

How many of you take your vehicle in for an oil change, tire rotation, or some other type of tune-up? Most of us know that if you don't maintain a vehicle, you soon won't have a reliable vehicle. The words of our text speak about the body of Christ and the imagery is quite useful. Just as we tune up our vehicles, we also need to tune up our part in the body of Christ. So, today, as we think about tune-ups, we focus for a few minutes on tuning up the body of Christ.

I. As members of the body of Christ, we need regular tune-ups so that the body can function properly. A. What can we do to tune up our part in the body of Christ? 1. To tune up the body, we acknowledge we are part of the body. That sounds obvious, doesn't it? If we go back to our vehicles for comparison, how many times has your oil filter said, "I'm not part of the body, so I'm out of here?" or your gas tank said, "They don't need me, so I'm dropping out at the next intersection?" We can laugh, but acknowledging our place in the body of Christ isn't a laughing matter. You, you and I, we all belong to the body. We're all necessary within the body.

2. As we tune up the body, we admit that our part needs a tune up. What would happen if your engine oil decided that it never needed to be changed? As God's Church in this place, we can look around and think, "He really needs a tune up" or "she really needs to get her act together." But as we're busy pointing fingers, we need to look at the three fingers pointing back at us and humbly admit that we need a tune up. We need Christ at work, molding and remolding us, renovating, and replacing. Maybe we'd prefer to point out others who need a tune up, but, as part of the body, we admit that chief of sinners though I be, I need Jesus to tune up me.

3. Within our tune up process, we acknowledge that every part is necessary. Suppose a mechanic overhauled your vehicle's engine. If he gave you a can with a dozen nuts and bolts in it, would you even take your vehicle for a test drive? In the design of engines, every part has a purpose. The same goes for the body of Christ. If it weren't needed, it wouldn't be part of the body. So, what does that say about you and your abilities? Are they optional, okay to set on the sidelines, or to be put on the shelf for use at a later date? If you are part of the body, which you clearly are, your part, your involvement, your abilities are needed right here and right now.

4. As we tune up the body, we believe that every part is of equal value. Is the oil pan more important than the valve cover or the fuel pump more important than the water pump? As with our vehicles, so it is within God's Church. Every part is not only valuable, but it's of equal value. Maybe you've been part of this church for fifty years or maybe for less than five years. Do longtime members have more value than the newest member of our church? Christ, as the head of the body says, "Absolutely not!" No matter who you are or what you have done in the past, you are of equal value to every other part. Believe it and act accordingly.

5. As we tune up the body, we choose to do our part. Can you imagine what would happen if every part on your vehicle had the ability to choose whether to work or take the day off? Unlike our vehicles, God has given us the choice. Perhaps the most obvious choice statement of the entire Bible is found in Joshua's words, "Choose this day whom you will serve, but as for me and my house, we will serve

the Lord.” As part of God’s Church, you have a choice. You can say, “Let someone else do it,” or you can say, “How can I do my part?” Which do you suppose Christ, the head of the Church, wants to hear from each of us today and every tomorrow?

6. With our tune up efforts, we remember whose in charge. When you sit in the driver’s seat and you turn the key, you know whose in charge and it’s not the dipstick or the gas cap. Within the church, we remember that this isn’t my church or your church, but His Church. We’ve been given a privilege, the privilege of being a member of God’s church and His church in this place. Because it’s our privilege, we acknowledge that God has expectations and that we have responsibilities. God could have done it another way, but He has chosen to use the church, people like us, to carry out His amazing work.

7. As we tune up the body, we demonstrate ongoing care and compassion. How many of you own a vehicle that’s compassionate and understanding? Foolish question, right? On a scale of 1-10, how important is demonstrating care and compassion to our work in God’s church? As Jesus pointed out in our Gospel and throughout His ministry, offering compassion is the most obvious sign that we are functioning as the body needs to function. For this church, for any church to function at its optimal level, we need to demonstrate kindness and compassion because those actions do more to bring others into the church than anything else.

8. As we continue our tune up, we focus on opportunities to serve. How many car dealers have a service department? Like those dealerships, we need a service department within the church. Actually, each one of us need to be members of that service department. Next to care and compassion is serving with an attitude that says, “I serve the Lord and I do it with gladness. Just watch my actions and you will see what serving the Lord with gladness looks like.” As we tune up our part of the body, one of our recurring questions is, “Where can I serve; where can I use my talents? Where can I use my gifts to honor my God?”

9. As we tune up the body, we renew our personal mission. Every vehicle company has a mission statement, a slogan, if you will, “Ford. We have a better idea. Dodge, built ram tough.” So, what phrase would best describe your personal mission within your church? Sometimes, we need to revisit our mission to make sure we are carrying out God’s mission for our lives. The world may have its ideas of why you are here. It may have its mission, but God has a better mission, a more significant mission for you, and as you renew your personal mission, you will know that you are doing your part to build up and carry forward God’s church in this place.

10. As we know, every vehicle needs periodic tune ups to function at its optimal level. Like those vehicles, God says to you today, “Thanks for being here. Thanks for taking yet another step to tune up your part of My body, the Church.” Amen.