



# **Message Transcript**

## **God's Kingdom Team**

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Well, good morning. Thanks for choosing to worship with us today. Before we get started, would you do me a favor and welcome our Broomfield campus, who's worshipping along with us. So glad to have you. And I just want to add my special invitation to all the mothers today.

I hope you feel honored and cherished. There's no greater work than what you do. As a matter of fact, I called my own mom this morning and told her how much she means to me. And there's so many stories I could talk about with my mom. But when I was sick, she started writing me a devotional.

Every single day up from the time I was sick to Easter, 47 days in a row, she sent me a devotion, telling me, it's gonna be okay. God's gonna heal you. He's doing this. Lean into. I mean, just so much appreciate my mom and so much of who I am.

There's hardly anybody that's had more of an influence on my life than my mother. So, mothers, thank you so much for all you do. I'm dedicating all my messages this weekend to my mom. Cause she taught me more about team, I think, than anybody I've ever been around. So just wanna let you know from the bottom of my

heart how much we cherish mothers here at brave church.

With that, let's go before the Lord. We've been praying, we've been singing, we've been praising the Lord. Let's prepare our hearts to receive his word into our hearts this morning. So, Lord, we come before you right now. And, Lord, we pray that you would have your way with us, Lord, that this just wouldn't be time to get through a message or to hear a clever story.

But it would be to hear you, Jesus, to directly hear from you. And, Lord, bring clarity to areas that are confusing. Lord, bring unity to our body. And, Lord, just encourage us for all that you have for us. And, Lord, we believe you're going to do something mighty in and through our church.

We know you already are. Lord, let this be an accelerant to that, for your name's sake and for your glory. And all God's people this morning who were ready to receive his word and to put it into practice, agreed by very loudly saying, amen. Amen. You know, recently I watched the NFL draft.

And the NFL draft is always something I enjoy watching because every single time the NFL draft takes place, place, different guys get selected in different spots. And based upon where somebody is selected, there's always a different response. Usually the guys that go in the top five picks are always saying like, man, I'm just humbled to be here. Just want to help the team. Just going to try to make a contribution and all these kind of things.

Guys that get selected later than what they think. There's some guys that think they're getting drafted in the first round that don't get drafted till the fourth or some guys don't even get drafted at all. And their response is a little different. Their response is they're upset, they're angry. People don't realize how valuable I am and they don't realize the contribution I can make and I'm gonna make them pay when I show them what I can do.

And based upon where they're selected and who it is that's selecting them makes all the difference when it comes to our faith in Jesus Christ. Many of us feel the same way. Some of us feel like God reached down and said, I got you. And you said, hey, you're lucky. And others of us feel like God reached down and grabbed us and we feel

like I don't even know why he picked me.

And I don't really feel like I'm all that good. And others realize, like God, I'm so gifted. How come you don't turn me loose and how come I don't have the opportunities everybody else does? And I think that I'm gifted and all these different kind of things. Last week we started talking about spiritual gifts.

And just as a reminder, the purpose of spiritual gifts is the exaltation of the Lord Jesus Christ for the purpose of building up the body of Christ so that we collectively can advance his kingdom in the world. That is, in a nutshell, what I began. And we talked about how every member in the body of Christ is uniquely gifted. I laid out a case for why I believe all the gifts are still operative today. If you haven't heard the message, go back and listen to it.

But that God's gifted everybody in the body of Christ to use his or her gift for his glory, for building up the church to advance his kingdom on planet earth. And there's different levels of gifts, there's different types of gifts, and there's different levels of effectiveness within each kind of gift. And we also talked about, again, that your gift

doesn't define your role, your gift, just how you're going to serve in any given capacity. And we said that everybody is doing that. And so today what we're going to talk about is being on God's team and what that looks like.

So if you have a copy of the scriptures. I encourage you, open up your bible to first corinthians, chapter twelve. In one corinthians, chapter twelve. We're going to begin in verse twelve. Once Paul has told this church that was so self indulgent, so self centered, so look what I can do.

He wrote to them about gifting, to tell them, here's what gifts are for, and here's how they work. They're for Jesus to build the body, to advance the church. And all of you have been gifted. So let's do this. Then he goes on to say this in verse twelve, for even as the body is one and yet has many members, and all the members of the body are members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ.

Sounds really confusing. Basically what he's saying. There's one body that has many members. One body. My body has many members.

It's made up of many members. And the many members that I have in my body make up one body. It's just like on a team. There can be a football team made up of many different positions, but all those positions make up one football team. That's what he's saying.

And then he says this, for by one spirit, we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one spirit. Let me just give you the first point here today that God has hand selected all believers to his victorious kingdom. All star team. Okay? Everybody God has chosen is on his team.

His team is the winning team, and everybody that's on his team is an a player. God does not have any bench warmers in the kingdom. Everybody is called to contribute to the full, everybody is valued, and everybody means something. I was thinking back this week when I was a sophomore in high school, I competed with a guy to be the quarterback of our team. Our team was ranked number one in the state, and he played as a sophomore on the varsity team.

And I remember when I was coming on the varsity team, I'm like, hey, I'm just gonna have to scrap to play somewhere. And I remember halfway through this summer, my coach pulled me aside and he looked me in the eye, and I can still remember where I was standing and what he said. He said, I didn't know what you could do. You keep banging around out there, you may be our starting quarterback. And that's all it took, because I didn't think they'd ever make a change.

When you're the number one team in the state, you don't make changes. And I'm like, well, if he believes in me enough to think I can do this, I will give all my time, all my effort, all my energy to be my best for him and got to become the starting quarterback. Here's what I'm gonna tell you. Jesus looks down from heaven, and if you're on his team, he would say this. You are my first pick in the first round of the draft.

I wanted you. That's why I came and got you. You're that valuable for me. I didn't save you just to be on my team. I saved you for purpose on my team, so that I could live in and through you.



