

Romans 12 | Part 1
Our Relationship with Other Believers
Scripture: Romans 12:3-13

Big Idea: Worship God: serve the Body/Church, and love others sincerely.

Call to Action: Ask God what gifts He has given to you to serve Him and others.

Volunteer somewhere in your church to help out!

Family Action: Talk to your kids about serving in your church, which is the Body of Christ.

Explain that EVERY believer has a spiritual gift! What is yours?

Exposure to Exposition & Exploring the Scriptures: (10-20 mins)

- Bible Drills (Memorization of OT & NT Book order)
- Guide the children to Romans 12:3-13 in the Bible. (Help them as needed, NT vs OT)
- Say: We are going to continue through Paul's letter to the church of Rome.
- We will learn that the gospel is God's power to save everyone who believes, and we should never be ashamed of Jesus.
- Read aloud. (Ask kids to see their pointers on V3)

Review: vv. 8:26-39 Nothing can separate me from God!

vv. 9:1-13 Did God break His Promises to save Israel (Israel's Past History)

vv. 9:14-33 God's Sovereign over ALL, and will not fail.

vv. 10:1-13 Trusting Jesus Is the Way, Jesus the stumbling block (Israel's Present State)

vv. 10:14-21 Is this a Big Misunderstanding, that Israel missed Messiah? (Israel's Present State)

vv. 11:1-27 God is not done with Israel; He is showing kindness towards Gentiles (Israel's Future)

vv. 11:28 – 12:2 God keeps His promises & Our relationship with God

vv. 12:3-13 Our Relationship with Believers & Serve the Body with spiritual gifts

Opening Question

Have you ever been part of a team where everyone had a different job – and what happened when someone didn't do theirs? → Let children answer and discuss. Paul will explain that we are to love the Body of Christ/ Church and do our part with the gifts God has given us.

Key Theological Term: Spiritual Gifts- a special gift given to EVERY believer to serve and help the church body grow.

Key Theological Term: Body of Christ or Church Body: All believers locally and worldwide.

Notes:

In Romans 12-15, Paul shows us how to live in response to God's mercy. This is not a list of rules, but a plan for worship. Because God has saved us and nothing can separate us from His love, our lives should reflect gratitude and obedience.

Think of it like a target 🎯:

- The center is our relationship with God (12:1-2).

- Then comes our relationship with other believers (12:3-13).
- Then the world, and finally government and society.

If living this way feels impossible, Paul already gave us the starting point. We become a living sacrifice, renewing our minds through God's Word. As our thinking changes, our behavior changes. This is where sanctification begins.

If we neglect our relationship with God, everything else weakens. But when we come to Christ and drink deeply (John 7:37-38), the Spirit strengthens us—and that strength flows outward to bless others.

Strength at the center makes faithfulness in the outer circles possible.

Romans 12:3-13, Paul moves from the center outward, showing how transformed hearts live among other believers.

*Paul paused in Chapters 9-11 to show that God is still faithful to Israel and keeps every promise. Now in Chapter 12, he returns to the main point: since God has saved you, live your whole life as worship to Him.

Romans 12:3–12:13 NLT

3 Because of the privilege and authority God has given me, I give each of you this warning: Don't think you are better than you really are. Be honest in your evaluation of yourselves, measuring yourselves by the faith God has given us. 4 Just as our bodies have many parts and each part has a special function, 5 so it is with Christ's body. We are many parts of one body, and we all belong to each other.

6 In his grace, God has given us different gifts for doing certain things well. So if God has given you the ability to prophesy, speak out with as much faith as God has given you. 7 If your gift is serving others, serve them well. If you are a teacher, teach well. 8 If your gift is to encourage others, be encouraging. If it is giving, give generously. If God has given you leadership ability, take the responsibility seriously. And if you have a gift for showing kindness to others, do it gladly.

9 Don't just pretend to love others. Really love them. Hate what is wrong. Hold tightly to what is good. 10 Love each other with genuine affection, and take delight in honoring each other. 11 Never be lazy, but work hard and serve the Lord enthusiastically. 12 Rejoice in our confident hope. Be patient in trouble, and keep on praying. 13 When God's people are in need, be ready to help them. Always be eager to practice hospitality.

