

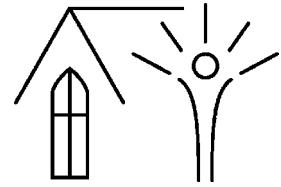


**ROSELLE**  
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

206 S. Rush Street  
Roselle, IL 60172  
(630) 529-1309  
www.RoselleUMC.org

*Our Mission Statement:*

*“To Know Christ,  
To Grow in Christ,  
To Show Others Christ”*



January 14, 2007

**Sermon: “May I Have A Copy? ...”**

1 Corinthians 12:1-11

Reverend Thomas Kim

Two psychiatrists were at a convention boasting about their cases.

One asked the other, “What was the most difficult case that you solved?” The other answered, “Once I had a patient who lived in a pure fantasy world. He believed that somewhere in South America he had a fabulously rich uncle who someday would leave him a fabulous fortune. Every day, all day long he waited for a letter with the good news from some fictitious attorney. He never went out or did anything. He just sat around and waited.”

“Well,” asked his friend, “what was the result?”

The psychiatrist stood tall and preened as he answered, “It was an eight-year struggle, but with determined skill and insight, I finally cured him.”

“Amazing,” rejoined his friend.

“Yes. And then that stupid letter arrived . . .”

That’s an old Milton Berle story.

Here’s one that’s more clerical.

A young pastor was pleased that a particular woman in his congregation always asked for copies of his sermon. One day his pride got the better of him and he asked her about it.

“Oh,” she responded brightly, “they’re just the perfect size for the bottom of my bird cage!”

It reminds us of Benjamin Franklin’s words, “He that falls in love with himself will have no rivals.” He will be destroyed himself by his pride.

In the Epistle lesson from 1 Corinthians, Paul says, “*Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone.*” We can clearly hear that all are differently gifted but from the same God. No one is better or less than anyone.

Quincy Jones is a performer, promoter, producer, director and much more. About a decade ago, he also became known for his amazing ability to bring together the superstars, getting them to blend their talents and work together, share the spotlight and function as a team to produce the hit recording, “We Are the World.” Do you know how he did it? I mean, how he persuaded those music superstars to come together and work as a team to create that song? Well he did a very interesting and evidently, effective thing. He put a sign at the entry to the recording studio: **“CHECK YOUR EGO AT THE DOOR!”**

That would be a good sign to put at the entry to the Corinthian churches who were strong-minded, self-oriented congregations. "Check your ego at the door!" No demand for superstars was there. They were all members of the team.

The church is no place for arrogance or haughtiness or vanity or conceit or selfish pride since we are differently gifted and "All these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses." (1 Corinthians 12:11) What the Bible says is that no one's pride is groundless because his talents and gifts are just given as the Spirit chooses.

That is also how it is in the church. Each of us is important— regardless of what our area of service might be. Each of us needs to do something for Christ. We are not only important; we all are essential.

*Ralph Daniel is a salesman in Singapore. Ralph moves briskly about on foot and by bus, going from client to client. About a year ago while at home playing and running with his dog, he accidentally hit the small toe on his left foot hard against the corner of a wooden door pillar. The doctor told him to rest the foot and not to wear his left shoe for two weeks. Ralph had to cancel all appointments for 18 days; consequently he closed no sales and earned no income. He was healthy and fit in every way yet incapacitated by that injured little toe for nearly three weeks. A hurt little toe prevented him from earning income! This experience did teach Ralph to appreciate St. Paul's words about the importance of all of the members of the body— whether they be hands, eyes, or toes. (THE UPPER ROOM, May-June '94)*

You all are important in the work of Christ. There are no first or second class citizens in the Christian community. You all are important whether you are singing in the choir or teaching a class, or welcoming visitors or preparing the Holy Communion table, or receiving the offering or whatever your role may be. You all matter in the ministry to which Christ has called you.

Some of you are compassionate listeners. You could be visiting shut-ins. Some of you have outgoing personalities. You could be active in the evangelism work of the church. Some of you work well with little children. The list goes on and on.

To be a follower of Christ is to be part of a family, part of a body, as it were. Faith community is not optional for the Christian. You are part of a family. You are members of a royal priesthood. You all have something you need to be doing to help the body survive and grow according to the gifts God has given us just as the Spirit chooses. You have unique gifts and it is important that you use those gifts to serve Christ. Metaphorically, the body of Christ. There is no reason to feel proud or subordinated.

In Jesus time, the Pharisees were a very devoted people. They were good at remembering the teachings of Torah, and at keeping regulations of the Law. They did hard work to purify their lives according to the Law. The scribes were very knowledgeable of the tradition, the scriptures, and the law. They did good deeds but they failed one thing to be humble before God.

Pride is the dandelion of the soul. Its root goes deep; only a little left behind sprouts again. Its seed lodges in the tiniest encouraging cracks. And it flourishes in good soil: The danger of pride is that it feeds on goodness. However, pride breaks harmony and spirit of a community, and hurts the body of Christ.

A hungry mountain lion came out of the hills to stalk a grazing herd. The lion attacked a bull and killed it. As it feasted on its kill, the lion paused from time to time to let out a scream in triumph.

A hunter, who was in the area, heard the commotion, found the mountain lion and shot it dead. When you're full of bull, keep your mouth closed.

God loves the humble, and God exalts those who humble themselves.

It is *Human Relations Day*, and Paul reminds us again, "To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good." (1 Corinthians 11:6) We are the Body of Jesus Christ for his glory. All of

us are important. There is something each of us can do in his service humbly. Most importantly of all, he is alive and he is with us.

The words of St. Francis of Assisi speak to the profound meaning of first and last, serving and being served that Jesus calls us to.

*Lord, make me a channel of Thy peace,  
That where there is hatred, I may bring love;  
That where there is wrong, I may bring the spirit of forgiveness;  
That where there is discord, I may bring harmony;  
That where there is error, I may bring truth;  
That where there is doubt, I may bring faith;  
That where there is despair, I may bring hope;  
That where there is shadow, I may bring light;  
That where there is sadness, I may bring joy;  
Lord, grant that I may seek rather than to comfort than to be comforted;  
To understand than to be understood;  
To love than to be loved.  
For it is by forgetting self that one finds;  
It is by forgiving that one is forgiven;  
It is by dying that one awakens to eternal life.*