Pastor Michael O'Neill November 8, 2026

I'm In: I'm Invaluable
Part Two

1 Corinthians 12:12-27

1. **You are invaluable just because you are you.**

   - **Your identity**

2. **You are invaluable because you are part of the body of Christ.**

   - **Your belonging**

3. **You are invaluable because every part of the body matters.**

   - **Your significance**
     - *1 Corinthians 12:14-17*

4. **You are invaluable because God has called you to make a difference.**

   - **Your impact**

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West Valley Church
11/08/2026
Michael O'Neill

I'm In:[1]
I'm Invaluable

Reader:

> The human body has many parts, but the many parts make up one whole body. So it is with the body of Christ. Some of us are Jews, some are Gentiles, some are slaves, and some are free. But we have all been baptized into one body by one Spirit, and we all share the same Spirit.
>
> Yes, the body has many different parts, not just one part. If the foot says, "I am not a part of the body because I am not a hand," that does not make it any less a part of the body. And if the ear says, "I am not part of the body because I am not an eye," would that make it any less a part of the body? If the whole body were an eye, how would you hear? Or if your whole body were an ear, how would you smell anything?
>
> But our bodies have many parts, and God has put each part just where he wants it. How strange a body would be if it had only one part! Yes, there are many parts, but only one body. The eye can never say to the hand, "I don't need you." The head can't say to the feet, "I don't need you."
>
> In fact, some parts of the body that seem weakest and least important are actually the most necessary. And the parts we regard as less honorable are those we clothe with the greatest care. So we carefully protect those parts that should not be seen, while the more honorable parts do not require this special care. So God has put the body together such that extra honor and care are given to those parts that have less dignity. This makes for harmony among the members, so that all the members care for each other. If one part suffers, all the parts suffer with it, and if one part is honored, all the parts are glad.
>
> All of you together are Christ's body, and each of you is a part of it.
> (1 Corinthians 12:12-27, nlt)

It's not enough to just show up at church. Our hearts long for more than that. We want to be needed. We want to be known. We want to have purpose and know that we make a difference. This series is an invitation for us to drive deep roots into our church, to see the difference you can make, and help you see the power you have inside you.

You have a God-given purpose waiting to be discovered. You have people around you ready to encourage you. And you may not know it yet, but you have everything you need to live a life of purpose. We just have one question: *Are you in?*

I have a strong burden to share this message with you today because, honestly, it's one of the most important messages that we need to hear today, and at the same time it might be

[1] Sermon series source and inspiration: "I'm In," Life Church, Craig Groeschel

one of the most difficult messages for people to believe about themselves, so I'm going stop and pray for help to do this well today, and if you would pray with me, that'd be great:

> Father, thank You for all Your people, Your children that You've gathered together today at both our campuses, around computers and in front of screens, God, to honor You in this gathering. We pray that Your Living Word would speak to our hearts, and inspire us, God, to see ourselves as You see us, that we can fulfill Your calling for us in this world as an invaluable part of Your family. God, we pray this in Jesus' name. And everybody said... [Congregation] Amen.

In this series we're looking at four different qualities as to how our God sees you, and all of them begin with the letters I-N. Last week, we looked at the reality that I'm invited, that you are invited into the family of God. We saw that Jesus invites those that others reject because God's grace changes what judgment cannot, and since we're invited, we want to come to him and bring others with us, and a great way to do that is to bring folks to church. This week, we're going to see the truth that you are invaluable to God's work in this church and in our community. Next week, we'll look at the reality that you are influential for God's glory, and in week four, I hope you'll see that you can be invested in God's Kingdom.

Today, I want to talk to you about the reality that you are *invaluable* to God's work – it means that you are *uniquely* valuable to God…

1. You are valuable just because you are you.

This is about…

– Your identity.

You're a child of God. You're invaluable. Jesus told a parable in Luke 15 and Matthew 18 about a shepherd that had 100 sheep, and one of the sheep, just one, wandered away. And the shepherd so much loved the one that he left the 99 to go after the one. The one was that valuable to the shepherd. You are a child of God; you are invaluable.

