

# Unity and Diversity

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 04 July 2021

Preacher: Chris Thornton

[ 0 : 0 0 ] The scripture reading comes from Romans chapter 12. Please follow along on the screen, the bulletin, or your own Bible. Starting in verse 1, we read, I appeal to you, therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

For by the grace given to me, I say to everyone among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned.

For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.

Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them. Thank you, Betty.

[ 1 : 3 9 ] Great. Good morning, everybody. Good morning. My name is Chris. This is the day the Lord has made, and we will rejoice in it, because England won last night.

So, miracles happen. Miracles happen. So, this is probably the last time you'll see me this happy. Let me pray for us as we begin.

Father, thank you that we stand in the presence of an awesome God. And thank you that we come with nothing in our hands, but knowing that you are a good and a gracious king, who is so full of mercy and so full of kindness that you continually, every morning, lavish new grace upon us.

Lord, I pray for us as a church family. I pray, Lord, that you would help us to see the grace of each other. Help us to see the grace that you have given us in abundance.

Lord, I pray that even this morning, as I know different people are struggling in different ways. I know there are different challenges we're going through. Father, I pray that your mercy and your kindness would just minister to us.

[ 3 : 0 4 ] That you come and speak to us. Open our ears. Open our hearts, Lord. That we would see you and not be the same again. We love you. In Jesus' name.

Amen. Amen. Great. So we're going through this series in Romans. And as I was thinking about this series, I remembered back at a previous church that there was an older lady called, let's call her Jean.

And she thought that men wearing hats in church was of the devil. Edward.

You'd not be in a good place. And one Sunday, a teenager came in to the Sunday service wearing a baseball cap.

And do you know what happened? Jean went straight up to him and said, take it off. And the teenager refused. And there was this showdown, this kind of standoff.

- [ 4 : 09 ] And eventually the teenager just kind of stormed out. This was Sunday morning. And the lady gathered her friends together and started complaining about the youth these days.
- And then the young people gathered together in their tribe to complain about how legalistic all these old people were. And it's fascinating, isn't it?
- Because I noticed something. That diversity is really hard. When you have people from different expectations, different backgrounds, different traditions coming together in one place, it's hard work, right?
- And we like to go with people who think like us, who act like us, who dress like us, who do the same things as us, because that feels a little bit safer and a little bit easier at times.
- And when we often hit up against the rub of diversity, what happens is we often end up looking down and judging each other. Don't we? Anyone done that?
- [ 5 : 12 ] Okay, maybe I'm the only one. And so what we often tend to do that moment, we then retreat into our little tribe, whether it's politically, whether it's age, whether it's life stage, because it's much easier to be uniform than to be diverse.
- Right? And, you know, as you look out into the world and you see people love talking about diversity in our world, but actually the world is as polarized into our little tribes as ever.
- And this is actually one of the key issues for the church in Rome as we're looking in the book of Romans. Because the book of Romans was not primarily just written to give you some, like a nice theology textbook.
- It was written to help a polarized church split into different tribes of the minority Jewish Christians and the majority Gentile non-Jewish Christians.
- And it was written to show them that the gospel and the doctrine of what you believe can heal and unite even divided people. And it calls us and everyone to stop placing our identity in our ethnicity, even in our religiosity, in anything else.
- [ 6 : 29 ] Because the only identity that we have now, if you are a believer in Christ, is a gospel identity in Jesus. And he's gone through the book of Romans showing how God has taken, if you have trusted in him, put your faith in Christ's death for you, he has taken you from being God's enemies to being his friends, to being outside the family, to being adopted into his multinational, multigenerational family.
- And it's all because of Jesus. And it's all the glory to him. It's all because of his mercy. And that's what we've been talking about, isn't it? By the mercies of God. And you know, a couple of weeks ago, we talked about in verse 1 how Paul has said, as a response to what God has done for us, therefore lay your lives down on the altar to live all of life as worship to him.
- And he's then said, we looked at last week, and he said, so in light of that, don't conform to the way everyone else is thinking, but get your minds renewed and transformed through the word of God, so that you live as this different kind of people that I've made you to be.
- So stop judging each other. Start loving each other. And this is where the rest of Romans 12 is going to flow out in some very practical ways.
- Because you see, the God of the Bible is a Trinitarian God. He's a God of unity and diversity. One God, three persons. And we as his people are supposed to reflect that.
- [ 8 : 01 ] So how, and here's the big question, how do you get unity without crushing diversity?
- Or how do you get diversity without creating tribal warfare and destroying unity? Well, Paul is going to go into this passage.
- And so if you've got it in front of you, we're just going to kind of check it out. Romans 12, starting at verse 3. He says, and I've got three things. He says, think straight.

