

Every Member a Minister

Building His Family · Week 2 — Romans 12:4–6 · Ephesians 4:11–12 · 1 Peter 4:10

God did not give you to yourself. He gave you to this body. And He gave you to this body by first giving you to His Son Jesus.

The Church Is a Body

For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. — Romans 12:4–6

Paul calls us a *body*, not an audience or a volunteer pool. He establishes what we *are* before what we *do* — identity before function. So the first question is not "where can I serve?" but "am I genuinely connected to Christ?" Serving that flows from a living relationship with Jesus is sustainable and joyful; serving from duty or gifting alone drains the very thing it was meant to build.

I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. — John 15:5

Fruit is the overflow of connection, not a project to force. Before you ask "what is my gift?" ask "am I abiding in Christ?"

Gifts Come from Grace

The word behind "gift" is not talent but *grace* — distributed by God, not developed by effort; given, not earned. That dismantles two lies at once. The first: "I'm not gifted enough to contribute" — you never earned it, so you cannot disqualify yourself from it. The second: "my gift is the important one" — if grace gave it, the glory belongs to God. Surrender comes first, transformation of the inner life first; out of that changed life the gifts flow naturally.

Leaders Equip, the People Minister

So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up. — Ephesians 4:11–12

Christ gives leaders not to do all the ministry but to *equip* the people for it. The people are the ministers; the pastors are the equippers. So the Sunday gathering is the fuel stop, not the destination — the workshop, the classroom, the hospital ward and the kitchen table all become places of ministry. And the goal is not a busy, well-staffed church but a church that looks like Jesus:

until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. — Ephesians 4:13

Stewards of Grace

Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards

of God's grace in its various forms. — 1 Peter 4:10

We are *stewards*, not owners — managing something that belongs to Someone else, holding it for the sake of others. A steward doesn't need to be impressive, only faithful with what was handed to them. Most of this ministry happens in the week, in places nobody photographs: the meal brought to a grieving home, the late-night message to someone who worried you, the older believer who notices a younger one drifting and chooses to engage, the friend who simply sits with another in a hard season without reaching for words.

The Cross Beneath Everything

The real issue is not activity or even gifting; it's what we are holding and refusing to release. The volunteer model could be managed, measured and rostered — but God is after living connection and overflow, not managed output.

Very truly I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. — John 12:24

A seed clutched in a closed fist stays exactly what it is — preserved, protected, permanently alone. The life that clings to itself produces nothing; the yielded life multiplies, not through striving but through surrender. This is why the volunteer model failed: it asked for the fruit without the death. Jesus was precise:

Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. — Matthew 16:24

The door into this is not talent but a yielded heart — and every person can open that door, not because they are gifted enough, but because Christ is in them.

The Surrender

This is not a commitment to a programme — just a willingness to fall into the ground. Open hands instead of a closed fist.

Because you are not just saved *from* something — you are shaped *for* something. And the moment you fall into the ground, the harvest begins.