

## Romans 12: 3-5 - We Are One Body In Christ – 4 November 2012

But this morning I like us to begin with a simple exercise, a simple activity. I know it's a little bit difficult to do it in a big group like this, but I need your full cooperation and I hope you will participate along and be a very sportive and cooperative people. First off, I'd like to divide you into groups all right, I'll divide you maybe into some 7 or 8 groups , all right? All right, you all have a building block today and they are all imprinted with these words-"I am gifted by God". Alright, I hope you have it . Now, what I want you to do now is each group your task, is to build the highest building. And group leaders, you will lead your groups to build the highest building. From where I am I will see which is the tallest building, all right? I give you all 3 minutes to build the tallest building in GLCC all right? Leaders, please take over. There can only be one winner. Everybody thinks he's the winner! Ok la, let's not say who wins, all right? OK la, Ok la. I think the clear winner is group 7! (Audience : Yay!) I know it was not equal in a sense as not everybody has the same number of blocks. But I wanted to illustrate a spiritual lesson. Anybody here can tell me what spiritual lesson can you learn from here? Unity is strength okay, good, anything else? It's our gifts- use our gifts to build the church. Anything else? Diversity, ok , very good. We all have different blocks, different colors, different shapes, all needed to build a building. Anything else? Does this lesson point you to a passage of the Bible?

Anybody heard of 1Peter chapter 2 and verse 4, how Peter declares that we are all living stones built up as a spiritual house. It takes all of us to be part of the spiritual house, the temple, the inhabitation of God. The Bible does not only tell us, we are spiritual blocks, spiritual stones that build up the house. The Bible actually tells you, we have a more intimate relationship one with another, than that. The Bible says in Romans chapter 12 and verse 5 that we are all members of the body of Christ. Looking at all of us, we are fitted together. This is a marvelous spiritual reality, that God has fitted all those who who believe in Jesus together in the same body of Christ. When Jesus saves us, when God saves us, we are not saved to live alone, God has saved us into an intimate, deep spiritual connection in the body of Christ and that's what I want us to think about today, that we are one body in Christ.

In my life, I've been greatly blessed by the body of Christ. I've been greatly blessed by the church. The church today is the body of God's people and I have been greatly blessed since I was saved, I was fitted into a fellowship group, the youth fellowship group and in that group, I learned I was blessed, I have opportunities to serve, I went on to serve in the spiritual families, I was involved in the Chinese ministry, the Filipino brethren. Today, I'm serving in particular with the young adults and with the

better halfers and throughout my 18 years journey as a child of God, I rejoice that God has given me the church, the body of Christ. I'm not saved and to study the Bible by myself, to pray by myself, to serve by myself , but he has given me brothers and sisters in Christ, and that is a blessing that sometimes we as Christians forget. This week in Your Voice, in the newsletter, we've a writeup about a particular small group, a SF, a spiritual family.

Ivan wrote this. He is a member, he's a participant in one of these groups and as he reflects upon the journey in the spiritual family, he says he thanks God that he could gather together with brethren to read, to study, to grow, to pray. And as they grow together, they as a people, as a group now serve together. God gave them a burden for the Jerusalem, for the loved ones, for the parents and as a SF, as a spiritual family, they are connected with each other, strengthened by each other and now go out together.

I say, you can't get that if you are living your Christian life alone. It is never God's will for us to live our Christian life alone. God has given us the church, the body of Christ. My wife has just gone on with a journey with some young mothers here, in a young mothers' group and this week was their final week together. And she shared with me that it has been a blessing for her to gather with the young mothers, as a group, as they connect in their lives together. They offer accountability to help each other grow in Jesus and she has been. I think many of you today we have been in small groups, have been in the body life of the church, you would say, God has blessed me. But there maybe some of you today who are sitting by the sidelines watching what's happening. You come every Sunday and you look at your Christian life and it doesn't seem to be what it ought to be. You say why? I think it's because we got to realize God has saved us and placed us into the body. It is an important spiritual reality.

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I see 2 groups of people in church. I see a group of people who are deeply connected to the body life. They serve one another. They grow together, they pray together, they study together and people who are connected to the body life, I see them joyful. I see them fruitful. I see them growing in Jesus and then I see another group. Maybe all they have time for is Sunday service attendance and I see that generally they are not as joyful, not as fruitful. Of course, there are exceptions both sides. But in general, I see that the group that follows the teaching of the Bible, that understands body life, they do much better spiritually than those who are not connected. Some of us may

think that being part of the church in our body life, I am not talking about Sunday service. I'm talking about knowing one another, serving one another, connecting with one another. I think that some of us who think that connecting in the body life is an option, we can have. I'm suggesting to you, it is not an option you can have, it is a necessity! You must be!