Romans 12:3-5 Because of the privilege and authority God has given me, I give each of you this warning: Don't think you are better than you really are. Be honest in your evaluation of yourselves, measuring yourselves by the faith God has given us. 4 Just as our bodies have many parts and each part has a special function, 5 so it is with Christ's body. We are many parts of one body, and we all belong to each other.

V3-5 We All Belong to One Body (The Church Body or Body of Christ)

Paul begins teaching about how Christians should treat each other in the church. (v. 3):

- Don't think you are more important than you are. (Pride)
- But also don't think you are more important. (Arrogance)

- God gave each believer a special role.
- We are all part of one big family – the Body of Christ.

Paul says he speaks “by the grace given to me.”

- That means God gave Paul the job of being an apostle.
- And just like Paul, God gives every believer a job too.

Paul compares the church to a human body. Think about your body:

- Your hands grab things, your feet help you walk, your eyes help you see, even your little toe helps you balance! Every part has a job!!
- If one part refuses to do its job, the whole body struggles.

The same is true in the church:

- Some people teach, some help, some encourage, some serve quietly behind the scenes.
- No one is more loved.
- No one is unimportant.
- And no one is replaceable.

A Helpful Picture

God has assigned each of us a part in His big plan – like instruments in an orchestra.

- The violin doesn’t try to become a drum.
- The drum doesn’t try to become a flute.
- Each plays its own part beautifully.
- If everyone tries to switch parts, it becomes noise!
- But when everyone plays the part God gave them, it becomes beautiful music.

Kid Point: Everyone depends on God’s kindness. God will always keep His promises.

Romans 12:6-8 In his grace, God has given us different gifts for doing certain things well. So if God has given you the ability to prophesy, speak out with as much faith as God has given you. 7 If your gift is serving others, serve them well. If you are a teacher, teach well. 8 If your gift is to encourage others, be encouraging. If it is giving, give generously. If God has given you leadership ability, take the responsibility seriously. And if you have a gift for showing kindness to others, do it gladly.

V6-8 Use Your Gift Well

Paul now explains how we are to use the gifts God has given us to serve Him and the Body.

These gifts are called spiritual gifts – which are special abilities God gives believers when they trust in Jesus. (v.6)

These gifts are:

- Given by God’s grace
- Different for each person
- Meant to help the church grow
- Your gift helps show where you fit in the Body of Christ.

Paul gives examples (v.6-8):

- Prophecy – Speak God’s truth clearly.
- Serving – Help others in practical ways.
- Teaching – Explain God’s Word.
- Encouraging – Cheer others on in faith.
- Giving – Share generously.
- Leading – Guide others responsibly.
- Kindness/Mercy – Care for people gladly.

Paul is telling his audience: Whatever your gift is – do it well! Not halfway. Not with complaining. Not wishing you had someone else’s gift.

Kid Point: We all have a specific gift from God that we are good at! What is yours?

Romans 12:9-13 Don’t just pretend to love others. Really love them. Hate what is wrong. Hold tightly to what is good. 10 Love each other with genuine affection, and take delight in honoring each other. 11 Never be lazy, but work hard and serve the Lord enthusiastically. 12 Rejoice in our confident hope. Be patient in trouble, and keep on praying. 13 When God’s people are in need, be ready to help them. Always be eager to practice hospitality.

V12:9-13 How to Love in God’s Family

Paul now gives many short commands about how believers should treat each other:

- Love must be real. (v.9)
- Hate what is evil. (v.9)
- Hold tightly to what is good. (v.9)
- Love with real love and put others first. (v.10)
- Work hard in serving with JOY. (v.11)
- Rejoice for your salvation- Praise God. (v.12)
- In troubles, be patient and always pray. (v.12)
- Help other believers. (v.13)
- Welcome others kindly. (v.13)

*This is a list of how a healthy church family should live.

*Paul is showing us that Love is not just a feeling; love is something we do.

Examples: (Let kids discuss and chat about what this looks like for them)

Love Must Be Real: (v. 9)

- Let someone else have the better seat.
- Share what you have.
- Pray when you say you will.

Hate What Is Evil – Hold to What Is Good (v.9)

- Don’t watch ugly things on electronics.
- Have friends who encourage you, not point you towards evil things.

- Love seeing and hearing good and beautiful things.

Treat Each Other Like Family: Our church family is our spiritual family. These relationships last forever – even into eternity. (v.10)

- Encourage each other.
- Protect unity.
- Put fellow believers first when choices are difficult.
- But never do something that dishonors Christ.

