

# 24-0623a Transcript

## 24-0623a - *The Body of Christ*, Tom Freed

**Bible Readers:** Mike Mathis and Tom Freed

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## The Body of Christ

Transcript (0:03 - 25:34)

### Scripture Readings

#### 1<sup>st</sup> Reader: Mike Mathis

(0:03) The first scripture reading for this morning is taken from Romans the 12th chapter, (0:10) verses 6 through 8. Romans 12, verses 6 through 8, which reads, (0:17) Having then gifts, differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them. (0:25) If prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith. For ministry, let us use it (0:34) in our ministry. He who teaches in teaching. He who exhorts in exhortation. He who gives (0:44) with liberality. He who leads with diligence. He who shows mercy with cheerfulness. (0:52) This completes the reading. (0:53)

#### 2<sup>nd</sup> Reader: Tom Freed

(0:58) Hi. I'll be (1:00) reading Colossians 1, 16 through 18. Colossians 1, 16 through 18. (1:08) For by him all things were created, both in heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, (1:14) whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities. All things have been created (1:20) through and for him. He is before all things and in him all things altogether. He is also (1:27) the head of the body, the church, and he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, (1:32) so that he himself will come to have first place in everything. (1:36)

## Transcript

**Preacher:** Tom Freed

(1:40) Good to see everybody. (1:43) My sermon is the body of Christ. Did you ever wonder to yourself why you're here specifically (1:51) at the Westside Church of Christ? And what made you want to become a member here? (1:58) You could be a member anywhere else.

You could go to any other church. You ever think to yourself, (2:02) why am I at the Church of Christ? What brought me here? Why am I still here? (2:09) One reason is probably can't be because of the huge crowds we have. I mean, (2:14) they say nothing attracts a crowd like a crowd, but over

the years, you know, especially after (2:20) COVID, we have dwindled here, but we do have a lot to offer here.

We do have great people and, (2:29) you know, we have people that have stepped up preaching and teaching and have grown a lot. (2:38) You could be anywhere else, but for most of us, it feels like home here. (2:44) I know years ago, I was checking out other churches in the area, churches of Christ, (2:48) but I decided to come here.

You know, it felt like home, felt like the right place for me to be, (2:55) and it still feels like that. I'm sure for everybody else here, I know some people like (3:02) Wally and Carol and Jim and Scott have been going here for, you know, 20, 30, 40 years, Joe, (3:10) and they're still going here, you know, keeping it alive. And we should be.

This is an important, (3:16) you know, area to be in. We need to spread the word. We need to keep the doors open here.

(3:25) But you're not here by mistake. God specifically put you here for a reason. He has a plan for us (3:31) here.

First Corinthians 12, 18, but now God has set the members, each one of them, (3:39) in the body just as He pleased. So God put us here as He pleased. (3:46) It's amazing to think by God's foreknowledge, He has put us all here in this church for a specific (3:53) reason, for a purpose.

We're all different people with our own unique personalities, talents, gifts (4:01) and knowledge we bring to the table. And even though we are many members, we are still one body. (4:08) First Corinthians 12, 12.

Whereas the body is one and has many members, (4:16) and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. (4:22) We can see that we're one body, even though all of us are different. We all come from (4:26) different backgrounds.

We all provide something different, but together we form one body (4:34) with Christ. And as one body with many members, we do not all have the same function. Romans 12, (4:41) 4 through 5. But just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all (4:49) have the same function, so in Christ, though many form one body, and each member belongs to all the (4:55) others.

But we all bring something different to the table. We all have special talents and abilities (5:03) that we need to use to help the church flourish and grow. Romans 12, 6 through 8. We have different (5:12) gifts according to the grace given to each of us.

If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in (5:18) accordance with your faith. And if it's serving, then serve. If it's teaching, then teach.

If it's (5:25) to encourage, then give encouragement. If it is giving, then give generously. If it is to lead, (5:31) do it diligently.

If it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully. We can see everyone (5:40) has gifts and talents. God's blessed us all with something.

You know, we all have different (5:46) abilities, and we need to use it. God expects us to use our talents He's given us. And your talents (5:55) and gifts are important no matter how big or small you think they might be.