That's the purpose of the kingdom. Now let me just be clear, because I don't make the assumption that because you come to church means that you're on Christ's team. Okay, so here's the good news. God the father sent his son Jesus Christ into the world as an exact representation as to who he was. He came, lived the perfect life, died on the cross in your place for all your sins and for what you couldn't do to get to God.

God came for you. He laid down his life and he died. He rose from the dead, which was declaring that he was the eternal son of God. And then he began to offer life to all who would call upon him. He said he was the way, the truth, the life.

I mean, he made a public spectacle of his triumph. In Colossians chapter two, starting in verse 13, he talks about what this looked like in Colossians chapter two, starting in verse 13, he says it like this. When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, he made you alive, together with him having forgiven us all our transgressions, which means this Jesus, through his death on the cross, has paid the penalty for all sin in the world. Having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us, he has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. Now, what does this mean?

Here's what it means. Verse 15. When he disarmed the rulers and authorities, he made a public display of them. Having triumphed over them through him. He triumphed over death.

He triumphed over all the powers of darkness. Have you ever watched an NFL game where somebody has an end zone celebration? I mean, I've seen all sorts of kinds. I've seen guys eat popcorn. I've seen guys sign autographs.

I've watched guys do bowling. I've seen this would be Jesus Christ's end zone celebration. It's called rising from the dead. No one else has ever done that, right? And he says, here I am.

And he defeated death. And he made a public display and a statement saying, I've canceled all sin and anyone who would confess me as their personal lord and savior, I will save them and they will be part of my team. That's the gospel. Now last week I used a marker board. I'm going to have Brandon bring it on up because I didn't

want to put it up at the beginning of this today because so many of you made fun of my artwork that I didn't want to have to show it again.

But I think it. Thank you. I thought I could do this a little easier with a marker board. So last week I talked about how the Father Jesus sent his son, the Father God, sent his son Jesus into the world and that the Holy Spirit's job is to glorify the Son, to bring glory to the Father. So the Holy Spirit came upon Jesus at his baptism.

Holy Spirit had always existed, empowered Jesus for his whole ministry. I'm going through this really quick. Watch my message last week. We spent a lot of time on this. Jesus ascended back into heaven right after he rose from the dead.

So the question I asked you last week is, where is Jesus? And we agreed that he had ascended back into heaven and that's where he is. He sits at the right hand of the throne of God. But then we did this.

This is where Jesus really is. He's in heaven, but his body is where, his body's

still on the earth. His body is still here. We who are part of we who are in Christ are part of the body of Christ. So everything Jesus did in the gospels is exactly everything that Jesus does now through his church, through his people, through his team.

And last week, you remember, I started erasing the board for some people that I don't really believe in church and don't go to church. Some people say I'm not really gifted and other people say, well, we really don't have those gifts that exist anymore and we really don't have the fullness of the body of Christ. This is what Paul is now highlighting. He says while there's many members, there's still one body. It's the body of Jesus Christ.

And here's what he says. Now listen to this. This is a controversial verse. It shouldn't be. Paul says in verse 13, for by one spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free.

And we were all made to drink of one spirit. So in the same way that the Holy Spirit came upon Jesus Christ at his baptism, what happens at the moment that you are converted to Christ? The Holy Spirit baptizes you into Christ's body. Okay? You're

in his body.

Now. Baptism simply means this. It means to repeatedly dip or to immerse until you become identified with what you're being baptized into. Okay? So if I had a piece of white cloth here this morning and I had a bowl of red dye and I baptized the cloth, I repeatedly dipped it or I immersed it until I pulled it out, the white cloth would become what it would be red.

Here's what Paul says. Here's what spirit baptism is. It becomes this buzz word in churches where everybody gets all up in arms about spirit. Have you been baptized in the spirit? If you're a Christian, you've been baptized by the Holy Spirit into the body of Christ.

That's spirit baptism. Every single person has been baptized into the body of Christ. As a matter of fact, romans eight nine says, if you do not have the spirit of Christ, you are not of Christ. Okay? So every single believer has been placed into the body of Christ, which means Jesus has selected you into his kingdom.

All star team. You're on his team whether you like it or not. And let me just give you news about that. You can't opt out. Once you're in, you're in.

Which is why this, for many of you who have come to Christ and you're not enjoying your christian life and you're not fired up about Jesus, if you're in Christ trying to live like you are in the world, it's just not fun. You just can't enjoy it. Why? Because you're in Christ and you're grieving or quenching, potentially the Holy Spirit in your life. So that's the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Now let me tell you about another ministry of the Holy Spirit, I think gets confused with the baptism of the spirit. It's called the filling of the Spirit. In Ephesians 5:18 and five, it says, do not get drunk on wine, which leads to dissipation or debauchery, which really means wastefulness. In other words, the Bible says, don't get drunk because it makes you live a wasteful life, but be filled with the Holy Spirit. And then it goes on to talk about singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, which could be a means of being filled or could be the result of being filled.

I think it's both. Right. But that's the filling of the Spirit, right? Some people call that the baptism of the Spirit. I don't call it the baptism of the Spirit, but I don't really get bothered when people talk about, are you baptized with the Spirit?

Have you had that second experience? And everybody throws away there's a second experience? There is a second experience. Because here's the deal. Just because you're in Christ, just because the Holy Spirit placed you in Christ, just because you have all of the Holy Spirit in you doesn't mean that the Holy Spirit has all of you.

Just because you have all the Holy Spirit doesn't mean that the Holy Spirit has all of you. There are myriads of Christians around the world who the Holy Spirit indwells them, has sealed them, has regenerated them, has baptized them, who are not Spirit filled. So I need to talk to you about what it means to be filled with the Spirit. Just as alcohol is a controlling substance. If you ever been around somebody that drinks too much, all of a sudden, what comes out of their mouth and the action that they have and the things that they do, it's no longer them doing it.

