



Orange: What is **Orange**?

Part of **Orange** is that we as a community of faith intentionally recognize and bring value to every generation.

Illustration:

Recently I met with a gentleman in his 70's. He is a terrific man with years and years of experience as a lay leader in the Church. It was lunch time as we sat down at a local Panera.

After some initial chit chat, we leaned into the heart of the matter. This gentle Godly man was wrestling with his place in church. After decades of service and teaching others, he was now at a place where he couldn't figure out where he fit in the greater

body of Christ. For years he identified himself as someone who could teach and lead others through the Bible. He loved nothing more than to communicate the Truths of scripture to a room full of hungry minds and hearts. Recently though, his hearing has been failing. With tears in his eyes he explained that he no longer can lead discussions with more than 2-3 people. His ears are not able to filter out the background “noise” enough to stay focused.

This is a true tragedy in his life. He no longer feels sure that he has a real place in the Church. With humility and sincerity, he looks me square in the eyes and asks, “Where do I fit? What do I have to offer any more?”

His question broke my heart. Were there ways as a church that we had dropped the ball in this man’s life? How had we let a man with so much wisdom, experience and knowledge feel so undervalued during the autumn of his life? If he was feeling these things, then there must be others as well in similar situations with similar questions.

Looking into his eyes, it was clear what one of the answers was. He needed to pour his years of faith into the lives of the generations behind him. Though he is unable to lead a room full of people, he can still sit across from a man and impart wisdom and grace. I replied, “You have so much to offer! In this season of life, we as a church need your knowledge, wisdom and experience to be poured into and reproduced in the lives of other men. Would you be willing to mentor others?” I could see the idea filter through this seasoned saint. Slowly, like a washcloth absorbing spilled milk, the idea soaked in. With renewed light in his eyes he said, “I think I could do that.”

Its been several weeks since we met and he is now mentoring a 50 year old gentleman. He has renewed passion and a greater commitment than ever to reproducing Christlike vision, values and beliefs in others.

Questions:

1. How has the church unintentionally played favorites with some age groups?
2. How common is this man’s story?
3. Are there other generations in the church that have been unintentionally de-valued?

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:12-27 NLT

12The human body has many parts, but the many parts make up only one body. So it is with the body of Christ. **13**Some of us are Jews, some are Gentiles, some are slaves, and some are free. But we have all been baptized into Christ’s body by one Spirit, and we have all received the same Spirit. ^{F62}

14Yes, the body has many different parts, not just one part. **15**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.

16And if the ear says, “I am not part of the body because I am only an ear and not an eye,” would that make it any less a part of the body? **17**Suppose the whole body were an eye—then how would you hear? Or if your whole body were just one big ear, how could you smell anything?

18But God made our bodies with many parts, and he has put each part just where he wants it. **19**What a strange thing a body would be if it had only one part! **20**Yes, there are many parts, but only one body. **21**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."

22In fact, some of the parts that seem weakest and least important are really the most necessary. **23**And the parts we regard as less honorable are those we clothe with the greatest care. So we carefully protect from the eyes of others those parts that should not be seen, **24**while other parts do not require this special care. So God has put the body together in such a way that extra honor and care are given to those parts that have less dignity. **25**This makes for harmony among the members, so that all the members care for each other equally. **26**If one part suffers, all the parts suffer with it, and if one part is honored, all the parts are glad. **27**Now all of you together are Christ's body, and each one of you is a separate and necessary part of it.

Context:

Paul uses the brilliant illustration of the human body to relate the working of the community of Christians. Even as every cell in a human body is linked by a common root (a common DNA code), yet the parts of our body (members) look different, are treated differently, work differently, and accomplish different purposes. Even so, there is great diversity in the body of Jesus Christ, both in appearance and function, yet each member has a common root and a common goal. Whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free: Because of the fact of the "body" dynamic, the dividing lines created by the Corinthian Christians were strictly artificial. Jew, Greek, slave, free, did not matter anymore, because they were all in one body.

- David Guzik

Questions:

1. What happens when one part of the body is given more attention than the others?
2. Which generations in the church need to be "reattached" for the greater health of the whole body?
3. How can you (your group) build bridges among the generations in the church?

Going Deeper:

On September 1st check out www.orangefoothills.com for additional tools and videos describing **ORANGE**.