

**Romans: Unashamed; the righteous shall live by faith**

**Romans 12:3-8 prt 34**

**MPS: Give yourself to God's church**

**INTRO:**

Review from last week

**MPS: Last week was 'God gave Himself for us, so we offer all of ourselves to Him.'**

**1. Give your body to God as your worship.**

*Vs 1 I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present [offer NIV] your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.*

**2. Give your mind to God for your renewal**

*Vs 2 Do not be conformed to this [the pattern of NIV] world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.*

**Today's MPS: Give yourself to God's church**

**OPEN:**

**My mom loved puzzles (word puzzles, crossword puzzles and jigsaw)**

- The missing puzzle piece leaves the whole puzzle incomplete – each piece distinct and has a place and when all of them are connected it reflects the image on the box.
- Paul said we are members of one another – like puzzle pieces distinctly made and cut to fit in the right place.
- The image of the puzzle is a mosaic of Christ to the world
- Scriptures teach us the church is the body of Christ and we are to reflect Him.
- You might be the missing puzzle piece
- We often hold back, thinking,
  - 'What difference can I make?' or
  - 'I'm not good enough,' or maybe even,
  - 'That's someone else's job.' But what if God is calling you to give yourself fully to His church, right now, right where you are? That tension—between holding back and stepping up—is what we're diving into today.

**'Give yourself to God's church'**

**1. Think rightly about yourself**

*Vs 3 For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned.*

- *Measure of faith --- that God has assigned.*
  - The word for “faith” (Gk *pistis*) has enough range that it can mean “position of trust” or “trusteeship”
  - The phrase “measure of faith” refers to different spiritual capacities that God apportions to each person and is thus equivalent to God’s distribution of “spiritual gifts”
  - So, God had given a measure of grace and faith to each member of the church. Each believer has thus been gifted. But we should not think too highly of ourselves when it comes to these gifts; rather, we should be humble and faithful stewards of them. Gifts should not breed arrogance.
- A. God has sovereignly chosen to deposit particular gifts in you. It’s not by your doing or your merit. It’s His doing.
- B. Therefore, you can’t take credit for fruitfulness in your serving the church.
- C. Use these gifts with Self-Awareness
- Having people in your life that will tell you the truth is a must for sober judgment (self awareness).

We are ALL servants; *to everyone among you* – it’s our new identity.

- Don’t overestimate yourself
- Don’t underestimate yourself

The path to unity always comes through humility and service

## **2. We are one body**

**Vs 4-5** *For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, 5 so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.*

- I’m always bothered by the phrase that starts with, ‘the church has done a terrible job at \_\_\_\_\_
- It’s not as though the church is a separate entity than you ... as a believer, YOU ARE THE CHURCH.

- We have reduced the church to something other than what God intends it to be.
- Giving yourself to God's people in His church is not contingent on the people – it is contingent on God and His word.

### 3. Use your spiritual gifts

**Vs 6-8** *Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; 7 if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; 8 the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.*

- Now, there may be times that you need to rest, a break as it were (sabbatical), but eventually you gotta get back in the game. (figure out how to explain HOW serving is good for you while it is helpful to others)
- We might group these gifts into two categories: A. teaching gifts and B. serving gifts (or verbal and nonverbal gifts.)

#### A. Teaching Gifts

Prophecy: *if prophecy, in proportion to our faith;*

What is prophesy?

- To prophesy is to speak the Word of God via the inspiration and calling of the Holy Spirit. Prophecy is distinguished here and elsewhere from the gift of teaching (but comes out in teaching). It is a gift that reveals something of God about God and how He is interacting with His people.
- Some limit prophesy to 'preaching' making it synonymous with preaching. (which is different from teaching) – my personal belief is that is how the gift is most often used but not limited just to preaching.
- Don't get out over your skies – outside of God's chosen leadership in the church, outside your ability, outside of what is truly from God, outside of you being seen as gifted or spiritual

Teaching: *the one who teaches, in his teaching*

What is teaching?

- The ability to interpret, clarify, systematize, and explain God's truth clearly (cf. Acts 18:24, 25; 2 Tim. 2:2). Pastors must have the gift of teaching (1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:9; cf. 1 Tim. 4:16), but many mature, qualified laymen also have this gift. This differs from preaching, not in content, but in the unique skill for public proclamation.

- All believers should be able to articulate the gospel in a plain way, but not all believers have the gift of teaching. (which is ok).

Exhortation: **8** *the one who exhorts, in his exhortation;*

What is exhortation?

- The gift which enables a believer to effectively call others to obey and follow God's truth (*see note on v. 1*). It may be used negatively to admonish and correct regarding sin (2 Tim. 4:2), or positively, to encourage, comfort, and strengthen struggling believers

Leading: *the one who leads, with zeal (energy).*

What is leading?

- **leads.** Lit. "standing before." Paul calls this gift "administrations" (1 Cor. 12:28), a word that means "to guide" and is used of the person who steers a ship (Acts 27:11; Rev. 18:17). In the NT, this word is used to describe only leadership in the home (1 Tim. 3:4, 5, 12) and the church (1 Cor. 12:28; 1 Tim. 5:17; cf. Acts 27:11; Rev. 18:17). Again, the church's leaders must exercise this gift, but it is certainly not limited to them

Leaders bring energy

- Your energy is contagious, conveying the importance of a task and the value of the people around you.
- Your energy encompasses your passion level and enthusiasm, but it goes deeper than that. It infuses your team with vision, clarifies the priority level of tasks, and enables you to bring out your best, as well as catalyze the very best from your team.

## B. Serving Gifts

**Service:** *if service, in our serving*

What is service?

- Where we get our word, deacon from. It means to help. Jump in and do what is necessary. "Just tell me what you need and I'm there."
- It is most powerful when it comes out of a grateful heart that the king of glory served us and we now serve out of identifying with Christ.

**Giving:** *the one who contributes, in generosity*

What is giving?

- This denotes the sacrificial sharing and giving of one's resources and self to meet the needs of others

- It's an openhearted generosity. The believer who gives with a proper attitude does not do so for thanks and personal recognition, but to glorify God

**Does acts of mercy the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness**

What is doing acts of mercy?

- One who actively shows sympathy and sensitivity to those in suffering and sorrow, and who has both the willingness and the resources to help lessen their afflictions. Frequently, this gift accompanies the gift of exhortation.
- HOW? Without complaining – it's the one gift if you have it that then there is tendency to be mad at others who don't have it like you and they are helping others like you are.
- To be sure, we should all do acts of mercy – (be merciful), but there are some who are gifted with it.
- Whether or not to use your gift is not an option – neither is it a suggestion. We are commanded to use the gifts endowed to us for the good of God's people and God's future people.

CONCLUSION:

**Give yourself to God's church** – The king came to serve us something we could not attain alone.

**Think rightly about yourself**

**We are one body**

**Use your spiritual gifts**

Application:

Serve Fair: Kind of like a trellis or simply giving pathways (through the gifts of leadership)

PLACES TO SERVE:

- GB Youth – Ryan stand up – women small group leaders
- GB Kids – (4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade min on 2 weds a month now)
- Security team
- Connect Ministry (Greeters, Connect Stations, Follow-up)
- Green Bean café – hospitality
- Women's and men's ministry

QUESTIONS FOR GROUPS:

1. Are you currently serving a local church? Why or why not?
2. How can you better discover your calling and spiritual gifts?
3. What does it look like for you to be, like a jigsaw puzzle piece, connected to the local church, using your spiritual gifts and reflecting the image of Christ to a lost world.