Let's think about it this way. Shelly and I have three boys. What if when they were little I lost one of the boys; I wouldn't say, "Where's Ryan? I can't find Ryan. Oh well, I've got two other boys – who really cares?" I would *never* do that because all of my boys and now their wives are uniquely valuable to my heart. *You* are invaluable to God because you are you. You are uniquely created by God. You're invaluable just because of who you are. You're a child of God and you were created for a purpose. You were created to make a difference in God's church, as God's church, And the reason this message is so difficult for so many people to believe is because when we look at the church and we look at everything that everybody else does at church, we often feel like we're not really good enough or talented enough or spiritual enough or smart enough to make a difference. When we look at everybody else and see how incredible they are and they can quote Scriptures in their prayers and they pray prayers that are so powerful that it even makes God say, "That was a good prayer," we're insecure and we feel like we don't know that much and sometimes we make mistakes, and the lie that so many of us believe when it comes to the church is this: "If I weren't here, it wouldn't really matter that much. If I wasn't here, doing my little part, it

wouldn't make that big of a difference." My prayer is that you will see that you are *invaluable* to God's work. You are uniquely prepared with gifts given to you personally by God to do supernatural work, with passions and talents. When God created you, he put you at this moment in history in this church because it's at this time that you can best glorify God. Your worth is established by God's love, not your performance.

You are invaluable to God's work…

2. You are invaluable because you are part of the body of Christ.

This is about…

– Your belonging.

In fact, let's look at that metaphor from the apostle Paul that we heard earlier. He was talking to the Corinthians, and they would've felt like a lot of us. Many of the Corinthians were not born of "noble birth." Many were slaves, they weren't highly educated. They weren't born with a silver spoon in their mouths, so they may have felt insecure about how they could make a difference. And Paul gave them this metaphor and compared the church, or the people of God to a human body. He said the human body has many parts. You've got an ear, got an eye, got a nose, got a mouth, got a hand, got a thumb, got an elbow, got a knee. The human body has many parts, but all these different parts make up one body. And he was comparing the body parts of the human being to his family, or the metaphor of the body of Christ.

Let me try to explain it to you this way – let's play a game for fun. I'm going to show you some photos of animals. I'll ask you what they're called, but then I'll ask you what a group of them is called. Let's go ahead and start:

> We all know that this is called an ___?___ elephant. Does anyone know what a group of elephants is called? They're called a *herd*.
>
> Let's look at another animal: a ___?___ lion. Who knows what a group of lions is called? It's called a...pride. Very good. You've all watched the Lion King.
>
> Sticking with the cat theme, here's a ___?___ cheetah. Try a group of cheetahs. What would a group of cheetahs be called? Not Cheetos. What would a group of cheetahs be called? They'd be called a *coalition* of cheetahs.
>
> Next is a ___?___ a donkey. A group of these would be (Be careful, church people!) What would a group of donkeys be called? A group of donkeys would be called a *pace* of donkeys.
>
> Let's look at another one a ___?___ vulture. What would a group of vultures be called? A group of vultures is actually called a *committee* of vultures. That's why we don't have committees at West Valley Church; we have teams!

Okay, so here's the point: Each animal on its own has *one* name, but when you get a group of animals together, they take on a *new* identity. Let that sink in. A single animal has one name, but a group together takes on a new identity.

What do you call a person who has submitted to the lordship of Jesus Christ? You might call that person a Christian, or you might say they're a disciple, or they're a follower of Christ. What, though, do you call a group of Christians gathered together to worship, working together and empowered by His Spirit to make a difference in this world? The church, or Paul called it the body of Christ. On your own, you're a disciple. But when you gather together with other Spirit-filled, Word-empowered believers, You take on a new identity. You are Christ's body. In other words, you are His hands when you serve people in His name. You are His feet when you take the message of the gospel into the places you go. You are His mouth when you lift others up with encouragement. You are His heart when you express His love to people who are not nice to you or are hurting or feel far from God. You are an invaluable part of the body of Christ. Anytime that voice in your head tells you you're not important, you're not good enough, you just step back and say, "No, my God created me. He sent His Son for me. His Spirit dwells within me. I am an invaluable part of the body of Christ." You may be one follower of Jesus by yourself, but when you are connected to the Body of Christ, you become part of something God intends to use to change our community and the world. The church isn't just somewhere you go; the church is who we are!

What I hope you'll understand and embrace is this…

3. You are invaluable because every part of the body matters.

This is about…

– Your significance.

