

Being Part of the Body

Romans 12:1-8 NLT One of our goals is to have our minds conformed to the message of the gospel.

- I. Thinking rightly about yourself.
 - a. Not too highly. We live in a day where self-esteem is emphasized as if thinking more highly about yourself is a virtue. American students are in the lower third for math proficiency yet have much more confidence about their math skills than students in South Korea who perform much higher.
 - i. Spiritually – We are all sinners who needed the mercy of God. Whether we were rebellious or religious, equally under God's judgment and all need Christ to be saved. The ground is level at the cross. *Romans 12:16 ESV "Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position.^[a] Do not be conceited."
 - ii. Embrace interdependence. The Pacific Golden Plover – it's a 90 hour flight, but they only have gasoline for 70 hours. They make up the 20 hours by flying in a V. Dependent and interdependent by design. You can make it to heaven but end up 20 hours short of the fulness God wanted for your life.
 - iii. The Amalekite war. Jehovah Nissi – Exodus 17:10-13 ESV "So Joshua did as Moses told him, and fought with Amalek, while Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. ¹¹Whenever Moses held up his hand, Israel prevailed, and whenever he lowered his hand, Amalek prevailed. ¹²But Moses' hands grew weary, so they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat on it, while Aaron and Hur held up his hands, one on one side, and the other on the other side. So his hands were steady until the going down of the sun. ¹³And Joshua overwhelmed Amalek and his people with the sword." *Who was the key person? All of them – if any don't do their part, Israel loses. We win together or we lose together. *My prayer shield.
 - b. Not too low. God hasn't just saved you; He's gifted you by His grace. Ephesians 2:10 NLT "For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago." We all have an assignment from God – a program of good works He planned for us to walk in – but they're different. You are unique and your part is important!
 - c. Sober – not too high and not too low.
 - i. 1Corinthians 12:21 ESV "The eye cannot say to the hand, 'I have no need of you,' nor again the head to the feet, 'I have no need of you.'"

- ii. 1Corinthians 12:15-16 ESV “If the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body. ¹⁶And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body.”

II. What has God put in you?

- a. 1Corinthians 12:18 ESV “God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose.”
 - i. This is past tense. In 1Corinthians 12 Paul talks first about gifts and then about ministries – if we don’t distinguish between them we’ll be confused. The supernatural gifts are the gifts of the Holy Spirit – they are present, can be manifested in anyone, and are to be valued and desired – that’s a different sermon for a different day.
 - ii. Romans 12 and the end of 1Corinthians 12 talk about ministries – or our part – Romans 12 are usually referred to as the motivational gifts.
- b. Ministry or motivational gifts – different values and perspectives on what humans need and what the church is supposed to be.
 - i. The church is a hospital. People are broken by their sin and need someone to go to them, not with judgment, but with a message of mercy. Come as you are! Jesus is the great physician who wants to heal you. Gift of kindness or mercy in most translations revealing God’s heart for us in our brokenness.
 - ii. The church is a family. People are lonely and rejected, they need a place to belong. Jesus came to bring us to the Father and remove the orphan spirit so we could be accepted apart from performance and know that we are in the family. Gift of encouragement and serving. 90 volunteers for VBS – thank you! Each Sunday – greeters, hosts, children’s workers, coffee makers and cleaners, worship teams and AV teams – thank you for making this a family where people are welcome!
 - iii. The church is a school. People are believing lies that are keeping them in darkness. Jesus wants us to teach them the truth in every area of their life so they can be free and stay free. Gift of teaching.
 - iv. The church is an army. People in the world are lost and going to hell. We need to go out in the dynamic power of the Holy Spirit, preach the gospel, and call people to repentance. God wants the harvest to come in. Leadership and prophetic.
- c. Which of these is true? Which of these is most important? All of them are both! We need to discover our value and represent it while making room for all the other values. *2020 day away – soft to hard – we were a

balance. I'm definitely army so usually need to slow down! Alice and I, the field marshal and the healer – help us work together, dear God!

III. We discover what's in us by doing.

- a. Test, discern, learn what the will of God is. *What you are good at – psychologists call it flow, we refer to it as your wheelhouse. Step out and try things. The gift of giving - finances support God's hospital, family, school, and army. We're all called to give, but some have been trusted with a lot of resources to steward – let them do so with generosity for God loves a cheerful giver. *The river is flowing – this week our elders approved a large donation to Venezuela – we gave it through Lighthouse Church. This happens all year long – family meetings we let you know.
- b. The paralysis of analysis.
 - i. Age – I'm too young – Jeremiah and Timothy; I'm too old - Caleb, and Daniel, Simeon and Anna. Abraham stepped out at 75. I don't see Nancy Van Maren slowing down!
 - ii. Hurt – I've been wounded so I can't contribute right now. Hurt people hurt people so I don't want to multiply the wounds. I'm struggling to forgive. *Job prayed for others while he was still in his pain – just because you're hurt doesn't mean you need to minister out of your hurt. If we have to be perfectly healed to minister then no one would do anything.
 - iii. Discouraged – I tried but failed. I tried but wasn't appreciated. I stepped out and became proud. I was on the worship team but hated the attacks afterwards. Aren't you glad Peter got back up after his failure?
 - iv. Insignificant – one talent – others have more to give than little old me. I give myself permission to only watch.
 - v. I'm the wrong sex. Acts 2:17-18 NLT “In the last days,’ God says, ‘I will pour out my Spirit upon all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy. Your young men will see visions, and your old men will dream dreams. In those days I will pour out my Spirit even on my servants—men and women alike— and they will prophesy.” Psalm 68:11 NASB “The Lord gives the command; The women who proclaim good news are a great army...” But what about? 1Corinthians 14:34-35 NLT “Women should be silent during the church meetings. It is not proper for them to speak. They should be submissive, just as the law says. ³⁵ If they have any questions, they should ask their husbands at home, for it is improper for women to speak in church meetings.” “Pastor Tom, we supposedly honor the word of God so why are you letting women speak in the pulpit?

1. Women were discouraged from learning – no women rabbis and a rabbi couldn't teach a woman that wasn't his wife. The gospel liberated them but they needed to learn.
2. Paul wants to reach Jews who would be offended by a woman speaking. "As the law says..." 1Cor. 9:20-22 NIV "To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. ²¹To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law), so as to win those not having the law. To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some."
3. Leadership – to protect the flock and to release the flock in their callings. Anne, Sarah, and Angela – Sophie Vankuken in 1927 – hundred year anniversary.

c. Breaking free from paralysis.

- i. In view of His mercy offer your bodies as living sacrifices. Let's get over ourselves and be all in – whether it's for one or one thousand. Jesus you are worthy of me getting back in the game.
- ii. Not for Him, with Him. "Draw me after you and let us run together." Identity before assignment. The one thing – not pleasing Martha or someone else who has expectations – Jesus, anything for you – help me hear Your voice, help me know it's You, and help me to be promptly obedient. Advice: Never tell God you won't do something!