



BAPTIST CHURCH

## **We Who Are Many Are One Body In Christ**

**“We Are Better Together”**

**Romans 12:3-8**

### Introduction

Over the past few weeks we have been walking through **Romans 12**.

So far in **Romans 12:1-3** we have discovered:

Every follower of Christ is:

**Challenged to Live With Purpose.  
Called to Live a Transformed Life  
Charged to Live and Serve with a Spirit of Unity**

Today we will discover:

Every follower of Christ is:

**Created to Function as One Body**

**We are better together!**

### Scripture

For by the grace given to me, I tell everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he should think. Instead, think sensibly, as God has distributed a measure of faith to each one.

4 Now as we have many parts in one body, and all the parts do not have the same function,

5 in the same way **we who are many are one body in Christ and individually members of one another.**

6 According to the grace given to us, we have different gifts: If prophecy, use it according to the proportion of one's faith;

7 if service, use it in service; if teaching, in teaching;

8 if exhorting, in exhortation; giving, with generosity; leading, with diligence; showing mercy, with cheerfulness. CSB

## Quote Of The Day

“Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much!”

— Helen Keller

**Individual Snowflakes by themselves are frail, but if enough of them stick together, they can stop traffic.**

The central verse in **Romans 12:3-8** is found in v.5 that says, “. . . we who are many are one body in Christ and individually members of one another.” CSB

What the Apostle Paul is saying is this— we, as individuals are **Created to Function as One Body.**

In other words— **We are better together!**

**What does connection and cooperation really look like?**

**It looks like the human foot.**

The human foot has 26 bones, 19 muscles, and 107 ligaments. Walking up stairs requires the connection and cooperation of 300 different muscles between the foot and the leg. The sense-receptors in your foot let your brain know exactly what kind of surface you're walking on: rocks, ice, soft sand, or the plug in from Angela's hair dryer that's lying on the bathroom

floor, and your foot immediately adapts. In the course of a life, the average person will walk about 100,000 miles. If you walk or jog for exercise, of course, that number will be higher. Although most people don't often do this, the toes can be used to pick up things. Some people can even write or draw with their feet. All this is done when our body, brain, bones, muscles, and ligaments are connected and cooperate together. Normal foot function depends on key systems working together. If one is failing, the foot can lose its arch, become unstable, cause pain and lose proper function. **Every bone, every muscle, every ligament plays a significant role in the foot functioning properly.** Citation: Facts about the Human Foot from "The Original Inspirational Bathroom Book", Pp. 31 & 277.

When we, as individual followers of Christ, connect and cooperate as one body we become an unstoppable force as we seek to advance God's Kingdom on the earth.

**Every Follower of Christ is a valuable part of the Body of Christ.**

**We are better together!**

The Church becomes an unstoppable force to advance God's Kingdom on the earth when we:

**Function Correctly  
Cooperate for the Greatest Good  
Understand our Differences Make us Better**

The Church becomes an unstoppable force when we:

## **1. Function Correctly v.4**

**"Now as we have many parts in one body, and all the parts do not have the same function" CSB**

The word translated **"function"** means **"a thing to be done."**

In other words our function in the Kingdom of God comes from identifying and exercising our role in the Kingdom of God.

As followers of Christ we are part of the same body, "The Body of Christ" but every one of us has **"a different thing to be done."**

Our value to the Kingdom of God comes from discovering and doing **"my thing" that must be done.**

**Albert Einstein once said: "Every man is a genius but if you judge a fish by its ability to climb trees, it will spend the rest of its life believing that its stupid."**

**In the article "Fluid Goals for Changing Times" pastor Mitchell Dillon writes:** "Early on in my pastoral career, I sat down to counsel with a couple, Elmer and Mel. They had been married for nearly forty years and had lived most of that time together in utter frustration. Elmer felt strongly he was called to serve God in full-time ministry. Mel worked long hours to finance her husband's College and Seminary studies. Elmer struggled with the academics, but was determined to finish his theological degree. While Elmer was completing his degree, he pursued leadership opportunities in local churches, without success. Elmer continued to be frustrated because he had no signs of visible achievement. He would attempt to teach adult Sunday School classes, only to find attendance quickly waned. He was not invited to serve on church leadership teams. People did not seek out his counsel. The fact is, **Elmer was not a very good student, he was not a capable speaker, nor was he a "people" person.**

