

Harmonious Body

Unique gift

Once upon a time, there were some animals who decided to establish a school for animals. They agreed upon offering courses in running, climbing, swimming, and flying. They also decided that all animals should take every course. This is where the problem began. The duck was better than its teacher at swimming, but only received passing grades in flying and performed poorly in running. As a result, they made the duck drop swimming and stay after school to practice running. This caused the duck's webbed feet to become worn out and its grade in swimming dropped to average. However, everyone else felt less threatened and more comfortable with this arrangement, except for the duck.

The rabbit started off at the top of its class in running, but due to making up for missed swimming lessons, it caught pneumonia and had to drop out of school. The squirrel showed great talent in climbing but was extremely frustrated in flying class because the teacher insisted on starting from the ground up rather than the treetop down. As a result, the squirrel developed muscle cramps from overextension and received a "C" in climbing and a "D" in running. The eagle was the problem student and was disciplined for being a nonconformist. For example, in climbing class, the eagle would always reach the top of the tree before anyone else, but it insisted on using its own method to get there. Eventually, the eagle was expelled for refusing to participate in swimming class.

Does this story speak to you? What is the lesson here? God doesn't expect them to excel in every other area. When everyone is expected to fit into the same mold, it only leads to frustration, discouragement, mediocracy, and failure. A duck is meant to be a duck, not something else. God has made you unique so that you can accomplish what He wants you to achieve in the world. He doesn't want you to be anyone else; He wants you to be you.

Paul says that we all have unique gifts as a part of the body of Christ. Each body part has unique functions that are created to function that way. Hands have fingers that do wide range of movement. Feet have high sensory receptors to give balance to the body. The eye is a complex organ that works by bending light to create an image that the brain can understand. The heart pumps blood throughout the body, delivering oxygen and nutrients to organs and muscles. Each body part is miraculously complex in working together by the communicating signal, Neuron. Each body part is essential to the whole body.

Romans 12:6 says, "God has given each of us the ability to do certain things well." This is evident. The passage indicates that everybody has talents. If you say, "I don't have any talents," or "I don't have any abilities," you are mistaken. The problem is that you are more aware of

what you are not good at than what you are good at. The average human being has between five hundred and eight hundred abilities. Numerous studies have shown this. You have at least five hundred different abilities within you, many of which you may not even be aware of because they come naturally to you.

The problem arises when we go to school, as we are all treated in the same way. We take standardized tests like the SAT, ACT, or PSAT, which only measure one form of intelligence. As a result, we are all forced to learn in the same way, even though we have different abilities. We now know that there are at least eight or nine different forms of intelligence or far more so far as I understand. According to Howard Gardner's theory, these include linguistic, logical-mathematical, musical, spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalistic intelligence.

What intelligence do you possess? God equipped me with musical intelligence. I am very grateful because I love music. When I create music, I feel fulfilled, as I was made to make music. Each person in this space is wonderfully equipped with a specific talent. God designed us uniquely so that we can function best with the gifts given to us. There is great joy and fulfillment in life when you use your gift for the highest purpose.

Your Uniqueness in the Body of Christ

Are you celebrating yourselves? In the gifted area, we are geniuses. We need to recover the created genius that was not fully developed or noticed. God let me know not so long ago that the first gift is in the musical area, especially, making music. I am a person of age, but I still try to develop it more for the Lord. My gift is not for myself alone but to bless and strengthen other people in the body of Christ. I desire that it brings people's hearts to the Lord. Yours is the same.

So why did God give us unique gifts? Firstly, it is to serve and honor God by building a strong and effective body of the Lord. Every task is important, whether it is carpentry, teaching, masonry, or preaching. You can honor God by repairing cars, helping people find and buy homes, creating music, cooking meals, managing your office, or in countless other ways. Each of you has an essential part in the body of Christ. Everyone has a unique role in the house of God.

Imagine an Orchestra. It is like creating beautiful harmonious music in an orchestra. There is no such thing that one person plays tuba, trumpet, clarinet, oboe at the same time. It is impossible. You have your own instrument in the orchestra that creates beautiful harmony. We are believers in various shapes, experiences, backgrounds, socio-economic statuses. We all make up the body of Christ. With the unique talent you have, you receive also the gift of the Holy Spirit to help other believers grow and mature. Every person is necessary in the body of Christ.

How is the body connected? Billions of neurons work together to create a communication network among all the parts to function as one. The Holy Spirit connects us with all the details of the harmonious music we play. We each play a part with the unique gift given to us, whether in our work, small groups, or church community. When we are together, the body of Christ is more effective and stronger.

There are various ways to build the body of Christ. With the talents given, you can produce wealth. **Deuteronomy 8:18 states, "Remember the Lord your God, for it is He who gives you the ability to produce wealth."** If God has given you amazing business skills, it is because He wants you to use those skills to contribute to kingdom projects at Fifth Ave Church and around the world.

This means utilizing your skills to earn more money that can be shared with others. **Ephesians 4:28 says, "Begin using your hands for honest work and then give generously to others in need."** John Wesley, the founder of the UMC, lived a life of sharing his financial resources without reserve. He used his money only for basic necessities. When he became a bishop, he was able to give 80% of his salary for mission work.

Money is not about us; it is about God. Even if you make millions of dollars, you must realize that it is not for yourself. You are only a servant; the owner is God. There is great joy in following God's way. Giving money to those in need is great fun. Our hearts are created to feel that way. Does it speak to you? God blesses those who give cheerfully, and this generosity triggers His blessings because God is a generous God. It will strengthen the body of Christ.

Your uniqueness is an essential part of the body of Christ. In the future, our church will launch the Connections ministry. It will connect those in need with those who can provide support. If you have carpentry skills, you might help those who need minor repairs on their homes. If you have time and a heart for people, you can be a comforting and listening friend for those who are lonely. If you love to cook, you can provide meals or serve in the future dinner church to share Jesus' love. The Connections ministry will work towards creating a loving and supportive community. It will be both inside and outside the church. It is all for Agape love.

Let's consider what God did for you. God created you. God equipped you with special talents, spiritual gifts, and personality. Then He sent Jesus to die for you. He expects a return on the immense love He invested. He will ask you someday, "What did you do with the time, talents, and treasure I entrusted to you? Did you use them for yourself?" I don't want to say "Yes."

What if you do not use your time, talents, and treasure for the body of Christ? Everyone loses. The world loses, the church loses, and you lose. In the parable of talents, Jesus took the one Talent of a servant who did not use his Talent gave those who have 10 talents. There is a universal law in this: if you don't use them, then you lose them. That is true in every area of life.