See, when Paul speaks about this verse, this is the context here. He speaks of this as the number 1, as the number 1 practical thing you need to realize if you are to present your bodies a living sacrifice. Romans 12 verse 1 says, I beseech you therefore by the mercies of God that you present your bodies a living sacrifice. Wow, it sounds so abstract! What does it mean to be a living sacrifice? He says this is the one thing you need to do. The 1st thing you need to do is that if you are to live unto God, you've got to connect and serve the church of God. You've got to realize that God has placed you, designed you, determined that you will be part of his body. It's the number 1 thing. Look at Romans 12, its the 1st thing, its the 1st practical thing. If we say we love God, if we say we want to worship God, if we say we want to give our lives to Jesus, then he says serve my people in the church, that's what it is.

Hey friends, I speak to you as a brother, I speak to you as a pastor, my heart aches when I see people struggling in a Christian life alone. Why? Why do you need to struggle through Christianity alone? You can have brothers and sisters that will come along with you. And why do you want to live your life alone when God has gifted you to serve others? Don't miss this. God is so good to give us Jesus. God is so good to give us his Holy Spirit. God is so good to give us the Bible today. And let me tell you, God is so good to give us his church. Today we are going to consider what does it take for us to be one body in Christ. All of us different people, all kinds of backgrounds, but together we are one body in Christ. I want to encourage you, every single one of you today to deeply consider - am I really intimately connected to the body here in GLCC, here that God has placed me. Not just attendance, but a real connection. If we are to be connected, there are some things you need to realize. Number 1, you've got to realize something about yourself. Number 2, you've got to realize something about others. And then number 3, you've got to realize that these two, you and others got to fit together because that's what it means to be one body in Christ.

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So I want to encourage you today, very simple outline. Number 1, to think of ourselves accurately. I will explain what it means later. Number 2, to think of others appreciatively. Very simple- think of ourselves accurately think of others

appreciatively and number 3 think of one another applicatively. So very simple outline, You, Others, Together.

Let's start. 1st of all, let's think of ourselves accurately. The Bible says in Romans 12 verse 3 that we are to think soberly. The word soberly means to think clearly. To think with the right mind, to think with clarity, to think accurately. You see, when a man is not sober, when a man is drunk, he does not think of himself properly. He has an exaggerated inflated view about himself. When you're drunk, you would think that you are the strongest man alive, isn't it? I could take on 10 men, you think that you're invincible and you go into a fight until the next morning when you are sobered up, you realize that you are not Superman! Because you have a broken nose, a broken arm and a broken leg. You see, the night before, when you were drunk, you were not sober. You think of yourself as someone more highly than you should. But when you are sober, you see yourself more accurately. You see that you are but flesh and blood. You see yourself correctly. In the church, there are some people who have exaggerated inflated views about themselves. They are lifted up in pride. Maybe because they're good at some things. Some of us, you may be good at preaching and therefore you think of yourself as the most important person, the special one. The prima donna of the church. Some of us, maybe because we serve more than others. We feel that by our sacrifice, we are better. I'm the one! Some of us, because we've been longer in the church or we give more to the church, we receive special treatment. Now the Bible says, please, don't have this attitude, this viewpoint that is exaggerated, don't think of yourself more highly than you should think. But you think clearly, soberly. What does it mean to think clearly and soberly? It's to think and to realize that all that you have today is given by God in the 1st place. He says, according as God has dealt to every man the measure of faith. It is God who distributes his grace. It is God who gives you the enabling. Paul himself exemplified it. He said, "I am an apostle, but what I'm going to speak to you is not because I am better than you, but it's through the grace given unto me." So here he is living that life of humility before us. You see, pride is a danger, it's a killer to a healthy body life. You can't really be part of the church body life if you have an over inflated view about yourself.

