

Intro: In case you haven't been with us in a bit or just joining us, we are currently going verse by verse through the book of Romans. We are in Ch12, and in the last 11 Chapters Paul has been telling us all that God has done for us. All that He's brought us through and given us. An amazing picture of the Love of God.

And as you step back and take a look at it as a whole you zoom back and are able to enjoy the full picture of the gospel.

Like a puzzle, each chapter has been put together piece by piece and as we finished Ch 11 you stand back and see the full picture. Paul did! And began to just worship the Lord. (see vs33-36)

Now that we step back and see the wonderful plan of God in salvation for the world, we need to begin to personalize it further. Not only did God have a plan to save the world through the Jew but, He's always had a plan to save you!

Because of that there's a response, Paul said, that is our reasonable service to God. There is an act of worship on our part that is our response to the love of God. (Recap 12:1-2) *(God made the first move)*

Not only are we to respond to the love of God by us offering up our bodies and our minds to God but Paul now begins to explain how we also respond to the Lord in our service to one another. As the body of Christ here on earth. We serve God with our spiritual gifts as we serve one another. Notice vs 3-8

I. SERVING THE BODY

In the scriptures the church or Christians collectively are called, God's people, Christ's bride, His children, the flock and also the Body of Christ.

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- Paul loved this term. He used it a few times describing us as a body with Jesus as the head.
 - Just like our natural bodies have different parts with different purposes so we all are different parts of the body of Christ with different purposes. Again with Jesus as head.
 - The Body of Christ is much bigger than any one church. It spans the world. Many churches with many members different functions all serving one purpose. That for which the head desires.
 - We also need to understand that we are called as members of a “local body”.
 - God has called every one of us to be a part of a local body. **Heb 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.
 - We are called unto a local body of believers to exhort one another. To build up one another. Serve the body to build the body.

So to do that God has given each one of us a gift or gifts upon salvation. Every one of us is given something different that we might operate together. So that the main goal is unity in the body of Christ.

Another part of our response to the love God has shown us is our service to one another as the body using our individual gifts. So Paul starts off by saying in vs 3.....

3 A. In Humbleness

3 “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.”

That's a very good thing to start of with right? Humbleness. As Paul begins talking to us about the body and the gifts we all have to serve with, I just love that he begins with how we are to think when we serve.

3 1. He says **"Don't think too highly of your selves than you outa think but think soberly"**

a. It's like he's saying if your thinking too high of yourself your not thinking soberly. Your not thinking clearly.

b. I can't help but to think of someone when they're drunk. How you can't talk to them.

i. Because they're not clear minded. They're intoxicated.

3 2. All though I don't believe this is a sharp rebuke from the apostle, I do think it stands as a great reminder to us about how we are to think about our gifts and our serving as the body .

a. That we start off with a humble mind. Humble attitude.

3a 3. Look at the one telling us this and look at what he says... **"For I say through the grace given me....."**

a. Paul's thinking " Hey guys I'm only able to tell you this because of the grace that was given to me.

i. If it wasn't for God's grace I wouldn't be doing what I'm doing.

4. Oswald Sanders in his book "Spiritual Leadership" wrote.. " *A leaders humility should grow with the passing years like other attitudes & qualities*" Notice Paul's advance in the grace of humility.

a. Early... **1 Cor 15:9-10** For I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.

b. Later... **Eph 3:8** To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ,

c. Toward the end of his life... **1 Tim 1:15-16** This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.

5. Not too low either

Paul's saying because of the grace shown me I want to remind you all to think of soberly of yourselves. Not too low of yourselves because you're a child of God, but not too high of yourselves either because we serve a bigger purpose than ourselves..... look at vs 4

4-5 B. Many Members, One Body

(Explain vs 4-5)

1. Paul goes into this a little deeper in 1 Cor. **Go to 1 Cor 12:12-31**
2. Paul is saying whether you are Jewish or Gentiles, slave or free, once we came to faith in Christ, we were all baptized into one body by the H.S.
 - a. Meaning the same H.S. that lives and works in you, lives and works in me. There's no difference.
 - b. My arm doesn't have it's own identity. It's part of my body.
 - i. If you bought me a watch, you wouldn't come over and ask to speak to my arm.
 - ii. A part of the body doesn't identify with itself outside of the body.

3. **Read 1 Cor 12:17-18**

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- a. God has created you in such a way as to be different and yet bring glory to Him.
 - b. All of us are different with different functions. Just like the hand needs the feet and no one is more important than the other in God's eyes. **Read Illust 1**
 - c. **"If one member suffers we all suffer"**

6-8 C. Using Your Gift

Being members of one body we all have been given different gifts to serve the body with. So think about that, the thing you do so good or so naturally isn't so "natural". It's a gift from God! God's gifted you in that particular area.... For his purposes.