Giving to the Lord, (6:03) encouraging someone, or just giving a hug or smile is just as important (6:07) as preaching, teaching, or leading prayer. Just going up to somebody and saying hi and having (6:15) a conversation with them can make their day. Sometimes the small things you do are more (6:21) important than the big things.

You know, as with the people here, even Carol, every day she comes (6:28) in and brings a smile to everybody's face. From, you know, young kids to older people here, (6:36) you know, just give it a hug. You know, being warm and friendly can make a huge difference.

(6:45) Also, Sal, who can't be with here because of her health issues, she's on the phone every service, (6:52) still giving encouragement. You know, we can't see her, but she's still dedicated, (6:58) and she's still, you know, we can hear her voice. It's uplifting.

You know, she's sick, (7:05) she's not feeling well, but she still makes it on the phone every service. (7:12) So never think, we also need to never think ourselves more important than (7:18) anyone else because of the gifts we have. Romans 12.3, (7:24) For by the grace given me, I say to every one of you, (7:29) do not think of yourself more highly than you are, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment (7:35) and according with the faith God has distributed to each of you.

(7:41) So don't think yourself better than anybody else. You know, everybody is of the same importance. (7:49) Each person with their unique set of gifts and talents are important for the body of the church, (7:55) just like every member of your physical body is important for it to function properly.

(8:02) First Corinthians 12.14-17, For in fact, the body is one member but many. (8:09) If the foot should say, because I am not the hand, I am not of the body, (8:13) is it therefore not of the body? If the ear should say, because I am not an eye, (8:20) I am not of the body, is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, (8:28) where would be the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where would be the smelling? (8:33) It's a great point. Could you imagine a body if you could only hear (8:38) or if you could only smell or see, what kind of, (8:44) you know, how would that affect you? You wouldn't even be able to hardly function.

(8:48) Imagine if you just had all ears. You know, that wouldn't do you much good. (8:54) Every part of your body works together, just like in the church.

Every member (8:59) provides something different and has a different function. You might think to yourself, I wish I (9:06) could preach or teach or lead prayer, but if your gift is giving or visiting the sick (9:12) or encouraging, it's just as important. You can't say to one member that his talents (9:20) aren't important, just like you can't say to the hands, feet, (9:24) eyes or ears that they're not important to the body.

(9:29) 1 Corinthians 12, 21 and 22. In the eye can I say to the hand, I have no need of you. (9:37) Nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you.

(9:42) No, much rather those members of the body which seem weaker are necessary. (9:48) The weaker, more hidden parts of our body are a lot of times the most important. (9:53) And that is the same for the members of the church.

1 Corinthians 12, 23 through 24. (10:01) And those members of the body which we think might be less honorable, (10:05) of these we bestow greater honor. And our unrepresentable parts have greater modesty.

(10:12) Our presentable parts have no need. But God composed the body, (10:16) having given greater honor to the part which lacks it. (10:22) We can look at the heart, lungs and intestines, when we compare it to the arms and limbs, (10:30) they look comparatively weak.

And some of them consider themselves unappealing and less honorable. (10:37) Yet these are more essential in life than the others. You may lose an eye by an accident, (10:43) or an arm and a leg may be amputated.

And yet the body can live and be vigorous. (10:50) But let the stomach, heart, lungs or any other vital organs be removed, and you cease to live. (10:58) That's why these parts are covered and protected well in your body, because they are vital for (11:02) life.

Just like it is vital for the health of the church that we have people doing the things (11:11) that aren't always in the spotlight, and that you don't always get recognition for. (11:16) Like I said, some of these smaller things, the things that aren't seen, are more important. (11:22) When you do these things in secret, not for the praise of God, or not for the praise of others, (11:27) God will reward you.

Matthew 6, 4, that your charitable deed may be in secret, (11:34) and your father who sees in secret will himself reward you openly. (11:40) Even if you think you may be a weaker Christian, and your talents are not that important, (11:46) and maybe you feel like you're not even noticed, (11:50) nothing can be further from the truth. Everyone here is important, and their talents and gifts (11:57) make a huge difference.

We are all one body, no matter where you come from, (12:04) or what your background is. And we are all baptized into one spirit. 1 Corinthians 12, 13.

