive.

Tying In

Everyone fits into the body...

For this activity you will need:

- Leading up to the lesson, take a variety of photos of people within the church while they are using their gifts or doing ministry e.g. visitation/pastoral care, encouraging someone, making meals, singing in the worship group, driving the bus, typing up the newsletter, welcoming people to church, leading in kids church, making the tea and coffee, packing up, mowing the lawns, vacuuming, praying etc.
- Alternatively, cut out a variety of faces from some magazines or catalogues.
- Butchers paper, textas, glue sticks and Bibles.

Read 1 Corinthians 12:27–31 together.

Being a follower of Jesus means different things for different people. God has chosen us to do different things as the verses tell us, He gives us different skills and talents and special gifts that make us each unique and best at doing certain things in our churches and sharing the message of God to others.

- What are some of the things that you see people doing in our church?
- How does God use people?
- Can you think of some people who match with some of the roles outlined in the verses we read?
- Apart from those that are listed, can you think of how others in your church use their gifts, talents and skills either in the church or sharing God with others?

Draw a body outline on the butcher paper (*you might like to use one of the children to trace around*).

- Get the children to sit in a circle around the body outline.
- Explain that we all have a part to play in our church and in sharing God's love with others.
- Stick the photos that you have taken inside the outlined body—fill any space there is with drawings of other people from your church that might not be in the photos.

- Talk about some of the gifts and talents people in your church have and how you see the using them for God.
- Encourage the children to think about what it would be like if some were missing.

Or, use the cut-out heads from magazines to represent people in your church—add a drawn body to the head once you have stuck it inside the body outline. Talk about some of the gifts and talents people have in your church and how you see the using them for God.

- Encourage the children to think about what it would be like if some were missing.
- Encourage the children to think about where they might fit and if there is someone they see represented that they identify with. Is there something you feel good at that you might be able to use for God?
- Give each of the Junior Soldiers a bright coloured 'post it note' that they can draw themselves on and write their name.
- Stick it alongside someone they might like to help in the coming weeks.



Prayer ...

Continue to sit in a circle around the body outline filled with people. You will need a squishy/soft ball to throw around the circle to encourage and affirm each child and leader. Each time the ball is thrown, the 'thrower', needs to say something encouraging to the 'catcher'. Speak words of encouragement to each child and leader (e.g. 'I've seen you help pack up the chairs—you are using your gift of helping. I heard you encouraging someone the other day – you were using your gift of encouragement.')

Have some time for silent prayer and ask the children to pray for some of the people we have mentioned today that serve God by using their gifts and talents. Ask them to also pray for the child that is to their right, that God will help them to understand what gifts and talents that they have and that they will use them in their church and in sharing God's message with others.

Finish up by reminding the children that each one of us is special and unique, because that's how God made us. But He also made us to worship Him both individually and together as a church. And—just as the body needs all of its parts to be whole—the church needs all of us, because we complement each other and make the church whole.

Home & Beyond

Print off the Home & Beyond cards attached. The children might like to keep these in their journal or notebook where they could write or stick the challenges, reflect, answer questions or complete activities each week.

Share...

- Share with your parents/Big Bud some of the activities you did today and what you enjoyed most and why.

Encourage...

- Take the time to say thank you or encourage someone at church who is serving God and helping others. (*We all love to be thanked and encouraged.*)

Read...

- Read 1 Corinthians 14–27 at least two times this week.

Home & Beyond

Share...

- Share with your parents/Big Bud some of the activities you did today and what you enjoyed most and why.

Encourage...

- Take the time to say thank you or encourage someone at church who is serving God and helping others.
(We all love to be thanked and encouraged.)

Read...

- Read 1 Corinthians 14-27 at least two times this week.


Junior Soldiers

Home & Beyond

Share...

- Share with your parents/Big Bud some of the activities you did today and what you enjoyed most and why.

Encourage...

- Take the time to say thank you or encourage someone at church who is serving God and helping others.
(We all love to be thanked and encouraged.)

Read...

- Read 1 Corinthians 14-27 at least two times this week.


Junior Soldiers

Home & Beyond

Share...

- Share with your parents/Big Bud some of the activities you did today and what you enjoyed most and why.

Encourage...

- Take the time to say thank you or encourage someone at church who is serving God and helping others.
(We all love to be thanked and encouraged.)

Read...

- Read 1 Corinthians 14-27 at least two times this week.


Junior Soldiers

Home & Beyond

Share...

- Share with your parents/Big Bud some of the activities you did today and what you enjoyed most and why.

Encourage...

- Take the time to say thank you or encourage someone at church who is serving God and helping others.
(We all love to be thanked and encouraged.)

Read...

- Read 1 Corinthians 14-27 at least two times this week.


Junior Soldiers



Head	Head	Head		
Head	Head	Foot		
Foot	Foot	Foot		
Foot	Foot	Hand	Hand	Hand
Hand	Hand	Leg	Leg	Leg
Leg	Leg	Eye	Eye	Eye
Eye	Eye	Ear	Ear	Ear
Ear	Ear	Mouth	Mouth	Mouth
Mouth	Mouth	Nose	Nose	Nose
Nose	Nose	Arm	Arm	Arm
Arm	Body	Body	Body	Body