After he failed to secure any ministry positions after completing seminary, Elmer took a job in a local supermarket and quickly became a supervisor in the meat cutting department. Turns out, Elmer was an excellent butcher. Each week he brought home a good paycheck. He was praised as a diligent, skilled and hard worker. His annual reviews revealed he was commended and respected by his peers. However, Elmer was still frustrated. He grew bitter and resentful that he was not called to a position of ministry at a local church.

The Bible says in **Jeremiah 29:11**, "For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." **Don't miss the opportunities God gives us.**

**The butcher who serves God with joy and sincerity can be just as assured of fulfilling God's will as any pastor or missionary.** Citation: Adapted from "Fluid Goals for Changing Times," MyGoals.com.

Finding “the thing” that God created for us can be very frustrating. However, when we discover “that thing” God has created us for it is very liberating.

**The physical body and “The Body of Christ” have many comparisons:**

**My body can function without a big toe, but it functions better with it.**

**My body can function without hair but it sure would be nice if I had some.**

**The Kingdom of God can function without you and me but it functions better when we are doing “our thing.”**

On July 2, 1986 the city of Philadelphia was brought to its knees because of the municipal workers strike. Because of this strike garbage piled up in the city, hospitals were crippled, many businesses in the city were closed and routine maintenance on roads, bridges and buildings was halted.

Citation: PHILADELPHIA SERVICES STRIKE A CHALLENGE FOR THE MAYOR, by: Lindsey Gruson, New York Times, July 2, 1986.

The “small and seemingly insignificant things” that we sometimes overlook are really not “**small things**” at all.

Every follower of Christ has a personal and important part in the Kingdom of God.

We would do well to discover “**our function**” — discover our thing to be done in the Body of Christ— and do it!

**How do we discover our function in the Body of Christ?**

**We have a Spiritual Gifts survey anyone can take. This survey gives insight to what our gifts are and how they are fleshed out in our lives.**

## Ten questions to consider as we seek to determine our function in the Body of Christ:

1. What are my passions?
2. What are my gifts?
3. What are my abilities?
4. What are my educational strongpoints?
5. What experiences have most influenced my life?
6. What resources do I have?
7. What personal relationships have influenced my life?
8. Has there been a recent transition, defining moment, or significant change in my life?
9. What opportunities has God given me?
10. What are my motives?

When we consider these questions we get a clear picture of our function in the Body of Christ.

## The Church becomes an unstoppable force when we Function Correctly.

The Church becomes an unstoppable force when we:

### 2. Cooperate toward the Greatest Good v.5

“ . . . in the same way we who are many are one body in Christ and individually members of one another.” CSB

As followers of Christ we are part of something bigger than ourselves.

**1 Corinthians 12:14-18, 27** “Indeed, the body is not one part but many. 15 If the foot should say, “Because I’m not a hand, I don’t belong to the body,” it is not for that reason any less a part of the body. 16 And if the ear should say, “Because I’m not an eye, I don’t belong to the body,” it is not for that reason any less a part of the body. 17 If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? 18 But as it is, God has arranged each one of the

parts in the body just as he wanted. 27 Now you are the body of Christ, and individual members of it. CSB

**What does many cooperating toward the greatest good really look like?**

**It looks like the Apollo 11 landing on the moon.**

After NASA Apollo 11's incredible feat of sending three men to the surface of the moon in June of 1969, astronaut **Michael Collins said, "All this is possible only through the blood, sweat, and tears of thousands of people... All you see are the three of us, but underneath the surface are thousands and thousands of others."** According to author **Catherine Thimmesh there were about 400,000 others who helped with the Apollo 11 mission.**

