

WE ARE THE CHURCH

THOUGHTS FROM CAPTAIN MARK DUNSTAN

The powerful two letter word "we" is a simple and beautiful word. It describes the wonderful reality of the church, as referenced in the lyrics of this song. The church is not a building or a specific location, but rather a group of people who love Jesus and are united in His message and calling for us to share it with others.

God spoke many truths through Paul, and this truth of "we" and the "church" was one of them. In Romans 12, we read the powerful words of being a living sacrifice. It's worth reading the entire chapter. For this new song, Romans 12:4-10 (NLT) speaks volumes and reinforces the central theme of the powerful lyrics:

"Just as our bodies have many parts and each part has a special function, so it is with Christ's body. We are many parts of one body, and we all belong to each other. In his grace, God has given us different gifts for doing certain things well... Don't just pretend to love others. Really love them. Hate what is wrong. Hold tightly to what is good. Love each other with genuine affection and take delight in honouring each other."

In my own journey, the truths of "we" and the "church" have constantly amazed me. Through them, I have seen God glorified and the kingdom expanded. Over more recent years with the development of technology, "we" has looked quite different and has provided new ways to connect with one another, despite where we are in the world. It is so valuable and important for the church to unite and come together, stay connected, and grow in God's good and pleasing plans for each one of us.

From these verses in Romans, there are two life-altering truths for us as the church. First, no matter who we are or where we are from, if we believe in Jesus, we are a part of the church (with Jesus as the head) and therefore, we are connected and united with one another in Jesus! Second, every person in the church has a gift, is needed, and is a valuable part of God's work. There is no one person or persons who are more important than another. We are one church, called to love God and love each other. If we stay focused on this, those who do not know Jesus will come to know Him and the church will continue to grow. Lives will be changed and become alive, and eternally present! Together, with the time we have on this earth, we can help to build God's church. The time we have in this life is now and it is a gift. May we, the church, embrace God's truths as we come together to live and sing out the beautiful lyrics of this song. *"We walk by faith, not by sight, not in our strength, but with God's true might, no matter the cost."* As we stay united in Jesus, we can go into this world *"magnifying His grace and mercy"* to our communities and to all God's people around the world!

PRAYER

God, thank you for Your love and grace in Jesus. May we, the church, embrace the gift of Jesus and the genuine beauty of one another. Holy Spirit, unite us and protect Your church, and may we glorify You in all we think, say, and do. Amen.