**WORD-SHARE-PRAYER Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**For personal and small group study Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**READ:** Romans 12:3-8 (Team Players Each with a Gift)

*NRSV:*

3] 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. 4] For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, 5] so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. 6] We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; 7]ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; 8] the exhorter, in exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.

THE MESSAGE:

3I'm speaking to you out of deep gratitude for all that God has given me, and especially as I have responsibilities in relation to you. Living then, as every one of you does, in pure grace, it's important that you not misinterpret yourselves as people who are bringing this goodness to God. No, God brings it all to you. The only accurate way to understand ourselves is by what God is and by what he does for us, not by what we are and what we do for him.

4 -6In this way we are like the various parts of a human body. Each part gets its meaning from the body as a whole, not the other way around. The body we're talking about is Christ's body of chosen people. Each of us finds our meaning and function as a part of his body. But as a chopped-off finger or cut-off toe we wouldn't amount to much, would we? So since we find ourselves fashioned into all these excellently formed and marvelously functioning parts in Christ's body, let's just go ahead and be what we were made to be, without enviously or pridefully comparing ourselves with each other, or trying to be something we aren't.

6 -8If you preach, just preach God's Message, nothing else; if you help, just help, don't take over; if you teach, stick to your teaching; if you give encouraging guidance, be careful that you don't get bossy; if you're put in charge, don't manipulate; if you're called to give aid to people in distress, keep your eyes open and be quick to respond; if you work with the disadvantaged, don't let yourself get irritated with them or depressed by them. Keep a smile on your face.

**REFLECT:** Enjoy this wonderful passage. Ask God for new insights. What do you learn about the Christian life and ministry?

**RESPOND:** How will you apply this text to your life and ministry?

**REQUEST:** Jot down prayer requests that you and others may have.

**Word-Share-Prayer for Ministry Teams**

Word-Share-Prayer (Read-Reflect-Respond-Request) is for use with small groups, committees, ministry teams, and boards. The texts are deliberately a bit short so that committees and teams with limited time can still ***"be the people of God before doing the work of the people of God."*** For small group meetings, a longer section of text may be used or just more time spent discussing each segment.

For many team and committee meetings, we follow a 7-7-7 format - 7 minutes for individual Bible Study, 7 minutes to share one insight per person and 7 minutes to pray for one another.  If we use these sheets for a regular one and one-half hour Bible study, then the biblical passage could be a bit longer and our schedule would be the ***Word***-30 minutes, ***Share(sharing)*** of lives (blessings and prayer requests)-45 minutes and ***Praye***r-15 minutes.

For a ministry team/committee allow 7-7-7 minutes (plus or minus) format. If the group is larger than 12 to 14, you may find it easier to break into groups of four, at least for the sharing of prayer requests and praying for one another.

1. Give every person 5-7 minutes to work on it in silence (we don't have people do them as "homework" since many will fail to do so).

2. Spend another 7 minutes or so asking people to briefly share one insight. If the group is larger than 14, break into groups of 4 to save time.

3. Ask for one-sentence prayer requests. Spend more time on this if someone in the group is in real distress about something. Otherwise, just a sentence or so per person as we want to lift one another up but haven't the time for more sharing... unless we are willing. Teams are often willing to spend more time in this Bible study portion of the meeting simply because we will work to be more efficient in the rest of the meeting.

Pray for one another out loud by name, giving everyone the complete freedom to pray in silence if they prefer.

Hope this is useful for you... praying for you and your congregation to experience the transforming presence of our Lord in new ways.

With joy – Stan