

“Stronger Together”



You yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. (1 Peter 2:5, ESV)

In his grace, God has given us different gifts for doing certain things well. So if God has given you the ability to prophesy, speak out with as much faith as God has given you. ⁷ If your gift is serving others, serve them well. If you are a teacher, teach well. ⁸ If your gift is to encourage others, be encouraging. If it is giving, give generously. If God has given you leadership ability, take the responsibility seriously. And if you have a gift for showing kindness to others, do it gladly. (Romans 12:6-8, NLT)

Questions for Consideration and Discussion:

1. Tell of a time when a task was made lighter by someone coming alongside and lending their strength to you.
2. How have you been encouraged this morning to find an opportunity to use your gifts to strengthen someone else?

Catherine's Picks: Resources to Further ADVANCE

ESV Study Bible

Morning and Evening by Charles H. Spurgeon, revised and updated by Alistair Begg

Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life by Donald S. Whitney

Desiring God Blog at <http://www.desiringgod.org/blog>

Knowing God by J. I. Packer

The Pursuit of God by A. W. Tozer, free at <http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/25141>

Every Good Endeavour: Connecting Your Work to God's Work by Timothy Keller

Feminine Appeal: Seven Virtues of a Godly Wife and Mother by Carolyn Mahaney

Girls Gone Wise in a World Gone Wild by Mary Kassian

Quiet Strength: The Principles, Practices, & Priorities of a Winning Life by Tony Dungy

Prayer:

Our Father, we thank you for the joyous anticipation we have of heaven and the incomparable realities that are being prepared for us in glory. In the meantime, we come before you as living stones, active building blocks, a spiritual house you are constructing so that we may proclaim your excellencies. We are grateful to have gifts that differ according to the grace given us. Help us to exercise them accordingly! Thank you for giving separate gifts to each of us that blend wonderfully together, like ingredients in a delicious recipe, so that *together* we manifest the true beauty of Christ.

Remind and empower us to encourage and stimulate one another to love and good deeds. Help us to faithfully do our part - however seemingly simple or insignificant that may be – in order to fulfill the role you have given us. Grant us a fresh realization that we need each other, that we are *stronger together*, and that *together* we manifest more powerfully the honour of Christ to a watching world. The spiritual treasures we possess have been bestowed upon frail earthen vessels so that what shines through obviously comes from you and not ourselves. We rejoice that your glory is put on display in us and that your strength is made perfect through our weakness.

Lord, wonderful moments occur when we work so well with other people that we seem to act as one individual. We marvel that our ideas function perfectly together, and our progress toward our goal goes more quickly than our individual efforts would. We have a shared objective, and we use our different talents to accomplish our unified purpose. Father, please help us recognize that differences between people are not negative but positive. Give us the insight to see how we can harmonize with them to make a pleasing whole. Guide us to be cooperative individuals as we work within your kingdom. Thank you for working your wonders through us and giving us the hidden strength we need – your strength. You are always with us, holding us up until the work is done. Use the spiritual gifts and abilities you have given us to benefit one other and bring glory to your name alone.

Hear these requests, we humbly pray, in Jesus' name. Amen.

Excerpts taken from...

At the Throne of Grace, a Book of Prayers by John MacArthur. Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2011, pp. 217-236.

Light for My Path, Prayers & Promises. Ulrichsville, OH: Barbour, 2003, p. 65.

– Janis Murphy