(12:14) For by one spirit we are all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, (12:21) whether slaves or free, and have all been made a drink of one spirit. (12:28) We combine to make up the body, and we need to be united with one purpose to grow the church. (12:36) Philippians 2, 2-4.

Fulfill my joy of being like-minded, (12:42) having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through selfish (12:48) ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. (12:55) Let each of you look not only for his own interest, but for the interest of others.

(13:03) We need to help each other out and lift each other up. 1 Thessalonians 5, 11. (13:09) Therefore, encourage one another and build each other up.

This is a fact that you are doing. (13:16) We need to help each other out. We're a team.

Everybody has a different role. Everybody needs (13:23) to do their part. Can't think of yourself that you don't matter.

We want to grow, (13:29) and we all have to do what we can, even if you think it might be small. (13:34) God's given us our gifts and talents, and we need to use them. We need to work together and (13:42) take care of each other like I feel like we do here, and we need to continue to do it.

(13:49) So we need to- God's given us abilities and talents for a reason. (13:54) And the more you use them, the more you do, the more he'll give you. (13:59) So since the members of the church make up the body, we all should know who's ahead of the body.

(14:06) Galatians 1.18. And he is the head of the body in the church. He is the beginning and the firstborn (14:13) from among the dead. So that in everything he might have the supremacy.

Psalms 118, 22 through 23. (14:21) The stone the villains have rejected has become the capstone. The Lord has done the same.

(14:29) And it is marvelous in our eyes. We can see we're the body, but Christ is the head. (14:36) He's in control.

He's over us. Just as the husband is ahead of the wife, Christ is ahead of the (14:42) church. Ephesians 5.23 through 24.

For the husband is ahead of the wife, as Christ is ahead of the (14:50) church, his body, of which he is a Savior. And where the church submits to Christ, so also the (14:58) wives should submit to their husbands in everything. I'm sure feminists don't want to hear that, but (15:05) that's what God's rule is, you know.

But as the husband's ahead, Christ is ahead over us. (15:14) You know, he leads the church with love, like husbands should do with their wives. (15:19) You know, you need to lead, and the man should lead, but it's not an abusive leadership.

It's not a love. (15:28) You know, it's not taking care of somebody. 1 Corinthians 11.3. Now I want you to realize that (15:36) the head of every man is Christ.

The head of every woman is man, and the head of Christ is God. (15:44) So Christ obtained a church with his own blood. Acts 20.28. Keep watch over yourselves and all (15:53) the flocks of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers.

He shepherds of the church of God, (16:00) which he bought with his own blood. That's why the church is his. He paid the ultimate price.

(16:09) He gained himself. He shed his blood for us, for the start of the church. (16:17) As through his blood we're saved.

Ephesians 1.7. In him we have redemption through his blood, (16:22) the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the great riches of his grace. (16:29) So you look back when Jesus died on the cross, the blood and water flowed from his side. (16:37) John 19.34. But one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and immediately blood and water (16:46) came out.

So similarly, we are cleansed by his blood through water when we die with him in (16:53) baptism. Romans 6.3-5. For do you not know that as many of you as were baptized into Christ Jesus (17:04) into his death? Therefore we were buried with him through baptism into death. (17:12) That just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, (17:15) even so we should walk in newness of life.

For if we have been united together in his likeness, (17:22) the likeness of his death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of his resurrection. (17:30) We can see that's when we die, that's when we, you know, we're buried with him, just like he was (17:35) buried in the tomb. You know, just like the water and blood flowed from his side, we are baptized, (17:42) we're cleansed in water.

You know, we're cleansed by his blood. We're added to his body, the church (17:51) after baptism. Acts 2.41. And those who gladly received his word were baptized.

(17:57) And that day about 3,000 souls were added to them. Not that baptism is overly important. (18:06) You know, we talk about it a lot, but it usually fits in in some way or the other.

We have to obey (18:13) and do all he said, hear, believe, repent, confess, be baptized, and be faithful. (18:22) We were cleansed by Jesus and we were added to the church so that he might present us to himself (18:28) in splendor. Ephesians 5.25-27. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church (18:39) and gave himself for her, that he might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of the water by (18:46) the word, that he might present her to himself a glorious church, not having sputter wrinkle (18:53) or any such thing, that she should be holy and without blemish.