- 1. So then the 1st question is are you using them?
 - a. Think of the things God has given you a natural desire and heart after. Are you using them?

- b. Are you kinda sitting on a talent your really good at?
Go to Matt 25:14-30

- 2. The 2nd question is then If you are using your gift are you using it for the purpose God gave it to you for?

- 6a 3. **"Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them ..."**

- a. Lets not just sit on them.

- 6b 4. **"if prophesy let us prophecy in proportion to our faith"**

- a. One of the gifts God has given in the body of Christ is the gift of prophecy.

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- b.** Paul is giving us a list here of a few gifts. Just a few. In 1 Cor 12:27,28 he lists several others. Some have counted 15 gifts given in scripture some have calculated 19 gifts.
 - c.** I don't personally think the number is important because I'm not so sure that all God's gifts are categorized and documented. Meaning it's not an exhaustive list.
 - d.** You may have a gift that's not documented or mentioned in scripture. And the way to know if it's being used correctly is does it bring attention to, elevate self? Or does it bring attention to the Lord? Does it elevate Jesus? Does it point people to Christ? That should be the goal.
 - e.** Again so Paul's giving us a small list of gifts he mentions here but I'm not going to attempt to do an in depth look into each one of them I'm just going to try to explain them a little. If I can.

6b **5.** ***"Prophecy"*** The gift of prophecy can be the foretelling of future events, you see that in the Old and New Testaments. But it's not just predicting events. For the most part when the gift of prophecy is in operation it's an inspired delivery ; a warning ; it could be an exhortation, it could be a word of judgment; it's more or less speaking forth the word of God. Not just foretelling future events.

- a.** Many times the gift of prophecy is used in the most subtle and practical of ways.
- b.** As in a church setting. Hearing the word and God begins to speak to you, right to your situation, through the teacher.
 - i.** *"How did you know?"*

c. Or *"I feel the Lord impressing upon my heart to tell you this"* A word of encouragement or even caution.

d. **1 Thess 5:19-22** Do not quench the Spirit. 20 Do not despise prophecies. 21 Test all things; hold fast what is good. 22 Abstain from every form of evil.

6c e. **"use it in proportion to your faith"** Or **"the" faith**

7a 6. **"or in ministry let us use it in our ministering"**

The gift of ministry or ministries. It's the broader picture of simply serving in practical ways.

a. It's those that operate in this particular gift, that may not think they have a particular gift at all.

b. It means servant. Or one that serves. In other places it means deacon but the title of deacon must never lose the heart of a servant. One that serves.

c. **WTBS to the minister-** *"The word minister means under-rower. It refers to the slaves who sat in the belly of the large ships and pulled at the great oars to carry the boat through the sea"*

d. We're all called to serve; minister. **"Let us use it in our ministering"** Use what? Grace given to us.

7b 7. **"he who teaches in teaching"** When your teaching your defining truth. When you have the gift of teaching you are able to explain things in such a way that people can understand what your saying. Whether the word of God or biblical truths.

a. Prophecy can work closely with this gift. In a subtle practical way.

b. But again the focus is the Lord. Not the teacher.

c. Was texting an quoting a pastor friend of mine and he texted back "I said that?" lol. We all recognize it's a gift from the Lord and wish to be led by the spirit always.

8 **8. "he who exhorts in exhortation"** Teaching has in mind instruction, while exhortation encourages people to practice what they've been taught.

a. **David Guzik** i. Those who are taught but not exhorted become "fat sheep" that only take in and never live the Christian life. Those who are exhorted but not taught become excited and active, but have no depth or understanding to what they do and will burn out quickly or work in wrong ways.

8b **9. "he who gives with liberality"** The gift of giving refers to someone who is a channel through whom God provides resources for His body.

a. They are to do it liberally.

b. When someone who is called and gifted to be a giver stops giving liberally, they sometimes see they're own resources dry up.

c. They may forget God's blessing them because of the gift they were using in serving Him.

8c **10.** Then there's those who have the gift to lead. Paul says **"those who lead do it with diligence"**

a. Sometimes leadership can be discouraging. The person who is leading but noone's following will only be taking a walk. And it can feel like that at times right?

b. Be diligent. Don't get discouraged.

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- 8d** **11. "he who shows mercy , with cheerfulness"** This gift of mercy sometimes comes upon you when you want to stay mad. Take revenge. But again all these gifts are a move of the Holy Spirit. As He wills!
- a.** Show mercy with cheerfulness.

Community Group Questions

- #1 According to the gifts of the Holy Spirit listed in scripture (Rom 12:6-8 1Cor 12:7-11; 28-30) which gift or gifts do you believe you have?
- Are there any not listed that you think you may have?
- #2 Are you using your gift or gifts to further the Kingdom of God or serve the body of Christ?
- If not how might you start?