

Leaves Of Hope #25

Family Devotion written by C.M. Gullerud

**Come, Holy Spirit, God and Lord!
Be all thy graces now outpoured
On each believer's mind and heart;
Thy fervent love to them impart.
Lord, by the brightness of thy light
Thou in the faith dost men unite
Of every land and every tongue: -
This to thy praise, O Lord, our God be sung.
Hallelujah! Hallelujah!**

L.H. 224:1, Martin Luther, 1524

Romans 12:3-6

For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you. Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith.

In order to understand what is here brought to our attention, we need first of all to be reminded that we being many are one

body in Christ. We have been brought together in the family of faith by means of the Spirit through whom we were all baptized into one body – whether Jew or Gentile, whether slave or free, as Paul wrote to the Corinthians. I Corinthians 12:13 It matters not what our ancestry is nor what our station in life may be, we are all one body in Christ, for he it is who has redeemed us and purchased us and thus made us his own.

This has taken place without any merit or worthiness in us, without any cooperation on our part. It is solely and completely the work of God. We have nothing whereof to boast. Not one of us can find any reason to exalt himself above another. The fact that we are joined together in the family of faith is completely a work of grace. We all stand on the same ground for we were all brought together by the same spirit. We are one body in Christ.

Now the fact that we are one body in Christ does not mean that we all have the same function or all possess the same gifts. Scripture tells us that there is a diversity of gifts, differences of ministries, diversities of activities. I Corinthians 12 So it is with our physical bodies. The arms, the feet, the eyes, the ears perform different functions. But this does not mean that they are not of the same body. It cannot be said of the foot because it is not the hand; therefore it is not of the body. The ear cannot say: *“Because I am not an eye, I am not of the body.”* The whole body

does not consist merely of an eye. Paul said: “If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were were an ear, where would the sense of smell be?”

I Corinthians 12:17

Now even as God has assigned to each member of the body its proper function, so has he done in the Church. Not all are to be pastors, not all are to be prophets or apostles. Not everyone has the same talent or ability. God distributes these as he sees fit. In his wisdom he gives them out for the benefit of all. Whatever function God has given to each one of us, there is no room for envy or jealousy or competition. Whatever our talents may be, we are to remember that we are individual members of one another and are of one body in Christ. May God keep us faithful in whatever service he has assigned to us.

**Thou holy fire, comfort true,
Grant us the will thy work to do
And in thy service to abide
Let trials turn us not aside.**

**Lord, by thy power prepare each heart
And to our weakness strength impart
That bravely here we may contend,
Thro' life and death to thee, our Lord ascend.
Hallelujah! Hallelujah! L.H. 224:3**