Every part matters. And it's almost as if the apostle Paul, when he was writing, could sense the reality that some people think to themselves:

> "I'm not that important. What I do doesn't matter that much. If I weren't here, it wouldn't really make that big of a difference at all." But what did Paul say in verse 14? He's using that metaphor of the body, and He says, "Yes, the body has many different parts, not just one part. If the foot says, "I am not a part of the body because I am not a hand," that does not make it any less a part of the body. And if the ear says, "I am not part of the body because I am not an eye," would that make it any less a part of the body? If the whole body were an eye, how would you hear? Or if your whole body were an ear, how would you smell anything?" (1 Corinthians 12:14-17, nlt)

Go ahead and just pause there for a moment and get that visual. If it doesn't make you laugh, you're not doing it right, okay? Just a big eye. "If the whole body were an eye, "how would you hear? "Or if your whole body were an ear, "how would you smell something?" Every part of the body matters. I love this passage of Scripture because so often we feel like my part doesn't make that big of a difference. And I like the way Paul contrasted the ear to the eye because, you know, if you're the ear, you might get jealous of the eye. Think about how much attention the eye gets and how overlooked the ear is. Think about it, the eyes get all the attention. They're up front. The ears are these weird shaped things on the sides. No one's ever had an ear-to-ear conversation. Right? No one in love has ever glared longingly into someone's ear (if they do, you should probably break up with that person because

that's weird). Think about this; what if we said: “Beauty is in the ear of the beholder.” “I've got stars in my ears.” I could do this all day: “You're the apple of my ears.” “I only have ears for you, dear…”

The ear could so easily say, "I'm not that important." But if the ear *did* say that, and there was no ear, there'd be nobody to hear it. Every part of the body matters. Every part. *Your* part, your role, your presence, your voice, your opinion, your contribution, it all matters at this church in the body of Christ. This is what Paul said. He went on to say, in verse 22, he said, "In fact, some parts of the body that seem weakest and least important are actually the most necessary."

Those that other people overlook, those that never get any airtime, those that aren't out on the stage and most visible are often the most necessary parts of the body because, listen to me, all of us together, all of you, all of you together are Christ's body, and each of you is a part of it. Every single part matters. Your involvement in our church matters to the heart of God, and it matters in the body. I did research on body parts that are kind of overlooked like on the hand, the thumb gets a lot of attention. You can play thumb wrestling. You can text and play video games. The pointer finger gets a lot. Middle finger, I'm not going to show it to you, but we know that the middle finger has plenty of uses, most of which are not for the glory of God. There's the ring finger that gets lots of focus. Then the poor little pinky – no attention at all. But do you know that 50% of your hand's strength actually comes from your pinky? The part that no one ever really talks about creates 50% of the hand's strength. Or think about your little toe. What’s it even there for? It’s so insignificant…tell that to your entire body when you ram your little toe into a piece of furniture at night! Your whole body feels it! The little toe is actually the third point of the tripod that gives you balance – it, your big toe and your heel.

Your part matters in the body of Christ, and it's often the parts that are least visible or seem like they're not that important that are actually the most important. I hope you'll understand this. Just because what you do may not be visible, does not mean that it's not important. Just because other people don't see it, or don't know about it, doesn't mean that it doesn't matter to God or matter to all types of other people. You may be an invisible prayer warrior. You may spend tons of time seeking God, and nobody knows. But week after week, when lives are changed at our church, week after week, when people say yes to the grace of Jesus, it's so often because *your* private faith has touched our God and public miracles happen because of what you did behind the scenes. You may do something so simple as to help someone feel loved. Smile at someone. Pick up a piece of trash. It may not be highly visible, but just because it's not visible does not mean it's not important. So often, some of the most important things that happen are actually the parts of the body that are least celebrated or least visible. Watch this video that shows just a few examples from our church that you probably didn’t even know about:

Listen. Other people may not ever know what your gift does. They may not ever know that you prayed for them. You may not ever know what your investment in a teenager on a Wednesday night at youth group does. You may never know that smile you gave someone who walked in and felt so nervous, so uncomfortable, so afraid to be in church, that one moment of welcome you gave them helped them come back again. Just because what you do is not visible does not mean it's not important. You... You are invaluable to the work of

God. You're intrinsically invaluable because you're a child of God, but you're also invaluable because you have gifts. You have talent. You're a part of the Body of Christ. The church is incomplete without your contribution. Never confuse visibility with value. Just because people don't see what you do doesn't mean what you do isn't making a difference!

4. You are invaluable because God has called you to make a difference.

This is about…

– your impact.

You're called by God; you're chosen by God. You're capable of doing what God has created you to do. You're a part of His body.

