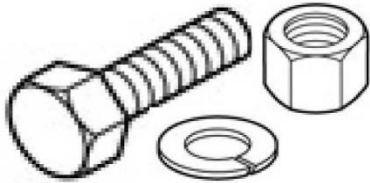


## THE LOWLY WASHER

Romans 12:3-4 ... “For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith. For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function.”



Bolts hold together everything from bird cages to bridges to skyscrapers. They are an indispensable part of construction and manufacturing. Bolts can range from nearly microscopic, such as those that hold watches together, to 3 and 4 inch diameter beasts that keep highway bridges from collapsing. The nut screws on to the bolt from the other side of the objects being held together to keep the bolt from backing-out and causing failure of the cage, bridge, or building. Without bolts and nuts, our world would be a pretty rickety place to live in.

But, what about the washer? The washer shown above – called a lock-washer – is little more than a thin, circular piece of metal that goes on to the bolt before the nut. It works by adding tension to the nut and by cutting the face of the nut slightly to keep it from loosening. It is neither super strong, nor costly. It all but disappears after the nut is tightened, so many people are not even aware that it exists. However, mechanics and fabricators know that if you do not use a lock-washer, natural vibration in the object being assembled may eventually cause the nut to come loose and fall off. With the nut missing, the bolt can fall out. Without the bolt, your parakeet might fly away, the bridge you drive on might fall into the river, and the building you work in could topple over.

Your life in God's Kingdom may be equivalent to a washer. You might consider your pastor to be a bolt; the main strength that keeps your church together. Church elders might be the nut (I have known a lot of elders who were nuts). If you are functioning in the ministry of your church as Christ expects, you are like the lock-washer that keeps your pastor and your elders functioning as godly leaders to prevent them from getting loose and causing the church and God's mission for your church to fail.

Today's verse teaches that each of us in the church has a role to play. Your role may be different than your sister's role, and her role may be different than her husband's role. Verse 5 reads: “so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another.” Just as the bolt needs the nut, and they both need the washer, the church needs each of us to work together to complete the task of evangelism God assigned to the church. Your family, your business and your nation needs washers to help the load-bearing components of those groups to avoid failure.

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