They're being controlled by an influence other than themselves. Here's what the gospel, here's what the Bible says. The Bible says this, you need to be controlled by the spirit. Say, well, how do I become controlled by the spirit? You need to receive the spirit.

Just because the spirit is in you doesn't mean that you've received him. It doesn't mean you've welcomed him. It doesn't mean that you've given him control of your life. And so I remember when I was in college, I remember reading a prayer. Campus crusade put out a prayer about how to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

I went back and read it this week, and I was reading it. I'm like, doctrinally, I totally agree with the prayer. I read it in my dorm room when I was 18 years old in college. And I thought that if I prayed this magic prayer that, like, angels would descend and I would feel this tingling going on and my life would be forever changed. Let me tell you what.

Nothing happened. But when I look back on my life when I was 18, there were some things going on. There was sin that I wasn't willing to let go of. I didn't want to let



the Holy Spirit control everything about my life. I still wanted to be in charge.

I still wanted to get to choose. And then if the Holy Spirit wanted to do something, that would be great. But I can tell you this when I got to a point in my life where I was like, holy Spirit, hey, you can have all of me, okay? I mean, all of me. I remember I went into the Methodist church I grew up in.

I was empty pews on a Monday at about 10:00 and I remember praying one day. I was just kind of at the end of my rope. I was like 23 years old. And I was like, lord, I don't care what you want me to do anymore. I don't care where you want me to go.

If you send me to New guinea, that was my specific prayer, I'll get on a plane right now. I won't even say goodbye to my parents. I'm gone. I will go for the rest of my life. I'll send them a note and telegram, whatever you want me to do, however you want me to, I'm yours, man.

And I'm telling you, at that moment I had an encounter with God unlike I'd ever had before. Some people would call man, you were baptized in the Holy Spirit filled with the Holy Spirit. Why? Because he began to take over control of my life. And, oh, how I wish I could tell you because I had that one experience.

That's it. I've had several moments like that since I was 23 years old, where the Holy Spirit takes over. Let me tell you something else, and we'll get to this in chapter 14. Being baptized into the body of Christ and being filled with the Holy Spirit does not necessarily mean you will speak in tongues and prophesy. It just doesn't.

We're going to talk about that in great detail. As a matter of fact, at the end of this chapter, it says, not all speak in tongues, do they? No. So just because you haven't had an outward experience doesn't mean you haven't been baptized nor filled with the spirit. It's a control.

So here's the question. How do you define your life? Do you see yourself as well? I'm an attorney or I'm a mother or I'm a dad or I'm a husband or I'm a pastor. I'm this, and I happen to be a Christian.

Or do you see yourself as this? I'm a spirit controlled Christian who happens to do blank. See. First and foremost, the Holy Spirit wants to know he has all of you. So the question I have for you is twofold.

Have you ever trusted Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins? Are you on his team? If you are, the Holy Spirit is already in you. Second question is this. Have you ever received him fully.

Have you ever allowed him to take over? I mean, the New Testament, we see this happen where people laid hands on people and released the Holy Spirit into people's lives. We also see it where at times they didn't lay hands on people and they receive the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit doesn't need a human agent to get his job done. Okay?

But what the Holy Spirit does need is a willing heart to say, yeah, I've been doing

the christian thing. I've been doing the christian behaviors. I go to church, I joined a small group, I kind of serve. But I don't know that I'm willing to let you, like, take over my whole life. Now, here's the thing about the Holy Spirit.

He wants 100% or nothing. He wants 100% or nothing. Will you let the Holy Spirit lead your life, or are you still going to be in control? Well, I'm just controlling 5%. No, you got it all.

Because when you tell the Holy Spirit, hey, listen, you can do these areas, I'm going to do these areas, you can manage these areas, I'll manage these areas. The Holy Spirit's like, that's fine, but when you can say, hey, God, I want all that you have for me, that's a filling of the Holy Spirit. That's why when I'm in environments where people are like, have you been baptized in the Holy Spirit? I'm like, of course I have since I was 18. But I don't get bent out of shape when people talk about, no, there's power that the Holy Spirit can release after conversion to have power over sin.

Believe that. I believe that's just called the filling of the Spirit or receiving or the welcoming of the spirit. And so just because you have all the Holy Spirit in you does not

mean that the Holy Spirit has all of you. One more word about filling the Holy Spirit is a spirit. He's not spatial.

He doesn't take up space. He's not a liquid, he's not like gas, he's not an oxygen, he's not air. So it's not like when I'm talking filling, it's like a balloon where he's like, I mean, it's not. That's like the force. That's like Star wars or something.

The Holy Spirit is a person, right? That's a personality. It's, this is the Holy Spirit controlling your life. Have you ever confessed sin and invited the Holy Spirit to take over? Now, here's what the devil will do.

The devil knows that once you're in Christ. You're in Christ for all eternity. He's lost you for all eternity. Even if you sin, you can't sin your way out of Christ. You're in Christ.

But what he can do is he can keep you from being the full potential of who you are. And there's nothing he enjoys more for Christians than Christians who are on the

body of Christ to be miserable in the body of Christ because they're not filled up with the spirit of Christ and therefore they're not serving and they're not joyous. And word to you. Listen, just hear me on this. The greatest joy you will ever experience in your life and the greatest adventure you will ever have is when the Holy Spirit is in charge of everything.

I mean, maybe you didn't hear me. I'm telling you, if I had the choice of season tickets and Super bowl tickets every single year to every, or tickets to every sporting event I'd ever want, every concert I'd ever want, every trip I'd ever have, or the Holy Spirit could be in me controlling my life. It's a no brainer. I mean, since the time I was 23, Christianity was no longer. Okay.

Glad I got saved. I don't really like church all that much. I don't even know what I'm supposed to do. And, yeah, those people are like this, and they're like this. When I was filled with the spirit, I didn't care what anybody else was doing.

