

## NEXT STEP: STUDY &amp; SHARE

## READINGS

Isaiah 51:1-6

Psalm 138

*O Lord, your steadfast love endures forever. (v8)*

Romans 12:1-8

Matthew 16:13-20

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

O God, with all your faithful followers of every age, we praise you, the rock of our life. Be our strong foundation & form us into the body of your Son, that we may gladly minister to all the world, through Jesus Christ, our Savior & Lord. Amen.

## SERMON TEXT- Romans 12:1-8

<sup>1</sup>I appeal to you therefore, brothers & sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy & acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. <sup>2</sup>Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good & acceptable & perfect. <sup>3</sup>For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. <sup>4</sup>For as in one body we have many members, & not all the members have the same function, <sup>5</sup>so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, & individually we are members one of another. <sup>6</sup>We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; <sup>7</sup>ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; <sup>8</sup>the exhorter, in exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.

## LISTENING TO . . .

**GOD- *Christian life is rooted in the Father, Son, & Holy Spirit***

1. *Romans & 1 Corinthians* have many common themes including the “body of Christ” motif. Compare & contrast them. See *1 Corinthians 12:1-27*. Hint: look for themes, parallel ideas, inversions, reversals, similarities, extensions, metaphors, actions, vocabulary, grammar, etc. Hint 2 one difference: *Romans* considers Jews & Gentiles, while *1 Corinthians* considers rich & poor.
2. Ancient Israel’s membership wasn’t “racial” as we think of the term (skin-color, anatomy, physical anthropology), but based on common ancestry & tradition (history, customs, society, language, etc.; cf. *Genesis 17:9-14*). How does St. Paul’s use of Spirit & gifts (& sacraments) as signs of membership fit Israel’s self-understanding (or new self-understanding, post-resurrection)? See *Romans 10:12, 11:13-24; 1 Corinthians 12:7-11, 28-30; Galatians 3:28; Ephesians 4:11-12; Colossians 3:11*.

**EACH OTHER- *Sharing & growing with our brothers & sisters in Christ***

3. Using your study Bible’s notes, review the spiritual gifts St. Paul lists. Which do you see in yourself? What opportunities is God using to develop those gifts? Don’t forget what *Hebrews 12:3-14* says.
4. Conformed means outwardly fitted or molded (limited?) to a pattern (like an idol); transformed means changed into something else (same word used in *Mark 9:2-3*). Where do you look too much like the world? Where is your flesh strong & your spirit weak? Where are you different from the world? Where is your spirit ruling over your flesh? See *Small Catechism: 10 Commandments, Table of Duties* available [bookofconcord.org](http://bookofconcord.org) *Romans 13:11-14; Galatians 5:8-26; James 3:17-18; 2 Peter 1:5-8*

**NEIGHBORS- *Bearing fruit for those not yet our brothers & sisters***

5. & 6. *Romans 12:1* (in Greek) begins “Therefore...” indicating that *ch. 1-11* will now be applied to everyday life. Review your study Bible’s notes for *12:1-8* & the introduction & outline to *Romans* (Wiki’s outline is reasonable, available [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Epistle\\_to\\_the\\_Romans](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Epistle_to_the_Romans)) What stands out to you as still relevant to believers’ lives together today? How would paying closer attention to St. Paul’s words help your congregation’s unity in the diversity of people who attend? How will it equip y’all for mission in your neighborhood? What changes do you need to make in how you deal with other brothers & sisters in Christ? With pre-Christians? List at least 5 for each question; 10 would be better.

13th Sunday after Pentecost  
Series: Extra-Ordinary Life

08.27.23  
Rev. Jared Stillions, STS

The One & the Many

*Only Christianity offers the world a truly diverse & united witness*

-Notes-

**KEY VERSE:** So we, who are many, are one body in Christ,  
& individually we are members one of another. (v5)

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-NEXT STEPS MEMORY VERSE-

You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God. (*Matthew 16:16*)

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