This week, I was preparing all these blocks for all of you. I brought it home, bought some buckets full of these wooden blocks and my son helped me to do it. He was such a darling. "Daddy, I want to help you!, Daddy, I want to help you!" And he really very, very diligently helped me through it all. He unpacked all the blocks and I was responsible to chop all the blocks with the words. 1st time I'm using these stamps, rubber stamps where you have to fit the individual letters. And so in the

beginning I was a bit lazy. And I said, just chop - "I'm gifted." Just the 1st phrase. But as I chop, chop, chop, chop, I realize that it just doesn't sound very right. "I'm gifted" is not enough because when people are reminded- I'm gifted -we can be drunk with pride. I am gifted! And, so I thought, let's do a little bit more and add a few more letters. "I'm gifted by God." You see when you realize "I'm gifted" but it's a gifting by God, it brings us to a more sober, accurate assessment about ourselves. That I by myself am nothing. But who I am today is purely the grace of God! I didn't deserve it. I didn't deserve salvation. I didn't deserve the gifts in my life. It is God who sovereignly, graciously gives it. Humbles me, humbles me. None of us today are who we are because we are capable, but it's all the grace of God.

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So this morning, if you want to have a healthy body life, begin by having an accurate assessment about ourselves. Begin by seeing ourselves as products of God's grace. So with your blocks today, I hope you have all your blocks with you. Can you lift it up? Can you lift up all your blocks? Thank you so much. Lift up one block alright? Lift up your block and say with me, alright? "I am saved by grace, I am gifted by grace. We are all saved by grace, we are all gifted by grace." Stare at this block. And this block is a souvenir for you for this week at least. I know some of you will be wondering, what should I do with this? I suggest you put it on your office table right there, remind yourself- I am a block, I am a part of the spiritual house, I am a part of the body of Christ and I have been gifted by God to be part of this body. But you see, this is what it takes. Number 1, we need to think of ourselves accurately.

Number 2, we need to think of others appreciatively because Paul now invokes the imagery of the body and the body is an interesting organism. Because the body is so diverse, the body is made of so many different kinds of organs and parts. The eye is very different from the toe. The brain is very different from the stomach. We all appreciate the fact that this body is complete and beautiful because it is so diverse. You agree with me? The body is diverse. The eyes functions in a different way from the intestines. The hand functions in a different way from the ear, it is different and it is necessary to be different, so that the body is complete and it is a beautiful picture of how we all are very different. There is no thumbprint that is alike today in the world, right? Unless... even left and right are also different. There is no thumb print that is exactly alike in this world. And it is said that there is no snowflake that is alike in this world. And let me say this, there is no Christian that is alike in this world. In this small little place, all of us, we are all very different. I dare say we are all very different. We have different color skin, we have different educational

backgrounds. We have different passions, some of you are really good with people. Some of you are really good with paperwork. We have different gifts. Some of you are great in the ministry of serving people. Some of you are just touched by God to serve in ministries of mercy and giving. We are all different. We have different temperaments, some of you are melancholic, some of you are natural optimists, but all of us, we have different backgrounds, experiences, make up, to make us who we are today. Very diverse, very unique. You are very special. God did not make us from a same mould, we are all uniquely, wonderfully and fearfully made by God. We are all different and we all have different functions. All members have not the same function. The word office there is, "praxis", which is the word practice or function. We all have different functions. And a healthy body life requires an accurate thinking about myself and an appreciative thinking of the others. You see, there is a tendency for us to despise others who are not like us. Hey, you're not like me, I'm better than you in this! But you see a healthy body life requires a healthy regard for others. And though we are different, we are all important in God's eyes. And we all have a function to play, a role to play in the church, in the body of Christ.

Many, many years ago, there's this debate between the different body parts about who is the most important in the body. And so the eye says, "I am the most important because without me, you cannot see." And so all the body parts kowtow to the eye and say, "Yea, you're right, you are very important." But then the mouth comes along and says, "Without me, you cannot communicate." And so everybody say, "Ya, mouth you are very important." The ear stakes his claim. The stomach says without me, you would die. The intestines also stakes its claim and so every part of the human body says we are important. I am important. Until it is the turn of the backside. The backside declares I am very important and every part of the human body laughed at backside. "You smelly backside, you are a nobody. You are smelly, you are ugly, you are a nobody. You are not important. And everybody laughs at backside. Mr. Backside became very grieved in his heart, If he has a heart . It becomes very upset and so he says, since you don't appreciate me, I'm going to shut up for 3 months. And come the end of 3 months, all the human parts of the body come and kowtow to backside and says, "You are very important. You are very important.". Now, this is a crude way of describing or illustrating to you, I suppose, there may be parts that are not so glamorous. There may be human parts that may not be so prominent and glorious. But every part of us, every single member in the body of Christ is important. Now not many of us want to be the armpit or the foot or whatever. But we are all important. And if we are to have a healthy body life, we need to embrace diversity.