I was the one telling my friends, yeah, I'm quitting my job and I'm going into ministry and most of my friends, because the people I hung out with, like, do you have

to wear one of those collar things that are white? And I'm like, no, I don't think so. And, I mean, they had no idea what I was. I was just telling, man, I just got to tell more people about Jesus. Because here's the question.

I mean, if you're here today, I mean, have you ever thought about what's going to happen the moment you die? I mean, have you ever considered that it could be today? Have you ever considered that you're going to stand in front of the glory of Jesus Christ, and if you've not repented of your sins and confessed him as Lord, you will be cast out into outer darkness for all eternity? Have you ever considered the consequences of that? I mean, when I preach on that, it's not like, oh, it's Sunday, I got to go to church.

I guess I got to tell people. I mean, I'm pretty fired up about it. And believers hear me. I mean, one of the reasons I left the evangelism scene, where a bunch of people were coming forward and giving their lives to Christ and doing all this, and I haven't changed my heart for evangelism. It's as important as it was.

But I started feeling like every person's coming forward, crying tears, feeling their

sins forgiven. They know they're new in Christ. That's God's team, a player. What are they doing? And the answer is, for many of them, they'll never do a darn thing because they haven't been taught that God's got special purpose for you.

So if you leave here today and you're a Christian, somebody says, have you been baptized with the spirit? Here's your answer. Yes, I have. Have you been filled with the spirit? Is he controlling your life?

That's a question only you can answer that requires your responsibility. And God wants you to know he's got great plans for you. He's got great plans for your life. And let me give you a second point. God needs your unique and best contribution to his team.

God needs the best you you can be. I mean, I remember when I was starting to watch preachers, when I knew I was going to be one and there would be guys I'd watch. I'm like, I can't tell a story like that guy. I can't go deep in the Bible like that guy. And that guy just has an engagement with people.



That guy's got a shepherd's heart, man. That guy's got a leadership. I can't be like that guy. And I can't. And finally got to a place where the Lord was like, no, no, no, Jeff.

Nobody can be like you. I called you. I need you to be your best you. And it gave me great comfort. Cause now I don't have to be like anybody else.

I'm just like me with all my flaws and all my gifts. That's just who I am. And every guy we're gonna train up in our church that goes out, there's not one that could preach like me. I'm the only me that there is. And all God asks is that I be the best, most filled up me that I can be.

For his name sake. He needs the best you. And so here's what he says in verse 14. For the body is not one member, but many. Okay?

Do you get that? I mean, somebody told me Jesus looked like a crustacean or something like that the other day because he had no hands, but do you get that? The body is made up of different parts. I mean, there's feet, there's arms, there's a torso, there's internal organs, there's all this that make up the one body. Here's what he says.

If the foot says, which is hilarious, because the foot can't talk, but if the foot says, because I'm not a hand, I am not a part of the body, it is not for this reason any less a part of the body. And if the ear says, because I'm not an eye, I am not a part of the body, it is not for this reason any less a part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? And if the whole were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? In other words, he's saying every part is needed.

The way God gifted you is needed. And what often happens in churches is we champion one or two gifts and then everybody tries to be this part. If you go to a Bible church, everybody wants to be a teacher and teach the Bible. If you go to a holy spirit gifted church, everybody wants to prophesy and speak in tongues, right? If you go to an evangelism church, everybody wants to tell you about who they're bringing to Christ.

Whatever's championed in the church, people try to go towards that thing. But if you saw a body that we brought out here on the platform today and it was just an eye, I mean, it'd be like a Sci-Fi freaky thing, right? It's not the full orb. Here's what Paul's saying. All the gifts are necessary in all the churches.

Everybody needs to serve to their full capacity. There are certain people in our body who have a natural bent towards evangelism. And certain people have a natural gift towards teaching, and certain people that have a natural gift towards leadership, and certain people have natural gifts towards serving. They're all needed in the body. And guess what?

Just because you say, well, my gift's not needed, you can't opt out now. I had parents that when I started something, play on a team, day one. I hate the coach. I knew we were going to lose every game. Here's what they would say to me.

You signed up, you finish. You're going to finish it. Through millennials. I know that doesn't make sense to you, but that's how we used to roll.

Sorry, I just had to say that. I love you, millennials. I love you. Sometimes things in life aren't comfortable. Here's what Jesus says.

You're on my team. Whether you like it or not, and I picked you to be used on my team, and I hand selected you before the foundation of the world for what I wanted to do through you. And only you can do it. Nobody else has what you have, not one person. Right?

And that's why it goes on to say this very thing in the next verse. But now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body just as he desired. God is the GM. God is the director of all the operations. God's like, I know where I want you to be.

I know how I'm going to gift you, and I know what I want you to do, and I want you to go for it. Because if. If you'll be the best you for me, I will produce fruit in and through your life. I will build the church, and I will advance my kingdom because of you.

If they were all one member, where would the body be?

In other words, here's what he's saying. You got to celebrate the diversity that we have. I mean, in Genesis 127, it makes it clear that whether you're male or female, God created each one of us in his image. Psalm 139 says, you are formed in your mother's womb and that you are fearfully and wonderfully made. And it's really interesting that in Ephesians 2:10, here's what he says.

He doesn't say, for I am or for you are. He says, for we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared in advance so that we would walk in them. Do you know what that means? It means that the moment that you trusted Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, God placed you in the body. This body is simply called this.

It's synonymous with this word. U r c h. Church. That's the body of Christ. You say, well, I don't like the church.

Well, then you don't like Jesus. Cause that's his body. That's his plan. A. He's baptized you and placed you into the family of God or the body of Christ or the church.

It's one and the same thing. And not everybody is wired the same. Now, you realize that, right? I mean, in life, we realize that if you work in an organization or you're in a family and have multiple kids, not everybody's the same. Everybody sees through a different lens.

