FEELING ANTSY?
(Children’s Story/Parable)

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“For the body is not one member, but many” (1 Cor. 12:14 KJV).

The English language hasn’t been very kind to ants. We have the expression “ants in your pants” to describe a slightly irritable, unsettled feeling. We describe a fidgety, impatient person as being “antsy.”

Yet the close study of ants has led researchers to respect and even admire these industrious little insects. “Acting together,” says Pulitzer-Prize-winning author Edward O. Wilson, “ants are among the dominant forces of our terrestrial environment.”

Representatives of the 8,800 known species can be found anywhere on earth except the polar regions. With a population of ten million billion, they outnumber mammals, birds, reptiles, and amphibians combined.

Without knowing it, the human race depends on ants in many ways. With the help of termites, ants turn most of the world’s topsoil. They spread plant seeds and scavenge and consume more than 90 percent of small-animal corpses.

But perhaps most impressive is the way in which ants assume roles in their communities. There are soldiers, builders, nurses, farmers, and hunters. And all contribute some specific talent to the welfare of the colony.

Desert ants of North Africa carry back to the colony 15 to 20 times their weight in food. There is no time to waste for these creatures, because it takes an average of only six days before they get lost or are picked off by larger insects.

Christians, too, are supposed to work for the good of those around them. The Christian church is described as a single body, each of its parts working for the good of the whole. It is very important to be sure that everyone plays a vital role in the local church. This will help to make them feel that they are valued by their fellow church members. In this context we can learn a great deal from the hard-working cooperation that goes on in an ant colony.