Then he's going to say, think team. And then think grace. Okay? So let's start. Think straight. He starts off saying, by the grace given to me, I say to everyone among you, not to think of himself or herself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment or sober thinking is actually what it says in Greek, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned.

Do you notice he says to everyone, not just the minority, not just the majority, he says to everyone that the healing process is going to start in your community when you start renewing your thinking.

[ 9 : 13 ] He's saying you've got way too high a view of yourselves. You've got to sober up. You need sober thinking. Do you know, when you're drunk, what happens to you?

You start thinking that a lamppost is your best friend. You lose touch with reality. Have you ever seen like X Factor or one of those programs where someone really believes that they are the next Taylor Swift, but they cannot sing to save their lives?

It's just excruciating, right? But you know, I've seen so many marriages falling apart where both sides claim the other person is the problem.

And Paul Tripp says, two perfectly righteous people in a terrible marriage, how does that happen? It happens when we make our thinking about us and our thinking about others more important than God's thinking about us and God's thinking about others.

You see, tribalism happens when you get stinking thinking, which leads you to elevate yourself and diminish other people. That's what Paul's saying.

[ 10 : 26 ] You know, one translation of this verse actually says, take a sane view of yourself. Think straight. But how do you do that? How do you do that?

Well, he says, according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. Well, the word measure can either mean, like if you take this and you go, okay, 1.5 meters, it can either be your height, what you measure, so in this case, your faith, okay, the amount of faith you've got, or it can actually be the tape measure itself.

And so what I think Paul is saying is, he's saying the latter, he's saying there is a tape measure, there is a measure that God has assigned to you. That is, it's the gospel of Jesus Christ.

It's not your own view of your own faith because you've got stinking thinking, so how are you going to get a right assessment? He's saying, no, you've got to use God's assessment tool, which is his tape measure, which is Christ.

And Christ is like, I can't go any higher. He's like 25 meters high. I mean, just take the image. But what does that do to us when we come against that measure?

[ 11 : 44 ] Well, the first thing it does, it actually humbles our pride. Because doesn't the world measure us according to our status, according to our achievements, according to how well you've done in your workplace, according to your appearance?

You know, so if you've got a good job, say you're a lawyer or a doctor or something like that, then people might look at you and go, oh, you're about five meters. And when people say that about us, we can begin to own that for ourselves.

Oh, we can. Pretty good. You know, even in church, you know, if you're the pastor or you're serving all the time, people can look at you and go, oh, five meters. But when you look at God's measure in the gospel, it's going to get dangerous.

You see that actually God's measure in the gospel says that actually connected to that, if I can get this working.

These things weren't made for sermon illustrations. He says, actually, you're more like that. You know, you're way smaller, you're way more fragile, you're way more sinful than you think you are.

[ 13 : 05 ] And that humbles us from looking down on other people. But then it doesn't just do that. It does a second thing. It also lifts up those who are crushed.

Because, you know, some of us, society tells you, you're that small. Or you tell yourself you're that small. And what the gospel says, in Christ, because of his death for you, if you put your faith in him, you go from that to actually being like this, because your measure now is not yourself, it's Christ.

So he says, your identity is no longer based on your performance and based on my performance, and my performance is 25 meters. You see, you're now no longer a loser, you're a saint.

You're no longer an outsider and rejected. You are welcomed into the family of the king of kings. You belong. Measure yourself against that. So that means in Christ, a faithful pastor of 50 years has no more personal merit in the kingdom of God than somebody who's a new believer.

Isn't that extraordinary? You don't get that out in the world, but you get that when you measure it against God's measure. And that means this.

[ 14 : 22 ] It means the same for you, and it means the same for the person sitting next to you if they're in Christ. And that means that grace is what brings unity to the church because grace levels the playing field of all of us.