Which is why I said it's very important for you to recognize what your lens is, because your lens is just your lens. It's not everybody else's lens. When you find yourself getting upset with something when you find yourself getting saddened about something, when you find yourself getting frustrated about something, do you know why? Because your lens is so crystal clear in that area that God wants to use you to help with that, not complain about it. Well, if the youth group was like this, I mean, you'd see how.

Blah, blah, blah. The reason you see it so clearly is because God wants you to help with that youth group. So go serve. And just so you know, your gifting doesn't

depict where you need to serve. I could serve in any numbers of mem, any number of ministries in our church, but if I did, my gifting would come out in that ministry in the way I served.

Do you know that you can serve in our children's ministry without even having a love for children? I mean, some of you can administrate and lead really, really well and help adults do things and say, I'm not with kids, but, man, if I can help facilitate what those people can do with kids, I could really help. Now, some of you are here today, like, how do I learn my gift? How do I learn my gift? How do I learn my gift?

It is so easy. I mean, I just got great news for you. Go through the passages I talked about last week. Romans, chapter twelve, verses six, seven, and eight. This passage here in first corinthians 12:15, ephesians four and one, Peter 4:11.

And just kind of walk through circle the ones that kind of are you. But it's even easier than that. I mean, next week, we're going to talk about, here's how you discover your gift. You love God and you love other people, and other people will show you what your gift is. I mean, it's pretty simple.

When I was a youth pastor, here's what I did, and I've told this story before, but it bears repeating because I haven't told it for a while. When people were going to serve on my team for my ministry with junior high and high school students, I made every single person, no matter who they were, male or female, whether they had a seminary degree or whether they'd never been to church at all, you had to serve in the cafe for two weeks. Because I knew in two weeks, I knew exactly where I needed to place that person. Cause you know what happens. I would give them specific instructions, hey, this is the time that you need to be here, and this is what you need to do.

You're gonna stand behind the counter, and you're gonna serve kids food. Here's what's gonna happen before, and here's what's gonna happen after? Only a couple people actually followed directions and would do that. And those were people that had the gift of helps. They would be the people that would come to me after the first week.

Oh, thanks for letting me serve the food. Thanks for letting me sweep the floor. Thanks for letting me set up chairs. I don't know much about teenagers, but it was so



great to be a part because I see God's doing a great thing. Thanks for letting me be a part of this.

Right? Other people, I would give the same assignment. They would say, like, hey, hey, hey. I didn't see him at all. I see him out in the smoker's pit with, like, six different kids that never fit into our youth group.

And they would come to me afterwards and they'd be like, jeff, I'm so fired up. Thank you so much for letting me serve. You know, these six kids out there, you know, what's going on in their life, their life, their life. I got to share the gospel with two of them. And I'm like, hey, thanks, gift of evangelism.

So glad you joined our team. Then there'd be somebody that would come to me at the end of the night, and she'd be like, hey, do you know that girl that's, like, a sophomore in your group that's living with her mom and her dad's kind of abusive? And I think she's having thoughts of suicide. And I'm just wondering if I could get her number and give her a call this week. And I'm like, of course you can.

Gift of mercy, gift of discernment. Give her a call. She needs that. Then there'd be that one person that would come to me afterwards, and they weren't complaining, but they kind of were. And they would say stuff like this, hey, have you ever noticed that behind the counter is just so disorganized?

I mean, have you ever considered, like, buying some containers and just organizing it? And you could. You could like, okay, gift of administration. I'm glad that you've arrived. Right?

I mean, I knew every single person's gift within two weeks. And if you take a person that has a gift of evangelism and you tell them, stand behind the counter, they'll never do that for you. But I can make all the gifts operative in our student ministry. All the gifts can be operative in our church. You say, how do I get started?

Here's what you do. You start loving Jesus and finding ways to serve others, and it will pour out of you. Some of you that have the gift of generosity. It's not uncommon for you to open your pockets and just start giving, giving, giving, giving, giving. One of

the reasons we're changing our whole benevolence policy is because we started as like seven or eight years old.

We got to be better at being generous towards the people in our own body, right? Whatever your gift is, it's just going to come out and other people will notice it before you. Other people will notice it before you. I've told our elders many times, I mean, my number one gift is the gift of apostleship. I know for me, if ministries aren't getting started, if we're not mobilizing people, if we're not moving, if we're just managing, I've told them several times, not as a threat.

I know how I'm wired. If our church ever gets to a place where we manage, like if we get to like 5000 people and everybody's like, that's cool, we're 5000, I'm out. There's no place for me to serve anymore unless I can keep my foot on the faith pedal and take things out. That's how I'm wired. That's how I've always been wired.

That's how God uses me. And your gift can be used anywhere at any time. So you can't come to church and be like, there's no place for me to serve. Here's a better thing to do. Okay, just listen to me.

Hear me real quick. I don't need to give you a title to do it. You don't need authority to do it. If you're gifted and you just start doing what you think you're good at, they'll be. If there's no fruit, you're not gifted at it, right?

If you say, well, I'm really good at teaching students, but you can't get one student to listen to what you say, I got news for you, you're really not good at it. If 25 students are coming and we're getting reports back like, hey, this gal or this guy down with student ministry, I mean, they're just flourishing. Everybody wants to be. That's because they're gifted at it, right? And all of us are gifted in different ways.

That's what we talked about. And all gifts are needed. But here's what you need to know. The only one that matters is yours. The only one that matters is yours.

If you take your gift off God's kingdom field and say, well, we'll just play with that group, every team gets limited. When you're not playing with all your full potential. I

said last week, I mean, you let me coach an NFL team, and all we say is, hey, give me the four best offensive players, the four best defensive players, the four best special teams players. We'll get killed by everybody. Even if those four guys are all probably, you need everybody on the team.

And that's what he's saying. So I would say get involved now. We don't need to be copycats. One of the things that goes on in church is we think, well, if I have this gift, then I got to be like that guy. I have a teaching gift, so I got to be like this teacher.

