

Serving in the Local Church

“Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord’s will is.” (Ephesians 5: 15-17 NIV)

It is likely that you have now returned to routines that were comfortable or at least familiar before you left on your short-term mission. Earlier in this e-zine you had an opportunity to decide if you would be willing to be available to DO whatever God wants, GO wherever He sends, and BE AVAILABLE whenever He calls. You may have determined that you have not been called to do cross-cultural service as a missionary. You are still called to serve, however.

By God’s grace and design you have been given spiritual gifts to use within the body of Christ for the common good. Every gift is critical to the healthy functioning of the body.

If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. If they were all one part, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, but one body. (I Corinthians 12: 17-20)

Have you been using your gifts for the common good within your church? If not, and if you need help finding your “fit” within your church, it may be time to meet with your church leaders to share your desire to serve within the body life of the church. When you meet, be sure to bring the S.H.A.P.E. materials completed earlier in the e-zine. This will demonstrate that you have the desire to serve and have put time into seeking a good fit. Pray with them seeking a ministry area that will match your gifts and skills. When meeting with them consider the ministry area or areas that inspired you while you were on the short-term mission. Are there similar things you can do at your home church? Pray in advance for God’s direction.

You have been equipped for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up. There are many ways in which you may be able to serve. You may serve as a greeter or usher, some of the first people newcomers meet when they visit your church. What a blessing you could be to help folks connect with others. Whether you work in children or adult ministries, in the church office, outreach evangelism, intercession, visiting shut-ins, participating on the missions committee, or with international students, you can still serve and reflect Christ both at home and abroad (Acts 1:8). May you have joy on the journey as you faithfully serve!

Let your light shine for Christ locally and be ready to respond if he calls you to serve globally. Be willing to let God use you for eternal impact locally as well as globally.