

Transformed – teen devotion – September 24, 2017

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For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. ... But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. If they were all one part, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, but one body.

1 Corinthians 12:13, 18-19

Freedom from comparison

“Did you see her new phone? I wish I had that.” “Man, he’s so good at that sport. How come I can’t be that good?” “Did you see the car her parents bought her? I have this crummy car that’s like 20 years old.” “That guy is so smart. I wish I was as smart as he is.” “She is so good on the piano. I wish I could do that.”

It’s so easy to start comparing who we are and the abilities we have to the skills other people have. It’s just as easy to start comparing what we have and don’t have to what other people have. But do you see what happens? As soon as we let comparison into our hearts, we will never be content. We will keep on wanting bigger, better, shinier, and newer. We will always want to be someone other than we are.

Paul wants to help us break free.

First, he starts by leveling the playing field. He says about all Christians: *We were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body.* You are one in Christ together with every other believer. Jesus lived for you, died for you, and rose for you just as much as he did for others. You were baptized with the same baptism as every other Christian, and with the water and the Word of God the Holy Spirit brought you to faith in Jesus who saved you. Saved is saved. There isn’t more saved or less saved. Christ has saved you the same way he has saved everyone else. There’s joy and freedom in that. We’re already in. We’re all equal in this body. No one is more or less important. No one is greater or lesser. We’re one.

We are one in Christ, and we also are many and different. We are different in the way that God has blessed us. Paul says this: *In fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. If they were all one part, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, but one body.*

Think about that. God has uniquely created you. He has given you gifts, strengths and abilities just as he determined for you. He's designed you uniquely. You are special, and you're one of a kind. And he made you a member of his body to serve in a way that no one else can. You are uniquely and majestically made to serve in this one body. God has given you gifts and abilities to make an impact on his kingdom.

Out in front or behind the scenes, you were made to make a difference in the body of Christ and to have an impact on his kingdom. Hardly anyone sees your pinky toe, and yet it makes a huge impact on your body. No matter what gifts you have, you were made to make a difference in the kingdom that only you can make. So this week, thank God that he made you the way he did and then serve God right where you're at in the body of Christ.

Prayer: *Dear Lord, thank you for everything that you've given me. Thank you for my talents and abilities, for creating me to be unique. I'm sorry for the times I'm not content with who you made me to be. Forgive me for comparing myself to other people. Forgive me and help to identify and use the gifts that you have so graciously given me. Amen.*

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