

1. Intro

- In Romans 1-11, the Apostle Paul mainly taught salvation truths, but starting in Romans 12, he pivoted to how we are to practically live in light of those truths. He answers the question, “Now what?”
- Last week, we heard that we are to give our bodies and lives to God as a living sacrifice. And now his letter begins to describe what that looks like.
- One of the things that Christians are to focus on is discovering and using our “spiritual gift”. This “gift” is a special ability to do certain things well, specifically in the context of the church and the work God is doing in the world. They’re also referred to as “gifts of the Spirit” or “spiritual gifts”. These are different than our natural, genetic abilities. God gave a “gift” to us when we believed the Gospel and the Holy Spirit came to live within us.
- As Paul launches into what it looks like to practically be a living sacrifice to God, he starts out with a warning, then gives a great illustration of the church, and ends with a challenge to use our “gifts” to the max!

2. Text: Romans 12:3-8

Romans 12:3

- The warning: Remain **humble** as you discover who God has made you to be since placing your faith in Christ.
 - At the point we believe in Jesus, God says we are a new **creation**.
 - **2 Corinthians 5:17**

Romans 12:4-5

- The illustration: God designed the church (body of Christ) to be made up of many unique, God-gifted **individuals** who all work together as **one** (like the human body).
 - Every individual of the church is needed to get the job done well.

Romans 12:6-8

- The challenge: God has given each of us different “gifts” for doing certain things well; **identify** them and use them **wholeheartedly!**
 - **Prophecy/the prophet:** Boldly and fearlessly proclaims God’s truth.
 - You are to use this speaking gift to the measure that God has given it to you!

- **Service:** Provides practical help both physically and spiritually.
 - You are to serve others well!
- **Teacher:** Making clear the truth of God’s Word with simplicity & accuracy.
 - You are to teach well!
- **Encourager:** Motivating others to action, application, and purpose.
 - You are to be encouraging!
- **Giver:** Releasing material resources to further the work of the church.
 - You are to give generously!
- **Leadership:** Guiding and influencing others, motivating them to work together towards a common vision and purpose.
 - You are to take the responsibility seriously!
- **Showing kindness** (gift of mercy): Identifying with and comforting those in need.
 - You are to do it gladly!
- There are 4 lists of “gifts” in the New Testament (Romans 12:6-8, 1 Corinthians 12:4-11, Ephesians 4:11, and 1 Peter 4:10-11). These are many of the gifts, but likely not an exhaustive list of all of them.

3. Application

- God has given you a specific spiritual “gift” or ability to do a certain thing well. Ask Him to show you what it is. Take the online survey. You’ll find a link in your **HCC “announcements” email**.
 - There is a learning curve and it takes time and experimentation to discover what your spiritual gift is.
- If you know what your gift is or if you think you know what it is, seek to put yourself in positions to use it. Embrace who God made you to be, the role He’s given you in His Kingdom, and use your gift wholeheartedly! The people of this church need what God has given you.
 - **Ephesians 4:11-16**
- We function best when using our “gift”, but there are times we need to serve in ways we’re not gifted. There are times when God puts us in situations we’re uncomfortable with in order to show us something about ourselves we didn’t know.
- Don’t compare your “gift” with other Christians’ “gifts”. That’s a dead-end road that leads only to discouragement and disappointment. God in His infinite wisdom and in His love for you, chose to give you the unique and important “gift” that you have. He doesn’t make mistakes. Your gift has a special purpose and role in this church.