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We need to realize different people are good at different things and we need to appreciate each other and love each other as we should. It's all important, it's all important. We are interdependent. Do you realize that when you're not doing what God wants you to do the body suffers? Do you realize that if your big toe is fractured, it maybe just the big toe but the whole body is in disequilibrium because of the big toe. And we need each other. If the stomach decides to pack up, the whole body suffers. We must appreciate each other and we can depend and we must depend on one other. Suppose today, imagine my finger, some of you come up and you get a knife and chop off my finger. What happens is that there is terrible agony. The finger is now wriggling and struggling there, you imagine on the stage, it's just jumping like a lizard. It's wriggling there and it's bleeding and soon it dies. But what's worse is that poor Jason here struggles in pain. "OOOH." And even after the pain is over, I'm severely handicapped. That's what happens when we don't appreciate each other. That's what happens when the body is not deeply connected, you'll struggle on your own and the rest of the church is in pain and is limping along because you're not really with us.

In order for us to have a healthy body life, Paul is saying, number 1, let's think of ourselves accurately and number 2, let's think of others appreciatively. Hey, we got to regard each other, serve each other, help each other. What is unique about this human body? Let me illustrate to bring this 2 points together is this, we are all made up of human cells, right? Biology. The human body is made up of organs and organs are made up of cells, C-E-L-L-S. They're small living organisms that when they fit together they form an organ to fulfill a function, and the organs are packed together to form the body. That's how God has designed it. The basic building block is cells, but the unique thing about cells is that they're all very different. The brain cell is different from the stomach cells, it's different from the muscular cells, it's different from the heart cells, it's different from nerve cells. They are all different, but yet all are in unity together. Why? What links all our cells together? Can I ask you? What links, connects all our cells together?

(0:25:04.7)\*\*\*\*\*. Are you sure? Yes la, yes la, Ok, hahaha, ok, what links all of us together is our DNA our genes. All your cells contain a genetic code that is unique to you. Your cells contain a genetic code that is unique to you. And because we all have the same DNA in all our cells, this body works together. Although the cells are very diverse, they do different things. The brain cells are used to think, the muscle cells are used to exert or to create movements. All the cells, though different, are

united because of the same DNA. It's a picture of how all of us, though very different are united in Jesus Christ. However, sometimes cells become very naughty. They can become very selfish. They ignore what the natural DNA tells them to do. They go into a kind of mutiny or rebellion. So what happens is that this cell, instead of being a part of the body, in a sense it receives from the body and it gives to the body, the cell decides to be selfish. It decides just to feed, but it will not give and what happens is that the body now becomes deformed. This is a picture of a deformed part of the body. This is a picture of a young boy who has this lump at the back of his..- at his back. You feel it: it's soft and when you perform surgery and you take it out, It looks like this. Medical school students, what is this?

Ah, very good, give them a round of applause. You all don't know what she said right? But she said it's a fat tumour, we call it a lipoma. A lipoma is a tumour, it's basically a growth, that has in a sense disobeyed the body's DNA instructions and decide to grow and multiply itself without giving out so it just proliferates, proliferates and it becomes a globule and it becomes a tumour called a lipoma. Now this lipoma is still not very harmful because it respects boundaries. It does not invade other cells. It stays where it is but the problem is it keeps feeding without giving up. So this is a picture of it on microscopy. The cells are all filled with fats, all filled with oil. You cut it, it's very oily. "Ewww." Some of us have lipoma here. But there are times where the cells go even more chaotic, they become even more rebellious, they totally disregard their neighbours and the cells now began to invade into others and this is what the psychology of the cells would be like. They begin to invade other cells. They become disrespectful and what happens is these cells now turn what? Cancerous. A cancer cell is a cell that does not regard its inhibitions. It does not follow its DNA, it has mutated. \*\*\*\*\*(0:28:38.1) It doesn't listen anymore and it just wants to do its own thing. So, it spreads, its aggressive. It sucks in the nutrients from the whole body, but all he wants is to grow himself. And so this is a picture of a cancerous tumor. Someone in the 1st service said it's a strawberry; I can't believe it. This is a fat cell cancer. Fat cell cancer- What's it called? Liposarcoma. So you say, what am I talking about ? I am talking about liposides. Liposides are fat cells. When they are so following the DNA instructions, it stays there, it is useful. When you are hungry, when you are struggling, when you don't have enough nutrients, the fat cells release the fats for you. But when it becomes disobedient, it becomes lipoma. And when it becomes even more rebellious, it becomes liposarcoma. You say what? \*\*\*\*\* (0:29:40.0). Liposides, Lipoma, Liposarcoma. Obedient, Selfish, Destructive.

