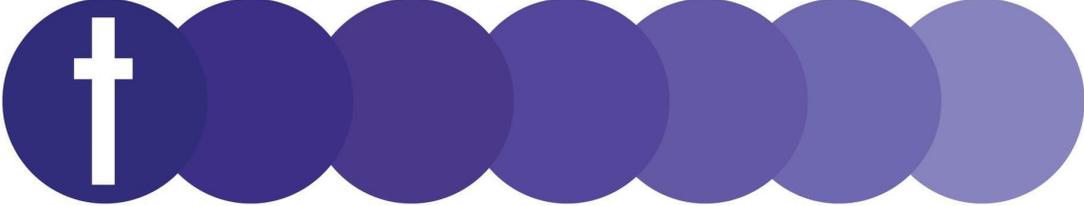


# COLLOQUIES with Pastor Brian

## Developing Your Discipleship Walk With Christ

**Romans 12: 1-8** <sup>1</sup> I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. <sup>2</sup> Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect. <sup>3</sup> For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. <sup>4</sup> For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, <sup>5</sup> so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. <sup>6</sup> We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; <sup>7</sup> ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; <sup>8</sup> the exhorter, in exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.



# DISCIPLESHIP

**T**his week's scripture is keying in on something important, but also something I struggle with daily. On one hand, I subscribe to self-renewal and commend it to us all. Paul says we can be TRANSFORMED in our bodies, our spiritual selves and our minds. So again, let me commend to you the idea of picking up daily practices to develop in your discipleship walk with Christ: Heart, Soul, Strength and Mind.

These practices are not necessarily easy. You wouldn't think promising to walk 7000 steps a day or to read a book a week or to memorize a scripture passage or to journal daily would be difficult, but I and others attempting daily discipleship find that LIFE gets in the way. We have to learn smaller things we CAN do, then build up to the next step. To borrow another Paul metaphor, we are like athletes who practice smaller things so when the large competition comes, we are ready.

The other side to this challenging scripture is Paul asks us not to think highly of ourselves. OK, sure Paul. You wouldn't think this hard, but then consider some of the athletes you know. When you are confident in yourself — that you can achieve the things you set out to do — it can breed some ego. And ego in itself isn't bad. But if the self-confidence means that we don't need other people to make the journey of discipleship, we have misunderstood what the call means. Paul offers that even in the midst of our discipleship and transformation, we can never get 'so big for our britches' that we forget we are part of the much larger body of Christ.

I find this scripture to be challenging. I struggle with finding weekly and daily discipleship practices that I can perpetuate, but even if I do and become proficient in them, Paul reminds us not to become overconfident or self-reliant. We are to practice our discipleship in a way that leads us to interdependence with one another. The Christian spiritual way to say this is, "Become the Body of Christ".

I'm moved at this point to say I need help with worship. SO much of our old way of doing things, coming to church, worshipping with music, having slides overhead, taking the offering, sharing in prayers, serving the communion... so many things... have been disrupted. Now, as we contemplate returning to outdoor worship Sunday, August 30 at 9 am, to show up and preach/pray/sing our hearts out, habits have changed. My family has been doing most of the service, but this needs to stop if we are to take Paul's words to heart. I know the Lord will lead us, but we all NEED to HELP with sound and projection, filming, drawn posters, gathering announcements, and jump-starting our ministries. I can dream with you about a day where we return to a 'new normal' but in the meantime, we have vulnerable people at home and at distance needing to be served. I can and want to help with your daily discipleship. Can you help your church with its interrelated and Body of Christ ministry to our community? If God moves your heart to say yes, please contact me at 828-434-6995 or [bcornell@wnccumc.net](mailto:bcornell@wnccumc.net)

Thank you for being open to the Spirit.

With appreciation and longing,

Brian