It doesn't matter whether you're black, white, green, yellow, pink. It doesn't matter whether you're an England fan or a Ukraine fan. It even doesn't matter about that. It doesn't matter whether you're married, whether you're single, whether you've got a great job, whether you're unemployed.

Grace is the only gateway into the family of the kingdom of God. It's the only measure of your value that doesn't crush others or crush you.

Grace brings unity to us. So what that means is, if Christ is our measure, and that grace that we have in him is the unity which unites us together as one, Paul is then going to go and say, since we neither elevate ourselves nor we just over-diminish ourselves, don't think too highly of ourselves, don't think too lowly of ourselves, then he's going to say, grace doesn't just bring unity.

Grace also brings diversity too. And that's my second thing. So think straight. Think team or body is the next thing.

[ 15 : 47 ] For he says in verse four, he says, What's he saying here?

It's actually not a difficult point that he's making. He's actually saying, instead of looking down on each other and judging each other, there's a shift of direction to see yourself as a team, as a body, united together.

And there's three things about this. One is, yes, you are unified. You are unified. That's what he says. We're one body. Okay, let me emphasize that again. Everyone who trusts in Christ, you're united to him vertically and you're united to each other horizontally in his church family.

So if your hand slaps your face, who suffers? You do.

If somebody looks down, if you look down on a brother or sister in the body of Christ and you just either withdraw to your own circle, social circle and complain, who suffers?

[ 17 : 07 ] We do. You do. All of us do. Do you see the image that he's saying? You are not an independent, like, we're not just an individual, like, bunch of little toes that come together on a Sunday.

It's one toes and then we go and amputate ourselves for the rest of the week. That's painful. That's going to die. That's actually one of the reasons, and Kevin mentioned it earlier, we want to move away from live streaming to actually in-person gathering.

Because church isn't just sitting on your sofa and just watching a message. Church is living, breathing a body together. Your absence affects me just as your presence, your physical presence affects me.

That's amazing. You know, it's like if there's two people in a room, if there's a hundred people in a room, it makes a difference to you, doesn't it? And actually, if you think about it, church is then intrinsic to your identity.

It's intrinsic to who you are. So live and make decisions as if your church family is not an optional extra, but actually it's intrinsic to who you are as a human being.

[ 18 : 24 ] And so, that means like things like CGs, family groups, if you're a family and you're struggling to get in, come and see me so you can actually get connected.

We're unified, but we're also connected with that, we're interdependent. And so, that's kind of the same point that I was making. As we're interdependent, what that means is, when you come together and I hear you singing, that encourages my heart.

When you pray for me, that encourages me. Do you know, you can't give hugs by live stream, but you can do that with each other.

That is actually, when you welcome me, I experience the love of Christ through you. Do you see how it works? And I know how hard this is.

I've got two kids, like young kids, and I know coming on Sunday, coming to see, it's hard work. But let me tell you, if you know that this is who you are, you're going to get here and we're going to help you get here whatever way possible.

[ 19 : 35 ] So we're unified, we're interdependent, but we're also diverse. And by the way, that also means that actually, you matter, right?

You matter when you're here. So don't just rock up for the sermon and then just rush out afterwards. Actually come to be with your family. But we are diverse as well. And he says this, he says, we're not just unified, we're not just interdependent, we're diverse.

He says, having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us. And I just want to unpack this a little bit. I'm just going to put this under another title, which is Think Grace.

Okay? Think Grace. So think straight, think team, think grace. Okay. He says, God has given us different gifts.

And he says, they're grace. It's the word charismata, which comes from the word charis, which is the word for grace. It's the same root family. And grace is not just for salvation.

[ 20 : 42 ] Grace is here for blessing other people. You know, our gifts are grace to us from God and grace from God to others through us.

They're grace to us and grace through us. You see, you won't get the full extent of the mercies of God by just sitting reading your Bible in your room.

Reading a Bible is really important. It's crucial. But it's not enough. Because God's design that is alongside his word, we experience grace through each other.

And it's not about us. It's not so we get exalted. So Jesus gets the glory and others experience his goodness through us. And so he says, use whatever gifts God has given you for others.

You see, it's no longer focused on yourself. It's for others. Now, some people get really hung up on that word gift because we go, oh, I don't know what my gifts are. I'm not sure I've got any gifts.

