

1 Corinthians 12:18

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.

Analysis

But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him—Etheto (ἔθετο, aorist of tithēmi, "to place, appoint, establish") emphasizes God's deliberate, purposeful arrangement. **Every one of them** (hen hekaston autōn)—no member's placement is accidental or arbitrary. **As it hath pleased him** (kathōs ēthelēsen)—God's sovereign will, His good pleasure, determines each member's position and function.

This is the theological foundation demolishing all gift-pride and gift-envy: God Himself assigned each believer's gifting, role, and place in the body. To despise another's gift is to criticize God's wisdom. To envy another's gift is to question God's goodness. To refuse your gift is to rebel against God's design. The passive voice throughout this section (etheto, "has been set") removes human agency—we don't choose our placement; God does. Like an artist arranging colors on a canvas or a conductor positioning orchestra members, God knows exactly where each gift serves the whole best.

Historical Context

Ancient creation accounts portrayed deity organizing chaos into ordered cosmos. Paul applies this to the new creation: God orders the church-body, assigning each member according to divine wisdom, not human preference or social status.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does believing God 'set' you in the body with your specific gifts affect your self-acceptance?
2. What happens when believers resist their God-assigned role to pursue a different function?
3. How can church leaders help members discover and embrace their God-appointed place?

Interlinear Text

νυνὶ	δὲ	ὁ	θεὸς	ἔθετο	τὰ	μέλη	ἐν	ἑκάστῳ
now	But	G3588	God	hath	G3588	the members	one	every
G3570	G1161		G2316	G5087		G3196	G1520	G1538
αὐτῶν	ἐν	τῷ	σώματι	καθὼς	ἠθέλησεν			
of them	in	G3588	the body	as	it hath pleased him			
G846	G1722		G4983	G2531	G2309			

Additional Cross-References

1 Corinthians 12:28 (References God): And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.

1 Corinthians 12:11 (Parallel theme): But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.

Romans 12:3 (References God): For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to

think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

1 Corinthians 3:5 (Parallel theme): Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?

Luke 12:32 (Parallel theme): Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

Psalms 135:6 (Parallel theme): Whatsoever the LORD pleased, that did he in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places.

1 Corinthians 12:24 (References God): For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked:

Luke 10:21 (Parallel theme): In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight.