

Victory of the Lamb – August 5, 2018 – Unshakeable Series

Logistics: The Anti-Selfie – 1 Corinthians 12:12-20 – Pastor Bill Limmer

Have you ever taken a selfie? When I am talking about a selfie, I am not talking about taking a picture of yourself with a bunch of other people in it. I am talking about taking a picture of just you, a true selfie. The first time I can remember taking a selfie was at my sister's wedding reception. I was 13 and the reception hall had a mirror right as you walked in. And there I was, in my tux, with a Kodak camera in hand. Click. We then took the film to Walgreens and about a week later, after we paid a ton of money, I had my first selfie.

The other day I was at one of our Lakefront Festivals engaging in the game of people watching and praying to God that somehow we might reach the masses with the love of Jesus. As I was walking back to Jacky and some friends with a strawberry and whipped cream funnel cake in my hand (don't judge), I saw what appeared to be a college-aged girl at one of the beer stands with her phone outstretched in one hand while the other hand was flipping her hair all the while she was smiling. She was in the process of taking a selfie. But apparently the first shot wasn't good enough, because she kinda frowned at the phone and flipped her hair again and flashed a new smile. All alone but wanting to be a star.

As Americans we idolize independence. We can't wait for the day when we can say, "I made it." We strive for self-sufficiency and feel like a failure if we have to ask for help. But I want you to know God never intended us to live without each other. The opposite of selfie – is doing life together.

Which brings us to right here and right now. God created us to be interdependent. Let's check it out together: 1 Corinthians 12:¹² **Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ. For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body**—In baptism God connects us to himself, his righteousness, and to each other. This is a miracle bond that changes everything for eternity. In John 15 we learn that Jesus is the vine and we are branches. If you take the branch away from the vine, it will be dead in no time. We need God and each other.

I understand that you may not always feel connected to God but feeling are not synonymous with truth. You and I don't feel or taste the oxygen molecules that are around us but it is still true and we still need them. Look to the person who is closest to you and say: "You need me." And now look to the same person and say: "I need you."

As your pastor, I am very much aware that I need you. I would be in so deep if I had to do all the things you do in the community, at work, school and here at the ministry center. Let's just say, the food at Victory Café would be not quite as tasty. When it comes to food my gift is not preparation but consumption. We need each other.

The same is true for the one who wrote these words had key influencers in his life, we might call them mentors. One of those key influencers was a man who played a key role in the conversion from his raging unbelief to faith, a man named Ananias. FYI: Ananias means The Lord is gracious. The Lord is so gracious that he reaches out even to those who are very far away from him. There were of course the disciples, and a husband and wife team, Aquila and Priscilla who also helped Paul along the way.

Who have been key influencers in your life to this time? Often it's your mom or dad, a teacher or a coach, a boss. How gracious God has been to me. I have been so blessed by God to have so many people

speak into my life from my parents, my wife, friends, my friend's parents, coaches, professors, co-workers, and you. You see, by God's grace, my antenna is always up. I am very much aware that I need you.

Here is another example: the lawn here was looking pretty bad. We have guests coming for the blood drive, a wedding yesterday, and worship today. I texted Ron and told him what was going on and he arranged for the lawn care to come and make things look great. Without Ron, it's not happening.

1 Corinthians 12:15-18 **Now if the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason stop being part of the body.** ¹⁶ **And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason stop being part of the body.** ¹⁷ **If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be?** How ridiculous it would be if the foot would say out of envy that it is not a part of the body because it is not a hand. How ridiculous it would be if the ear would say, because I am not an eye, I am not a part of the body.

Meet Mr. Potato Head. He has all the parts of a body. Eyesight is an amazing gift from God, but if that is the only thing Mr. Potato Head had was eyes, I hope he ends up in a beautiful spot because he isn't going anywhere. Our feet are tremendous blessings from God; we can climb, hike, jump, run and walk with our feet. But if all Mr. Potato Head had were feet, he could probably do a lot of things but he wouldn't see anything.

1 Corinthians 12:19,20 **But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be.** ¹⁹ **If they were all one part, where would the body be?** ²⁰ **As it is, there are many parts, but one body.** Your enemy, the devil, wants you to go through life in isolation. He wants you to strive to fix your own problems. He wants you look down on others. He wants you to think you are no good, not needed. We were created by a three in one God.

Key Truth: You cannot fulfill the purposes for your life by yourself. That should be enough but, because of sin, it is not. So let me flush it out a little bit for you. Hall of Fame inductees listing people who helped them get to where they are at. They didn't do it solo. To be the best you can be, it is going be with other people.

Here is another one: Big semi-trucks bring products into the Amazon fulfillment Center. The products are off-loaded into yellow totes that weave their way through literally miles of conveyors belts and into a picking mod. When a customer places an order, the associates, called pickers, are directed by technology to where the product is found. The picker will then place in another yellow tote where it goes back on to the miles of conveyors belts and sent to a packer who packs and ships it to the customer. One worker described the over 1million square foot facility as a place with so many pieces to the puzzle but when it's completed it's a masterpiece. For that puzzle piece to be put together, many moving parts have to work together. I love to make purchases from Amazon just so I can marvel in imagination at the logistics involved in getting my items gathered from a warehouse and delivered to my door within 24 hours.

Have you ever been jealous of anyone? What if everyone could pick out their own spiritual gift? Our sinful nature would gravitate us toward choosing the gifts of the person that we are jealous of. The church would be poorly served, just as if the whole body were a hand or an eye. We would become a

monster. Fortunately, just as God has given the parts of the body their separate functions, so that the body and all its members are well served. So also the Holy Spirit has distributed his gifts to his people, so that we have all the gifts we need to function in joy and love because it is all dependent on Christ.

Geese flying in V formation. Why do geese fly in a V? (Because it would be too hard to fly in an S! Just kidding.) Scientists have determined that the V-shaped formation that geese use when migrating serves two important purposes: First, it conserves their energy. Each bird flies slightly above the bird in front of him, resulting in a reduction of wind resistance. The birds take turns being in the front, falling back when they get tired. In this way, the geese can fly for a long time before they must stop for rest. The second benefit to the V formation is that it is easy to keep track of every bird in the group.

One of the ways the we can support each other at Victory is through our small groups. We have 12 leaders in training right now. And we are going to launch them beginning in September. In the small groups you are going to find people with strengths and weakness, just like you. You will find a safe and supportive atmosphere. You will find God's Word to direct and lead you. God made people to need people. Embrace it. Love your friends and let God's gifts to you flow through to them. Gifts like companionship, correction, encouragement, guidance, sympathy, love and joy. One my friends said this past week, "Troubles shared are only half as heavy. Joys shared are twice as good." We are blessed to be a blessing to others.

If you are not a part of the Victory family and would like to be, talk with me after worship or at your earliest convenience, give me your email or whatever and let's connect! We would be excited to have you a part of the body of Christ (family of God) here at Victory! Let's pray.