[ 21 : 45 ] Things like that. And Paul would say, hey, that's not the point. This gift list, he's basically saying, use whatever God has given you. And he's just giving you, actually, and this is not an exhaustive list.

It's an example list of some things that God has given to the church in Rome. And the reason we know that is because there's two other lists in the New Testament of gifts and none of them are exactly the same.

These are examples. And one of the examples of that is to show that diverse grace moves us out of tribal thinking, individualistic thinking, and moves us to unified serving and blessing each other kind of thinking.

You know, and if you're going, I don't know what my gifts are, just try stuff out of serving other people and you'll find where your sweet spot is as you learn how to serve. You know, and he mentions like practical things.

He calls serving here and that's a very practical thing like setting up the sound system, those kind of things. He mentions relational stuff, the exhortation, like encouraging, listening, consoling, comforting people.

[ 22 : 52 ] But he's using, he uses a body analogy. Okay? We've talked about that. But I think many of us are actually very familiar with the body analogy. So I want to change the analogy. Okay?

It's not a perfect analogy. But I want to say that Christian community is actually making a beautiful, delicious chocolate cake.

This one, if we can have it on the screen, this one is gluten-free for me. But it's meant to be this mouth-watering demonstration of the goodness and glory of God so that others can see and experience it.

Now, and what he does, he privileges you and me and every believer of being a partner in him making and creating this masterpiece. He doesn't have to.

But he privileges us with the opportunity to. And so, what do you need when you make a chocolate cake? I've got a few different ingredients.

[ 23 : 57 ] Okay. I've got some, I'm actually missing some ingredients. ingredients. And by the way, you know when you have different ingredients in a cake, if you miss some out, what happens?

It's not good, right? They're kind of interdependent, right? To make something unified, right? Well, I'm actually missing cocoa powder and I'm missing vegetable oil, but let's pretend that we have them.

Okay, let me give you, that's some baking powder for you. Can I give you, there's an egg, hold it very carefully, okay? Donna, can I give you, that's some sugar.

More woolly, there's some flour for you. Now, did you pay for that? Did you earn it? What is it?

It's a gift. It's a gift of pure grace to you. Okay? And as you got the gift, you got to go, hmm, why have I got this gift?

[ 25 : 06 ] You see, you can lead a Bible study, you can give people lifts to help others and that's grace. Do you know that? You can work at your gifts, you can develop your gifts, but ultimately it's all a gift.

That's why it's called a gift. And it's glory to him, it's grace which is spring-loaded for the worship of Jesus. That's what your gift is. But don't we often then turn what is meant to be given for the worship of Jesus into like a comparison thing?

So like the eggs, look over at the other eggs and say, I'm not like other eggs. I'm a double yoker. You know, I got talent. I'm not like those other ones.

You know, I shouldn't have to put up with guys who are not quite as good musicians as me or quite as competent at leading Bible study as me. And then the flower, actually no, let's not do the flower.

The vegetable oil, which I forgot to bring, but hey, the vegetable oil looks over at the sugar and says, you're so sweet. You know, everybody loves you.

[ 26 : 16 ] Everybody just talks about you all the time. But I'm just greasy. Nobody notices me. I don't get any appreciation around here.

Maybe what's the point in me kind of coming into this? Because what have I got to offer? No one will miss me. And then the baking powder pipes up and says to the vegetable oil and says, it's all right for you.

They get half a cup of you. But they only get like a half a teaspoon kind of girl for me. And have you tried tasting me? I'm not anything special.

And you see what's happening as we do all of this. Where does the focus come? You see, when we lose, we start comparing and wishing our gifts away and going, oh, they've got something better than me or I'm better than them.

When we start doing that, our eyes go off the worship of Jesus and they begin to focus on ourselves. Right? Anyone done that?

[ 27 : 21 ] Man, I do this all the time. And what happens is our thinking becomes stinking because we either elevate or diminish ourselves in ways that we need renewal of the gospel to transform our minds against the measure of God.

And we forget the incredible grace that God has entrusted us with because it's not about us. It's about the worship of Jesus, Jesus, right? And you know, so before you come and serve, before you come and whatever you do for somebody else, I encourage you, stop.

