

WHAT WE BELIEVE – God Equips 1 Corinthians 12, Romans 12

We are living in confusing times... no I don't mean politically, economically, socially (though it's true)... **We are living in confusing times decoratively!**

It's November 9th... Should we still have Halloween décor up... or put turkeys out for Thanksgiving... or should we already be decorated for Christmas?

I may not be able to answer that question for you this morning, but maybe I can ask a series of questions that include analogous themes to all 3 holidays!

Question for you Halloween fanatics... **"What are you afraid of?"**

Question for you Thanksgiving lovers... **"What are you thankful for?"**

Question for you Christmas crazies... **"What would you ask for Christmas?"**

I mentioned "analogous themes". Today's message is really not about holidays & decorations, in this season of transition... **The message today is about our church, & the season of transition that we are in, & approaching!**

It's budget season here at the church... It's re-evaluating season of our ministries/missions... It's voting season for new consistory members... It's planning season for next year... It's restructuring season for what's ahead...

Here are the analogous themes & questions for us to consider this morning:

- We had the tunnel of doom in our church the last few weeks... Maybe that scared you... **or maybe your fears in the church are of a different kind!**

What are you afraid of when you think about transitions & the potential loss of certain things, ministries, groups, or people in the church?

What are some of the things we are afraid of in this season of transition?

- **We're also in the season of "Thanksgiving", a time of expressing gratitude**

When we think about our church, what are we most thankful for? **What ministries, groups, people, experiences are on our gratitude lists?**

- **This is also the time of year when we think about our desires for the future... What do we want for Christmas? If you were to ask for something for our church to have... to become... to offer... what would it be?**

These are all legitimate fears... expressions or gratitude... and desires for our

future... But what are we to do with all of this?

How can our fears, what we are afraid of for our church, **be alleviated?**

How can our gratitude lists continue to be the experience of others as well?

How can we see our hopes for the future of BRC be realized?

The last 2 weeks we have declared that GOD MOVES, and that He GATHERS, PROTECTS, & PRESERVES His Church... no matter the season!

But how does He do it? How is He moving and building His Church, and bringing about His Kingdom work here on earth? **Through His people!**

GOD EQUIPS... We believe that the Church, made up of all believers, share in Christ and all His treasures and gifts. These gifts are given to each one for the services and enrichment of the other members, and to further the work of God's Kingdom & Church here on earth!

1 Corinthians 12:4-20, 27-31

We've all been given gifts to use!

We make up the body of Christ... and every part, doing their part, is essential for the health, stability, and future of the body!

Do we know our gifts? Are we using our gifts? Are we growing in our gifts? S.H.A.P.E. – Spiritual gifts, Heart/passions, Abilities, Personality, Experiences

We may know these things about ourselves, as well as the needs that exist in our church. **The questions is "Are we willing to sacrifice in order to serve?"**

Romans 12:1-8 – Being a living sacrifice is our spiritual worship! We all have full schedules... We all are busy... But for a sacrifice to be made, one must say "no" to one thing, to be able to say "yes" to another...

In this season of transition in our church, I'm asking you to not only come to worship on Sundays, but **to make a sacrifice of service as an act of worship!**

BRC's Mission Statement is **"To be a church where the love of Jesus is transforming lives!"** We believe that happens inward (worship), upward (Bible studies/small groups), & outward (service & faith sharing)!

Jesus is the primary reason/cause for the transformation that takes place in our lives, but He works through these secondary causes (causes that require sacrifices of service to be made by God's people).

Will you do your part... be the part of the body you've been given to fulfill... Will you join with the rest of us in alleviating fears... in providing reasons for thanksgiving... & in being part of prayers being answered for our future?

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- This is also the time of year when we think about our desires _____
_____ What do we want for Christmas? If you were to ask for something for our church to have... to become... to offer... what would it be?
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Sermon Questions – God Equips

What season are you decorated for right now at your house? Halloween, Thanksgiving, or Christmas? Why?

Halloween fanatics emphasize fears...

Thanksgiving lovers emphasize gratitude...

Christmas crazies emphasize what they want for the future...

In the church there are fears, things to be grateful for, and desires for the future... Can you share:

- Your fears for BRC? _____
- Your gratitude list for BRC? _____
- Your hopes for BRC's future? _____

- How are these fears alleviated? _____
- How is our gratitude contagious and shared by others? _____
- How are our desires for the future realized? _____

What role do the individual members of the church play in the answers to these questions? Read 1 Corinthians 12:4-20, 27-31

Jesus is the primary cause of the transformation taking place in our lives, but what tools in the church does He utilize to bring about such transformation?

We are all parts of this body called the Church... What do you see as your gifts, and contribution, that you can give back to God as your sacrifice of service? Read Romans 12:1-8

What ministry/ministries would you like more information on to see if you might be a good fit?