Think about this. Have you ever been asleep at night, and maybe you laid on your arm the wrong way or something, and you woke up and your hand or your arm was asleep? Who knows what I'm talking about? Okay. That arm is a part of the body, but if the arm is asleep, it's essentially paralyzed. It's dormant. It's useless. Can I just say you're a part of the body of Christ, but if you're not using the gifts that God has given you, you've gone to sleep. Your part of the body is now useless. You're not living out your divine calling, your function, your role, your part, your position. If that's you, please wake up. Wake up. You're an invaluable part. You've got something unique to offer that no one else does. But if one part of the body is asleep, the rest of the body has to work harder. Others are putting more in because you're not doing your role. Something that God wants to be done isn't being done. Somebody that God wants to reach may not be within reach. Somebody that God wants to hear the gospel may not hear the gospel because your part of the body has fallen asleep. Wake up, church. Wake up, church. Feel this. Church is not a building that we go to. It's not an institution we're a part of. We're a living body of Christ. We are the church. We don't go to a church to meet our own needs. We are the church of Jesus Christ, and we meet the needs of people in this church and community. That's what we do. That's who we are. You're an invaluable part of the body of Christ. You may say, "Well, but I messed up. But I don't know enough. My life has so many dark spots in them. You don't know about my past." Listen, your past does not disqualify you from being used by God. So often, your past actually prepares you for what God is calling you to do. You've been prepared, whatever you've been through. I shared with you my story a few weeks ago, and to be honest I debated about sharing it with you because I'm not proud of my life before Jesus, but what did my past life do? If anything, *I* know you can be delivered. *I* know you can be transformed. *I* know what it's like to have no hope and find immediate hope. My past does not disqualify me. It has prepared me and I can tell you for a fact that if God did it for me he can do it for you. Your past does not disqualify you. "Oh, but I've been divorced, I'm disqualified." Actually, no, you're better prepared to help others heal. You're better prepared to help others rebuild. You're better prepared to help people know there's hope, even in your darkest moment. "But I was addicted…but I still struggle, and I still have doubts, and I still don't know that much." Listen, if you know the grace of Jesus, then you too know how to love somebody, you are already prepared to be a part of God's body. Your

contribution matters. If you're still in progress, you're even better prepared. We often get so intimidated by the perfect spiritual people that come in and everything floats when they walk in the room. Listen, if things don't float when you come in the room, *you* are the one prepared to make a difference.

What do you think could happen if every part of the body engaged in ministry? What do you think could be different in our communities if we saw our role as significant and invaluable to the work of God? Feel it. Your presence matters. Your presence today matters to the heart of God. You are a part of His family. Your story matters. Your gifts matter. Your talent matters. What do you think would be possible if all of us stepped up together and did what we were uniquely created to do? We could help bring life to those who have been overlooked. We could bring dignity to those who felt shamed. Every young girl who feels like there's no hope because she's pregnant and she's not married and she's going to be ashamed, and she certainly wouldn't be welcomed in that church because she didn't live up to their expectations. We could show her the love of Jesus. If someone walks in here and they are struggling with their identity, we are going to love them and embrace and welcome them, and they are going to meet a Jesus who gives them a brand-new identity in him – far greater than their gender or sex or lack of self-confidence, far greater than their achievements or money. Think of what is possible. Think of what is possible, if you would recognize that you matter to God, that He has given you gifts, that He's given you talents, that you're invaluable to Him just because you are you. But you're also an invaluable part of the body of Christ. The church isn't a place you go. The church is who you are. You are His hand, you are His feet, you might be His elbow, you might be the pinky. Your role is incredibly important. But if... If you're *not* engaged, if you're *not* expressing and offering the unique value for which you were created, if you're asleep, dormant, paralyzed, then something that our God wants to be done in this world is not yet being done. Because you were uniquely created by God to bring value, to offer life. Every time you give, it may not be much. Your gift matters. Every time you pray, you may not feel like anything happens, but your prayers touch the heart of God. Every time you gather to worship with others, you may not feel like it that weekend, but, believe me, it matters to the heart of God, and it matters to those around you and to you to be with others in His family because every part of the body needs every other part. You have no idea how much it matters to me to see you in church on Sunday morning. How much Shelly and I need you. You have no idea how much your prayers carried us. You have no idea that one of you that sent me a note this week that said, "Thank you," how much I lived on that note and let it sink into my soul. I promise you, with everything in me, I'm going to do my part. And with everything in you, you do your part. And every part is equally important to the family of God. And when we do all of our parts, people aren't going look at our church and say, "What, church?" No, they're going to say, "That church? Our city is different because West Valley and Selah Church are here. This community is different because of that church." The church is meeting needs. The church is showing love. The church is the body of Christ. You are an invaluable part of God's body.