In her book **Team Moon**, Thimmesh shares stories of these hidden heroes —spacesuit seamstresses, radio telescope operators, parachute designers and others who made it possible to get men to the moon, get them home, and let the rest of the world watch while it happened. At Kennedy Space Center, some 17,000 engineers, mechanics, soldiers, contractors and other workers set up the enormous missile for the launch. Then there were the "Two guys named Bob"—the guys in Houston monitoring just how little fuel was left in the lunar module during its descent to the surface. **Team Moon** also included a 24-year-old "computer whiz kid Jack Garman" who helped work through worrisome computer glitches during the Eagle 's landing. The computer code that ran all the systems was developed by a team of software engineers at MIT' led by Margaret Hamilton. Roughly 500 people worked on the space suit, including one seamstress who commented, "We didn't worry too much until the guys on the moon started jumping up and down. And that gave us a little bit of an eyebrow twitch."

No wonder astronaut Neil Armstrong would later say that as he took his first step on the moon he immediately thought about all those 400,000 people who had given him the opportunity to make that first step.

Citation: Catherine Thimmesh. **Team Moon** (HMH Books for Young Readers, 2015)

As followers of Christ we are not alone in the work. We are woven together for one common cause— “The work of the Kingdom of God.”

## **We are better together!**

When as God's people work with unity and cooperation we can and will accomplish great things.

## **The Church becomes an unstoppable force when we Cooperate toward the greatest good.**

The Church becomes an unstoppable force when we:

### **3. Understand our Differences Make us Better vv.6-8**

“According to the grace given to us, we have different gifts: If prophecy, use it according to the proportion of one's faith; 7 if service, use it in service; if teaching, in teaching; 8 if exhorting, in exhortation; giving, with generosity; leading, with diligence; showing mercy, with cheerfulness.” CSB

**Psalm 139:13-16** “For it was you who created my inward parts; you knit me together in my mother's womb. 14 I will praise you because I have been remarkably and wondrously made. Your works are wondrous, and I know this very well. 15 My bones were not hidden from you when I was made in secret, when I was formed in the depths of the earth. 16 Your eyes saw me when I was formless; all my days were written in your book and planned before a single one of them began.” CSB

God created us, and we are fearfully and wonderfully made.

God created us with gifts so that we could accomplish His work according to His will for our lives.

Three Observations about our differences:

#### **A. We are Unique because of our differences v.6a**

“According to the grace given to us, we have different gifts.” CSB

The phrase translated “**different gifts**” comes from the Greek words—

“**Diaphoros**” meaning distinct, outstanding, excellent, and valuable.

“**Charismata**” meaning divine capacity, talent, genius, capability given freely by God for every Follower of Christ to serve Him.

There is no one else like you! There is no one else like me!

No one else has my experience, No one else has my story, No one else has the same opportunities. You are and I am the only one of multiplied billions of people who have ever lived. This is our span of time on the earth. This is the space where God has placed us. These are our people.

We are connected by God’s design and His purpose to Make Disciples, Baptize Disciples and Teach Disciples.

Three Observations about our differences:

## **B. We are Significant because of our differences v.6b**

There is no one else who can do what God has created you and me to do.

We have been given gifts according to the grace of God.

The unique abilities, qualities, and characteristics that God has given us allows us to make significant contributions to the Kingdom of God.

The gifts we have been given should be utilized with **honor** and **humility** as we seek to Advance God’s Kingdom on the earth.

Anything we accomplish for the Kingdom of God we do it for His glory and His Honor not our own!

Three Observations about our differences:

## **C. We are Called to Identify and Utilize our differences vv.6b-8**

God has given us gifts to serve Him.

Notice the seven “**let him**” statements found in verses 6-8.

If a man's gift is prophesying, **let him use it** in proportion to his faith.

7 If it is serving, **let him serve**; if it is teaching, **let him teach**;

8 if it is encouraging, **let him encourage**; if it is contributing to the needs of others, **let him give generously**; if it is leadership, **let him govern diligently**; if it is showing mercy, **let him do it cheerfully**.

God did not give us different gifts just so that we could be different.

**God gave us different gifts so that we could serve Him according to His plan for our lives!**

## Conclusion

The Church becomes an unstoppable force to advance God’s Kingdom on the earth when we:

**Function Correctly**

**Cooperate for the Greatest Good**

**Understand our Differences Make us Better**

**We are better together!**