I used to do this when I had to clean toilets for somebody. I used to stop and say, thank you, Jesus, that I get the privilege of serving you. I pray this would be worship to you today. Every time do that because your heart is going to get tempted to start comparing.

Remember, it's gift. Worship. Don't compare. And then third thing, check your own heart. You see, what he says here with some of these gifts, he says, the one who contributes, do it in generosity, the one who leads with zeal, the one who with acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.

Guys, would you like to just kind of come up? But Donna, I'd like you to come up really cheerfully. And Mawali, I'd like you to just come up really reluctantly.

[ 28 : 57 ] Because, you know, if you can do it with zeal, then why is he telling you that? Because you can do it reluctantly, right? Or you can contribute but stingily, right? Or you can have compassion and listen and care for people but just do it out of this sense of guilt and burden and like, oh.

So, could you come up, please? And can I have the others come up as well? It's okay, it's not too far.

It's, uh... Yes! Woo! Thank you. Do you want to put it in the bowl? You can open it. You can actually put it in.

Come up, yeah. Okay. Now the egg's the one we're going to have to be careful with. Okay. Ooh!

Too much watching Jamie Oliver. There you go. Okay. Yeah. I put a little bit in. Okay. Mauli. Come on, Mauli.

[ 30 : 01 ] You can do it. You can do it. Come on. Put it in. Great. Thank you. You guys can... Actually, let me take the flower unless you want it. Thank you.

You guys, thank you. Give them a round of applause. But actually, you know, we have so many people. And why do we get people involved?

Because actually, we have so many people in Watermark doing amazing serving. Like, even this morning, like, a ton of you have just been serving. People are serving your kids. People are serving everywhere. And we just have such an amazing church we're serving.

I think we are so blessed by you guys. So blessed. It's amazing. And I hear people, you know, you're serving in just, you know, cooking meals for newborns.

You know, you're serving and grabbing coffee with people who are struggling. You serve by setting up early. But I think we have a danger. We have a danger that when we serve a lot, we can get jaded.

[ 30 : 58 ] Because sometimes when we serve, we can actually expect as you put the gifts in the bowl, that others are going to appreciate you. Or others are going to treat you well.

And what happens when the flour just kind of messes up your eggshell? You know, some of you are, like, have been stewarding with the parking.

Actually, who's been stewarding, like, done over the last couple of months, just doing parking stewarding? Okay, don't be shy. Come on, guys. Let's give them a round of applause. Let's just... Thank you.

Thank you for that. That is just an important job. It's not a glamorous job. It's an important job. But just imagine that you're showing people to their spot, the car parks.

You've got a system that's all... You've worked it out. But then one driver just ignores you completely and says, this is my spot. And you're, like, trying to explain to them. And they say, no, no, no.

[ 31 : 59 ] I've got to get out of here first. And they're rude to you afterwards. They act a bit more like an amputated toe than the body of Christ.

How do you feel when you do that? And by the way, if you are a driver, this is not a dig at you, but actually, just remember to worship God and treat and encourage the parking stewards well.

Okay? But how do you feel? Aren't we tempted to go, well, what's the point? Aren't we tempted to just begin to grumble in our own hearts? Aren't we tempted to just maybe put in only half the flour the next time because we are just...

Why do I have to deal with this? And you know what happens is if someone that you're serving with, that somebody goes and thanks them, but you've been doing exactly the same thing and they ignore you.

How does that feel? Can we, at that moment, rejoice with those who rejoice? Is their success my success? Or have we forgotten that we're one body?

[ 33 : 12 ] And it's hard, right? And it can eat away at you. Or we can end up serving, but it forgets about worship and it just becomes about obligation. Sometimes we just withdraw, but the mercies of God come to us and reminding us, serving is grace.

And you know, I delight in your service to me. Even if everyone else ignores you, I do not ignore. I hear, I see, and it delights my heart.

So do it for me. And in the midst of that, just remember that it is grace that you're even part of this family. That's what I'm doing for you.

Don't become tribal and withdraw. Receive my love for you. And get up again and use your gifts to serve. So we've said, remember it's a gift.

Worship, don't compare. Check your own heart. Final thing. Find your identity in Christ. You see, many of us can serve because it becomes a bit of an identity to serve.