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And what happens is that this liposarcoma sucks from the entire body until the patient is absolutely thinned out. I think this is a picture of the kind of members in the body of Christ. Now we all should be like liposides, fat cells. Yes, we are blessed in church, we receive the teaching of God's Word, we receive the prayers of people, we receive encouragement from one another, that's great. And there are times where I give up and I must continuously fulfill my function in the body. I want to serve. I want to be a blessing and there is a wonderful exchange, dynamic, that takes place in the body of Christ. But some begins to disregard the DNA, some fail to think of themselves accurately and fail to think of others appreciatively and they become lipoma and they just want to suck. They come to church with this mentality - What can you give me? What can I receive out of this? What is there for me in church? I'm not willing to lift a finger, but all I want is to be fed. I want to be a lipoma and when rebellion deepens, he becomes a liposarcoma, he becomes a destructive influence in the church because he disregards his DNA code, in Jesus Christ. If we are to have a beautiful body of Christ, lipomas need to be excised, liposarcomas need to be removed and all of us should understand what it takes to be a healthy part of this body, that is, number 1, have humility to understand that we are nobodies, we are sinners saved by grace, we are people gifted by grace. And then we need to realize that everyone has a function and a role to play in the body of Christ. And we need to love one another, we need to appreciate one another. That's the mindset that needs to be in place for us.

But thirdly, let me move on. If we are to be one body in Christ, we need to think applicatively. What it means is this- unity, healthy body living is not just in the mind, its got to be in the hands. What it means is that this is not just about how you see things, but also how you serve one another. You see this is what Paul says in verses 6 to 8, which will come in next week in detail. Paul says, God has placed all of us in his body and he has gifted all of us differently, now get to serve. How do I connect with my brothers and sisters in Christ? We are all seated here this morning listening to the sermon. Let me tell you this, you begin to connect to the body when you are willing and you get to serving one another. How do you serve? Serve in your area of giftedness. You say, how do I discover my giftedness? You've got to come next Sunday, but the principle you need to grasp today is that in order to have a healthy body life it comes to a very practical level, serving one another. Serving one another in love, because this means you realize you're nobody that has been gifted by God for a purpose. This means that you value others, you're not being a lipoma, you are not being a liposarcoma. You're being a healthy liposide that would give to others, serve others, it is as practical as this, folks. Serve one another! But you say, Pastor, are you

sure that I can serve? I have not been to Bible school, I don't have Bible training. What am I supposed to do? I thought ministry is to be done by the pastors and the preachers and the elders and the deacons. We are all spectators. No, No, No, sitting on a chair is not a ministry. Warming the seat is not a ministry. Ministry is serving one another and ministry is for everyone. If you have believed in Jesus as your Savior, let me say this to you, you have been equipped to serve. Why? Just look at the building block I gave you. Look at it and see what it says- I am gifted by God. It's not He is gifted by God. It's not They are gifted by God. It's not Pastor is gifted by God. It's- I am gifted by God. This is what Scripture teaches. We all have a role to play and we all have been shaped to play the same role. You see, some of us, we think of church as a country club. And our name ,GLCC ,can easily be Gospel Light Country Club. We attend membership classes, we sign up as a member, we give some money to keep this church afloat financially, but we decide for ourselves whether we want to come or whether we want to go. Aiyah, there will be management committee that will run the club one lah. This year CC club very good, every Sunday there is a show. Pastor puts up a show, you come and watch the show la. And after the show, you go back you feel shiok! This is not country club, we are a body. The body doesn't just watch the mouth move. As the mouth moves, the nerves move, the stomach moves, intestines move, the blood circulatory system moves, the heart moves. Everything is working together for the body to grow and thrive, but so many of us have this mindset- I'm a spectator, I can't serve and so let's watch them serve. And you know what, the body just limps along. Why is Jesus not lifted up amongst our people? Why is not the church moving as it should? We need better preaching, sure we always need better preaching. We need better leaders, sure, we always need better leaders. But this is it! Are we moving as a people? Are we all connected? Are we all serving? Are we all serving one another? That's the key! Church is about you. Jesus is not just the Savior of my life, Jesus is the Savior of your life and he has saved you to serve. He has saved you to be in his body, that we may be inter dependent on one another, and as we serve each other, we build up one another. The body grows. So many of us failed to grasp, we are not here as lipomas. We are here to contribute. We think of church as a place where we gain, we grab. But let me tell you, church is where you give. Church is where you contribute, church is where we serve one another. This is where we work, we labor. We are the Army, folks. The Bible never told us we are a cinema, the Bible speaks of a body, speaks of an army, it speaks of work, it speaks of labour. Moody himself said "A great many people have a false idea about the church. They have the idea that the church is a place to rest in, to get into a nicely cushioned pew. Today, even better, nicely cushioned chair, individual, air con, great lights and everything. And contribute to charities, listen to the minister or the