He has baptized us. He's (19:04) cleansed our sins. He's made us pure and ready for him.

The church is a bride of the Lamb. (19:13) Revelation 21.9. Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls filled with the seven plagues (19:20) came to me and talked with me saying, come I will show you the bride, the Lamb's wife. (19:30) The church is made ready for the marriage of the Lamb.

Revelation 19.7. Let us be glad and rejoice (19:37) and give him glory for the marriage of the Lamb has come and his wife has made herself ready. (19:47) So we can see that the church is Christ's wife. It's his bride.

It's supposed to be made ready, (19:56) be prepared for him. The church is a bride of Christ and adorned for his return. Revelation 21.2. (20:06) That I John saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven (20:11) from God, prepared as a bride, adorned for her husband.

The church are made pure. (20:20) You know, we're adorned, we're made ready for God, for Jesus to come back, (20:25) to have the marriage. It's beautiful symbolism from Revelation.

It's showing the church awaiting (20:34) the groom. Jesus' return for the wedding ceremony. That is what we should be doing as a church, (20:43) working together, using our abilities and talents and gifts, waiting for the Lord's return.

(20:50) You know, if you are part of his church, part of the body and remain faithful, (20:54) you shall inherit all things. Revelation 21.3-7. And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, (21:03) Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his

people. (21:10) God himself will be with them, and their God, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.

(21:18) There shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, (21:25) for the former things have passed away. And he who sat on the throne said, Behold, I make all (21:31) things new.

And he said to me, Write for these words are true and faithful. And he said to me, (21:40) It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end.

I will give the fountain (21:47) of water of life freely to him who thirsts. He who overcomes shall inherit all things, (21:54) and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. We can see at that marriage feast when (22:02) God, you know, Jesus comes back for his church, that those who are in the church who have done well, (22:10) you know, withstood all the trials and tribulations on this earth, (22:15) are going to go up to heaven with him.

He's coming back for his church. People say, (22:19) Oh, it's not important I go to church. It doesn't matter.

I have a relationship with God. (22:24) Well, if you're not part of the church, you're not part of God's body. (22:28) He's coming back for his church.

So if you're not in the church, (22:35) then, you know, you're going to be, you're going to miss out. You're going to be left out. (22:40) You know, and those who are not in the church will burn with fire and brimstone.

(22:45) Revelation 21.8. But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, (22:52) sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and (22:58) brimstone, which is the second death. So it's important. It's important you belong to the (23:07) church.

It's important that you participate. It's important that we do our best not to sin. (23:16) It's difficult.

This world is difficult. It's filled with (23:21) lust and greed and, you know, temptation. It's easy to sin.

It's hard to, you know, (23:29) it's easy to be baptized, you know, obey God and join the church, but it becomes difficult (23:36) years in, you know, to continue to do it. But we have to, we have to remain faithful. (23:43) Life is short, and you definitely have to be part of the church, be part of the body.

(23:52) You are blessed if you're invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb. Revelation 19.9. (23:58) Then he said to me, right, blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb. (24:04) And he said to me, these are true sayings of God.

So if you're not yet a Christian, (24:12) I think most of us are, but if you're not, this is your invitation to the wedding feast. (24:17) If you accept it, you will not be turned away. Just like the parable of the wedding feast, (24:27) God will not accept any excuses you have while you did not attend.

(24:32) You know, all these people have excuses why they couldn't go. They had to bury their dead, (24:37) take care of their cattle. Are those more important than, (24:43) you know, that more

important than God, than being part of the church, (24:50) than being prepared for Christ to come back? Don't miss your chance and leave here today with (24:58) your soul in danger of destruction.

Matthew 25:46. And these will go away into everlasting punishment (25:06) with the righteous in the eternal life. I think, like I said, most of us are, all of us are members (25:14) here, but we do have to work together. Everybody is important.

And, you know, we are a team. We've (25:21) got to build each other up. We've got to use our gifts and talents.

We can't hide them away. (25:28) Well, if anybody needs prayers or would like to be baptized today, we come forward.