No, you don't. You be like you. And you be like you. And you be like you. You be the best you.

You can be doing it in your way, and God will bless that. And even as a church, our church doesn't need to look exactly like anybody else's church. Yes, we want to bring glory to Jesus. Hope all churches do that. Yes, we want to teach the word hope.

All churches do that. But our reflection in the kingdom may look different for us

from a leadership on down. What fires us up is building quality disciples to mobilize people for missions all around the world. And we're just getting started. But I guarantee you, one day you are going to see us.

It's going to happen by faith. I believe it. You're going to see people standing here being commissioned all over the world, taking people from our church to go with them, to plant churches to the glory of God. That's what I'm fired up and want to be a part of. That's our church's uniqueness now in the body of Christ.

It doesn't mean that we're better or we're worse. It's just who we are. Be the best you that you can be. That's what Paul says. And God's the one that's positioned all these things.

Let me tell you something else, not only individually, but then as a body, we need to take care of things. Notice this point number three. God needs you to care and cheer for all members on Christ's team. God needs you to care for, cheer and celebrate. All members on Christ's team.

Notice what he says, verse 20. But now there are many members, but one body. He's been repeating this over and over and over, ad nauseam, right? And the eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of you. Or again, the head to the feet, I have no need of you.

On the contrary, it is much truer that the members of the body, which seem to be weaker, are necessary, right? I mean, the body, thank goodness the hand can't say to the foot or the head to the arm, we don't need you anymore. Get out of here. I mean, the body can't function if you have a foot by itself and an arm by itself and a head by itself and a torso by itself. That's not a body, that's a cadaver.

There's a big difference. We need the whole body to function together. And isn't it true sometimes that some of the weaker members of the body are more necessary than we think they are? I remember when I was in 8th grade, it was two days before I was supposed to go to basketball camp for the summer, and we were on a vacation in Branson, Missouri, at a water slide. And my sister and I, we were going down, running up, going down, running up, going down, running up all day long.

Well, one of my trips up, I literally kicked as hard as I could. One of the metal posts going up my fourth toe of my left foot, I broke it. And it wasn't like, cool like today where you get like, those robo walking legs. I mean, this was like, they gave me like a platform wooden shoe with like, green canvas and three brown eyelets to tie up, and I had to walk around like this. It was just the fourth toe on my bottom foot.

Everything else on my body was just fine. It was just my fourth toe. You don't realize how much you need your fourth toe until you don't have a fourth toe that works, right? I didn't get up this morning thanking God for my kidneys and my pancreas and my liver. I mean, I didn't even know how to ask God to make those things function correctly.

I'm just glad that they're there. But isn't it true in the body of Christ, sometimes there's things we celebrate, but there's others that are doing just as significant kingdom work, that are more anonymous that God cares for. It means we care for and cheer for and celebrate everybody in the body of Christ, right? That's what he's saying. And notice what he says this and those members of the body, which we deem less honorable on these we bestow more abundant honor.



In other words, we should be even more grateful for those ones in our body that we would normally overlook and say, listen, because here's what I would tell you as a pastor. If you're a person that prays, which I know several of you are, because I've gotten several notes from you when I was sick. Listen, I champion your ministry, and you're going to find out someday in heaven that because you prayed when nobody saw what you were doing, you were one of the biggest assets that we ever had in our church. There's things that you do, and here's what you're doing. You're not doing it for an audience of the crowd.

You're doing it for an audience of one. If God can see what you're doing, it will build some of you that have gifts of mercy. Nobody gets to see everything you're doing except for the one or two or three recipients of your gift. And I'll tell you this, they're grateful because I'm always grateful when I'm getting it from you. What's your gift?

We need to bestow honor on all people. And then he says this, and on our less presentable members become more presentable, whereas the more presentable members have no need for it. I mean, there are parts of our body that we take great

care and covering, right? To show care and concern for. There are some people in our body of Christ that we need to take special time to care for and come around and have concern for, right?

Sometimes in our Christianity that we have today, we think everybody needs to be like a poster child and look a certain way and dress a certain way. Hey, some of the most gifted people I have met in 30 years in the body of Christ, like people that hear the Lord and kind of understand who he is and have a passion for him. Some of those people, not all. Some of those people are some of the weirdest people I've ever met in my life, right? That I wouldn't necessarily bring out and be like, hey, meet so and so because you would say they're kind of weird.

But I'm telling you, you get to know them. They're not kind of weird. They're kind of connected to Jesus and he really loves them infinitely. And he's saying this, all parts of the body are welcome. We need them all.

And I don't know about you, but the older I get, the more I realize how grateful I am for the body that I had, right? I mean, there's parts of my body I wasn't as thankful

for 30 years ago that I'm thankful for now. Do you know what I'm saying? As we grow in our maturity in Christ, we feel the same way. We realize that every one of you is supernaturally gifted to serve the Lord Jesus Christ in whatever capacity he has.

And it's kind of like this. The point he's trying to make is, you know, the arm is way more visible. I can take my sleeve off. I just don't want to embarrass some of the men here. But, I mean, I could show off my arms, but I can live without an arm.

I can't live without my kidneys. I can live without my legs. I can't live without a heart. I mean, the things that I can't always see are often more valuable than the things that I can see. That's why churches that flourish, it's not about the senior pastor or lead guy or elders.

It's about the team. It's about all of us coming together and being everything we've been needing to be for Christ. Paul says, but God has so composed the body, giving more abundant honor to that member which lacked it, so that there may be no division in the body, but the members may have the same what care for one another. Your gift was intended to care for other people, and most of you in ways that you can

care. They don't seem like a big deal, but they're a big deal.

Some of you are just naturally generous. We can't do ministry here without generosity. It's impossible. Well, that's not that big of a deal. All I do is write a check.