preacher and do their share to keep the church out of bankruptcy. This is all they want. The idea of work for them, service for them, actual ministry in the church never enters their mind."

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I read a shocking statistic in the States about American churches where only 10% of the church is involved in serving one another. 10%! If my body works 10%, I'll be dead. If your heart works 10%, you'll be dead. If your brain works 10%, you'll be gone. Somehow this body of Christ, this spiritual body failed to grasp, we need to go all in. I believe ministry is all in, you either believe it or you don't. Don't give half hearted things. The body of Christ needs to be all in, in order for it to grow. At the end of this song, Onward Christian Soldiers, anyone heard of this song? How do you sing Onward Christian Soldiers? Onward Christian soldiers, marching as to war.. and you know the rest, right? But let me tell you a more exciting version, which is more relevant for us. A more accurate description of the church, alright? and sing together with me la. It goes like this, back word Christian soldiers, fleeing from the fight, with the cross of Jesus, nearly out of sight. Christ our rightful master, stands against the fold, onward into battle, we seem afraid to go... ok,cut the singing. But this song is appropriate for many church, for many of us, backward Christian soldiers, and let me show you stanza 2. Sit here then ye people, join our sleeping throng, Blend with ours, your voices in a feeble song. Every morning we gather to worship, we sing with a feeble voice. Blessings, ease and comfort ask from Christ the King, but with our modern thinking we won't do a thing. Like a mighty tortoise, moves the Church of God. Brothers, we are treading where we've often trod. (Same old things, comfort zones.) We are much divided,many bodies we. Having different doctrines, but not much charity. (Not much love for one another.) Backward Christian soldiers, fleeing from the fight, With the cross of Jesus, nearly out of sight. Maybe you agree with me. this is more an accurate description of the church today than Onward Christian soldiers. Because many of us have gone AWOL, you know AWOL? Absent Without Official Leave. In SAF, if you go AWOL, you are going to be put in DB ( detention barracks). But in the church, somehow, when we go AWOL, nobody cares. And so we perpetuate that AWOL lifestyle, we join the sleeping throng, and what happens is that the church becomes not a mighty Fortress but a mighty tortoise, just slowly trudging along. Is that God's will? No. So what should we do about it? I ask you, what will you do about it? What will you do about it? My friends, this week I want to challenge you once again. I want you take this block back home, place it on the table, stare at it if you want. Reflect upon what it says- I am gifted by God. The gifts are not accidental, your life is not an accident. It is intentional. God made you the way you