Serve with Energy and the Right Heart: We serve people – but we are really serving Jesus. (v.11)

- Don't be lazy.
- Be enthusiastic.
- Serve the Lord.

Rejoice, Persevere, Pray: (v.12)

Paul connects three important ideas:

- Rejoice in hope (our future resurrection).
- Persevere in trouble.
- Be devoted to prayer.
- We don't rejoice because life is easy.
We rejoice because Jesus defeated death.

When trouble comes: (v.12)

- Don't quit.
- Don't isolate yourself.
- Keep praying.

Help Believers – Show Hospitality to Others: Paul ends with two acts of kindness: (v.13)

- Support the needs of fellow believers.
- Practice hospitality.

Hospitality means welcoming and helping others – even strangers.

Kid Point: When we live this way, we show the world what Jesus is like!!

Observation Questions (What did it say?)

1. What warning does Paul give about how we should view ourselves? (Paul warns believers not to think too highly of themselves but to evaluate themselves honestly. v.3)
2. How does Paul describe the church in verses 4-5? (He compares the church to a body with many parts, each having a special function. v. 4-5)
3. What kinds of attitudes and actions does Paul command in verses 9-13? (Sincere love, hatred of evil, devotion to one another, diligence, joy in hope, perseverance in trials, prayer, generosity, and hospitality. v.9-13)

Understanding Questions (What does it mean?)

1. What does "measure of faith" in Romans 12:3 mean? (It refers to the portion or role God has assigned to each believer in the body, not the strength of personal faith. v.6)
2. Why must love be "real and not pretend"? (Because fake love damages unity. True Christian love is self-sacrificial action, not just words. v.9)
3. Why does Paul connect rejoicing, perseverance, and prayer? (Because our hope in resurrection gives us strength in trials, and prayer keeps us anchored to God in every season. v.12)

Application Questions (What should I do?)

1. How can I serve in the body without pride or false humility? (By accepting the role God has given me and serving faithfully in that place. v. 3)
2. What does real love look like in my church or to those around me? (Personal response) Following through on commitments, helping sacrificially, honoring others above myself. v.10)
3. What Spiritual Gift/gifts has God given to me? (Personal response) v.9-13)

Activity #1: Build the Church Together

Supplies:

Straws/Spaghetti noodles
Mini Marshmallows

Instructions: Work together to build a church building that stands up. Use the straws or noodles as the walls that brace the building and the marshmallows as the joints to hold the structure in place. Work together.

Step 1 – Divide kids into small groups of 3

- Pass out materials
- Ask them to build a church with no directions

Step 2 – Now have students work together to build a standing church

- Give job roles:
- One child is the thinker
- One child is the builder
- One child is the encourager

(Feel free to change the jobs)

Step 3 – Which way worked best?

- The one with no guidance or roles?
- Or the one where each person had a specific role to play to make it work together?
- When we know our gift and contribute to the Body, we help those in the Body and show others on the outside what it looks like to serve, help, encourage, and build the Body.
- People see Jesus when we work together and serve each other.

Step 4 – Add Key Notes Around the Tree

- Have students write these short statements around the diagram: The root supports the branches

- Israel was set aside, not destroyed.
- Gentiles are included by grace, not pride.
- Israel will be grafted back in.

Activity #2 : Memory Verse: (Come up with moves)

Romans 12:4-5 Just as our bodies have many parts and each part has a special function, so it is with Christ's body. We are many parts of one body, and we all belong to each other.

Remind them: What is the Gospel?

Jesus' perfect life paid for the sins of all who believe. Jesus died on the cross as the punishment for sin. But Jesus did not stay dead, three days later He rose to life (resurrection) defeating the power of death. Believe, and you will be saved!

- We are all sinful. We all deserve the consequence of sin- death.
- Jesus is what saves us from the sin we all have in our bodies. And one day, he'll even give us a new body.

Supporting Truths Kids Can Grasp:

- God assigns our spiritual gifts to serve the Body of Christ (believers). (Romans 12:3-13).
- No part of the Body of Christ is unimportant. (Romans 12:4-5).
- Our abilities to serve come from God, not personal merit. (Romans 12:6).
- Love must be genuine and sacrificial. (Romans 12:9-10).
- Faithful service requires perseverance and prayer. (Romans 12:11-12).