

The Body of Christ- Cylinda Nickel

It is with a heavy and bashful heart I write the tale of the real General Conference event that took place in my heart this week.

Wednesday Night I went to the musical/drama with my parents. My parents were with my but I stopped to talk to John on the phone (he was speaking at our home church that night). I was late and saw a lady that looked familiar to me. I stopped and said- "Hey how are you doing?" She looked at me and said, "Are you talking to me?" I said "Yes, it has been forever." She again said "Do you remember me? No one remembers me. They only remember the important people from school."

I stopped and talked to her and told her that she was just as special and awesome as anyone else that stepped foot inside of IBC. I met her two daughters, left her with a quick hug and wave. I must say that I found my seat with a heavy heart.

No one remembers me she had said.

That is our whole fear isn't it? That is why when we are having a great conversation with someone at general conference we are frantically trying to look around for someone else to recognize us. We walk into the lobbies of our hotels just trying to have eye contact and recognition from anyone, all the while stepping past the Pastor's wife of 50 years that is the true heroine in the story.

This realization slapped me in the face when I saw my face placed right in the middle of this scenario. I went to the Minister's wives breakfast with my Mom. It's our thing. She doesn't like to go alone, and I try to be a good daughter once a year. Sister Hopkins is so gracious as to let us sit with the Central America, Caribbean, and Mexico section. This is reserved for the missionary wives and leaders from that region.

This year that table was in the second row. We were right behind the table that was guest of the leadership of the breakfast. In one of my friend's pictures I noticed that she and a group of ladies from that table were being photographed. Much to my chagrin I was sitting behind that table and my head the size of a turnip was between two ladies. I had this weird wallflower look on my face. It makes me shiver to see the picture in my mind's eye. What was that look? It was the same look that I used to have in High School when the cheerleaders walked by and I knew that I was lucky to be in drama club.

This was further engraved in my heart when my friend Rachel Coltharp was speaking during the breakfast. At the table behind me two ladies were talking. The first lady asked the second one- "Who *is* this speaking?" The other lady responded, "Rachel something or another, never heard of her." The first lady then questioned. "Hmm, I wonder how *she* got chosen to speak."

At this point I about went Karate Crazy on both of them to tell them to #1 Shut UP, #2 Listen she is anointed AND funny - that's why she is speaking, and #3 No One asked YOU TO SPEAK so stop being bitter. I then reattached the Holy Ghost Saline Drip into my arm and kept my mouth shut.

I made up my mind after those two experiences that I was going to be on a mission. Every person that I met from then on would be handled with grace, love, care, and be the most important person while they were talking to me. I would really listen to their stories, I determined that even though it was hard to do- I would not wave at the ones that walked past me or grab and hold them to talk to them in a second.

Do you know what? IT WAS amazing. ALL of God's people matter. Not just the cool ladies that have on their matching Coach boots, bags, and bows. Not just the ministers that have the D&G glasses, but the well worn ones that could pray a saint out of hell are just as amazing.

I thanked every elder that I could find. I was asked to sit with a district superintendant and his wife for dinner one night with my Mom. I listened to this 66 year old man tell of the great ups and downs of his life and his walk with God. No, I did not get to add my little funny quips or showcase my sarcastic humor but I did make a new friend. I saw them a couple of times after that and they made it a point to come over and check on my both times. He later thanked me for really listening to his stories. He said do you know what I noticed about you? You did not glaze over when I was telling you about my heart problems, about the six saints that recently died in my church, and about how I still know that I can do something for God. I said glaze over? You all are amazing. And do you know what? They are.

God help us as a generation if we cannot see what really matters. Don't get me wrong. I am all for meeting new people, for looking good, and for being your best. But I am not going to trample my way over people to get there. Even if I can't recognize someone's name I am determined all the more to give them my full attention.

I am sure that this does not apply to you. If you are not an outgoing people person this might not even apply but thank you for being gracious enough to listen to me.

My heart feels lighter. I pray I remember this lesson. Below is a LONG scripture I know but it is amazing!

I Corinthians 12:12-31 The Message

12-13 You can easily enough see how this kind of thing works by looking no further than your own body. Your body has many parts—limbs, organs, cells—but no matter how many parts you can name, you're still one body. It's exactly the same with Christ. By means of his one Spirit, we all said good-bye to our partial and piecemeal lives. We each used to independently call our own shots, but then we entered into a large and integrated life in which he has the final say in everything. (This is what we proclaimed in word and action when we were baptized.) Each of us is now a part of his resurrection body, refreshed

and sustained at one fountain—his Spirit—where we all come to drink. The old labels we once used to identify ourselves—labels like Jew or Greek, slave or free—are no longer useful. We need something larger, more comprehensive.

14-18I want you to think about how all this makes you more significant, not less. A body isn't just a single part blown up into something huge. It's all the different-but-similar parts arranged and functioning together. If Foot said, "I'm not elegant like Hand, embellished with rings; I guess I don't belong to this body," would that make it so? If Ear said, "I'm not beautiful like Eye, limpid and expressive; I don't deserve a place on the head," would you want to remove it from the body? If the body was all eye, how could it hear? If all ear, how could it smell? As it is, we see that God has carefully placed each part of the body right where he wanted it.

19-24But I also want you to think about how this keeps your significance from getting blown up into self-importance. For no matter how significant you are, it is only because of what you are a part of. An enormous eye or a gigantic hand wouldn't be a body, but a monster. What we have is one body with many parts, each its proper size and in its proper place. No part is important on its own. Can you imagine Eye telling Hand, "Get lost; I don't need you"? Or, Head telling Foot, "You're fired; your job has been phased out"? As a matter of fact, in practice it works the other way—the "lower" the part, the more basic, and therefore necessary. You can live without an eye, for instance, but not without a stomach. When it's a part of your own body you are concerned with, it makes no difference whether the part is visible or clothed, higher or lower. You give it dignity and honor just as it is, without comparisons. If anything, you have more concern for the lower parts than the higher. If you had to choose, wouldn't you prefer good digestion to full-bodied hair?

25-26The way God designed our bodies is a model for understanding our lives together as a church: every part dependent on every other part, the parts we mention and the parts we don't, the parts we see and the parts we don't. If one part hurts, every other part is involved in the hurt, and in the healing. If one part flourishes, every other part enters into the exuberance.

27-31You are Christ's body—that's who you are! You must never forget this.