[ 34 : 25 ] And some of us, you know, you've been pouring out and pouring out and pouring out and pouring out and pouring out and actually you just, you feel like you're empty. And you feel like you're still meant to be pouring out, but you feel like you've got nothing else.



You can't even open the bag. And the mercies of God come to us. And sometimes you keep going, oh, I can't believe I've got to keep doing this.

And the mercies of God come to you and say, humble yourself. You're not omnipotent. Receive my grace through others.

Some of us don't receive the grace of God because he's designed grace to come through somebody else, but we never ask anybody for help. Right? Some of us go, well, but I don't want to disturb everyone.

Everyone's busy. But actually, sometimes that's because our identity is an independence rather than actually being willing to ask others for help. I've just experienced that so much in my life.

[ 35 : 29 ] When, you know, he's going, I've given grace to Donna for you. So ask her. Ask her. Ask her. The mercies of God give you courage to disturb other people.

But you know what? What can sometimes happen is maybe the flower goes to the egg and asks to help, but the egg is too busy trying to find their identity in decorating their own shell with their career ambitions, with their kids' education, with a whole load of other things, social calendar, packed schedule.

I've got no time for anyone because I've got goals. goals. And we've forgotten that God has invited us to be part of the cake that he's making. So he says, in the view of God's mercies, offer yourself as a living sacrifice and be willing to be disturbed.

And put yourself in relationships in CG or in other places where you're able to see the needs of others so you know how you can serve them and can be disturbed. But finally, if we're going to find our identity in Jesus, not actually in what we're doing, not in our careers, and not in our serving because if you can't say no sometimes, if you feel guilty at saying no all the time, and you're somebody who's pausing all the time, then the mercies of God come to you and says, take a break.

Sabbath. Enjoy my goodness. It's not about you. Enjoy worshipping me so that you can be refilled, that your bag can be replenished so that you can pour out again.

[ 37 : 09 ] And God, in his amazing mercy, you know what he does? He takes this complete mess. I mean, I don't know what the recipe was, but it wasn't this.

And you know, he has a whisk. It's the whisk of his spirit of grace, forgiveness, which is he pours and he whisks all the messiness together. And he brings us to remember the gospel again and he causes us to repent and he reminds us of how kind he is.

It's going to get messier. He then puts it in the oven of his gracious, sovereign plan. the circumstances, the experiences, the things that he just brings in life.

And then, miraculously, out of just the most incredible, incredible mercy and grace, you see what appears.

is this glorious cake.

[ 38 : 25 ] And when you look at it and you say, how did it get from that to this? And then you look down at the baker's hands and there are nail prints there.

There are scars and he says, this is the fruit of what I have done for you. And what it means is that grace comes to us but glory goes to Jesus because there is no one else who can take that and make this.

And that is what God is trying to do with us, brothers and sisters. Wherever you are, some of you, he's calling you to start serving in ways you haven't served before. Some of you, he's just calling you to use your service and come back to worshipping and joy in serving him.

Some of you, he's calling you to stop thinking it's individualistic but actually remember you're a body. And it's the glory of Jesus and it's all fueled by grace.

It's not this burden on us. And he's calling us to be a unified yet diverse community. Let's pray.

[ 39 : 36 ] Let's pray. Maybe as we pray, I just want you to think we've been looking at the three kind of responses that God might be calling you to.

Some of you, God's calling you to actually thankfulness and praise that actually you've lost sight of the glory of the community God has given you and God just wants to say you to worship him and thank him for the grace that he has bestowed both upon you and his community.

Some of us, we need to repent that we've made so many things about ourselves and some of us just need to step out and obey what he's calling you to do.

So I want to give you just a minute to go and work with God on what's he calling you to right now. What's he calling you to?

Maybe it's the musicians just start to play. Just respond to God to whatever he's calling you to right now. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

[ 40 : 51 ] Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Father, I just thank you for this amazing church, Lord. Thank you for your amazing mercies to us. That we could even be a member of your family.

Lord, what a privilege. Amen. But Lord, I pray that your mercies would not just be in our heads, but they would thrill our hearts. So that as we look around and we see each other, we see ways that we can bring your grace through the gifts that you've given us to serve one another.

Change us, we pray. Fill us with joy, I pray. What a wonderful Savior you are. In Jesus' name, amen.