



First Baptist Church Fair Oaks Ranch

Rom 12:3-8 “Because of the privilege and authority God has given me, I give each of you this warning: Don’t think you are better than you really are. Be honest in your evaluation of yourselves, measuring yourselves by the faith God has given us. 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. So if God has given you the ability to prophesy, speak out with as much faith as God has given you. If your gift is serving others, serve them well. If you are a teacher, teach well. If your gift is to encourage others, be encouraging. If it is giving, give generously. If God has given you leadership ability, take the responsibility seriously. And if you have a gift for showing kindness to others, do it gladly.”

Perhaps one of the greatest tragedies is to receive a special gift or talent and never take the opportunity to use it. Imagine if Mozart or Bach had failed to compose music, if DaVinci or Michelangelo had never painted, if Lincoln or Churchill had failed to lead or if Spurgeon or Graham had failed to preach. Such God given talents and skill would have been wasted and lost in time. These are names that are remembered by history; however, how many untold servants, leaders and teachers have faithfully fulfilled their calling that will be remembered in the annals of heaven with the heroes of the saints. What is sad and unfortunate is how many more should be listed but will remain unsung because of fear, pride or selfishness leading to an unwillingness to use their gifts. Scripture makes it clear that every Christian has received a unique and special giftedness that is meant to be used to bless the body of Christ. First Peter 4:10 says “As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God’s varied grace.” The key to this instruction is “use it.” Do not hide it, conceal it, withhold it, abuse it, manipulate it or ignore it. Put your giftedness to work in the local church. To be frank, a Christian who is not serving within the church is a Believer who is not aligned with God’s word. This does not mean that everyone has the same gift or the same amount of time to give; however, the concept of doing nothing is foreign to Scripture. To fail to use your giftedness is to fail to heed the warning of Romans 12 to not think too highly of yourself.

There are numerous ways to serve in the body of Christ. In 1 Corinthians 12, the Bible says there are a variety of gifts and a variety of services. The permutational mixture of the 18+ spiritual gifts is 6 quadrillion or 6×10^{15} . That means that no one who has ever lived or ever will live has the exact same mixture of spiritual gifts that you have. God has carefully and wonderfully made you to serve in the mosaic of His kingdom. Romans lists seven of these different types of gifts and ministry that should be used within the church: Prophecy, Serving, Teaching, Encouraging, Giving and Leading. Below is a quick summary of these gifts and their use within the church.

Prophecy involves speaking the word of God. This is not in an Old Testament sense of predicting the future, but in the use of preaching and proclaiming the things of God to God’s people. This is different than evangelism which is speaking God’s grace to unbelievers. This person must be proclaiming the things of God that are in accordance with the Word truth and genuine faith. Serving is a broad category of helping that ranges from administrative, logistical and practical assistance. Each act of service should be done as if Christ was the recipient. Teaching includes the systematic and didactic instruction of God’s word with an emphasis on its proper application. This should be done ‘well’ and with sincerity and reverence. Encouraging and exhorting is a picture of gentle and faithful walking alongside others who are struggling in their faith. This person helps others in their weakness and corrects when necessary. Giving is the ministry that exceeds the normal call to give one’s tithes and offerings and excels at knowing needs



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and giving extra to help meet them. Leading includes directing the various affairs of the church, to include delegating responsibilities and tasks. This should be done with humility and seriousness. Finally, mercy is the amazing gifts that cheerfully reflects God's love and grace to others, especially the infirmed, weak and sick.

It is impossible for anyone to say, I don't know how or where to serve with a list like this. God has uniquely gifted each believer with a mixture of these gifts that are specifically designed to minister to and bless the church. When a Christian fails to discover or refuses to use their giftedness, they ultimately fail to obey Christ.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, I pray you give each of us a spirit of humility, unity and passion to serve our brothers and sisters within the church. It seems so easy for the enemy to turn my eyes inward and selfish. Help me to better understand how and where I belong in the body and to serve in that place faithfully. In Jesus Name.