

With a growing calmness, Carol opened her eyes to see the warm smile of her good friend Marge. Her friend's arms encircled her in a big wonderful hug. And Carol felt like God Himself was holding her tightly in His embrace.

Sometimes God uses us to demonstrate His love to other Christians. "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" (Romans 12:5-6). We serve others "with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 4:11).

Sometimes that means just being there when a friend's mother dies. Or team-teaching a Sunday school class with an over-burdened friend. Or taking homework to someone who is sick. Or being available when that Christian brother or sister needs someone to listen to or to give a hug.

If we are going to be available to God for ministry like that, we can't pack our days so full that when we get a call from a friend we are unable to respond. It may mean in our busy lives of going to school and working that we'll have to re-sort our priorities.

Instead of just asking for God's blessing on your planned agenda, maybe you should ask Him, "Lord, what would You like me to do today?" -CK

**God is not looking for ability but availability.**



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## Central Mountains Baptist Church

# 16 DECEMBER, 2012

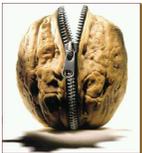
### Just a Big Hug

As Carol lay in her bed in the coronary care wing of the hospital, she felt very much alone. Her family members who had been very supportive were now gone for the day. Her fears were back and, along with the pain in her chest, they gave her a feeling of overwhelming despair.

With eyes closed, she prayed, "O Lord, I know You're here with me. No matter how I feel right now, I know I am not alone. Calm me, Lord. Give me peace. Let me feel Your arms around me, holding me."

As she prayed, her fears began to subside. But God wasn't finished yet.





# Romans: Truth in a Nutshell

(unzipped for you)

## Teamwork

Romans 12:3-5 Paul describes two factors that determine the quality of our body life as a local church (and therefore they also determine our usefulness or spiritual impact as a local church):

### 1. Good \_\_\_\_\_ individually, Verses 3, 6-8

*(2 Timothy 4:5) "But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry."*

*(1 Corinthians 12:7) "But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all:"*

*(Philippians 2:3) "Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself."*

*(Hebrews 10:24-25) "And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, [25] not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching."*



### 2. Good \_\_\_\_\_ together, Verses 4-8, 16:17

*(1 Corinthians 12:13) "For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body; whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free; ..."*

