

PERSONALIZING SCRIPTURE

GROUP ACTIVITY

You can use this as a group activity or personal homework.

- Your assignment is to personalize 1 Corinthians 12:12–27. In your notes or journal, list each group member’s name. Ask each woman the following questions and note her answers.
 - What is one ability you have?
 - What is one ability you wish you had?
- Read through 1 Corinthians 12:12–27. This week personalize this passage for your prayer partner or person of your choice.



ENCOURAGEMENT PRINCIPLE #7

Biblical encouragement produces confidence and results in increased ministry opportunities.

The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ. For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. Now this small group of believers is not made up of one part but of many—
 _____ (fill in your names). If _____ (name) should say, “Because I am not _____ (insert the ability you wish you had) I do not belong to this group,” _____ (your name) would not for that reason cease to be part of the body. And if _____ (name) should say, “Because I am not like _____ who _____ I do not belong to this group,” _____ (your name) would not for that reason cease to be part of the body. If the whole body was like _____, (fill in the name of someone whose gifts you admire and might sometimes envy) who is a gifted communicator, then how would the need of _____ (fill in the name of someone who needs encouragement) be met? If the whole body was an _____ like _____, then how would the need of _____ be met? But in fact, God has arranged the parts in this group, every one of us, just as He wanted us to be. If we were all one part, what kind of a body would we be? As it is, we can see there are many parts to this group, but we make up one body. _____ cannot say to _____, “I don’t need you!” And _____ cannot say to _____, “I don’t need you.” On the contrary, the very parts that feel the most insignificant and the weakest are actually the most indispensable. . . . God has combined the members of this local church and has given

greater honor to the parts that lacked it, so that there should be no division in this body, but each member should have equal concern for each other. In fact, if _____ is suffering, _____ (list your name and/or the names of the other group members) suffer with her. If _____ is honored, _____ (list your name and/or group member names) rejoice with her. Now this group represents the body of Christ, and each one of us is a vital part of it. (My paraphrase of 1 Corinthians 12:12–27.)

ASSIGNMENT FOR THE NEXT WEEK

- Watch Chapter 8 Encouragement Stories video at www.treasuresofencouragement.org
- Read Chapter 8 and complete Getting Focused and Staying Focused questions.
- Most of next week's discussion will focus on this assignment.
- Use the following to write a summary of this lesson:
 - Write a summary statement of Chapter 8.
 - List a few things from the chapter that were helpful to you.
 - How did this chapter change or inform your thinking about encouragement?
 - Write a prayer based on some of the scriptures in this chapter.
 - How would you like for others to pray for you as you seek to apply the scriptures in this chapter to your life?
- Pray with your prayer partner and, in particular, for where you can “rise” in your Village.
- Complete your group encouragement assignment.
- Ask God to show you one way to use your talents as you have never used them before.
- Be prepared to share your experience.
- Keep journaling.
- Review your memory work and memorize Hebrews 10:24.
- Bring a note card and pre-stamped envelope with you to Bible Study.

PRAYING SCRIPTURE

But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body. For we who are alive are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that his life may also be revealed in our mortal body.

2 CORINTHIANS 4:7-11 (NIV)

- Bring your Blessing Book to Bible Study next week.
- **Bonus:** Listen to the suggested Chapter 7 Help & Hope podcasts at www.treasuresofencouragement.org:
 - *Depression: Walking with My Husband into the Darkness — A Conversation with Sue Tell*
 - *Intentional Grieving — A Conversation with Sherry Kendrick*

