

## A Thinner Thumb

A friend and brother in Christ recently had a run-in with CNC machine. He was shaving materials to precision when the process was briefly interrupted by an unintentional introduction of foreign matter into the cutting mechanism that, unfortunately, didn't slow the slicing process down one iota. The result was a thinner thumb. Frankly, I would have been curled up crying on the floor, screaming for EMS and swooning toward a black hole looking for that bright light, but my brother just wrapped his thumb in a rag and finished the job before seeking medical attention. (It is important to note that anyone familiar with my level of dexterity would never have allowed me entrance into the same room as a machine with such a level of complexity; I struggle to control a hammer.) I guess we're just not all wired the same.

But... this is a good thing. In fact, Paul showcased the contrast and diversity of our spiritual skill sets as a big advantage. In his comparison between the human body and the church of Christ, he promoted the benefits of being different, yet all of us contributing to the body's unity (1 Corinthians 12:12ff). Of course, he also pointed out that missing any body part – as each serves a Divine purpose (vs. 17-18) – would deter from the desired efficiency of the whole body; any part that is damaged or severed impacts the whole. Applied spiritually then, how calloused and cruel it is to dismiss damaged members as though they are not important. No one should “slip between the cracks.” Further, what body part attacks it's own body with impunity? It is easily understood that only a misguided, disturbed soul would damage their own body; that person needs a loving intervention. How is that different in the body of Christ?

There is another observation that is equally applicable: when a body part is damaged, neglecting it, demeaning it or abusing it further is salt in a wound. When a part of the body is hurting, we tenderly accommodate it, gently attend to it and anxiously encourage its healing by applying every medicine and therapy in reach, with the purpose of healing the member that has been damaged. That conduct translates to the care and concern we should have for one another in the Lord's Body (cf. Galatians 6:1-2; Colossians 1:18).