Well, write a bigger one. I mean, we can use that. All I do is I just greet people coming in. Hey, listen, I want to tell you this. I've been to church enough to know that many times when I'm coming into church, I care more about how I'm going to get greeted than what the pastor has to say.

Because I know several of you. When you walked in here this morning, you kind of fell down. You meet one of our greeting team. They're not greeting you because they have to. They enjoy greeting you.

They really want to make you feel welcome here. They want to know that there's a spot for you at brave church on the team. Right? No matter what your gift is, just use it, exercise it, and use it more so that it doesn't atrophy. And then notice this, no

division.

Because we're not looking to each other to see what each other has. We're going to honor God. And if one members suffer, all the members suffer with it. If one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it. Do you feel that way?

I mean, when you hear about things going on in our church, do you suffer with people that are hurting? Hey, when you hear about other people in our body that God is promoting or he's celebrating. Can you celebrate with them? Two things I find that christians have a real hard time doing is hurting with those who hurt. And sometimes what's even harder is celebrating with those who are.

God is blessing. See, if you're sufficient in who you are in Christ and you're filled up with the Holy Spirit, when somebody gets something good happen in their life, you know what you'll do? You'll celebrate them. You'll take time to tell them, hey, I'm so glad with what God's doing in your life, I see that. That's awesome.

It doesn't rob me of anything God's doing in my life, but I'm as happy he's doing it in your life. Because guess what? There's seven plus billion people on the planet that need God's service. So go for it. And can you take time to weep with those who weep?

See, the problem with caring for and celebrating others is that it's completely inefficient. It takes time. And if you're the kind of person said, well, I don't have time to suffer with them, I was going somewhere. I mean, I don't have time. I mean, pick yourself up.

Let's get going. That's not the heart of Jesus. And if your heart is, when somebody does something really well or really good, or you see gifts in them, if you don't have the courage to tell them how gifted they are, it's because you have insecurities in your own heart. See, God wants us to be the greatest group of cheerleaders and the greatest group of compassion people as we continue to build his church and advance his kingdom. That's what it means to be the body of Christ.

Use your gift to exalt Jesus. Build up his body so we can advance the kingdom. And all of you are a players. I mean, if Jesus Christ showed up here this morning in all of his glory, once time elapsed and we all got picked up off the ground and all that, and he could tell us what he thought about you, and he could bring each one of you up here. He would talk about before the before, before the beginning of the world in eternity past, how he had selected you for what he wanted you to do, and he would begin to talk about all the things he's been able to get done through you, how proud he is of you.

And if he showed you all the things he wanted to do through you, not only would your mouth drop, our mouths would drop and be like, no, way. That's incredible that God would want to do that. That's what he wants to do with everybody. And yet, oftentimes in the church, we're the ones that put everybody down, or we don't have time to build other people up. And we think there's only a couple people that can do anything.

What would it be like if everybody was serving to their full and loving Jesus in our church? I'm telling you right now, we'd outgrow this building. We wouldn't have enough seats in here, right? Because it would be the body of Christ saying, I want that. I want

to know that I'm special.

I want to know that I'm valuable. So here's how Paul ends. Paul ends by saying this. Point number four, that God needs you to play your role while he continues to build his team. God needs you to play your role while he continues to build his team.

Right? It doesn't matter what your role is. Just be the best at your role that you can be. And just so you know, you say, I didn't want that role. You're already doing it.

I guarantee you're already doing it. I mean, think about if you're a Christian. Think about what you did when you first got saved. First thing I did when I got saved was go tell all my unsaved friends they were going to hell. Nobody told me to do that.

I never took an evangelism class. I sat down with my dad at a restaurant. I remember right where we were, and I was leading him through the gospel, and I'm like, my dad is the most gentle, kind, sweet man you've ever met. I mean, I love my dad. I mean, you know, I mean, my dad's just tender.



And we were talking, and I'm like, dad? He's like, well, I've read through the bible. I've gone to church my whole life. I'm like, yeah, I know, but you're still going to hell, because here's the deal. You have to believe that Jesus Christ died on the cross.

I've always believed that. No, you haven't, dad. You got to make a decision. Nobody told me to do that. I had no training in that.

That's what I do. Right. What did you do? Some people started having a heart of compassion for people. Some people had a heart of generosity for people.

Some people had mercy gifts they didn't realize they had. Some people, from the day you got saved, you started studying the word like you've never been. I mean, your face was like leather, because all you did was getting the word and getting the word and getting. There's a natural proclivity or tendency based upon your gift as to how you responded once you became a believer. And if you don't know what your gift is, let me

give you the best way to do it.

Get in a small group where you desire to love God and serve other people, and it will just come out. If you have a gift of hospitality, you'll be the one person that's like, hey, let's do it at my house. Let's bring everybody over here. If you don't have the gift of hospitality, you'll say, hey, yeah, let's do it at your house. Right?

I mean, not everybody has every gift, right? But God needs you to play your role. Jesus said, I will build my church, and the gates of hell will not prevail against it. Let Jesus build the church. You just play your role.

And I'm telling you this. I played on championship teams. I played on teams that could have been champions but weren't, and I played on lousy teams. The worst team to play on was the team that could have been a champion that wasn't. I remember when I was 22 years old, the University of Illinois, sitting down with my coach in college, telling him at the time, Nebraska was the number one team in the country.

I remember telling him, I would rather be the extra point holder for Nebraska than be your quarterback. We're not a winning team. See, I've kind of always been bold like that. So the point is, we want to be on championship teams. We want to play for.

You're on the winning team. It's a guaranteed victory. It's a guaranteed win. And God says, you're my first round draft choice. And notice what he says now.

You're all members of Christ's body, and individually you're members of it. And notice what God's appointed and God has appointed in the church. First apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, helps, administrations and various kinds of tongues, as you heard me say last week, and you'll hear me say more as we get into chapter 14, I believe all those gifts are operative today. When it comes to apostle and prophet, here's where I think things have ceased. To be a original apostle, you needed to see the resurrected Jesus Christ and verbally hear from him, go.

