

“Walking Wounded: The Body of Christ”
by Jason Vanderlaan

One hundred and five. There are one hundred and five steps between my dorm room and Hackman Hall, where I have my classes. During the first two days of mid-terms alone I had the opportunity to make that epic, round-trip journey four or five times... on crutches. For the record, that’s the equivalent of climbing about half way up the Empire State Building on crutches. Yeah, that’s a lot of steps.

So what does this have to do with anything? Well, when it takes you twice as long to get anywhere on campus, you have a lot of time to think. And I believe it was somewhere around step number 47 that I began to draw a comparison between my sprained ankle and the condition of the body of Christ in our world today.

We often talk about how all the parts of the body/church need to work together, and I couldn’t help but notice how my ankle was definitely not working with the rest of my body. Granted, it didn’t have much of a choice, but it still wasn’t cooperating. It is so sad that there are parts of the Body of Christ that *voluntarily* decide not to work with each other.

But this is more than an issue of “playing nicely” together. This is about how we can best serve God as a whole. Because as I forced my aching knee, arms, and hands to push myself up and over step 94 I realized that when one part of the body gives out, the rest suffer for it. They have to work harder for less progress than if all parts were working together.

What I’m trying to say is that, as the Body of Christ, we spend way too much time fighting against each other. We let petty differences separate us, thus making it harder to move forward as the Body. We especially spend too much energy waging the war of liberalism versus conservatism, when, instead, we need to be fighting against our true enemies, who are not of flesh and blood.

But how can we be united with so many differences? I don’t have a comprehensive answer to that question yet, but think it would be a good start to recognize that the path of truth is narrow and there are ditches on both sides. We must realize that liberalism is a liability and conservatism is a crutch (no pun intended). Because if our minds are too open, our brains will fall out, but, on the other hand, if our minds are too closed they’ll suffocate. Either way, we die. The only good ground to walk on is found in the center.

When we see this and evaluate our beliefs in light of it, I believe we’ll all begin to move towards a healthy balance. And not only that, but we’ll finally be able to throw away our crutches and begin to move forward as the healthy, whole Body of Christ.

(P.S. I’d like to say a big thanks to everyone who has opened doors, carried food, given me rides across campus, or helped me in any other way while I’ve been on crutches. Y’all are the best!)