So Father, today we ask that Your Spirit would stir within us. Give us the faith today, God, to do what You've uniquely created us to do. Help us to embrace the truth. We are irreplaceable. We are invaluable to You because we belong to You. And we're called to do our part in Your body, as Your body in this world. At West Valley and in Selah and online, as

you are praying and reflecting today, for those who would say, "I am a Christian." I pray you are also saying, "I really know there's something more for me." Maybe you just kind of come to church and you're not doing hardly anything, you know there's a lot more. Or maybe you're kind of involved somewhere but you recognize, "There's more in me. God has given me more; I care about more. I love making a difference and I really believe there's a more significant role. There's something different. There's something more for me to do." Would you lift up your hands right now? Wherever you are, just lift up your hands and say, "Yes, God. It's about my availability. It's not about my ability; it's about my availability. I'm available." God, I pray that Your Holy Spirit that dwells within those who know You, God, that we would be so stirred, that we couldn't be asleep. We couldn't be dormant. God, give us eyes to see needs all around us. Give us ears to hear the cries of those who are hurting. God, give us a heart to care for those who are broken and lost and about to give up hope. May Your church, God, rise up. May we be a light in communities. Stir within us, God. Stir within us. God, for the one who feels like giving up, help them see their part is important. For those not yet engaged, God, help them to see their part, embrace their role, and do what we're uniquely created to do so that Your body can show Your love to those around us.

As you keep praying today wherever you are, there are some of you, you're going to say, "I'm not anywhere close to that – I don't even know where I stand with God." Here's what I hope you'll feel. Back to that story about Jesus and the sheep. If a shepherd has 100 sheep and one gets away, the shepherd leaves the 99 to go after the one. Listen to me, maybe you're the one. Maybe you're the one. Maybe you're watching today online or you're at West Valley or in Selah and there's something drawing you toward God. You don't know what it is. You're kind of curious, You think maybe there's something more. Maybe you're desperate and scared to death and you're looking for anything to relieve the pain. There's something drawing you toward God. What is that? Let me tell you what it is very clearly. It is His love. His Holy Spirit is drawing you today and you're not here by accident. Who is Jesus? Jesus is the Son of God, who was perfect in every way, who died in our place on a cross for the forgiveness of our sins. Our God is so good. He raised Jesus from the dead so that anyone, and this includes you, anyone who calls on the name of Jesus, that person would be saved. What does that mean? All of your sins forgiven. You don't just become a better version of you. You become new. The old is gone and the new has come. At West Valley and Selah and online, there are those of you, you recognize this is why you're here. God is coming after you, He loves you. He's longing for a relationship with you, and you recognize you don't have that and you want it. What do you do? You turn away from your sins as best as you know how and say, "Jesus, take my life." When you call on Him, Heaven hears your prayers. God forgives your sins and you become new. No matter where you are, those who say, "Yes, that's what I need, I can sense it. That's why I'm here. I'm ready. With everything in me, I want to be a part of His family. With everything in me, I give my life to Him." All those who say, "Yes, today, by faith, Jesus, I need Your forgiveness. I need Your grace. I give my life to You." That's your prayer. Lift your hands now to say, "Yes, that's my prayer." As we have people crying out on the name of Jesus, would you join your faith with theirs and simply pray aloud after me? All of us pray after me so no one prays alone:

- "Heavenly Father."
- "Forgive all my sins."

- "Make me brand new."
- "Fill me with Your Spirit."
- "So I could follow You."
- "Doing my part."
- "In Your church."
- "As Your church."
- "My life is not my own."
- "I give it all to You."
- "Thank You for new life."
- "Now You have mine."
- "In Jesus' name, I pray."
- “Amen”

Would somebody celebrate big right now? In the family of God, welcome those born into His family.

Benediction:

> May you go knowing that you are invaluable to the Kingdom of God and this church, prayerfully and actively seeking to do your part to make this church body whole, healthy, introducing people to Jesus Christ, equipping each other with a faith that works, and living as people with purpose.

Life Group Questions
I'm In Part Two: I'm Invaluable
Week of November 8, 2026

1. Have you ever broken a bone or seriously injured yourself? How did your body have to react/change/compensate for itself during that time?
2. Do you know anyone who makes a big difference behind the scenes? What do you think about them and the work they do?
3. You came to church for the first time at some point. What did you love about church that brought you back? How has your life been changed through the church?
4. Read 1 Corinthians 12:12-27. If you were one part of the human body, which part would best represent you?
5. You matter. Your story, voice, and gifts are all important. Do you believe this? Why or why not?
6. What is your part in the body of Christ? What were you uniquely created to do?
7. Every part is important. How can your part in the church make a difference outside the church?
8. Consider how you could use the gifts and experiences God's given you. How could you love, serve, or share with others? What is one thing you can do this week in the church for your part ?
9. Pray for each other.