I have never visibly seen the resurrected Christ. I have never face to face heard an audible voice saying, go. But I will tell you, I have spent time with Jesus, the

resurrected Jesus, and in my spirit so many times he tells me, go to a place where things aren't going and go build it up. That's my gifting. Apostles make great church planters, frontline missionaries, starting up new ministries.

That's what an apostle is. A prophet is someone that brings forth the word of God, speaks on God's behalf. I have some of those giftings as well. Right. But what we don't have today are prophets that say, thus say the Lord.

That doesn't align with this book. So I'm never going to tell you something that doesn't align with this book. If I do, fire me. This is the book you need to listen to. I'm not going to come up with new revelation and tell you stuff that's not in this book.

This book is complete. Right? So there's no prophets that are going to say, hey, you guys have never heard this before, but let me tell you, and you need to add this to that book. You have. No, no, no.

That's not a modern day prophet. Modern day prophet is someone who speaks on God's behalf to God's people. And then he says, we got teachers, we know what that is. Miracles, healings, helps administration of various kinds of tongues. We'll talk about some of the supernatural gifts here in a couple weeks, how those are to be operative in the church.

But then he says this, all are not apostles, are they all are not prophets, are they all are not teachers, are they all are not workers of miracles? Are they all do not have gifts of healing? Do they all do not speak with tongues? Do they all do not interpret, do they? In the original language, in Greek?

I never knew I would ever use this when I was studying this. But in the original language, there's two different particles. It's u and may. Every time u is used, it's expecting a positive answer. Every time may is used, it's expecting a negative answer.

This is all may. This is all expecting a negative answer. Not all our apostles. Well, of course they're not. Not all our prophets.

Of course they're not. Not all teachers. Of course they're not. I mean, it goes all the way down and listen to this. Not all speak in tongues.

Here's the answer. Of course they don't. Let me just tell you something before we get to tongues. Whether you speak in tongues or not, it has nothing to do with your level of spirituality. It's a gifting of the Lord.

You're not more spiritual if you do, and you're not less, you know, whatever, you're just not less spiritual if you don't. But notice this, what he says, but earnestly desire the greater gifts. What are the greatest gifts? Here's the greater gifts. The greater the gift is, the one that helps build the church the most.

In other words, use your gift and eagerly desire your gift for the purpose of bringing exaltation to Jesus and building up other people. Your gift was not given to you so you could run off and use it by yourself. You were gifted to play on a team. You were gifted to play on a team, right? I mean, if I said, I'm an awesome basketball

player, and they said, what team do you play on?

I said I didn't feel like playing on a team. I'm just really good. I'm not a good basketball player. I might be a good shooter in the parking lot if I said, hey, I'm an awesome quarterback. I mean, but I don't play on a team.

Now, I might be able to throw a ball decently, but I'm not good unless I'm on a team and can demonstrate my gift on the team. You can say, I'm really gifted in this, but if nobody sees the gift being operative on the team, it's not a gift that God's using or you're not using your gift. So here's what God would say. Love me, love my people, and I'll use your gift. You don't have to go figuring all this stuff out.

It's so natural. Now, you can take spiritual gift tests. They can be helpful or they can be wrong. So I took two this week. First one, I took apostleship, faith one and two, I'm like, yeah, I've known that for years.

Took another one. They only had like eight gifts on it, my number one gift

administration. So I threw that one out. So. But the whole point is, God will use who you are.

And God's up in heaven. God the Father's up in heaven. Jesus the Son is in heaven. His body's on the earth. The Holy Spirit's empowering you through the church, saying, you're my number one draft pick.

Will you love me and serve my people? Because if you'll love me and serve my people, I will build something in and through you that you didn't even know was possible. I'll use you in ways that other people will be like, how do you get to do that? And why do you get to do that? Because I love God and I love his people, and he just chose this for me.

And next week you're going to see the more excellent way, the way this flesh is out. If you have love for God and you have love for God's people, it's automatic. It's automatic. So here's my question as we end today. Here's my question as we end today.



Does the Holy Spirit have all of you? Does the Holy Spirit have all of you? He's in you. You have all of him. If you've trusted in Jesus Christ, but does he have all of you?

Or is there unconfessed sin in your life? Is there a desire to say, well, I want some of Jesus. I just don't want all of them? I mean, if I give it all to Jesus, man, he'll take my life and make it miserable. I've not met one person, okay?

Not met one person filled with the Holy Spirit. Who would ever tell you, yeah, my life's worse off now than it was before. Not one. Not one. Not one.

My life from the time I was filled with the holy spirit has been the most enjoyable, adventurous life. I would not trade my life for anybody else's life in the whole world. I think I'm living the best life I can possibly live in this world because I love Jesus and he's filling me up, using me the way he deems best. And guess what? The greatest news is God doesn't run out of stuff.

He's an abundant God. If God gives to you and then you, and then you, it's not like God's like, well, now I don't have as much left to give. He doesn't run out when he gives. He's God. He's infinite, and he wants to give you everything and let you be filled by his spirit, his glory.

Amen. So, would you stand with me as we close in praying today?

Lord Jesus, we just come before you, and there may be some here who have never trusted you as our lord and savior and been baptized in the body of Christ. And if that's you, here's what you can say. Jesus, right now I repent of my sins. I trust you as my lord and savior come into my life. And for those of you who have confessed Jesus as your lord and savior, who may say, I'm not living that fulfilled life here, talking about, why not pray like this, holy spirit, fill me up.

Take control of my life. Anywhere you lead, I'll go. Anything you say, I'll do. I just want to be yours. Lord, release your holy spirit in this place to do your work you've been wanting to do.

And, God, we just give you all the praise and glory for your love for us. In Jesus name, amen.