are. God gave you the experiences of life. God gave you the backgrounds, the resources, the giftings. And you have been done and you have been so prepared intentionally by God. So realize, 'I'm gifted by God' and pray this prayer- 'Lord, let me serve. I am gifted by you, Lord, let me serve.' Don't let it this be just theory, please. I'm gifted by God, I'm gifted by God. But I'm not going to do anything for the kingdom of God. Oh no, think applicatively, think to apply truth to life. Think to be not just a hearer, but a doer. Pray that God will lead you to see needs all around. It may be a brother or sister struggling, serve. It may be a need to teach some young people, step in. It may be children that need to be equipped in Scripture, help them. In whatever areas that God would lead you in this week ask him to lead you and allow you to take the steps of faith in obedience. This is what it is. Take this block, remind yourself, Lord, let me serve. Let me encourage you, every Sunday morning, you know every Sunday morning, after service, I sometimes go like a broken recorder. I keep reminding you about youth, young adults, young families, better halfers, why? I have nothing better to say? In a sense I have nothing better to say, yes. Because this is the most important thing to say. You have the RPGs of life - the Reading the Praying, the Growth of life. But let me say to you, you won't be who God wants you to be if you're not connected to the body life. Start by participating in these life groups because church is about body, its about a living dynamic organism. It's not about attendance, so be part of the lives of people and begin in small groups. I want to thank God for all our small group leaders, discipleship group leaders here. You serve a very, very important ministry- building life, but you don't serve alone. This ministry is shared by all the participants and come and share in this ministry together. When the liver cells gather together, the liver functions well. When the heart cells gather together, the heart functions well. And we need you to gather together to serve one another, that the body maybe built up.

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And, I want to encourage you to take simple steps, just talk to someone you know in church who is in the lifegroup and ask him about that. And see how you can join, speak to the leaders, speak to me. Write an email, I am always accessible. You can easily find my contact and I'll be so glad to help you as a member of the church to fit into the body of Christ. Then you will grow, then you will rejoice, then you will realize the meaning and purpose that God has placed you here. Otherwise, if you are lipoma, you are ugly. If you are liposarcoma, it's worse! So ask God today, it's for your sake, it's for for Jesus' sake, if we have been touched by grace, if we say, Lord, I want to be a living sacrifice because you lived and died for me, 1st practical outflow-serve one another. It doesn't get more practical than that. I read of statistics, how

people grow best in ministry. They say reading is important, praying is important, but at the same time, ministry is important. My dear folks, this is a very simple message. We are one body in Christ, think accurately about yourself. We need one another, we are just sinners saved and equipped by grace. Think appreciatively about one another. We are here to serve one another, we are not lipomas. Obey the DNA code in us, Jesus in us. And then let's think applicatively, let's begin this week, praying Lord, let me serve. I do not want the church to be a mighty Tortoise. I want the church to be a mighty fortress, I want the church to move on, I want the church to press on. I want the church to prevail and the gates of hell to be pushed wide open, Lord, use us as a people to impact the generations and the people around us and it will happen when the church of Jesus Christ awakes, and when every member is doing what God has equipped you and shaped you to do. This is a practical message and may God move in you, not just to be tickled in the brain, but to apply it in your lives.

0:47:05.3

Let's bow for a word of prayer. Years ago, Napoleon pointed to a map, he pointed to China, and said, this is a sleeping giant, when it awakes it will be unstoppable. This morning I'm looking at a sleeping giant; the body of Jesus Christ and I think to myself if the body awakes we will be unstoppable because Jesus will build his church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. My friends, the devil today wants to conform you to his ways, to the ways of the world. His way is the individualistic, self-absorbed way, I am the most important, it's all about me, but let me tell you if you want to be transformed by the renewing of the mind, God says the body is important, it's not about me, it's not about I, its not about myself, it's about others. And God has destined that my joy is found best when I serve others. Take a step of faith today, and prove what is that good, acceptable and perfect will of God. Live a life of a living sacrifice, in the body of Christ. Lord, let me serve and when I serve, when I love my brethren, then the words of Jesus will come true, by this shall all men know you are my disciples, if you have love one for another. Lord, let me serve so that you will be glorified, not just in one individual life, but in this body corporately. Jesus, may you be lifted up amongst the nations through us. It starts with you today. I'm speaking to you, I'm speaking to you. God is speaking to you. It's about you. Would you put your hand to the plow and serve Jesus, by serving His people. "Do you love me?"- He says to Peter, then feed my sheep. Do you hear the voice of God? So, Father, this morning, we gather humbled before your presence, realizing we are nobodies. We are sinners saved by grace, help us realize we are not Lone Rangers but you have a beautiful purpose and plan for us in this beautiful body of Christ. Work in my heart, my life,

Lord, let me serve. Let me serve your people, let me love your people, help me to do so, that as I use my gifts, my experiences, all that you have shaped me to be, the body is built up, my life is built up and you will be glorified through this body. Lord, bless this church for your own namesake, may Jesus be the supreme master we all obey, the DNA code we all follow, bless this word so that we will not just be hearers but we will be doers. Enable us by your Holy Spirit, we humbly ask in Jesus' name, Amen. God Bless.